

AFRICAN HISTORIES AND MODERNITIES

PENTECOSTALISM AND POLITICS IN AFRICA

Edited by
**Adeshina Afolayan,
OlaJumoke Yacob-Haliso,
and Toyin Falola**



African Histories and Modernities

Series Editors

Toyin Falola

University of Texas

Austin, TX, USA

Matthew M. Heaton

Virginia Tech

Blacksburg, USA

This book series serves as a scholarly forum on African contributions to and negotiations of diverse modernities over time and space, with a particular emphasis on historical developments. Specifically, it aims to refute the hegemonic conception of a singular modernity, Western in origin, spreading out to encompass the globe over the last several decades. Indeed, rather than reinforcing conceptual boundaries or parameters, the series instead looks to receive and respond to changing perspectives on an important but inherently nebulous idea, deliberately creating a space in which multiple modernities can interact, overlap, and conflict. While privileging works that emphasize historical change over time, the series will also feature scholarship that blurs the lines between the historical and the contemporary, recognizing the ways in which our changing understandings of modernity in the present have the capacity to affect the way we think about African and global histories.

Editorial Board:

Akintunde Akinyemi, Literature, University of Florida, Gainesville

Malami Buba, Languages, Sokoto State University

Emmanuel Mbah, History, CUNY, College of Staten Island

Insa Nolte, History, University of Birmingham

Shadrack Wanjala Nasong'o, International Studies, Rhodes College

Samuel Oloruntoba, Political Science, TMAIL, University of South Africa

Bridget Teboh, History, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

More information about this series at

<http://www.palgrave.com/gp/series/14758>

Adeshina Afolayan • Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso
Toyin Falola
Editors

Pentecostalism and Politics in Africa

palgrave
macmillan

Editors

Adeshina Afolayan
University of Ibadan
Ibadan, Nigeria

Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso
Babcock University
Ilishan-Remo, Nigeria

Toyin Falola
University of Texas
Austin, TX, USA

African Histories and Modernities

ISBN 978-3-319-74910-5

ISBN 978-3-319-74911-2 (eBook)

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-74911-2>

Library of Congress Control Number: 2018947374

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2018

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors, and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Cover illustration: Jake Lyell / Alamy Stock Photo

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer International Publishing AG part of Springer Nature.

The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Pentecostalism and politics in Africa are two unique phenomena worthy of study in their own right as conceptual and empirical subjects. Both have contributed to the postcolonial unfolding and understanding of the continent. But such an understanding would be incomplete if they are understood, as in most of the literature, as separate incidences and phenomena. This is because since Pentecostalism made its way to Africa it has been inextricably and complicatedly tied in with the complexity of the political on the continent. African political leaders, at various levels, from president to local government chairpersons, have recruited pastors to their political ambitions; pastors have campaigned for political positions; politicians and pastors have been at loggerheads; pastors have either asked their congregations to vote or not to vote, based on peculiar interpretations of the Bible; the church has exploited loopholes in state legal provisions that served their purposes; pastors have prophesied about the political climate of the state; and politicians have made policies that are beneficial or not beneficial to the churches. There are many diverse manifestations of the complex relationship between politics and Pentecostalism in Africa.

The contributors to this volume are distinguished by their attempts to map the intricate conceptual and empirical contours of this relationship in a way that will enable our understanding of a dimension of postcolonial life in Africa that, in significant ways, contributes to how Africans define who they are and how they perceive their present and future in a political context that is so circumscribed. This volume is equally significant because it opens up further discourse and research into the Pentecostal literature in Africa and the already fulsome debates on politics and the political.

* * *

We would like to thank all the contributors for their enthusiasm and patience throughout the time it took for this volume to achieve publication. Each brought their expertise in various aspects of Pentecostalism and the political

understanding of Africa to bear on their analyses of the complex relationship between the Pentecostal and the political in Africa. Our appreciation also goes to the editorial assistants at Palgrave Macmillan who painstakingly guided the volume to its successful end.

Ibadan, Nigeria
Ilishan-Remo, Nigeria
Austin, TX
2017

Adeshina Afolayan
Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso
Toyin Falola

CONTENTS

Part I	Introduction	1
1	Introduction: The Pentecostal and the Political in Africa Adeshina Afolayan, Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso, and Toyin Falola	3
2	Explaining the Growth and Legitimation of the Pentecostal Movement in Africa Olufunke Adeboye	25
Part II	Pentecostalism and Society in Africa	41
3	Pentecostalism, Islam, and Religious Fundamentalism in Africa Marinus Chijioke Iwuchukwu	43
4	Buy the Future: Charismatic Pentecostalism and African Liberation in a Neoliberal World Marleen de Witte	65
5	When Pentecostalism Meets African Indigenous Religions: Conflict, Compromise, or Incorporation? Naar M’fundisi-Holloway	87
6	Pentecostal Panopticism and the Phantasm of “The Ultimate Power” Abimbola Adelakun	101

7	The Pentecostal and Ecumenical Movements in the African Context	119
	Ernst M. Conradie	
8	Pentecostalism, the Prosperity Gospel, and Poverty in Africa	137
	Samson O. Ijaola	
9	Soft Tongue, Powerful Voice, Huge Influence: The Dynamics of Gender, Soft Power, and Political Influence in Faith Evangelistic Ministries in Kenya	159
	Damaris Seleina Parsitau	
10	The Role of Women, Theology, and Ecumenical Organizations in the Rise of Pentecostal Churches in Botswana	181
	Fidelis Nkomazana	
11	Neither Jew nor Greek? Class, Ethnicity, and Race in the Pentecostal Movement in Africa	203
	Asonzeh Ukah	
	Part III Pentecostalism and/as Politics in Africa	221
12	Pentecostalism, Political Philosophy, and the Political in Africa	223
	Adeshina Afolayan	
13	Political Ramifications of Some Shifts in Nigeria's Pentecostal Movement	245
	Femi James Kolapo	
14	Pentecostalism as an Alternative Social Order in Africa	277
	Samuel Zalanga	
15	Pentecostals, Conflict, and Peace in Africa	303
	Olajumoke Jacob-Haliso and Rachael O. Iyanda	
16	Leadership and Power in the Pentecostal Movement: Selected Case Studies	321
	Afolarin Olutunde Ojewole and Efe Monday Ehioghuae	

17 African Pentecostalism and Modernity: Critical Reflections on Tensions and Social Concerns	343
Samuel Zalanga	
18 Pentecostalism, Power, and Politics in Nigeria	371
Kelvin Onongha	
Part IV Conclusion	383
19 African Pentecostal Political Philosophy: New Directions in the Study of Pentecostalism and Politics	385
Nimi Wariboko	
Index	419

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Olufunke Adeboye is Professor of Social History at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. She was a Visiting Research Associate at the Harriet Tubman Institute, York University, Toronto, Canada, in 2006 and has held visiting research fellowships at the Centre of West African Studies, University of Birmingham, UK (2004), the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and Amherst College, USA (2006), and at the Centre of African Studies, University of Cambridge, UK (2009/2010). Her research interests include: gender in Africa, precolonial and colonial Nigerian history, nineteenth- and twentieth-century Yoruba society, African historiography, and Pentecostalism in West Africa. In 2013, she won the Gerti Hesselning Prize awarded by AEGIS (Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies) for the best journal article published in a European African Studies journal by an African scholar. Her latest book (edited with Afe Adogame and Corey Williams) is *Fighting in God's Name: Religion, Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Local and Global Perspectives*.

Abimbola Adelakun is Lecturer in the department of African and African Diaspora Studies at the University of Texas, Austin, USA. She completed her doctoral degree in the department of Theater and Dance at University of Texas, Austin. Her research interests are Pentecostalism, Africana studies, popular culture, and dramatic literature. She is a novelist, newspaper columnist, and blogger. Her research has been supported by the American Association of University Women (International); University of Texas Outstanding Graduate Student Fellowship; Andrew Mellon Summer Fellowship at Harvard; and John L. Warfield Center for African/African American Studies.

Adeshina Afolayan teaches philosophy at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. His areas of specialization include philosophy of politics, cultural studies, African philosophy, and philosophy of modernity. He is the editor of *Auteuring Nollywood* (2014), coeditor of *Urban Challenges and Survival Strategies in Africa* (2017), and the *Palgrave Handbook of African Philosophy* (2017). He is also the author of *Philosophy and National Development in Nigeria* (2018).

Ernst M. Conradie is Senior Professor in the department of Religion and Theology at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, where he teaches systematic theology and ethics. His most recent monographs are *The Earth in God's Economy? Creation, Salvation and Consummation in Ecological Perspective* (2015); and *Redeeming Sin? Social Diagnostics amid Ecological Destruction* (2017).

Efe Monday Ehioghae is Professor of Christian Theology and Ethics and head of the Department of Religious Studies, Babcock University, Nigeria. His research interests include moral/practical theology, soteriology, ecclesiology, philosophy of religion, and religion and science. He has served on the international review board of Valley View University's *Journal of Theology*, Ghana. He is currently chair of the editorial board of *Insight Journal*, Babcock University, Nigeria.

Toyin Falola holds the Jacob and Frances Sanger Mossiker Chair Professor in the Humanities and a Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas, Austin, USA. He has received various awards and honors, including seven honorary doctorates.

Samson O. Ijaola teaches in the department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Samuel Adegboyega University, Ogwa, Edo State, Nigeria. His scholarly writings have appeared in edited volumes and peer-reviewed journals. His research areas include Christian studies, philosophy of religion, science and religion, gender studies, peace and conflict studies, and African studies.

Marinus Chijioke Iwuchukwu is an Associate Professor in the Theology department at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, USA. His areas of research include interreligious dialogue, religious pluralism, religious and cultural diversity, world religions, and media and religion. His MA in journalism and PhD in religion and media are both from Marquette University, Milwaukee, USA. As a journalist, he founded a local newspaper for the Catholic diocese of Kano, Nigeria, and served as media director for several years. He was on, the academic staff of Federal College of Education, Kano, for about 12 years. He is the author of two books and coeditor of one. The title of his most recent book is *Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Postcolonial Northern Nigeria: The Challenges of Inclusive Cultural and Religious Pluralism*. He has published over 20 book chapters and peer-reviewed journal articles. He is the current chair of the Consortium for Christian-Muslim Dialogue, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA. He is also a Visiting Research Fellow of University of Chester, UK, and 2017 Resident Research Theologian of Gladstone's Library in Hawarden, Flintshire, UK.

Rachael O. Iyanda is a member of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Veronica Adeleke School of Social Sciences, Babcock University, Nigeria. She completed her PhD at Babcock University, an MA at the University of Ibadan, and her BSc at Babcock University. Her research

interests are policy design and analysis; comparative politics and gender studies; human development and trafficking in persons; international conflict, peace, and security. Her recent research focus has been on human trafficking and human security. She is an apostle of provisioning the social safety net to minimize security threats affecting all, especially women. She is a member of the International Political Science Association, West African Political Science Association, Society for Peace Studies and Practice, and the Liberian Studies Association.

Femi James Kolapo teaches African history at the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada. He previously taught in the History department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria. He has done research on the nineteenth-century, all-native staffed, Upper Niger Anglican Church Missionary Society mission established by Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther. His analysis of mid-nineteenth-century mission–African relations at Lokoja and Gbebe, the Niger-Benue confluence, is in the final stages of preparation for publication. He has an ongoing research interest in religion in general, and the history of religion in Nigeria, and Pentecostalism in particular. He is also involved with the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Naar M’fundisi-Holloway completed her MA and PhD at the University of Birmingham, UK, on Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity and civic engagement in Zambia focusing on Politics and HIV/AIDS. She is also a qualified secondary school teacher and has worked in inner-city schools in Birmingham teaching religious education, health, and social care. She currently works as an Action Researcher at the Territorial Headquarters of The Salvation Army in London within the Research and Development Unit.

Fidelis Nkomazana earned his BA (1985) with majors in Theology and Religious Studies and Environmental Science and a postgraduate Diploma in Education (1986) from the University of Botswana and an MA in Theology in 1990 and a PhD in 1994 from the University of Edinburgh. He has researched and published on church history and related aspects, such as the role of women, HIV and AIDS, and Pentecostalism. Served as head of department of Theology and Religious Studies from January 2003 to July 2010 at the University of Botswana, and is currently acting head. He also a member of the University of Botswana, National University of Lesotho and University of Swaziland Theological Conference and the Association of Theological Institutions of Southern and Central Africa.

Afolarin Olutunde Ojewole has a BSc in Real Estate Management from the University of Ife (1987), an MA in Pastoral Ministry and a PhD in Old Testament Exegesis from Andrews University, Berrien-Springs, Michigan, USA. He is the author of several academic research articles in reputable journals around the world. He is currently an Associate Professor in Old Testament Exegesis at Babcock University, Nigeria.

Kelvin Onongha teaches cross-cultural studies, ministry, and leadership at the Adventist University of Africa, Kenya, where he serves as the director of the Doctor of Ministry and the MA Missiology programs. He holds doctorate degrees in Ministry and Missiology from Andrews University, Michigan.

Damaris Seleina Parsitau is a sociologist of religion and gender and with a focus on Pentecostal Christianity and gender. She holds a PhD in Religion, Gender and Public Life from Kenyatta University, an MA in Sociology of Religion from the University of Nairobi, and a BA in History from Egerton University, all in Kenya. She is also the Director of the Institute of Women, Gender and Development Studies (2012–2018) Egerton University, a center of excellence in gender research, leadership, mentorship, policy making, and advocacy for gender equity and equality in Kenya. She is currently an Echidna Global Scholar (2017) at the Brookings Institutions, Center for Universal Education, Washington DC, USA, and an affiliated Research Associate and Visiting Research Fellow, College of Human Sciences at the University of South Africa (2016–2019). She has previously held Visiting Research Fellowships at the University of Cambridge and the University of Edinburgh, UK. Parsitau has over 20 years' experience in teaching, research, leadership training, and mentorship. She has been published in peer-reviewed journals and book chapters, with two forthcoming manuscripts.

Asonzeh Ukah is a sociologist/historian of religion, affiliated to the department of Religious Studies, University of Cape Town, South Africa. His research interests include religious urbanism, sociology of Pentecostalism, and religion and media. He is the Director of the Research Institute on Christianity and Society in Africa (RICSA), University of Cape Town, South Africa, and Affiliated Senior Fellow of Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS), University of Bayreuth, Germany. He has published widely in English, German, and Spanish and is the author of *A New Paradigm of Pentecostal Power* (AWP, 2008) and *Bourdieu in Africa* (edited with Magnus Eichtler, Brill, 2016).

Nimi Wariboko is Walter G. Muelder Professor of Social Ethics and Chair of Philosophy, Theology, and Ethics at Boston University School of Theology, USA. He is also on the faculty of the Graduate Division of Religious Studies and Questrom School of Business of the same university. The five pillars of his scholarship are economic ethics, Christian social ethics, African social traditions, Pentecostal studies, and continental philosophy. The structure of his creative body of work is characterized by a rigorous interweaving of original insights from each of these fields. He has won several awards for his academic excellence and has published over 20 books, including *Nigerian Pentecostalism* (2014).

Marleen de Witte is Assistant Professor of Cultural Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Her research interests include African Pentecostalism, African traditional religion, media and mediation, glo-

balization, the senses and the body, cultural heritage, popular culture, funerals, urban Africa (in particular Ghana), and Afro-Europe (in particular the Netherlands). She has published *Long Live the Dead! Changing Funeral Celebrations in Asante, Ghana* (2001) and numerous articles and chapters in international journals and edited volumes in her fields of interest. Her thesis *Spirit Media: Charismatics, Traditionalists, and Mediation Practices in Ghana* (University of Amsterdam, 2008) was awarded the Keetje Hodshon Award of the Royal Holland Society of Sciences and Humanities.

Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso is Associate Professor of Political Science at Babcock University, Nigeria, and holds a PhD from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Her research has focused on women in peace, conflict, and security, and on comparative African politics. Her essays have been published in *Wagadu: The Journal of Transnational Women's Studies*, the *Liberian Studies Journal*, the *Africa Peace and Conflict Journal* and elsewhere. She is coeditor of *Gendering Knowledge in Africa and the African Diaspora: Contesting History and Power* (2017), *Women in Africa: Context, Rights, Hegemonies* (2012), and three other forthcoming titles. She is editor of the *Journal of International Politics and Development* and serves on the editorial board of several reputable international and national journals. She has held fellowships and grants from the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, the University for Peace Africa Program, the International Development Research Centre, African Association of Political Science, Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, among others. She was Global South Scholar-in-Residence at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, Switzerland; was a postdoctoral fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies' African Humanities Program; and is currently African Studies Association Presidential Fellow, 2017.

Samuel Zalanga is Professor of Sociology in the department of Sociology and Reconciliation Studies at Bethel University, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA. He was Associate Editor for Africa for the then Association of Third World Studies' *Journal of Third World Studies* from 2008–2014. His broad area of scholarly interest and specialization is development studies and social change. Among his recent publications are: "Christianity in Africa: Pentecostalism and Sociocultural Change in the Context of Neoliberal Globalization," and "Economic Development and Cultural Change in Islamic Context: The Malaysian Experience," in *The Changing World Religion Map: Sacred Places, Identities, Practices and Politics* (2015). He also recently published "Julius Nyerere: Leadership Insights and Lessons for Contemporary Challenges in Postcolonial African Development" in *Governance and the Crisis of Rule in Contemporary Africa: Leadership in Transformation* (2016). His book, *Post-Colonial States and Economic Development: Ruling Coalitions and Economic Changes in Nigeria and Malaysia*, is forthcoming. He has been a Carnegie African Diaspora Fellow on two occasions and is currently a US Fulbright Scholar in Southeastern Nigeria. He has received several awards and recognitions.

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 4.1	Mensa Otabil preaching in the Christ Temple. Courtesy of ICGC	69
Fig. 4.2	Christ Temple complex, Accra. Courtesy of Pearl Boateng, https://pboats.files.wordpress.com	76
Fig. 4.3	Christ Temple complex seen from e-waste dump at “Sodom and Gomorrah.” Courtesy of Kevin McElvaney	81

LIST OF TABLES

Table 7.1	Models of mission	128
Table 15.1	Taxonomy of generations of African conflicts, 1950s–2010s	310

PART I

Introduction



CHAPTER 1

Introduction: The Pentecostal and the Political in Africa

*Adeshina Afolayan, Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso,
and Toyin Falola*

The common concern of all the chapters in this volume is to critically explore the complex relationship between politics and Pentecostalism in Africa; or specifically, the relationship between the Pentecostal and the political. We ask, what are the current and pertinent features of African Pentecostalism and Pentecostalism in Africa? What are the antecedents for the establishment, proliferation and legitimization of the Pentecostal movement in Africa? How does Pentecostalism intervene in specific social and political issues, such as secularism, citizenship, endemic poverty, development challenges, ascension to power; and in primordial and political identity questions, including ethnicity and race issues, gender and womanist politics, ecumenism and interfaith relationship, party politics, political participation; and other facets of politics and society in Africa? Conversely, in what ways do the state and the peculiar nature of politics in Africa modulate the Pentecostal movement? Can Pentecostalism be regarded as an alternative vision or a compromised acquiescence to the political order of things in Africa? What theoretical frameworks and paradigms can we deploy for making sense of these questions, and what new hypotheses might we propose

A. Afolayan (✉)
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria
O. Yacob-Haliso
Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Nigeria
T. Falola
University of Texas, Austin, TX, USA
e-mail: toyinfalola@austin.utexas.edu

for explaining the intersections of Pentecostalism with politics in Africa? This book, *Pentecostalism and Politics in Africa*, addresses these questions, and more, from interdisciplinary perspectives in order to make a unique contribution to the literature specifically on Pentecostalism, and more broadly on religion and politics and comparative African politics.

Religion has become a defining phenomenon of modern life. This is contrary to the optimism and expectations of those modernization theorists who argued that religion and religious beliefs were primitive sentiments that would, to use the Marxist term, “wither away” as human societies modernize. Unfortunately, religion has failed to wither away. Pentecostalism, in this context, has come a very long way and is now a very strong, global religious force. All over the world Pentecostals are voicing their opinion on a variety of issues ranging from poverty and inequality to democratic representation. But the political essence of Pentecostalism is context-bound. Thus, its spiritual and political contours are shaped by geo-cultural factors that make Africa different from, for example, South America. While Pentecostalism has invaded the political sphere in most South American countries, in the wake of and under the strong influence of liberation theology, it remains to be seen in what specific senses we can begin to interpret the relationship between Pentecostalism and politics in Africa. In other words, in what sense does Pentecostalism qualify as a “political spirituality” à la Ruth Marshall, and how are its “political” and “spiritual” dimensions mediated by its situatedness and the postcolonial context in Africa?

There are already a few brilliant scholarly interrogations of Pentecostalism in Africa, Ogbu Kalu,¹ Ruth Marshall,² and Nimi Wariboko,³ being the most prominent. While some are serious introductions to Pentecostal theology, many more constitute a critical examination of the political dimension of the Pentecostal movement in Africa. For instance, Freeman’s edited *Pentecostalism and Development* explores the critical connection between churches, NGOs, and the idea of social change in Africa. In *Political Spiritualities*, Marshall was concerned with the specific political form that Pentecostalism was taking within “the epistemological, normative, and ontological insecurity of life in urban postcolonial Nigeria”.⁴

There is as yet no comprehensive study that attempts to cumulate Pentecostalism’s political performances and the many different ways Pentecostal movements intersect and invade the political space in Africa. Pentecostalism in Africa, as most of these studies have demonstrated, is a unique practice that is molded by the specific postcolonial context, and yet, perhaps by further interrogation, we can find areas of symmetry and asymmetry, confluences and divergences. The idea of African politics in its multiple colorations and complexities provides a unique space within which to interrogate the interesting relationship between the religious and the political. The present volume makes a solid contribution in this regard, drawing on multiple disciplinary frameworks, the extant literature, case studies, and ethnographic research.

POLITICS, PENTECOSTALISM, AND THE POST/COLONIAL IN AFRICA

In the history of human evolution there has always been a complex relationship between religion and politics. The constitution of the political, or of the space within which it should manifest, has almost always been inflected by a religious character. One good example is to note the dynamics of the constitution of the public space and, for instance, the agora in the Greek city state or even in some African societies. Marcel Detienne narrates the research experience of French ethnologist Marc Abélès in mapping kinship relationships of the Ochollo society in Ethiopia. The Ochollo hold plenary assemblies on a daily basis that all Ochollo males who have reached puberty can attend and participate in. Interestingly, the discussions “take place inside a circle of stones hewed into the shape of a chair [...]. The person who asks the presidents—who are the ‘sacrificers’ of the country—for permission to speak leaves his place and comes to face the assembly in the arc of the circle, in front of the seated presidents.”⁵

This structure of the Ethiopian agora mirrors the structure of the agora in certain Greek city states, where the site designated as the sanctuary of the gods also served a sociopolitical function as a space for assembly. This relationship became extremely complex and conflictual in the medieval period when the Catholic Church attempted to capture the whole of the religious and the political in a broad understanding of *katholikos*, a universality that unites all without exception. The specificity of the complex relationship between the religious and the political in the medieval period provides a particular context that sharpens our understanding of how the two categories can or cannot relate. Africa presents another unique and specific context within which the religious and the political can be understood; and this is a peculiar context because we are not just talking of the religious but of the Pentecostal religious. Africa is also a peculiar context since both the religious and the political are mediated by the colonial predicament.

When Christianity came to Africa, it came as part of the total package of the colonial enterprise. The missionaries, together with the European traders, laid the initial groundwork for the colonial situation in Africa. But the interpretation of that moment seems to divide students of colonialism in Africa. On the one hand, there are some who interpret the missionaries’ arrival as a signal for an unwitting positivity. Olufemi Taiwo, in *How Colonialism Preempted Modernity in Africa* (2010), unabashedly argues that one cannot, without contradiction, disaggregate the arrival of the colonial missionaries from the emergence of modernity. Commencing with what he calls “the peculiar circumstances of Anglophone West Africa” as a methodological warning about not generalizing the “career of colonialism” in Africa, Taiwo contends that, unlike the colonial administrators, “there is no evidence that missionaries similarly set up administrations for the governance of native peoples.”^{6,7} Thus:

If we take seriously the differences among the classes of Europeans, we must simultaneously reconceptualize the genealogy of modernity in Africa. I argue that the credit for introducing Africans to modernity must go to the missionaries. Of course, this contradicts the received wisdom that attributes the westernization of Africa and the continent's induction into modernity to colonial administrators. In fact, I go so far as to contend that in their interactions with Africans, the missionaries were the revolutionaries and the administrators were the reactionaries. Once we acknowledge the revolutionary role of missionaries, new analytical possibilities suggest themselves. Modernity is a larger movement than colonialism, and it is the essence that the colonial authorities in different parts of the continent claimed to be implanting in the continent. Missionaries were the first to make the implantation of "civilization," which for so long was indistinguishable from the forms of social living coterminous with modernity, one of the cardinal objectives of their activities in Africa.⁸

On the other hand, it would seem that the most important critique, following Mudimbe, derives from the need to see the missionizing enterprise as essentially a political performance. Mudimbe suggests that we read "Christian revelation as a political performance in Africa."⁹ In fact, for him, the performances of the three actors in the colonial project—the colonial commissioner, the missionary, and the anthropologist—are all united in their attempts at "reenacting' the Western experience as a sign of knowledge, of human experience, and of God's revelation."¹⁰ To re-enact revelation as political performance therefore means, in part, according to Mudimbe, a proposed integration "into Western culture as a means of participating in the messianic and paradigmatic extension of the message of the Deus Israel (God of Israel) to Gentiles, thus promoting sameness."¹¹ Within this context, therefore:

a missionary arrives in an African village. He or she meets the local chief, amicably negotiates a sojourn, and, in most cases, is accepted without problem. The event immediately degenerates into a pattern repeated throughout the continent. The missionary first establishes in the village a network of friends and sympathizers by recourse to generous initiatives and gifts. Second, he or she makes familiar his or her presence by associating it directly with the efficiency of a serving power. The mission, from its beginning, offers its meaning as a vocation of service and promotes schooling and caritative institutions such as dispensaries and hospitals. Third, the missionary inflates the spiritual and political sacredness of his or her own enterprise: the beard of the Catholic priest is identified with wisdom, the white cassock and celibate life of priests and nuns symbolize purity of heart, and missionary activity in general is conflated with God's will and politics.¹²

One popular example relating to the inauguration of African philosophy is apposite here. The debate between those who take philosophy as a universal discourse and those who see it as essentially a cultural enterprise in Africa took a new turn with the publication of *Bantu Philosophy* in 1945 by a Belgian missionary, Father Placide Tempels. This book is significant because, in Abiola

Irele's words, it was the first within the European colonial discourse on Africa to "attribute a developed philosophical system to an African people, the Baluba of present-day Zaire [...] *Bantu Philosophy* provided a conceptual framework and reference for all future attempts to formulate the constitutive elements of a distinctive African mode of thought, to construct an original African philosophical system."¹³ Its publication therefore gave a huge boost to the culturalist interpretation of the idea of philosophy, and the thesis was firmly approved by no less an authority than a colonial Belgian missionary. In this context therefore, we could take Tempels' philosophical effort as a significant demonstration of Taiwo's argument for the colonial missionaries' implantation of the first moments of modernity in Africa.

However, Hountondji's blunt critique of the supposed relevance of Tempels and *Bantu Philosophy* raises critical issues about the connected dynamics of the colonizing/missionizing enterprise that Mudimbe outlines. But, contrary to the flood of approbation that greeted the publication of *Bantu Philosophy*, Hountondji contends that African philosophers, mostly, have failed to interrogate Tempels' intention in publishing a book whose significance is not questionable, but only if one understands what it is meant for.

One can readily discern Tempels' motives. At first sight they appear to be generous, since he had set out to correct a certain image of the black man disseminated by Lévy-Bruhl and his school, to show that the African *Weltanschauung* could not be reduced to that celebrated 'primitive mentality' which was supposed to be insensitive to contradiction, indifferent to the elementary laws of logic, proof against the laws of experience and so forth, but that it rested, in fact, on a systematic conception of the universe which, however different it might be from the Western system of thought, equally deserved the name of 'philosophy' [...]. But on closer scrutiny the ambiguity of the enterprise is obvious. It is clear that it is not addressed to Africans but to Europeans, and particularly to two categories of Europeans: colonials and missionaries. In this respect the seventh and last chapter bears an eloquent title: 'Bantu philosophy and our mission to civilize'. In effect, we are back to square one: Africans are, as usual, excluded from the discussion, and Bantu philosophy is a mere pretext for learned disquisitions among Europeans. The black man continues to be the very opposite of an interlocutor; he remains a topic, a voiceless face under private investigation, an object to be defined and not the subject of a possible discourse."¹⁴

Thus, we can conveniently return to Mudimbe's starting argument that "The question of the relationship between God and human beings in African experience presents itself as a contradictory and paradoxical sign."¹⁵ Within the postcolonial and extreme neoliberal context within which African societies had to struggle to undermine the several and severe colonial handicaps, the understanding of this relationship becomes even more complex. Pentecostalism constitutes a significant intervention in the failure of the African state to make sense of the neoliberal paradigm as a postcolonial development direction. The global

incidence of Pentecostalism, however, has some unique implications that lead, for instance, to its significance for both postcolonial and postsocialist societies.¹⁶ For example, J.D.Y. Peel was fascinated by the possible implications of Pastor Sunday Adelaja, a Nigerian, sending evangelical missions to Europe and North America from his church in Ukraine. This is interesting in light of the fact that the usual trajectory of evangelical missions has been from advanced and developed societies to poorer, underdeveloped ones. Or: “How then can Pentecostalism, seemingly more than any other new religion, manage to graft itself so successfully into a society such as the Ukraine, with an ancient Christian tradition to which it seems radically exotic, or into diverse other local cultures in the former USSR?”¹⁷ But in a postcolonial context, what is it also about the nature of the political in Africa that accentuates Pentecostalism’s relevance?

Put this way, the question permits us to interrogate both the development impasse of the postcolonial African state and the universalist aspiration of Pentecostal Christianity. But the peculiar evolution of the nation-state within the African postcolonial context makes for a distinctive reinterpretation of Pentecostal creeds in different parts of Africa. The loss of development initiatives by most African states after the euphoria of independence provided a cogent atmosphere for the Pentecostal message of modernity and existential meaning. Postcolonial politics became steadily ambivalent about the governance imperative when it became obvious that the ramifications of independence still lay within the terms written into the “postcolonial” by the colonial masters. The economic conditionalities of the Bretton Woods financial institutions were a further dent on the possibility of seizing the economic initiative to make the postcolonial truly *postcolonial*.

The specific constitution of postcoloniality in Africa has a lot to do with the unique status of the political in its statist framework. The centrality of the state in most plural societies in Africa points to a specific understanding of postcolonial nationalism. It is specifically an attempt to institute an enabling civic nation-building that would facilitate national integration. The failure not only to evolve a distinctive statist development paradigm but also, and as a consequence, to ensure national unity, led to a severe disarticulation of the political in a manner that fragmented national cohesion and enlarged social cleavages.¹⁸ Postcolonial African societies therefore gave way to several morbid symptoms, to use the Gramscian phrase. It takes little reflection to see how Pentecostalism, which makes room for the lowly and the poor, could flexibly fit into and grow luxuriously within the context of disarticulated postcolonial politics. Its emphasis on the scriptural and the pneumatic dovetailed, first, into a vision of a fallen self, reborn into a new life and empowered to act with faith in building character and prosperity; and second, a host of basic themes—speaking in tongues, the belief in the power of efficacious prayers, the possibility of miracles, divine healing, and the capacity to cast out evil spirits. The scriptural and the pneumatic not only enable a delicate balance between otherworldly and this-worldly concerns, but it also makes for an adaptable flexibility which enables Pentecostalism to

connect with the aspirations of diverse audiences and to move with the times. Its two sides, the scriptural and the pneumatic, enabled members to strike a variable balance between discipline and ecstasy, adjustment and mobility, as their particular circumstances required. Because the gifts of the Spirit might be variably construed in terms of intrinsic or expressive rewards and of external or instrumental ones, Pentecostalism could connect both with the self-improvement techniques of popular psychology and with rituals to exorcise evil spirits that block one's progress. Though "an option for and of the poor" (which still remains a fair characterization of the bulk of its adherents across the world), Pentecostalism has never encouraged class *ressentiment*; but neither has it worked to reconcile the poor to their poverty—rather to empower them within it so that they may move up out of it. So, sidestepping Marxism's strategy of class action, it has facilitated social mobility, initially of individuals but also (especially where adopted by ethnic minorities or in peripheral regions) collective self-enhancement.¹⁹

These developments within postcolonial African society and the Pentecostal movement are deserving of the close scrutiny that the chapters in this book lend them. Each chapter is distinct in its approach both to make sense of the protean character of Pentecostalism in Africa and to impose meaning on the problematic of government and of governance which, since independence, the African state has failed to make sense of.

PENTECOSTALISM AND POLITICS IN AFRICA: OUTLINE AND THEMES

This book is in four parts, separate but interlinked in their common attention to the social and political complexities of Pentecostal being and performance on the African continent. The various contributions review, appraise, applaud, critique, and move the intellectual discourse on Pentecostalism in Africa in directions that herald both resolution and further questioning. Part I contains two chapters that justify the study of the subject in this volume, execute a baseline assessment of the scope and growth of Pentecostalism in Africa, and seek to explain its ascension, acceptability, and current shortcomings. Part II is populated with nine chapters that contextualize Pentecostalism within broader movements, cadences, and political issues within society, within Christianity, and within Pentecostalism itself. In its six chapters, Part III takes the discussion into a more formal realm of politics. Part IV contains the concluding chapter, which serves to elevate the discourse by pulling together the philosophical, theological, and basic themes that emerge from the subject and proffer a direction for future studies.

One of the primary perplexities in the study of Pentecostalism in Africa is the question of how and why the movement outgrew its predecessors, seemingly overnight. Olufunke Adeboye's introduction in Chap. 2 is a succinct overview and decisive analysis of the growth trajectory of the Pentecostal churches on the continent. It makes it clear that we may employ African Pentecostalism—and not just Pentecostalism in Africa—as a distinct and conceptually accurate

notion. Without dithering, Adeboye boldly affirms the alternative histories of African Pentecostalism that reject Azusa Street as the lone and decisive explanation for the explosion of the Pentecostal in Africa, a fundamental axiom subscribed to by subsequent chapters. Instead she asserts an “indigenous agency” in the appearance of Pentecostalism in Africa, and the fact that the experience of Pentecostal revival occurred at different times for different groups of people “without recourse to Azusa Street.” She balances this with an acknowledgment of African Pentecostalism as, what Ogbu Kalu has called,²⁰ the “third response” of Africans to mission Christianity, that is, Africans’ creative engagement with the Christian doctrine introduced by the missionaries, and the creation of their own versions out of this encounter.

What are the distinguishing features of this African Pentecostalism that emerged? According to Adeboye, these include: African Pentecostalism being intertwined with Africans’ search for a unique identity and power by appropriating traditional worldviews into Christian doctrine; affirming the traditional beliefs in witchcraft, evil, demons, and other transterrestrial spiritual forces; an emphasis on spiritual warfare and fervent prayers; a belief in the accuracy of the biblical record; spontaneity and emotionalism; and the Pentecostal theology of sin and salvation. How do we classify the vast number of Pentecostal ministries in Africa? Two broad categories, classical Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals, dovetail into other subcategories in Adeboye’s schema. Classical Pentecostals could be indigenous or foreign, and they emphasize personal holiness, new birth, a moderate lifestyle, conservatism in adornment, and are generally averse to the ordination of women. Neo-Pentecostals are a more varied cluster comprising transdenominational charismatic fellowships, renewal movements in mission denominations, and charismatic churches. These are the most prominent of Pentecostals, with megachurches, flamboyant preachers, large congregations, a strong emphasis on the Faith Gospel and the prosperity doctrine, a youthful congregation, and permissive dressing for women. They are lay-oriented, have contemporary worship styles, and utilize modern media technologies to great advantage. However, Adeboye informs us, several churches cross categories easily and complicate any attempt at rigid classification.

This second introductory chapter engages the debates surrounding the proliferation of Pentecostal churches in Africa. Adeboye sagely invites us to separate the proliferation of churches from the *growth* of Pentecostalism in Africa, and to separate numerical growth from splintering, given the lack of reliable statistics on church membership. Therefore, she counsels a move away from quantitative measures of growth to the examination of “non-quantitative parameters”. Scholars interested in pursuing this vital issue should consider instead the “vitality of [the Pentecostal movement’s] practice(s), its high visibility in public space, and the intensity of its opposition to traditional religion and other forms of Christianity.” In engaging the literature, Adeboye provides five groups of factors responsible for the growth of Pentecostalism in Africa: contextual (social and political); cultural (resonance with “primal” religious traditions); instrumentalist (agency for social transformation); strategic

(successful strategies of operation); and spiritual (manifestation of Pentecostal charismata) factors. In the final analysis, Pentecostal legitimation, that is acceptance and public recognition, are achieved by formal processes through the postcolonial African state and, more importantly, through Pentecostal ecumenical bodies. Chapter 2 closes by flagging several shortcomings of the Pentecostal movement in Africa, including splintering, lack of training, abuses, and a shunning of interfaith and ecumenical dialogue.

The many themes located as vital to the study of African Pentecostalism in Part I reappear in many of the subsequent chapters. Chapter 3 takes off from one of the shortcomings of the Pentecostal movement identified by Adeboye in Chap. 2 which she refers to as “lack of genuine interest in interfaith dialogue.” Marinus Iwuchukwu begins by linking fundamentalist Islam with classical Pentecostalism, as both have a similar deafness to other perspectives and both are hostile to ecumenical rapprochement. This chapter draws out other similarities and differences between fundamentalist Islam and Pentecostalism and how both movements pose a challenge to social peace and coexistence between Christians and Muslims in Africa. Commonalities between Islamic Fundamentalism and Pentecostalism include: placing “large capital on the urgency to be in heaven or paradise”; focusing on particular audiences distinguished by class, ethnicity, age, and so on; copious use of dominant media culture; prevalence of celebrity or charismatic leadership; and the promotion of scriptural literalism. They are different though in that the former has a largely male followership, while the latter has a largely female followership; the one readily advocates the use of physical violence, not to be found in the *modus operandi* of the other; and there is a tendency to homogeneity in the rank of Islamic fundamentalists, whereas Pentecostalism shows a greater diversity. Iwuchukwu clearly demonstrates how these mutual and differing characteristics pose a danger to social objectives of peaceful coexistence, economic development, and social cohesion. The main emphasis of the chapter, though, becomes the prescriptive interrogation of *why* both groups must participate in “effective dialogue” for their own self-preservation, and for peace to prevail on the African continent. Ultimately, Marinus Iwuchukwu proposes theological, ideological, and moral appeals against the exclusivist stance of Islamic Fundamentalism and Pentecostalism, and the adoption of religious pluralistic worldviews.

Several of the reasons advanced in Chap. 3 for the rapid rise of Pentecostalism in Africa converge in Chap. 4 where Marleen de Witte takes off from the Pentecostal fixation on a heavenly future, linking this feature of classical Pentecostalism with Africa’s responses to neoliberal economic outcomes. “Buy the Future!” is the keen cry titling a widely popular book authored by Pastor Mensa Otabil, founder and general overseer of Ghana’s International Central Gospel Church. Using this as a case study, de Witte adroitly interconnects the fallout from neoliberal economic reforms in Africa with Ghanaian Pentecostalism’s flamboyant pastors and megachurches, capitalist production, the emphasis on material success, modernity, urbanity, and media technology. Otabil, however, is not typical in his approach to attaining prosperity since he

places “much less emphasis on spiritual agency and divine intervention and instead trust[s] in the power of the born-again Christian to take the future in his/her own hands and become successful through practical life skills”. Otobil also displays a “trademarked social awareness, African consciousness, and plea for education and cultural transformation.” By careful textual analysis of several of Otobil’s sermons, speeches, and books, de Witte clearly presents his defining messages of African transformation, cultural adjustment theology, and the links with leadership and Africa’s liberation.

There are contradictions, however, in the messaging of Otobil’s Pentecostalism, for all its enunciated emancipatory potentials. As with other major Pentecostal preachers that de Witte compares him to, such as David Oyedepo of the Winners’ Chapel, Otobil “materializes” the touted African transformation message in several ways. His Christ Chapel complex is a fine example of Pentecostal city-building, envisioned futuristically as taking after the Redemption Camp of Pastor Enoch Adeboye of Nigeria’s Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG). Otobil’s complex in Accra similarly provides an oasis of cleanliness, polish, serenity, modernity, and functional social services that are absent in the government-ordered society outside its gates. This is but one aspect of what de Witte calls the “aesthetics of success” that African Pentecostal pastors are compelled to project. The most modern media technologies are employed to project an image of material success using radio broadcasts, TV images, audio and video CDs, sound magnifiers, websites, huge billboards, posters and banners, and their voices resounding in various multi-media formats throughout the city space, from markets to offices to homes. These charismatic pastors, with their “corpulent bodies, flamboyant outfits, well-groomed appearance, beautiful wives, and luxurious cars” become the dream of success for those who gaze upon them. They celebrate wealth, consumerist capitalism, material progress, business and entrepreneurial achievement. Inadvertently, in spite of Otobil’s message of transformation, all these characteristics end up making him no more than a purveyor of neoliberal capitalist markers of success, the very thing he constantly preaches against. Just beyond the boundaries of his Christ Temple complex, are the dregs of society in the “Sodom and Gomorrah” slum, the polluted waters of the Korle Lagoon, and the dirt and poverty emblematic of the neoliberal economic assault on the rest of the population. At the end of the day, de Witte concludes in Chap. 4, Otobil’s message of African liberation and his prosperity theology participates in the exclusionary politics of neoliberal ideologies.

When Pentecostalism confronts or is confronted by African indigenous religions, is there conflict, compromise, or incorporation? This important question is both historical and contemporary and is given attention by Naar M’fundisi-Holloway in Chap. 5. This chapter, which focuses on the Zambian case, couples the profundity of African traditional religions (ATR) with resistance to colonialism and the birth of African independent churches (AICs), the most obvious products of the clash of missionary Christianity with ATRs. In Zambia, as in many other places in Africa, the ATRs are associated most closely

with ancestral and chiefly cults and the veneration of spirits. The chapter reviews ATRs as being holistic, people-centered, and intimately linked with African cultures and worldviews. AICs in Zambia arose directly as a result of increasing frustration with missionary Christianity's desire to dominate and its ignorance of sociocultural needs. M'fundisi-Holloway makes the claim that "the best description of the product of the interface between Pentecostalism and ATR was the creation of AICs." She asserts that it is in this sense that Pentecostalism owes much of its success in Africa to ATRs.

Conflict between ATRs and Pentecostalism arose out of Pentecostal theology—which was monotheistic, rejected ancestral worship, and even rejected the traditional practices that made their way into AICs—since Pentecostalism framed itself as more powerful than these other forms of religion. Thus, AICs were disparaged as barbaric, shallow, and syncretic by Pentecostals. Ironically though, Pentecostalism has had to compromise with ATRs, just like AICs and has incorporated many of its markers: the use of items such as olive oil, candles, and cloth in worship; widespread claims of healing capabilities; worship and religious practices such as oral liturgy and dance; the continuation of African cultural worldviews; and the emphasis on attaining the good things of life. There is therefore, the chapter concludes, a need to pay more attention to the contributions of ATRs and AICs to the development of Pentecostalism and Christianity on the African continent.

Echoing its preceding chapter, Abimbola Adelakun focuses in Chap. 6 on how modern Pentecostalism appropriates and employs elements of the "indigenous religious imagination" to animate its imagery. She probes "phantasms of supernatural visibility, surveillance, and the procedures of power that are transacted in the cinematic realism of representing omniscient supernatural eyes" within Pentecostalism. Against an extensive background of prolific Yoruba filmmakers' use of cinema and theater to project supernatural elements of Yoruba cosmology and religions, Adelakun dissects a popular Christian drama of the 1990s in Nigeria, *Agbara Nla* (*Ultimate Power*), at the time a deviation from the established genre. She deftly demonstrates that, while Pentecostalism is obsessed with the same consciousness of the supernatural as indigenous religions, it operates in acknowledgment of the latter's ability to see panoptically into and be present in the believer's life, simultaneously claiming the superiority of its supernatural powers over all others. The chapter highlights the intense emphasis on ocularity and surveillance claimed by both religions, and how the movie is a depiction of the intense power struggle between Pentecostalism and African traditional religions in a modern world. This tension is occasioned by Pentecostalism's clash with non-Western African sociocultural forms as it spread across the continent and, contrarily, by its inevitable assimilation of some of these same indigenous forms to attain its current relevance and spread.

Further, Chap. 6 finds in Michel Foucault's examination of Jeremy Bentham's philosophical analysis of the panopticon prisons an apposite analytical framework for engaging the Pentecostal view of the all-seeing eye of God and the propensity of Christians to self-regulate as a result of the awareness of

this benevolent, omnipresent, and omnipotent gaze. In *Agbara Nla*, this gaze is placed in heaven, at an angle that elevates it beyond the seeing angle of the indigenous deities that Pentecostalism seeks to squash. Whereas indigenous gods require the “devil’s magic mirrors” and other media to see, be seen, and communicate, the Christian God in *Agbara Nla* is portrayed as needing no media, save prayer and the spoken or written word of God, which lends weight to his supposed superiority over traditional religion. This overt political project of ascribing superiority of power to the Pentecostal’s God, argues Adelakun, further plays out in this movie in the contrasting of rural and urban spaces, darkness and light, blindness and sight, old and new names, old and born-again bodies, and several other creative depictions of Pentecostalism as possessing Ultimate Power. Throughout the drama, biological, technological, cultural, and spiritual eyes reinforce the “phantasmal,” supernatural, panoptical ability of God, which persists among Pentecostals, both at home in Nigeria and Africa, and abroad among the African Diaspora.

In Chap. 7, Ernst Conradie takes on the uneasy relationship between the Pentecostal and ecumenical movements in Africa, one of the flashpoints signaled in Adeboye’s contribution in Chap. 2. While both movements have similar temporal origins and were both products of specific religious awakenings, it would seem that the modern ecumenical movement appeared among the mainline churches while the Pentecostal movement appeared from the margins of religious organizations. In order to understand the nature of the relationship between the two and its particular manifestation in the African context, Conradie anchors his analysis from his situated location at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in South Africa, drawing on insights from the work of the Department of Religion and Theology at UWC. Specifically, he reflects on the Department’s project on “Ecumenical Studies and Social Ethics” (2012–2015), executed in relation to the establishment of the Desmond Tutu Chair of Ecumenical Theology and Social Transformation in Africa, from which several conferences emanated and several related postgraduate projects were registered at UWC.

The relevant context for Conradie’s examination of Pentecostalism’s relationship to ecumenism is Southern Africa, within which he draws a nexus between ecumenical relationships and both the establishment of, so-called, mainline churches and the waves of expansion of the Pentecostal movement. Factors shaping these relations are the definition of “mainline” churches and the opposition of Pentecostal churches to any ecumenical incorporation by the mainline churches in light of their historical reasons for breaking away from them. This chapter makes the pessimistic estimation that “the so-called mainline churches will find it difficult to persuade independent churches that the reasons why they broke away from the mainline churches in the first place and/or the reasons why new churches were established are less important than the need for continuity, mutual recognition and fellowship among all churches.” This challenge is enunciated with reference to how the six-fold questions of unity, faith and order, social responsibility, education, worship, and mission are confronted in the ecumenical movement’s interactions with the Pentecostal

movement. However, for Conradie, these questions subsist, and can even be extended, and therefore require further interrogation in future studies.

In Chap. 8, “Pentecostalism, the Prosperity Gospel, and Poverty in Africa,” Samson Ijaola kicks off with the provocative summation that the root of poverty among African Christians is traceable to the colonial exploitation that was enabled by the missionaries’ theology of the need to focus on a world hereafter, rather than resist current external domination. The author details the path along which the prosperity gospel traveled to reach Africa, and then carries out an assessment of the performance of the prosperity gospel in mitigating poverty in Africa. The ascendance of the prosperity gospel is inextricably linked with the history of Pentecostalism, which Ijaola traces to American Pentecostalism. Several scholars have linked the prosperity gospel to the New Thought Movement popularized by Ralph Waldo Trine, Norman Vincent Peale, and E.W. Kenyon, among others, even going so far as to claim that the prosperity gospel is a revision of classical Pentecostalism in deference to the New Thought movement. This philosophical basis, coupled with the faith healing movement of 1950s America associated with William Braham, A.A. Allen, Kenneth Hagin Sr., Oral Roberts, and others provided the catalyst for the rise of the prosperity gospel and the neo-Pentecostal movement. Ijaola further documents the historical trajectory that saw Oral Roberts and Kenneth Hagin Sr. mentor Kenneth Hagin Jr., Frederick K.C. Price, Jesse Duplantis, Benny Hinn, Robert Tilton, T.D. Jakes, Eddie Long, and Creflo Dollars to spread the prosperity doctrine in the United States. Their African counterparts came to include, among many others, Benson Idahosa, David Oyedepo, Duncan Williams, and Ayo Oritsejafor.

Chapter 8 further asserts that the prosperity gospel distinguishes classical Pentecostals from neo-Pentecostals: while classical Pentecostalism emphasizes the other-worldly over this-worldly, neo-Pentecostalism makes a vital link between the two and presents the this-worldly as a continuum of the other-worldly. With Africa’s dismal, postindependence, economic and political development performance, the prosperity gospel became ultra-attractive to many, especially given the nonchalant attitude of mainline or classical Pentecostals to addressing the urgent problems of the here-and-now—problems as commonplace as poverty, unemployment, sickness, demon-possession, and so on. But what is the overall impact of the preaching of the prosperity gospel on poverty reduction in Africa? Ijaola’s assessment is unenthusiastic and recalls de Witte’s concerns in Chap. 4 concerning the double-edged sword of neoliberal transformation ideologies of African neo-Pentecostal pastors. While it is true that many of the prosperity preachers motivate their followers to greater entrepreneurial activity and provide financial and personal support of various kinds to economically disadvantaged members, at the same time, their lifestyles, their materialism, their palpable greed, and various occult practices have, in the end, created discordances in their witness.

Damaris Parsitau introduces the powerful impact of gendered soft power in Chap. 9, titled “Soft Tongue, Powerful Voice, Huge Influence: The Dynamic of Gender, Soft Power, and Political Influence in Faith Evangelistic Ministries in Kenya.” Parsitau investigates how evangelist Teresia Wairimu Kinyanjui, the

founder and head of Faith Evangelistic Ministries (FEM), reputed to be one of the largest and most influential neo-Pentecostal churches in Kenya, “constructs, appropriates and embodies soft power and influence and how she mediates spirituality as an alternative model to contest public life.” Parsitau proceeds from the fundamental premise that spirituality and public life can and do intersect, and that soft power provides the opportunity for women to mediate these two realms and thereby exert great influence. A direct link between women’s involvement in politics and increased political influence is often hard to prove; nevertheless, this chapter proposes that if Pentecostal women and their religious organizations gain political attention, they can garner voice and influence and, in turn, positively impact public policy issues such as poverty, peacebuilding, social justice, and women’s empowerment.

Based on ethnographic research, and drawing on theories of feminism, sociology of religion, and foreign policy studies, Chap. 9 identifies two main trajectories that Pentecostal women leaders have used to increase their influence in Kenya: single unmarried women establish their own ministries/churches; or wives of pastors/bishops create their own sphere of influence within their husband’s ministries. Teresia Wairimu of FEM is of the first category. Parsitau attests to several elements of Wairimu’s soft power capabilities, including humility, integrity, compassion and empathy for the sick and the weak, gentleness, trustworthiness, dignity, authenticity, relational savviness, and charismata, which have combined to expand her influence beyond her congregation to political leaders. She deploys these characteristics for influence through social welfare and humanitarian activities, entrepreneurship and business development programs, spiritual and social capital, networking, trust and soft skills, peacebuilding and national cohesion activities, leadership training, mentorship and role-modeling. Wairimu is a protégée of world famous evangelist Reinhard Bonnke and is seen as pastoring past and present presidents and other political leaders of Kenya. This chapter however concludes by sounding a note of caution that such liaisons between spiritual and political leaders could result in the former’s cooptation and the silencing of voice—an outcome contrary to the desired expansion of soft power and influence.

Chapter 10 takes us to Botswana, from where Fidelis Nkomazana describes the groundbreaking role of women in the rise of Pentecostal churches in a national, highly patriarchal, religious landscape—and then these women surprisingly gave men a back seat of influence in the churches they founded. Furthermore, women’s most outstanding contribution to Pentecostal expansion in that country was in church planting and growth. The chapter locates the women’s experiences and the history of the church in Botswana in the cultural and historical context of Botswana women’s subordination and marginalization. Christian missionaries extended this discrimination against women by restricting the role of their wives to the home and domestic pursuits, and they largely obliterated the role of women in church development from the missionary literature and thus from the history of the church in Botswana. However, though largely unrecorded, these missionary wives became vital in reaching out to the

Batswana people, especially their women, and in opening up communities for the message carried by their husbands. Politically, Pentecostal churches were suffocated by the “territorial Christianity” that pervaded colonial Botswana. Missionary and mainline churches operated along ethnic-territorial lines and persecuted attempts to establish Pentecostal churches—until the 1966 constitution democratized the space and protected the fundamental rights of all to their religion.

Returning to the somewhat perplexing issue of Pentecostal churches and ecumenism analyzed in Chaps. 2, 3, and 7, Nkomazana provides another angle in Chap. 10. In this case, ecumenical organizations in Botswana—he mentions four major ones—became instrumental in the rise of Pentecostal churches in the country, most especially by their support for women-founded churches, inspiring women’s active participation in leadership roles. More specifically, ecumenical *women’s* organizations, such as the Women Aglow Fellowship International, enabled these gains for Pentecostal women in Botswana. Thus, Pentecostal women church founders, like Nkomazana’s case study, Christinah Allotey of the Prevailing Christian Ministries, were able to launch into leadership. Interestingly, Botswana’s Reverend Allotey seems to mirror many of the qualities of Kenya’s Reverend Wairimu detailed in the preceding chapter by Damaris Parsitau: Allotey shepherds her congregation with motherly love, compassion for the needy, personal charm, and charismata. In spite of severe sociocultural and other challenges, Chap. 10 concludes, Allotey proves powerfully that women contribute in substantial ways to the life of the church in Botswana.

The challenging intersections of class, ethnicity, and race with religious affiliation, or more specifically with Pentecostalism in Africa, are robustly unpacked by Asonzeh Ukah in Chap. 11, “Neither Jew nor Greek? Class, Ethnicity, and Race in the Pentecostal Movement in Africa.” The three social constructs are conceptualized as key to unraveling the cultural context for understanding the growth and the dynamism of Pentecostalism in Africa. Ukah clearly asserts that in Africa, “Pentecostalism is ethnicized and racialized, and ethnicity and race are pentecostalized,” and class is embedded in Pentecostalism from its foundations—all three forming an indispensable “conceptual triad” for analyzing African Pentecostalism. In this, African Pentecostalism displays links with global Pentecostalism, which has engaged in similar debates, especially in light of the latter’s multicultural Azusa Street origins. We must not forget, though, Chap. 11 reminds us, that colonialism and Christianity have been “potent factors” in the production of ethnicity and class as troubling categories on the African continent, and points to the political roots of religious divisions.

“Neither Jew nor Greek?” is a potent way of posing the dilemma of the bifurcation of Pentecostalism’s engagement with the question of identity. Whereas the biblical injunction alluded to here assures us that Pentecostal *theory* is based on an equality of persons before God, Pentecostal *practice* gives a lie to this theory in concrete ways. Ukah argues that African Pentecostalism actually incorporates and entrenches distinctions based on race, ethnicity, and

wealth by “claiming a strident separation between the saved and the unsaved, assigning a special role in God’s salvific plan for the black race and in claiming that God is rich and poverty is the work of the devil.” The implications of this predilection of African Pentecostalism have been that: wealth is elevated to the status of a requirement for spiritual salvation; a new kind of big wo/man rule emerges with the creation of megapastors; servant leadership is replaced by celebrity leadership, which evokes celebrity worship; the poor and the oppressed are demonized and further beleaguered; and structural and institutional causes of poverty are ignored in favor of spiritualized explanations. Specific ethnicities have identified with specific Pentecostalisms, resulting in “Pentecostal ethnicity,” useful for political power in many parts of Africa. There is also the racialization of Pentecostalism, evident right from Azusa Street, where West African Pentecostalism inspired the inscription of emotionalism and energy into Pentecostal worship forms in the West, right from the beginning through the involvement of American Blacks and multicultural others from around the world. The important conclusion that Chap. 11 makes about this racialization relates to how African Pentecostalism has emerged as “a religion of inversion,” appropriating race, and becoming the current missionaries of the gospel to the West, turning the historical trajectory on its head.

Adeshina Afolayan’s Chap. 12 heralds Part II and preoccupies itself with a philosophical exploration of how the nature of politics in Africa shapes Pentecostalism. Drawing on the works of Ruth Marshall, Achille Mbembe, Jacques Derrida, Nimi Wariboko, Ogbu Kalu, St. Augustine, Hannah Arendt, and a few others, this chapter locates Pentecostal philosophy within discourses on the nature of postcolonial African, reasons for state violence, the possibility of a “Pentecostal political regime,” and the theory of Pentecostal complicity in the social conditions of the continent. It argues that Pentecostalism in Africa is intimately linked with the socioeconomic and political decay that is pervasive on the continent in the postcolonial period, generating suffering accompanied by dynamics that seek to attenuate these. As other chapters have argued, Afolayan concurs that it is this suffering that provokes the Pentecostal’s vision of the otherworldly, while mandating a concern for the this-worldly.

However, Afolayan is very doubtful that African Pentecostalism has the capacity to become integrally political, thus rejecting the idea of a wholesale Pentecostal political regime in favor of an understanding of Pentecostalism as merely “a certain way of reacting in the political space, as *politeia*.” Still, several complications arise with this framing of Pentecostalism’s engagement with the political. If a possible dynamic is for Pentecostalism to invoke what Wariboko has termed as “the spell of the invisible,” a noumenon that sets it apart from others, then how can this spiritual knowledge become public in any sense—the very essence of politics and the political? Deftly switching lenses, Afolayan avers that Mbembe’s exposition on the entanglements of colonialism, which gives a picture of the enterprise as implicating both colonizer and colonized, is a more useful analytical framework for delineating Pentecostalism’s interaction with the state in Africa. Indeed, this chapter is of the opinion that in the process, “even the spiritual itself is modified and modulated by the political in the strenuous

attempt to intervene in postcolonial suffering.” This theology of Pentecostalism’s complicity in the social conditions of Africa harkens back to the themes laid out in previous chapters and seeks to explain the materiality that Pentecostalism has become identified with in recent times as its members seek to grasp the solution to their problems in the here and now, a pattern that is itself political in nature.

In Chap. 13, Femi Kolapo interrogates the political credentials and democratic characteristics of the Pentecostal movement. He acknowledges that while it is true that Pentecostalism in the 1970s was concerned with evangelism and the advent of Jesus Christ that will herald the end of the world, the Pentecostal movement today has found a way of integrating this-worldly concerns into its original otherworldly focus. And part of this-worldly’s mentality is the transformation of Pentecostals into “politically engaged entities” contesting the political space with other politically active organizations, especially the civil society organizations (CSOs). But, argues Kolapo, being considered a politically engaged entity in the literature does not automatically transform Pentecostalism into a democracy-enhancing entity with the appropriate credentials to fight injustice. On the contrary, Kolapo claims, “a claim to democratic influence for the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria has to be based not only on theoretical possibilities but on actual practice to establish the nature of the links that the Pentecostal movement, for example, as part of the CSO, has forged with the structures of democratic institutions in the country.” The empirical analysis of the shift of Pentecostalism toward political engagement—“in doctrines, in relation to economic activities and material resources, in respect of institutional consolidation nationally and internationally, and in the paradoxical nature of the political engagement it engages”—only demonstrates that Pentecostalism itself, within what he calls a sanitized “third religious public”, is firmly embroiled in clientelist and hierarchical practices that uphold the state.

The vision of “Pentecostalism as an Alternate Social Order” is vigorously interrogated by Samuel Zalanga in Chap. 14. His fundamental argument is that modernity and Pentecostalism have radically different visions of social order; whereas modernity is built on rationality, a scientific worldview, and epistemology, African Pentecostals, for Zalanga, who are more concerned with getting rich—through the fastest means possible—are less concerned about modern rationality, scientific worldview, or epistemology. As a matter of fact, although Pentecostals use and voraciously consume the modern products of science and technology, their preeminent concern is with using supernatural, not natural or modern, keys to access material and financial success. The concept of *enchantment* is deployed to frame the particular non-modernist penchant of Pentecostalism for the cosmic and otherworldly. Following Weber, the enchanted world here refers to one “where physical objects and animals are infused with powerful spirits, as are ancestral spirits, which together with subordinate deities govern the affairs of the world under a Supreme Being or creator.” Zalanga makes the startling argument, although it does echo some of the literature on Pentecostalism, that given the intensely enchanted nature of African traditional religions it was inevitable that any religion seeking to replace it must present elements of ATR’s enchantment

to be attractive to African peoples; hence the allure of Pentecostalism in Africa. Indeed Mfundisi-Holloway and Adelakun in Chaps. 5 and 6 respectively show specific ways that this may occur.

Two Nigerian case studies, which have theologies of enchantment in common but differ widely in *modus operandi* and rhetoric, are chosen to illustrate this argument further: Dr. D.K. Olukoya's Mountain of Fire Ministries; and Bishop Dr. David Oyedepo's Living Faith Mission, aka Winners' Chapel. Zalanga teases out an appropriate research agenda from the analysis of the kind of social order that Pentecostalism imposes on Africa, a far different kind from the social order demanded by modernity. He asserts that it is pertinent to examine the texts and rhetoric of the Pentecostal churches concerning their vision of social order for us to correctly ascertain their usefulness for any social or political purposes. Similarly, it would be enlightening to conduct in-depth studies of the background factors and forces that shape the beliefs and theological trajectories of the Pentecostal leaders across Africa, as this could explain why they choose certain approaches to their religion and not others. Relatedly, a rational choice approach to religion compels us to ask how people choose certain Pentecostalisms—to use Ogbu Kalu's term—and essentially the methods of dissemination that spread certain brands of Pentecostalism and attract followers. However, most compelling for this book, is Zalanga's argument that we must relate the ideas and beliefs within Pentecostalism to the structures and contexts from which they emanate if we are to parse the movement. This is because "for as long as the social conditions of anomie exist, Pentecostalism will thrive in Africa. In this respect, Pentecostalism and its leaders are just a reflection of the deeper crises in the social structures and cultures of Africa."

Staying on the theme of social crises in Africa, Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso and Rachael Iyanda in Chap. 15 further interrogate the deep crises that plagued African states postindependence and how Pentecostals exercised agency in these difficult contexts, either for ill or for good. Echoing Ukah in Chap. 11, these authors take the position that Pentecostalism is undoubtedly implicated in the extremely large part that identity politics, in this case religious identity, has played in fomenting instability on the African continent. The three major religions that dominate the continent are recognizable in this role—Fundamentalist Islam and Pentecostalism, as spotlighted by Iwuchukwu in Chap. 3, and African traditional religions, as Adelakun moots in Chap. 6. However, Chap. 15 makes clear that the task of charting a direct trail from Pentecostals to conflict is problematic; there are several other global, regional, national, and local forces that intersect to explain many of Africa's civil wars; and indicting a single actor is analytically inaccurate. The perfect illustration of this point is the selected case of the Lord's Resistance Army of Uganda. An explicitly spirit-led movement, the group was assembled with explicit political objectives, in addition to the stated spiritual objectives of cleansing the land. However, ethnicity, discrimination, marginalization, political victimization, state oppression and repression, economic underdevelopment, and various other factors coalesced to make the conflict in northern Uganda almost inevitable.

On the other hand, the role of Pentecostals as individuals in peace initiatives is made more complex by the concurrent presence of other structural, political, and social developments that propel individual involvement. The case selected to explore this position is that of Johan Mostert, a minister in the Apostolic Faith Mission, South Africa's largest Pentecostal denomination. The context is apartheid and postapartheid South Africa, and Mostert's case shows on the one hand, how his position and identity as an Afrikaner, a church leader, and an individual with agency produced conflict transformation initiatives for his community, and on the other hand, how his individual agency benefited from the tectonic shifts taking place on the national political stage and within his church. Moving the discourse on, Yacob-Haliso and Iyanda posit two "compulsory ingredients" for Pentecostal involvement in conflict transformation and social change: first, a Pentecostal willingness to reconsider socially ascribed positions and act on the basis of an assumption of their variability; and second, an external sociopolitical environment that alters structural social forces and enables change to proceed.

Afolarin Olutunde Ojewole and Efe Monday Ehioghae in Chap. 16 return to one of the early questions addressed in Adeboye's Chap. 2; why is Pentecostalism growing so fast in Africa? In this case, the authors concern themselves with whether leadership or political power factors, or both, account for the wide popularity of Pentecostalism across the continent. Similarly, Kelvin Onongha closes Part II with Chap. 18 on Pentecostalism, power, and politics in Nigeria, which can be evaluated alongside Chap. 16. While Onongha outlines the challenge that Pentecostalism's evolution from a priestly to a prime-ministerial role presents, Ojewole and Ehioghae, like Zalanga in Chap. 14, emphasize scrutiny of the pre-eminent role and visibility of Pentecostal church leaders in Africa as key to unlocking intimate insights about the movement's involvement with politics. Three major transnational Pentecostal churches are employed as cases to interrogate this concern: the RCCG; Winners' Chapel (Living Faith Church Worldwide); and the Synagogue Church of All Nations. Under the leaderships of Pastor Enoch Adeboye, Bishop David Oyedepo, and Prophet T.B. Joshua, respectively. On his part, Onongha delves into several cases to buttress the points he makes concerning the intersections of Pentecostals, politics, and power in Nigeria.

While the three neo-Pentecostal churches mentioned above have remained officially non-partisan, like most others, Chaps. 16 and 18 concur that their leaders have multiple and myriad ways of exerting influence on politics and policy in Nigeria. They are generally politically savvy, politically correct, and religiously pragmatic. Relying on the divine prerogatives ascribed to them by their followers and others, through which their words are taken as final and they are perceived as next to Christ in authority, these religious leaders have not hesitated to wade in to political affairs from time to time. By conducting public prayers and participating in national fasting and prayer days, or by praying publicly for specific political office holders, presidents, and past presidents, or by public prayers during moments of national anxiety, they expand their political reach. By commenting on public affairs, either by exhorting citizens and leaders

alike to higher moral conduct or by blatantly taking sides in electoral politics, Pentecostal leaders in Nigeria have visibly engaged with politics and political power. Given the sheer number of their followers, these three Pentecostal pastors have become voices that cannot be ignored. They complement these with their healing and prophetic ministries, which further increase their relevance on national and international issues in Nigeria, Africa, and even beyond. They team up with others in the Christian Association of Nigeria and the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria and articulate political opinions. Importantly, these Pentecostal pastors cultivate personal friendships with, and mentorships of, prominent political office holders in Nigeria and Africa. Onongha situates these trends appropriately within frameworks provided by previous scholarship on African Pentecostalism by Ogbu Kalu, Paul Gifford, and Richard Burgess, among others.

Understandably though, Ojewole and Ehioghae conclude with their worry about whether Pentecostal leaders' involvement in politics might not result in the loss of their "prophetic voice." Onongha highlights the fact that many Pentecostal leaders have played a negative role within the complex sociopolitical context of Nigerian politics. The contradictory situation in which Pentecostal leaders endorse openly corrupt and inept political leadership, while partaking in ostentatious material pursuits, further dilutes the moral influence of Pentecostal Christianity in Nigeria. Besides, these authors note, Pentecostal forays into politics, such as a pastor of the RCCG—Professor Yemi Osinbajo—ascending to the office of Vice President of Nigeria in 2015, have not attenuated deep-seated religious tensions in the country, nor led to true social transformation.

In Chap. 17, "African Pentecostalism and Modernity: Critical Reflections on Tensions and Social Concerns," Samuel Zalanga extends his analysis of the kind of alternative social order that Pentecostalism portends in the absence of a modernist viewpoint and the challenges of this state of being. At its root are the rival ontological assumptions about human nature purveyed by modernist and Pentecostal tenets. Returning to a discussion of different framing strategies adopted by Bishop David Oyedepo of Winners' Chapel and Dr. Daniel Olukoya of Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries, Zalanga posits that "there is an elective affinity between the discourse and rhetorical framing strategy used by the leader of the denomination and the kind of audience or adherents that he or she attracts." Furthermore, he debunks the assumption in some of the literature that Pentecostalism could significantly contribute to the advancement of modern liberal market capitalism, stating that there is no clear or direct link between Marx Weber's theory of the protestant ethic and Pentecostal visions of social order. Given the non-rational base of African Pentecostal theology, attaining western style modernity might be a difficult, even painful, process for Africans, but Zalanga does hearteningly suggest the possibility of the evolution of an African modernity, suited to the continent's myriad problems.

In all, *Pentecostalism and Politics in Africa*, charts new epistemological, axiological, and empirical paths for the study of Pentecostalism and its interrelationship with politics and the political in Africa. The 18 chapters outlined

above, together with Nimi Wariboko's concluding Chap. 19, leave no doubt that this effort must not and cannot settle the questions posed at the outset; rather the new questions raised must lead to even more intensive philosophical, theological, and interdisciplinary examinations of the essence, modes, and varieties of Pentecostal politics in Africa.

NOTES

1. Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
2. Ruth Marshall, *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.
3. Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2014.
4. Marshall, *Political Spiritualities*, 2.
5. Marcel Etienne, "Public Space and Political Autonomy in Early Greek Cities," in Marcel Hénaff and Tracy B. Strong (eds.), *Public Space and Democracy*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001, 43.
6. Olufemi Taiwo, *How Colonialism Preempted Modernity in Africa*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010, 5.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., 6.
9. Valentin Mudimbe, *Parables and Fables: Exegesis, Textuality, and Politics in Central Africa*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991, 6.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., 7.
13. Abiola Irele, "Introduction," in Paulin Hountondji (ed.), *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality*, second edition. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996, 15, 17.
14. Hountondji, *African Philosophy*, 34.
15. Mudimbe, *Parables and Fables*, 3.
16. Katherine Verdery, cited by J.D.Y. Peel, already makes the argument that a similar incorporation into the global capitalist economy provides a strong context for reconciling the religious experience of both types of societies. See Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Orisa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*. California: University of California Press, 2016, 90.
17. Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Orisa Religion*, 90.
18. See Joshua B. Forrest, "Nationalism in Postcolonial States," in Lowell W. Barrington (ed.), *After Independence: Making and Protecting the Nation in Postcolonial and Postcommunist States*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2006, 33–44.
19. Ibid., 97–98.
20. Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.



CHAPTER 2

Explaining the Growth and Legitimation of the Pentecostal Movement in Africa

Olufunke Adebayo

INTRODUCTION

The explosion of Christianity in Africa since the 1970s has been the subject of several publications and conferences in recent times. Observers within and outside the continent have come to a common conclusion that the center of world Christianity has gradually shifted from the Western to the non-Western world, namely, Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Within this Christian epicenter, the Pentecostal expression has been particularly visible, vibrant, and impactful. It has generated considerable debate about its roots (whether indigenous or foreign), on the diversity of its manifestations, on its features, and its public significance. The spread and variety of African Pentecostalism continues to amaze experts—sociologists, anthropologists, theologians, historians, and even government officials—who have had to regulate its practices in numerous African nations.

This chapter examines the nature of the growth and contemporary acceptability of the Pentecostal movement in Africa. It explores the various factors that facilitated this growth. It examines the challenges associated with the growth and their implications for the future of African Christianity and the fate of the continent. The chapter is divided into four parts. The first examines African Pentecostal origins and later diversification; the second focuses on growth-related issues and tries to identify the factors responsible. The third discusses the issues of the movement's legitimation and acceptability in sub-Saharan Africa, especially its relationship with the state and Pentecostal ecumenical bodies. The chapter concludes by raising questions on the downsides of the movement.

O. Adebayo (✉)
University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria

AFRICAN PENTECOSTAL ORIGINS AND LATER DIVERSIFICATION

Scholars of African Pentecostalism have challenged the previous scholarship that claims the birth and spread of Pentecostalism worldwide could only be traced to the Azusa revival in Los Angeles, USA, during the opening decade of the twentieth century. This rebuttal has uncovered indigenous agency in non-Western societies and underscored the fact that different people had the Pentecostal experience at different times, mostly without recourse to Azusa. This is not to say there were no Western influences in African Pentecostalism, but that each region should be studied separately to uncover peculiar patterns rather than embracing broad generalizations.

According to Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, the precursors of the Pentecostal movement in Africa were “indigenous prophet figures” whose uncommon spirituality had earned them immediate expulsion from their respective mission churches.¹ These men included William Wade Harris of the Gold Coast, Garrick Sokari Braide of the Niger Delta, Simon Kimbangu of the Congo, and other such itinerant prophets, who preached the Christian message with unusual authority, challenged witchcraft, sorcery, and the powers of traditional religion, and healed sicknesses. These prophets did not found a church but were hounded by colonial authorities in their respective countries because their rising fame and large followership threatened the state. For instance, Simon Kimbangu, whose public ministry in the Congo lasted just for one year, 1921, was sentenced to death. But at the intervention of two Baptist missionaries, the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment and exile. He died in 1951 after spending 30 years in prison.²

Ogbu Kalu identified the Pentecostal movement as the “third response” of Africans to mission Christianity as proof that Africans were not passive receivers of the Christian message but that they engaged creatively with it to produce their own versions, herein presented as responses. The first response was Ethiopianism, a nineteenth-century reaction by the African nationalist elites against white domination in the mission churches. In the words of Kalu, Ethiopianism

challenged white representation of African values, cultures, and the practice of the Christian faith. It challenged white monopoly of the cultic and decision-making powers within the church, and the monopoly of the interpretation of the canon and the cultural symbols of worship. Ethiopianism countered the denigration of indigenous cultures with a nationalist antistruature, and a quest for the Africanisation of the gospel.³

Many of the Christian nationalist elites broke away from the mission churches to found African Churches. Their concern was to create a way in which they could be both African and Christian without white tutelage. The second response took the form of a pneumatic challenge to mission Christianity. Following the outbreak of influenza and meningitis epidemics in sub-Saharan Africa in the second decade of the twentieth century, several “spiritual” churches

sprang up to seek divine intervention.⁴ These included the *Zionist* in southern and central Africa, *abahoro* in eastern Africa, and the *aladura* in western Africa. These, and the many that came after them, became known collectively as African Independent Churches (AIC) in the literature. AICs drew heavily from African traditional religion to reorder their worldview and introduced new symbols and sources. Pentecostalism, as a third response, shared certain features with the AICs and both drew from issues raised in primal religion:

the vibrant spirituality in both groups produced creative liturgy, polity ethics, and evangelistic concern for soul care and material well-being of members. Both groups are innovative and have developed doctrinal emphases that differ from the inherited traditions of the missionaries who responded with jaundiced perceptions of the world of power in indigenous African communities.⁵

However, a Pentecostal emphasis on the centrality of the Holy Spirit and their insistence on personal and social rebirth set them apart from AICs.

African Pentecostalism has several distinguishing features. First, it embodies Africans' quest for power and identity through religion by appropriating aspects of their traditional worldview. According to Kalu Ogbu, African Pentecostalism embraces the "spiritual ecology" of Africa as mapped out in its traditional worldview.⁶ It endorses local beliefs in witchcraft and other forms of spiritual manipulation but maintains that the power of God is above them all. Pentecostals acknowledge the existence of spiritual forces in heaven, on earth, and underneath the earth, but maintains that they all bow to the name of Jesus Christ. Like the African traditional worldview, Pentecostalism also argues that things that are not seen determine what is seen; and Pentecostals are always quick to invoke biblical passages that talk about spiritual warfare between the forces of light and darkness.

This emphasis on spiritual warfare hinges on fervent prayer, which is marked by speaking in tongues (glossolalia). Furthermore, Pentecostal beliefs underscore the idea of biblical inerrancy and their spirituality is marked by spontaneity and emotionalism. According to Opoku Onyinah, Pentecostal spirituality emphasizes "the experiential, the relational [...] with freedom to interpret and appropriate the multiple meanings of Biblical texts."⁷ Closely associated with this is Pentecostal theology, which is based on the concept of salvation from sin, resulting in transformation and empowerment for the individual. Healing and deliverance also occupy significant positions in this theology.

African Pentecostalism has produced very creative liturgies, faith communities, strong ethics, and an evangelistic concern for "lost souls," namely, unreached peoples. It is equally concerned with the material well-being of its members and is thus able to maintain a balance between the this-worldly practical concerns of its followers and the otherworldly spiritual imperatives of its salvation theology. This clearly distinguishes it from AICs whose prayers and prophecies are mostly directed toward members' daily concerns.

One cannot deny links between African Pentecostals and their Western counterparts. Some local congregations have invited foreign pastors to mentor and guide them. For example, Assemblies of God (AG) missionaries were invited from the United States of America to eastern Nigeria in 1939 by local Pentecostals who had formed the Church of Jesus Christ in 1934 under the leadership of Augustus Wogu.⁸ Similarly, the Welsh Apostolic Church was invited to Ghana by Peter Anim and to Nigeria by Joseph Ayo Babalola, both of whom (together with D.O. Odubanjo) were recognized leaders of their local Pentecostal churches.⁹ These churches had been affiliated with the Faith Tabernacle congregation in Philadelphia in the USA. This external connection and subsequent rapport between African and global Pentecostalism did not necessarily increase their homogeneity but it did provide a platform for Africans to domesticate and adapt foreign ideas and practices to their own culture.

By the end of the twentieth century, African Pentecostalism had greatly diversified from what it had been in the 1930s. This diversification was mostly reflective of a transformation within the movement, including: the influx of foreign Pentecostals; the mass mobilization of students into the movement; and the rise of churches and ministries that claimed a mandate to address problems of poverty and lack, which had been exacerbated by ailing national economies since the 1970s.

This brings us to the task of classifying the various Pentecostal ministries in Africa. There are two broad categories, each with its own subdivisions, classical Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals. Classical Pentecostals can be subdivided into indigenous and foreign. Examples of indigenous churches are the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) in Ghana and Nigeria, the Church of Pentecost (COP) in Ghana, and the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) in Nigeria. Examples of foreign Pentecostals include AG, The Apostolic Church (TAC), and the Foursquare Gospel Church, with branches across sub-Saharan Africa. Classical Pentecostal churches emphasize the Christian experience of new birth and personal holiness exhibited in a moderate lifestyle with strict social ethics. Indigenous classical Pentecostal churches, according to J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu:

stress not just the new birth, but also personal holiness, bible study, evangelism, and baptism in the Holy Spirit. Believers are expected to dress modestly and do away with semblances of flamboyance, materialism and extravagance and in short worldliness in life.¹⁰

These churches promote conservatism in the dressing and physical appearance of women: no excessive jewelry, no make-up, and no exposure of hair during services. It is only recently that some of these rules have been relaxed in order to attract more youth into the churches. The COP in Ghana and some model parishes of the RCCG in Nigeria now allow women without head coverings to worship in the churches. The old rule of women not sitting together with men during services has also been reviewed by a few of the churches. However, most

classical Pentecostal churches have yet to come to terms with the issue of the ordination of women. Very few, such as the RCCG, have been ordaining women as pastors, giving them spiritual oversight and administrative duties. One can thus conclude that the gender practices of classical Pentecostal churches are largely conservative and are only just opening up to piecemeal reforms.

The second category of Pentecostals in Africa, the neo-Pentecostals, comprises: transdenominational charismatic fellowships; renewal movements in historic mission denominations; and charismatic churches. The transdenominational charismatic fellowships, as the name implies, are not churches but a wide network of groups where people meet for regular fellowship in a charismatic ambience. Examples include: the Student Christian Movement, which is found on the campuses of many tertiary educational institutions on the continent; the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship (FGBMF), comprising professionals from various fields; Women Aglow; Intercessors for Africa; and various transdenominational prayer camps. Apart from operating in small chapters, or clusters, scattered over large areas, each fellowship regularly organizes annual or biennial convocations at which all components of the network come together to worship and fraternize.

Renewal movements also abound in historic mission churches, such as Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Anglican congregations. E.K. Larbi, in his Ghanaian case studies, identifies three manifestations of charismata in the mainline churches. First is the congregation-centered type, where special groups within the congregation are exposed to a deeper spirituality than others. Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) is a case in point. This group is integrated into formal church structures with recognized leaders overseeing prayer groups in parishes and dioceses. According to Larbi, some members of the CCR even operate healing centers outside the church, similar to Pentecostal prayer camps.¹¹ The second form is person-centered, but equally church-based, in which only a few individuals possess the charismatic experience and they minister to others within the church as the need arises. The third manifestation of charismata is the independent type, where individual members of mainline congregations have a personal encounter with a spiritual gift, which they freely exhibit at home, outside the church. Such charismata often included glossolalia, the ability to pray for divine healing, prophesy, and visions. A notable African example is the Catholic exorcist and faith healer, Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo of Zambia, who had a flourishing healing and deliverance ministry in Lusaka before he was called to the Vatican in 1983.

Neo-Pentecostal charismatic churches have become very prominent in Africa since the 1980s. Examples include: the Church of God Missions International, founded by the late Benson Idahosa of Nigeria but now headed by his wife, Margaret Idahosa; Winners' Chapel, founded by David Oyedepo; Christ Embassy International, led by Chris Oyakhilome; and Daystar Christian Centre, founded by Sam Adeyemi; Family of God Church, led by Andrew Wutawunashe; Jabula New Life Covenant Church, led by Tudor Bismark, both from Harare, Zimbabwe; Abundant Life Faith Centre in Kampala, Uganda, led

by Handel Leslie; and the Redeemed Gospel Church in Huruma, Kenya, founded by Arthur Kitonga. Ghanaian examples include the International Central Gospel Church, founded by Mensah Otabil, and Lighthouse Chapel International, led by Dag Heward-Mills. South African examples include the multiracial Rhema Bible Church in Johannesburg, founded by Ray McCauley, and the Grace Bible Church led by Mosa Sono.

Over the years these examples have grown into megachurches with thousands of worshippers and branches in various locations. Other salient characteristics of the neo-charismatic churches (founded within the last 30 to 40 years) include a strong emphasis on the faith gospel, or message of abundant life, which focuses not only on the bliss of the hereafter but also propagates the prosperity doctrine. The congregations are predominantly youthful, with a lay-oriented leadership, and they recognize and encourage individual charismatic gifting. The pastors come from various professional backgrounds and the worship is quite urbane. Dress rules are very relaxed, especially for women, unlike in the classical Pentecostal churches. They utilize modern media technology to propagate the gospel and enhance the services, which in most cases are conducted in their national lingua franca—English or French. Charismatic churches have vast transnational networks that are not only linked to the setting up of branches in outside nations, but are also tied to their numerous trips to other African and Western nations for ministration. Reciprocally, local Pentecostal pastors receive visits from like-minded colleagues from other nations. This gives the charismatic churches an international perspective. Additional foreign influences come from the consumption of foreign Christian literature, audio and video recordings of sermons of foreign pastors, and through the global media.

It should be noted here that the classification of Pentecostal churches offered above is not without exceptions. From time to time churches classified in one category exhibit features generally identified with other groups. A case in point is the RCCG in Nigeria. Although it is regarded as an indigenous classical Pentecostal church, it also manifests features generally associated with charismatic churches in the neo-Pentecostal bloc through its model parishes: dressing rules for women are relaxed; an individual's charismatic gifts are encouraged; and modern media technology is fully exploited to project the church. All these are located within the overall mission statement of the RCCG, which is "To make heaven and take as many people as possible with us."¹²

The rise of various classical Pentecostal churches cannot be located within the same temporal milieu. While churches such as the CAC, RCCG, and COP emerged during the colonial period, others such as the DLBC and the Mountain of Fire Ministries emerged in the 1980s and 1990s. Different socioeconomic circumstances aided their rise and later popularity. The charismatic churches, on the other hand, witnessed a phenomenal growth from the 1970s with the rise of churches such as Benson Idahosa's Church of God International in Nigeria.

THE GROWTH OF THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT IN AFRICA

The growth of the Pentecostal movement in Africa has been a subject of considerable debate. The central question is whether the movement is really growing numerically or merely splintering in a “noisy and boisterous style.”¹³ Pentecostalism has a high tendency to splinter due to its internal democratization of access to spiritual power. Anybody with considerable spiritual resources may break away from existing structures to found another church, or ministry, for such causes as the detection of faults in the existing leadership, an autocratic exercise of power, or a weakening of charisma. In the absence of reliable statistics on church membership, such splinterings are sometimes presented as evidence of growth in the Pentecostal movement. The fact that members move freely from one ministry or church to another, that they attend special programs in search of an answer to personal issues, does not help matters. So, instead of looking for statistical evidence that overlaps and is often inflated, other, non-quantitative parameters have been adopted as signs of growth in the Pentecostal movement. These included: the vitality of its practice(s); its high visibility in public space; and the intensity of its opposition to traditional religion and other forms of Christianity.¹⁴ Moreover, the Pentecostalization of the mainline churches also makes it difficult to measure growth quantitatively.

The factors responsible for the growth of Pentecostalism in Africa can be classified into five broad categories: contextual, cultural, instrumentalist, strategic, and spiritual. Contextual factors have to do with the general environment that facilitated the thriving of Pentecostalism. Kalu Ogbu explained the pre-1970 growth of Pentecostalism against the “backdrop of influenza on the West Coast of Africa between 1919 and 1925 and the psychosocial pressures of colonialism.”¹⁵ Furthermore, the 1970s in Southern Africa witnessed “a quest for belonging” among blacks, which drove them into the Pentecostal movement. On the other hand, “black political insurgency drove whites into a quest for security in the warm embrace of the Holy Spirit.”¹⁶ In sub-Saharan Africa there was a crisis in the political economy of several states during the 1980s and 1990s. Scholars have identified legitimacy crises, environmental degradation, civil war, and drought as some of the attendant complications. Describing the Nigerian situation, Asonzeh F.K. Ukah wrote:

In the midst of legitimacy crises, social decay, state failure, massive corruption, academic graduate unemployment, environmental degradation, unprecedented abuse of human rights, and crippling poverty of many amidst the scandalous wealth of a few, new churches and ministries proliferated... These leaders are not only religious leaders; they are also economic visionaries who creatively respond to the demands of their immediate environment.¹⁷

It was in the midst of these challenges that individuals turned to the Pentecostal churches for solace and comfort. Structural adjustment programs implemented by several states had made life difficult for their citizens. Paul Gifford has argued that the rise of neo-Pentecostal charismatic churches could

be linked to the collapse of African economies in the 1980s, which he equally used to account for the subsequent dependence of these churches on the USA. He believes that this Americanization, rather than any African quality, is responsible for the growth of these churches.¹⁸ This argument by Gifford has, however, been countered by a cultural argument, which many scholars believe has played a significant role in the growth of Pentecostalism. There is no denying that the collapse of local economies and the ensuing hardship drove men to seek God more than ever before. But what sustained their interest in the Pentecostal churches was the resonance of traditional African concerns with the supernatural within this Christian context.

Writing on the Ghanaian situation, E.K. Larbi has given an impetus to the cultural argument. He notes that the single significant factor that has given rise to Pentecostal activities in the nation is that Pentecostalism found a fertile ground in the all-pervasive primal religious traditions “especially in its cosmology and in its concept of salvation.”¹⁹ Similarly, Onyinah indicated that, in Ghana, Pentecostalism spoke to the cultural issues in the African mind. It denounces the world of darkness, of witchcraft, sorcery, and demons, as wicked and diabolic; at the same time it endorses it as real while assuring believers that the power of God is greater than them all. Therefore, to gain victory over all evil forces, one had to denounce them, accept Jesus Christ, and receive the power of God through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is the power that can destroy all the works of the devil.²⁰ Kalu Ogbu also applied the cultural argument generally in Africa when he observed:

Pentecostalism in Africa derived its colouring from the texture of the African soil and from the interior of its idiom, nurture and growth: its fruits serve more adequately the challenges and problems of the African ecosystem than the earlier missionary fruits did.²¹

Pentecostalism in Africa thus grew because of its cultural fit within and the ready answers it had for the questions raised within the indigenous worldview. He contends that this indigenous worldview still dominates contemporary African life and continues to shape the character of African Pentecostalism.

The instrumentalist argument underscores the manner in which Pentecostalism was deployed by its adherents for their own purposes. For instance, Pentecostalism was used by the young, educated, and upwardly mobile to contest the constraints of ancient traditions, such as overburdened kinship networks. Writing about the Zimbabwe AG Africa, David Maxwell illustrates how members are taught to reject tradition and to focus on the nuclear family. This frees them from the “exactions of kin and community thus enabling personal accumulation.”²² Doctrines are formulated to enable Pentecostals to make the most of rapid social change, such as social mobility, and a code of conduct prescribed that prevents individuals from falling into poverty and destitution. These are used to confront and renegotiate issues of political exclusion and frustrated economic aspiration. It has aptly been dubbed

the religious face of modernity. The prosperity gospel gave people a template for coming to terms with and benefiting from modernity's dominant values and institutions.²³ In a similar study on Pentecostalism in Kenya, Damaris S. Parsitau and Philomena N. Mwaura argue that one of the reasons Pentecostalism became popular in urban Kenya was because of its capacity for social transformation and change. Pentecostalism empowered marginalized classes and facilitated upward social mobility for several individuals through the instrumentality of the prosperity gospel preached by Kenyan televangelists such as Bishop Mark Kariuki, Bishop J.B. Masinde, Margaret Wanjiru, and Wilfred Lai.²⁴ The urban poor are attracted to this message because Pentecostalism claims to have an answer for poverty. When this is juxtaposed with the failure of the state as an agent of modernization, it thus makes sense that numerous people turned to Pentecostalism not only for solutions to individual problems, but also for spiritual prescriptions for national economic and social woes.²⁵

The strategic argument examines the successful strategies employed by Pentecostal outfits to expand their territory and how these have contributed to the growth of their brand of Christianity. First is their use of modern media technology for evangelism and their response to popular culture. The deployment of modern electronic media, for instance, promoted a direct encounter with their audience and potential converts, more than could have been achieved in a face-to-face physical setting. This has facilitated greater mass outreach. For the young and young at heart, it also had immense promotional attraction, especially when music was involved. Pentecostal ministries/churches now maintain user-friendly and highly interactive websites where visitors can recall past sermons, listen to worship music, and pay their tithes and offerings online. Feedback and prayer requests are also collected from online fora, such as dedicated email addresses, Facebook, and Twitter. More research still needs to be done on the implications of these virtual interactions for physical church participation and membership.²⁶ Meanwhile, mass electronic media have facilitated world evangelism and helped Pentecostals to forge and maintain transnational relationships. Their use of print media for the production of tracts, posters, Christian literature, and billboards, has gone hand in hand with the deployment of electronic media.

A strategy of mobilizing young people to drive the neo-Pentecostal movement evolved from the 1970s, which was serendipitous. Several authors have commented on the sheer energy and spiritual radicalization of students in both secondary schools and universities across sub-Saharan Africa as mainstream Pentecostals or as Catholic Charismatics.²⁷ In Nigeria, university students from Ibadan and Ile-Ife pioneered this charismatism in the southwestern parts of the country. In the southeast, it was secondary school students who spread it through the revived Scripture Union. Nigerian students who went for French language study evangelized their colleagues in Ivory Coast, Republic of Benin, and Guinea.²⁸ A remarkable feature was the urgency with which the young people evangelized their colleagues. Commenting on this, Ogbu Kalu wrote:

With a strong evangelism zeal, the Kenyan students evangelized other eastern African countries and forayed into Muslim communities in the coastal seaboard of the Indian Ocean, while the Ugandans took the message to Kenya and Tanzania. In a similar vein, the Nigerian students evangelized the Muslims in northern Nigeria and forayed into other West African countries.... Later the Fellowship of Christian Union Students (FOCUS) brought together the students from the eastern and western parts of the continent.²⁹

The students who started out in campus fellowships, after graduation formed the nucleus of various Pentecostal ministries, which they pioneered. Some of these later metamorphosed into churches, with the former youths rising into their episcopacy.

A third strategy is the gender practice of Pentecostals. Their pragmatism in harnessing the full potential of female spirituality has also facilitated the churches' rapid growth. The majority of Pentecostal church members are women, and what continues to attract them is not only the prospect of solving their numerous problems, but also the opportunity to strengthen and express their spirituality because many of the people ministering to them are also women. Many Pentecostal pastors have enlisted their wives to minister alongside them, while several church/department units are headed by women. Successful and impactful female ministrations thus attract more women into those Pentecostal congregations.

Finally, there is a spiritual argument to explain the rapid growth of Pentecostalism, especially in the 1980s and 1990s in Africa. Many observers considered the demonstration of Pentecostal charismata within this period as unprecedented, and therefore interpreted it as representing a special move by God. African Pentecostalism has generated immense spiritual capital in the form of healings, massive conversions, other signs, wonders, and spiritual virtues unmatched by mainline Christianity. This providential argument is illustrated by Ogbu Kalu with the "unprecedented growth" of Bethel and Transcena churches in Liberia, the proliferation of young *aliliki* preachers in Malawi, and with the evangelism zeal and impact of secondary and university students in Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, and Sierra Leone.³⁰ The same period also witnessed the growth of such groups as Gideon Bible International, FGBMF International, and Women Aglow. These groups provided avenues for born again professionals to reach out to their colleagues and others in society, and altogether constituted a mighty move by God in Africa.

PENTECOSTAL LEGITIMATION IN AFRICA

The issue of the legitimation of the Pentecostal movement in Africa concerns its public recognition and acceptability as a valid representation of Christianity. From an insider's perspective, Pentecostal leaders and pastors might not have seen anything wrong with their practice. However, at various points in the history of the Pentecostal movement in Africa, external entities, such as the state and Christian ecumenical bodies, have had to engage more critically and sternly

with particular expressions of Pentecostalism. During the colonial period in Africa, examples abounded of state hostility to early manifestations of Pentecostalism. In Nigeria, pioneers of the Pentecostal movement were heavily persecuted, as experienced by Garrick Sokari Braide and Joseph Ayo Babalola.

Garrick Sokari Braide had a healing ministry in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria between 1912 and 1918. This ministry not only attracted a lot of followers in the region, it also drew opposition from white missionaries (from the Anglican Church to which Braide had previously belonged), and the persecution of the colonial administration.³¹ In 1916, he was tried and imprisoned by the colonial state on charges of sedition. It was claimed that he had prophesied that power would pass from “whites” to “blacks” before the end of World War I. After six months, he was released. He was later rearrested, released again, and died in 1918.³² After his death, his followers named the movement the Christ Army Church to carry on its activities, but it lacked its former vigor without the presence of its leader and the movement gradually petered out.

Similarly, Joseph Ayo Babalola, a steamroller driver in the colonial Public Works Department started a Pentecostal revival in Northeast Yorubaland in 1928/1929. By 1930 the movement was drawing large crowds from the region, mostly for healing.³³ Because of the size of the crowds, open fields were used for the meetings, while nearby streams and rivers were consecrated for use as holy water for healing purposes. The sacralized stream at Ilesha, for instance, became known as *Omi Ayo* (River of Joy) because of its healing properties.³⁴ Again, this movement attracted not only the opposition of existing mainline churches, whose membership had drifted en masse to join the new Pentecostal movement, but was also vehemently opposed by local colonial officials. First, they viewed the mass movement of people with suspicion because of its inherent potential for social upheaval. Second, health officials saw the use of untreated and possibly polluted streams as “holy water,” as unsanitary and likely to cause an epidemic.³⁵ In the words of Ukachi, colonial officials “prevailed upon traditional rulers to deny the revivalists land for building churches. In some cases, approvals for registration were denied and sanctions placed on the revivalists for witch-testing, holding night meetings, interfering and criticizing of cults, and the use of ‘holy water’.”³⁶ In early 1932, Joseph Babalola was arrested by colonial authorities in Otua (in Afenmai, in the present-day Delta State of Nigeria) and sentenced to six months imprisonment in Benin.

From these two examples, it is clear that the principal issue at the heart of the “persecution” of the two Pentecostal leaders was the legitimacy of their movement. Colonial authorities were quite at home with the historic mainline churches and they found the mass mobilization of the early Pentecostal movements simply unacceptable. That those movements were led by local people did nothing to allay the fears of the colonial state. The groups were kept under close watch and their leaders hounded from time to time.

These early Pentecostal groups did not fold their arms. Sensing the hostility of the state to their activities long before Babalola was incarcerated, the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle sought affiliation with TAC of Great Britain. Three

leaders of the British Church—Daniel Powell William, William Jones Williams, and Andrew Turnball—came to Nigeria in September 1931. This visit marked the birth of TAC of Nigeria. In the words of Matthews Ojo, “the affiliation with the British Apostolic Church helped to ease the persecution and hardship encountered by the revivalists, as the missionaries visited many *Obas* (traditional rulers) and colonial administrators on behalf of [local] revivalists.”³⁷ After this first batch of missionaries returned to England, another two arrived Nigeria in June 1932, Idris Vaughan and George Perfect. By this time, Babalola had been incarcerated. Part of the mandate for the new men was “to teach the converts from the revivals, to expound more about the doctrinal beliefs of the Apostolic Church, and to *approach Obas and colonial administrators for grant of land to build churches*” (emphasis mine).³⁸ The prison experience did not dampen Babalola’s spirit. After his release, together with I.J. Vaughan, he held powerful evangelistic crusades in Duke Town and Creek Town in Calabar, no longer molested by the colonial authorities. Affiliation with Western Pentecostal bodies thus legitimated early local Pentecostal groups within the context of a hostile colonial state. Paul Gifford also observed that, in the case of Uganda, Pentecostal churches were “positively discouraged” by the British Protectorate. Among the very few that did take root was the AG, founded in Uganda in 1935 by missionaries of the Canadian AG. Other foreign Pentecostal denominations came in its wake.³⁹

After independence several ecumenical bodies sprang up within Christian communities in sub-Saharan African states. The goal of such bodies was not only to foster peace and unity within their constituencies but also to perform quality assurance tasks, which included the validation or legitimation of member churches and ministries. This was particularly the case in countries with older ecumenical Pentecostal bodies, such as Ghana. The Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council was established in 1969 (under the name Ghana Evangelical Fellowship) as an ecumenical body of Pentecostal groups operating in Ghana.⁴⁰ Membership remains voluntary and many Pentecostals endeavor to join it because of the prestige and legitimacy it bestows. However, several groups are turned down on account of their inability to meet the basic admission requirements. The Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria is another voluntary ecumenical body that openly excludes a certain number of churches on account of what it considers to be their “unchristian” practices.⁴¹ From these few cases, it is clear that while the postcolonial state in Africa legitimates Pentecostal bodies by registering them and empowering them to function, a greater legitimation is the one offered by the Pentecostal ecumenical bodies, which may choose to exclude certain groups on several grounds.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing discussion has identified the origins, variety, and operations of the Pentecostal movement in Africa, the reasons for its impressive growth, and how its legitimacy has been handled. It is necessary to note here that the

movement has not been without its shortcomings, which have limited its expansion. First is the issue of splintering, which could be taken as a sign of the movement's vitality, but it also indicates its lack of internal cohesion. Older groups have little or no control over younger ones on the issue of splintering.

Next is the issue of limited theological training. Some Pentecostal denominations have bible colleges or pastoral institutes, while the smaller ones do not; hence, many pastors lack formal theological training even though they are endowed with Pentecostal charismata. Because of the absence of external control and the fact that the smaller groups are not accountable to any superintending authority, abuse is rife in some of these bodies. These range from financial misappropriation to sexual scandals.

Another weakness of the Pentecostal movement is its impatience with, or even lack of genuine interest in, interfaith dialogue, especially in nations with plural faiths and a significant Muslim population. The impatience of Pentecostal groups with Islam has exacerbated existing religious tensions in many nations.

Finally, the African Pentecostal movement has been shy about making a deep commitment to, and having a greater ecumenical engagement with, global Christianity at the World Council of Churches. This could have been born out of its perception of the secularity of such bodies.

Despite all these shortcomings, African Pentecostalism has continued to expand both within the continent and abroad. It has changed the face of Christianity on the continent and has remained relevant to the daily aspirations of people, whether on the lower rungs or in the upper echelons of society.

NOTES

1. J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "'Born of Water and the Spirit': Pentecostal? Charismatic Christianity in Africa," in Ogbu U. Kalu (ed.), *African Christianity: An African Story* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007), 340.
2. Graham Duncan and Ogbu U. Kalu, "Bakuzufu: Revival Movement and Indigenous Appropriation in African Christianity," in Ogbu U. Kalu (ed.), *African Christianity: An African Story* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2007), 248.
3. Ogbu U. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 24.
4. Ogbu U. Kalu, *Power, Poverty and Pluralism in African Christianity, 1960–1996* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2006), 135.
5. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 67.
6. Ogbu U. Kalu, "Preserving a Worldview: Pentecostalism in the African Maps of the Universe," *Pneuma: Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, 24:2 (Fall 2002), 110–137.
7. Opoku Onyinah, "African Christianity in the Twenty-First Century," *Word and World*, 27:3 (2007), 310.
8. Austen Ukachi, *The Best Is Yet To Come: Pentecostal and Charismatic Revivals in Nigeria, 1914–1990s* (Lagos: Summit Press, 2013), 64–65.
9. E. Kingsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra: Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, 2001), 106; Matthews A. Ojo, *The End-Time Army: Charismatic Movements in Modern Nigeria* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2006), 34–35.

10. J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "Born of Water and the Spirit," 345.
11. Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 86–87.
12. RCCG, *Sunday School Manual* (Lagos: Directorate of Christian Education, 2016), 1.
13. Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 5.
14. Ibid.
15. Ogbu U. Kalu, "Preserving a Worldview," 127–128.
16. Ibid., 128.
17. Asonzeh F.K. Ukah, "Those who Trade with God Never Lose": The Economics of Pentecostal Activism in Nigeria," in Toyin Falola (ed.), *Christianity and Social Change in Africa: Essays in Honour of J.D.Y. Peel* (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2005), 254–255.
18. Paul Gifford, *Christianity and Politics in Doe's Liberia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 314–315.
19. Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi, "The Nature of Continuity and Discontinuity of Ghanaian Pentecostal Concept of Salvation in African Cosmology," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies (AJPS)*, 5:1 (2002), 87–106.
20. Onyinah, "African Christianity," 308.
21. Ogbu U. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 170, 178.
22. David Maxwell, "Delivered from the Spirit of Poverty? Pentecostalism, Prosperity and Modernity in Zimbabwe," *Journal of Religion in Africa*, XXVIII:3 (1998), 354.
23. Ibid., 350.
24. Damaris Seleina Parsitau and Philomena Njeri Mwaura, "God in the City: Pentecostalism as an Urban Phenomenon in Kenya," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 36:2 (October 2010), 95–112.
25. Olufunke Adeboye, "Pentecostal Challenges in Africa and Latin America: A Comparative Focus on Nigeria and Brazil," *Afrika Zamani*, 11 & 12 (2003/2004), 136–159.
26. See Parsitau and Mwaura, "God in the City," for a discussion of how the Deliverance Church of Kenya has been able to navigate this terrain.
27. Ukachi, *The Best is yet to Come*, 141–158; Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Church in Ghana* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2006).
28. Kalu, "Preserving a Worldview," 125.
29. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 98.
30. Kalu, "Preserving a Worldview," 125–126; See also R. van Dijk, "Young Born Again Preachers in Post-Independence Malawi," in Paul Gifford (ed.), *New Dimensions in African Christianity* (Nairobi: AACC, 1992), 66–92.
31. Matthews A. Ojo, *The End-Time Army: Charismatic Movements in Modern Nigeria* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2006), 7, 31.
32. Ukachi, *The Best is yet to Come*, 40.
33. The largest number reported in the Babalola revival in 1930 was 4000 people. See Moses O. Idowu, *The Great Revival of 1930* (Lagos: Divine Artillery Publications, 2007).
34. David O. Olayiwola, "Joseph Ayo Babalola 1904–1959," in J.A. Omoyajowo (ed.), *Makers of the Church of Nigeria* (Lagos: CSS Books, 1995), 137–149.
35. Ojo, *The End-Time Army*, 33.

36. Ukachi, *The Best is Yet to Come*, 53.
37. Ojo, *The End-Time Army*, 34.
38. Ibid., 35.
39. Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role* (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 154–168.
40. For more details, see the webpage of the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council at www.gpccghana.org.
41. A case in point is the continuous exclusion of the Synagogue Church of All Nations from its membership. This ostracism also affects any church (such as Christ Embassy) that associates with the Synagogue. See Sam Eyoboka and John Ighodaro, “Nigeria: Okotie, Oyakhilome Rift: PFN Disowns T.B. Joshua,” *Vanguard*, 15 November 2001.

PART II

Pentecostalism and Society in Africa



Pentecostalism, Islam, and Religious Fundamentalism in Africa

Marinus Chijioke Iwuchukwu

According to a recent Pew Research Center demographic report, Christians in sub-Saharan Africa constitute about 65% of the population. That is a huge leap, considering that at the beginning of the twentieth century Christians accounted for less than 3% of that population.¹ In another Pew Research Center report, Pentecostalism accounts for 12% of the entire population of Africa, numbering about 100 million followers. That is more than double the population of the same group of Christians in 1970.² While Islam accounts for 30% of the population in sub-Saharan Africa, it dominates North Africa. With the growing influence of Salafi and Wahhabi brands of Islam—from Egypt and Saudi Arabia respectively—fundamentalist Islam has been making serious waves across Africa. Countries such as Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Kenya, Mali, Niger Republic, Nigeria, Somalia, Tanzania, and the Republic of Sudan, among others, have experienced the horror of human and material losses inflicted by militant Islamic fundamentalists, while growing numbers of people have enlisted in this brand of Islam. Meanwhile, social tensions are growing between Muslims and Christians in places such as Nigeria and Kenya, where Pentecostalism and Islamic fundamentalism operate alongside each other and the number of followers for both religious traditions are growing.

For clarity and specificity, it is necessary to point out that while there may be diverse understandings of what constitutes a Pentecostal Christian, this chapter focuses on those who Walter J. Hollenweger and other scholars describe as “classical Pentecostals.”³ This category of Pentecostalism is different from

M. C. Iwuchukwu (✉)
Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA, USA
e-mail: iwuchukwu@duq.edu

charismatic renewal movements and Pentecostals, which some scholars prefer to identify as independent African churches. In the typology of Pentecostalism, Anderson adds a fourth which he describes as “Neo-Pentecostals and Neo-Charismatic Churches.”⁴ For the purpose of this chapter, Anderson’s classification will be considered under the umbrella of the first category of classical Pentecostals.⁵

Islamic fundamentalism ranges from the militant to those who are doctrinal fundamentalists, with extremist interpretations and observances of Islam. Typically, Islamic fundamentalism in Africa operates with extremist or exclusive social-political agendas. These groups often have a narrow and extremely conservative interpretation of the Qur’an and Islamic principles, which even pitch them against other Muslims—whom they judge as heretics or apostates.

Normatively, scholars of religious dialogue are clear on which sorts of religious followers or theological/philosophical assumptions preclude dialogue: these will be the religiously ultraconservative, fundamentalist, militant, or exclusivist. Unfortunately, both fundamentalist Islamists and Pentecostal Christians fall squarely in these groups.

While this chapter will explore the history and development of both Islamic fundamentalism and Pentecostalism in Africa, it will also advocate for their involvement in interreligious dialogue in the interests of a healthy African society. However, given that both traditions are understood to be deeply opposed to interreligious dialogue, one wonders about the rationale for this approach. Why would a scholar waste her or his energy exploring an issue that appears to have a foregone conclusion? These concerns are central and it is therefore important that the goals of this chapter are appropriately underlined.

The interreligious dialogue focus of this chapter, aware of the odds stacked against it, has been tweaked from a primary focus on how to engage Pentecostals and Islamic fundamentalists in dialogue to how to convince them that they must embrace dialogue for the survival of their faith traditions in Africa and the preservation of peace in African societies. Given this focus, the question should not a priori be what contributions Islamic fundamentalists and Pentecostal Christians could make to interreligious dialogue, but *why* they must contribute to effective dialogue in the African continent. Then we can explore how or what their contributions to that dialogue should be.

By way of providing a constructive outline, this chapter focuses on:

1. A brief historical overview of Pentecostalism and Islamic fundamentalism in Africa.
2. Why Pentecostalism and Islamic fundamentalism find Africa a lucrative place.
3. The similarities and differences between Pentecostalism and Islamic fundamentalism in Africa.
4. The challenges both Pentecostalism and Islamic fundamentalism pose to social peace and coexistence in Africa among Christians and Muslims.

5. Why Pentecostals and Islamic fundamentalists must become part of the interreligious dialogue exercise and experience in Africa.
6. How Pentecostals and Islamic fundamentalists can effectively contribute to ongoing Christian–Muslim Dialogue in Africa.⁶

BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF PENTECOSTALISM AND ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM IN AFRICA

In his *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*, Ogbu Kalu (2008) argues that Pentecostalism in Africa originates even earlier than the beginning of the Pentecostal movement in the USA. According to him, it dates to the early years of Christian missionaries in Africa in the late nineteenth century. He contends that the African Pentecostal movement has a lot in common with what is phenomenologically categorized as the African independent church movement. In his opinion, because of the uniquely African worldviews and practices evident among African Pentecostals, it is better to avoid collapsing all Pentecostal movements into one giant identical lump of Christian experience or denomination. He supports the proposed idea of “Pentecostals,” rather than the generic “Pentecostalism,” for all the shades and colors of Pentecostal movements across the world.⁷

While affirming Kalu’s historiographical identification of a distinct Pentecostal movement in Africa, it is critical not to lose sight of the impacts of the global phenomenological and historical developments in Christianity, ignited by the Enlightenment and Secularist movements in Europe and America. Yet, there is no denying that the evolution of the African independent church movement has not much to do with the influence of the Enlightenment on Africans, who chose to reject some of the modalities, rituals, doctrines, and methods of the European missionaries and their cronies. However, while African Pentecostalism possesses uniquely African features, it is a historical fact that Pentecostalism in Africa, as a uniquely Christian phenomenon, has a deep affinity with the Pentecostal movement that originated from the 1906 revival meeting at Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles, California.⁸ This claim is evidenced in the boom of Pentecostalism in the African landscape reflective of similar developments in Western countries.⁹

Many modern Pentecostal megachurches in Africa share theological and structural affinity with similar organizations in the USA and Western Europe.¹⁰ Although African Pentecostalism may share spiritual and religious heritage with earlier independent African churches—such as Zion Christian Church in southern Africa, Kimbanguism in central Africa, and the Aladura church in Western Africa—most current Pentecostal churches have closer affinity with popular Pentecostal churches like the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Deeper Christian Life Ministries, Church of God Mission, Durban Christian Center, Apostolic Faith Mission, Full Gospel Church of God, Deliverance Church of Kenya, and so on. These more popular Pentecostal churches have

significantly defined the Pentecostal church movement in different parts of Africa and some have grown beyond their origins and spread to other African and Western countries—such as the Full Gospel Church of God, Deeper Life, and Redeemed Christian Church.

It is also vital not to undermine the historical and phenomenological similarities between the origin of the Pentecostal movement in Africa and the development of the charismatic movements in mainline Protestant and Catholic Churches in Africa. These two movements emerged in the African religious landscape about the same time and became dominant among Christian denominations from the 1970s.¹¹ It is apparent that today's dominant African Pentecostalism, especially in the forms that have been sustained to the twenty-first century, emerged clearly from the early 1970s in different parts of Africa, especially in western, eastern, and southern Africa.

Islamic fundamentalism in Africa generally traces its origin and development in Islamic history to movements that began in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, in the forms of Wahhabism and Salafism respectively. These two movements were both partly reactionary responses to colonial influences and political orders in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. It is also relevant that they both come from the Sunni Islamic tradition. The Shi'a tradition of Islam has had its own brand of fundamentalism but with minimal impact in the African continent due to the lower demographics of followers of the Shi'a tradition in Africa. That notwithstanding, a group like the Izala movement in northern Nigeria has traditionally expressed its affinity to the Shi'a Islamic tradition, albeit soliciting financial support from non-Shi'ite Middle Eastern foundations.¹²

The influences of both Wahhabi and Salafi movements produced huge effects in the Sokoto Caliphate and the Sudan. The jihad of Uthman dan Fodio led to the birth of the Sokoto Caliphate and the Mahdi movement in the Sudan as the products of Islamic leaders that heeded the fundamentalist approach to Islam orchestrated by both Salafi and Wahhabi movements. The explosion of these fundamentalist developments was slowed by the colonial influences in both Nigeria and the Sudan. However, after the independence of these countries from direct colonial administration, Islamic fundamentalism reignited in both countries. In Nigeria, the obsession of the Sardauna of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello (a grandson of Uthman dan Fodio) with the ardent support of Sheikh Muhammadu Gumi for the advancement of Islam in Nigeria—using extensive financial and human resources from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Libya, and Pakistan—accelerated the emergence of modern Islamic fundamentalism in northern Nigeria, especially after the founding of the Izala movement.¹³ In the case of the Sudan, it resulted in two civil wars between the north and south and the eventual formal political secession and independence of Southern Sudan from the Republic of Sudan in 2011.

In other parts of Africa—such as Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Kenya, Somalia, and Tanzania—the origin of Islamic fundamentalism can be traced to the growing economic and political influence of Saudi Arabia, with its Wahhabi extremist baggage. It is no secret that Saudi Arabia has funded and

promoted the rise and development of its brand of Islam in most sub-Saharan African countries. Saudi Arabia has strong political and economic influence through the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC), to which numerous African countries belong. Although the OIC is primarily said to be an economic organization, its economic support to member countries is contingent on beneficiary countries complying with certain Islamic principles. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia has single-handedly sponsored and promoted Islamization in different African countries through huge financial contributions to beneficiary communities. Given the oil-rich resources of Saudi Arabia, it has been economically convenient for it to exploit the indigent conditions of African countries and communities to spread its brand of Islam. According to a *60 Minutes* CBS News report of April 10, 2016, “After, oil, Wahhabism is one of the kingdom’s biggest exports. Saudi clerics, entrusted with Islam’s holiest shrines have immense power and billions of dollars to spread the faith, building mosques and religious schools all over the world that have become recruiting grounds for violent extremists.”¹⁴ Moreover, “The 9/11 Commission report says that Saudi Arabia has long been considered the primary source of al Qaeda funding through its wealthy citizens and charities with significant government sponsorship.”¹⁵ From the research findings of Carol Chosky and Jamsheed Chosky:

According to the Saudi monarchy’s official websites, Wahhabi charities and royal trusts, including that of another Saudi ruler, the late King Fahd, spent millions of dollars recruiting students to more than 1500 mosques, 210 Muslim centers, 202 Islamic colleges, and 2000 madrassas and on staffing those institutions with nearly 4000 preachers and missionaries in non-Muslim nations in central, southern, and southeast Asia, as well as in Africa, Europe, and North America. Adherents to Wahhabism used Saudi control of four-fifths of all Islamic publishing houses around the world to spread their fighting words into faraway places.¹⁶

All this accounts for the quick and effective spread of al-Qaeda and its terrorist cells to different parts of Africa, including Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and Tanzania. These countries have experienced the sad and devastating consequences of numerous terrorist attacks.

The 1979 Iranian revolution and the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the USA emboldened the activities and determination of Islamic fundamentalists, even in Africa. The Iranian revolution is credited with inspiring the fundamentalist stance of the Maitatsine and Izala movements, the fundamentalist groups led by Ibrahim al-Zakzaky, Yakubu Yahaya, Dahiru Bauchi, and other fundamentalist activities in different parts of northern Nigeria.¹⁷ The leaders of al-Shabaab and Boko Haram are seeking to replicate al-Qaeda’s Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS—also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, ISIL), and other globally infamous terrorist organizations, to accomplish identical goals in Africa. These fundamentalist and terrorist organizations operating in Africa rely largely on the Middle East for funding and training.¹⁸ So, as long as the funding pours into their coffers, these fundamentalists will continue to operate, not only in Africa but also across the world.

The theology and ideology of fundamentalism in Islam has existed for centuries. The cry among some Muslims for a brand of Islam synonymous with that of the *muhajirun* (those who emigrated from Mecca with Muhammad) is a yearning for a fundamentalist Islam. There will always be Muslims who are attracted to that form of Islam, which is a legitimate aspect of spirituality or religious identity, but that yearning or practice does not need to be militant. Realistically, there are millions of Muslims who are attracted to fundamentalism but not to its militancy. Wahhabism, Salafism, Izala, Ismailism, and many other Islamic sects are grounded on some level of fundamentalism. Yet many followers of these forms of spirituality do not advocate or promote violence or militancy. It is epistemologically incorrect to insist that Islamic fundamentalism exclusively revolves around the views and positions of fundamentalist ideologists like Sayyid Qutb of Egypt or Abu al-'Ala al-Mawdudi of Pakistan. Therefore, the non-militant, fundamentalist Islamic orientation has existed among Muslims for a very long time, even in Africa. However, the militant forms and excesses of Islamic fundamentalism were vigorously and effectively resisted by the French, British, and Portuguese colonial authorities in Africa—for instance, the Mahdi movement in the Sudan was kept in check by the British.

After independence and the development of self-rule through some form of democracy or rule of law principles, a number of Muslims with a fundamentalist ideology, especially those opposed to the political order of Western ideology, began to blend their religious fundamentalism into political activism. That was the case in Egypt, with the growth and development of the Islamic Brotherhood as well as Izala, the movement started by Sheikh Abubakar Gumi in northern Nigeria. A number of fundamentalist Islamic groups in Africa today reflect both a religious fantasy of fundamentalism and some sort of anti-Western ideology.

WHY PENTECOSTALISM AND ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM THRIVE IN AFRICA

There is no doubt that Pentecostalism and Islamic fundamentalism have both thrived in sub-Saharan Africa (Islamic fundamentalism exists all over North Africa, but Pentecostalism does not), especially when compared with how similar organizations have fared beyond their places of origin.¹⁹ In sub-Saharan Africa, statistics on the spread and growth of Pentecostalism match or even surpass its growth in the USA and Europe. Islamic fundamentalism has enjoyed almost unabated growth in its recruitment and membership among Africans—almost comparable to its appeal and growth in the Middle East. With the demise of Muammar Gaddafi of Libya, that country became a haven for Islamic fundamentalism and terrorist organizations taking advantage of the power vacuum (serious military efforts are going on to reclaim several parts of the country that were previously under the control of Islamic terrorists). A *Time* magazine report on Salafi activities in post-Gaddafi Libya vividly tells the story:

Throughout Libya, Gaddafi's fall has emboldened Salafis, who were persecuted and imprisoned under the now deceased leader. They have increased their public presence, taken over mosques, and even hoisted the flag of al-Qaeda over the courthouse in Benghazi where the revolution began 11 months ago. In the capital, Tripoli, Salafis have destroyed more than six shrines. In one incident, dozens swarmed mausoleums belonging to two Muslim mystics and dug up their bodies so that worshippers could no longer visit their tombs. They also burned the relics around the shrines.²⁰

Although Asia has a larger demographic of Muslims, Islamic fundamentalism in Asia is limited and sporadic, albeit prevalent in southern Philippines, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and parts of India. These are fewer and less threatening to the Asian continent than in Africa, where the dangerous and destabilizing influence of Islamic fundamentalism exists in Algeria, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Kenya, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, Tanzania, the Sudan, Tunisia, and so on. While South America and some parts of Asia—such as South Korea, China, and the Philippines—are experiencing a significant growth of Pentecostalism, its growth and spread in sub-Saharan African countries is phenomenal. It is estimated that by 2025 there will be over 257 million Pentecostals in Africa. In the same period, Asia and South America will have about 199 million and 216 million respectively.²¹

The core question that invariably emerges in the light of the growth and spread of Pentecostalism and Islamic fundamentalism in Africa is: Why are Africans called in droves to either Pentecostalism or Islamic fundamentalism? It is not enough to suggest that Africans are overwhelmingly religious, because they cannot be said to be more traditionally religiously inclined than the peoples of Asia or South America. Several existential, sociological, ideological, and economic reasons could be adduced for the boom of Pentecostalism and Islamic fundamentalism in Africa.

First, historically both Islamic fundamentalism and Pentecostalism have thrived among economically disadvantaged people. From the Middle East to Europe, one of the common denominators of those easily coaxed or convinced to join the ranks of al-Qaeda, ISIS, and other terrorist organizations is that most members are relatively poor. ISIS prides itself on setting up a caliphate that will end economic inequality. In the case of Africa, where the greater population find themselves on the lowest rungs of the economic ladder, the exploitation of the economically disadvantaged and corruption among their leaders is scandalous, which elicits a populist attempt at redressing their economic problems.

From colonial times, when Africans reacted against their oppression by the colonial authorities, the rise of nationalism leading to independence was the result of the people's objection to the economic, social, and political ravaging. However, when African leaders who had received the support of their people to weed out colonial political control were entrusted with political leadership, for the most part they turned their backs on the same people who had brought them to political fame and success. Therefore, to a large extent, Africans have lost faith in their political and social activist leaders. Militant Islamic fundamentalism, with its

strong political agenda, is an attempt by some Africans to hijack political power, using religion as their primary vehicle. That is the case in communities and cities captured by Boko Haram in northeastern Nigeria, al-Shabaab in Somalia, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Salafi and ISIS in Libya, ISIS and al-Qaeda in Mali, and in the Central African Republic and Kenya. In all these places, Islamic fundamentalists promised to improve the economic fortunes of the people. After a while, as is the case in Yemen, parts of northeastern Nigeria, and parts of Syria and Iraq, the people realize that the militants' claims for economic redemption are bogus and self-serving.

Pentecostalism, for its part, thrived by promising prosperity to its members, which started as wishful thinking. Ultimately, those who immediately and substantively benefit from this promise and advocacy for prosperity are the leaders or head pastors of those Pentecostal organizations. It is common knowledge today, stretching from the USA and Europe to all developing countries where the prosperity gospel doctrine is popular, that the leaders of such religious communities wallow in excessive luxury and wealth, while their followers only remain hopeful of crawling up to the next rung of the economic ladder. According to Ebenezer Obadare, five of the ten richest pastors in the world are Nigerians.²² Ministers of Pentecostal churches are notorious for demanding tithes from their followers. The obligation of tithing is a core pillar of Pentecostal doctrine, which is considered a primary indicator of faithfulness to God. Therefore, Pentecostal ministers have used such teachings to exploit their followers' religious naïveté and gullibility to their own economic advantage.

While it is true that pastors of Pentecostal churches are economically sustained by the generosity of their followers, many of those churches have also succeeded in establishing small-scale or cottage industries to employ the services of many of their members. This phenomenon is growing fast in places such as Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, and Zambia, where job opportunities range across schools, medical clinics, small cottage industries, and so on. These ventures attract and sustain membership in the Pentecostal churches as the jobs are almost exclusively reserved for members of the church that owns the business.

Political instability and an endemic corrupt political culture is a second major factor that has made the African continent a fertile ground for the growth and development of Islamic fundamentalism and Pentecostalism. This has manifested itself in Algeria, Egypt, Kenya, Libya, Nigeria, Somalia, Tunisia, Zambia, and so on. Islamic fundamentalists with political agenda have paraded themselves as capable of running a government best suited to the people. According to these agitators, the best political order for Muslims is a theocratic government, hence their goal to establish their brand of Islamic caliphate as the normative political order for their society. In the case of Nigeria and the Sudan, such political agitators have advocated the implementation of strict, Sharia-based governance as ideal for the people and their society. Unfortunately, by insisting on their vision of a theocratic government they have thrown these societies into political chaos.

Pentecostal Christians in different parts of Africa have sought to use political platforms as God's directive to bring to bear their narrow goals and conservative worldview on their society. Pentecostal ministers have harnessed the gullibility of the people's belief in their spiritual abilities and their oratory skills for political gain and absolute political control. Many African politicians today are perceived as playing the religious zealot card as their most effective tool for gaining access to the heart of the people and winning their support. Pentecostals have often measured the potential for political success via the politician's religious identity and affiliation. Consequently, they have almost exclusively recommended and supported Christian or Pentecostal Christian politicians rather than politicians from non-Christian faith traditions. Pentecostals are of the firm belief that only Christians from their faith tradition are best suited to lead their society. They have made some progress in supporting politicians of their faith to ascend to power or in attempting to sway to their side politicians from different theological persuasions and Christian denominations. A popular Nigerian Pentecostal leader, Pastor T.B. Joshua is known to have publicly acknowledged that seven different African heads of state consult with him.²³ Former Nigerian president, Goodluck Jonathan, former Ghanaian president John Atta Mills, and former president of Zambia, Frederick Chiluba, and the current Kenyan and Zambian presidents are known for vigorously courting the support and assistance of Pentecostal leaders for their political administrations.²⁴

A third major reason why Africa has proved susceptible to the establishment and growth of both Pentecostalism and Islamic fundamentalism is the high level of ignorance and lack of sufficient religious education. Islam and Christianity are foreign to African society. There is an obsessive dependency of people in Africa on their religious leaders for information about either Christianity or Islam. Moreover, not only are religious leaders accorded a disproportional respect but also are almost always viewed as impeccable, infallible, and inerrant—and therefore, in most cases, often appear to be above the laws of the land. People have traditionally held religious leaders to be the exclusive repositories and conveyors of truth and right doctrine; they are raised to trust what their religious leaders tell them and almost never question their teachings or ideas. This mentality has prevailed because not too many followers bother to independently verify or critically review what they learn from their religious leaders.

Among Muslims, the dependence on what religious leaders teach or instruct further prevails because of the authority and dominance of religious, economic, social, cultural, and political ideas that are allegedly from the Qur'an. Muslims are taught that the authentic Qur'an must be written in Arabic. Since the language is foreign to most Africans, only those who go through a formal Islamic education are proficient in classical Arabic and therefore can read and understand the original Qur'an. Consequently, most lay people depend on an interpretation provided to them by those trained and educated to do so. Invariably, these religious leaders are often viewed as infallible repositories of what is considered an authentic, appropriate, and correct teaching of Islamic religion. This explains

why vast numbers of people have abdicated their right to critical thinking to the whims and machinations of their religious leaders. As a result, Islamic fundamentalism thrives among the less educated in Africa.

In Pentecostal circles, religious leaders claim certain charismata that validate their role and duty as church ministers that include: speaking in tongues, healing, spiritual discernment, interpreting dreams, visions, prophecy, and passionate oratory in preaching. The manifestations of any or some of these are sufficient to hoodwink their followers since they are interpreted as coming from God or the Holy Spirit, so people who possess them have always been revered in African communities. They are automatically held to be impeccable, inerrant, and infallible. People who enjoy such honor and regard tend to have a strong influence and control over their followers. Almost always, the select people who enjoy this privilege have tended to manipulate the minds and thinking of people under their influence. Given this phenomenon and the high respect Africans have for religion and its leaders, people who are less educated are often more susceptible to the machinations of the charlatans, self-serving, or egotistic individuals that are among their religious leaders.

THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PENTECOSTALISM AND ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM IN AFRICA

There is no question that Pentecostalism and Islamic fundamentalism in Africa have things in common as well as displaying some stark differences. Because they share certain features, they are able to tap into similar demographics of followers. Because they show remarkable differences, they are often pitted against each other and even, in some cases, demonstrate a vicious mutual dislike and hatred.

Some of the commonalities shared by Pentecostalism and Islamic fundamentalism are:

1. They place large capital on the urgency to be in heaven or paradise. Yusuf al-Ayyeri, the presumed leader of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, who was executed by Saudi Arabian security forces in 2003, is reported to have vehemently opposed democracy because it promoted cultural differences, undermined the Shari'a as the legal code, which upholds God's will, and made "Muslims love this world, forget the next world, and abandon jihad."²⁵ Pentecostals are equally obsessive about the end of the world and going to heaven; however, it is prefixed by the drive for a successful material existence.
2. They focus on particular audiences, often distinguished by class, ethnicity, age, and profession. Religious identity is strongly determined by one's ethnicity, particularly in parts of Cameroon, Chad, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, former Republic of Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda.

In such places, Islamic fundamentalism and Pentecostalism have only thrived in given ethnic constituencies. It is also important to underscore that most members of either faith belong to the lower economic class.

3. They are most dominant in urban areas but are gradually spreading into rural areas.
4. The rapid growth of their membership is traceable to the fact that Africans are generally credited with vivacious spiritual or religious yearnings, which both traditions appear to provide or even exploit for other than religious reasons.
5. They are reputed to make copious use of the dominant media cultures: print, TV, the Internet, and social media. Since the beginning of the Internet in the early 1990s the pervasive use of this medium has effectively replaced the previous voracious use of print media by both Islamic fundamentalists and Pentecostals.
6. There is a prevalence of celebrity or charismatic leadership and these leaders are often the main attraction for the followers. They are revered and often have a dominant impact on their followers' way of life.
7. They tend to promote scriptural literalism and consider themselves conservative, or even ultraconservative. Their claim to authenticity is based on their holy books, the Qur'an for Islamic fundamentalists and the Bible for Pentecostals.

The differences that stand out between these two religious traditions include:

1. While both are often led by men (in the case of Islamic fundamentalism in Africa, it is male-only leadership), followers of Pentecostalism in Africa are dominantly women, while followers of Islamic fundamentalism in Africa are largely men. There are reports of scores of women in the ranks of Islamic fundamentalism, but they are rarely given public recognition.
2. Both are religious exclusivists and both consider and treat non-members with disdain; Islamic fundamentalists advocate and use violence to assert beliefs and goals; Pentecostals often verbally and hermeneutically sound violent, but do not subscribe to physical violence as their *modus operandi* and may only resort to violence as a last resort or in self-defense.
3. This chapter has alluded to both religious traditions tapping into similar categories of people as adherents. While that is generally true, it is also true that Pentecostalism is more open to a diversity of adherents, so there is more homogeneity of audience or adherents in the ranks of Islamic fundamentalists.
4. Although both traditions demonstrate a strong conservative adherence to their faiths in keeping with their different holy books, Pentecostalism has demonstrated more flexibility to the influence of different cultural traits.²⁶ Islamic fundamentalism in Africa almost always seeks to maintain and uphold cultural traits consistent with Arabic influence and culture.

PENTECOSTAL AND ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALIST CHALLENGES TO SOCIAL PEACE AND COEXISTENCE IN AFRICA

Political developments in different parts of Africa have produced active and aggressive responses from both Pentecostals and Islamic fundamentalists.²⁷ There are many communities in Africa where family members belong to different religious affiliations. Usually, family cohesion keeps people bonded but there are growing cases where families are torn apart due to religious differences. Both Islamic fundamentalists and Pentecostals can consider their religious family as their premier family, and ties to their biological family can suffer strain and neglect. Tension is bound to exist in such families, further disrupting the peace and social harmony in such communities.

The violence and destruction that several African communities have suffered from Islamic fundamentalists have significantly diminished their economic and social cohesion. In parts of northern Nigeria, northwestern Cameroon, southern Chad, Niger Republic, Mali, and Burkina Faso, those communities that have suffered the unspeakable carnage visited on them by the destructive violence of Boko Haram and al-Qaeda in the Maghreb have yet to recover from the trauma and horror of their experiences; thousands of lives have been lost and billions of dollars' worth of property have been destroyed. Hundreds of thousands of people have fled their homes and are living as displaced people under very difficult conditions.

Verbal abuse and a resentment of those who are religiously different are at the heart of the message Pentecostals preach, which may scare some people enough to convert to Pentecostalism, but such language and style has made others resent Christians in general. This is because non-Christians may not necessarily distinguish Pentecostalism from other brands of Christianity. The hostile evangelization paradigm of Pentecostalism has further emboldened Islamic fundamentalists to be aggressive and hostile toward all Christians.

In the light of ongoing threats of violence from Islamic fundamentalists, and the discomfort and extensive demonization of non-Christian religions, including Islam, coming from the pulpit of Pentecostal preachers, there is a growing distrust and even hate in many African communities between Christians and Muslims. There is a mutual resentment that is becoming normative, especially where they have to share the same geographical space. Such a state of mind is detrimental to social peace and harmony. The tension built up by such resentment more often than not escalates into violence and counterviolence, as seen in the Central African Republic, northern Nigeria, and Kenya. Such a distrust and lack of harmony has caused tremendous damage to peaceful neighborhoods for Christians and Muslims living in northern Nigeria, the Sudan, the Central African Republic, Egypt, and Kenya.

WHY PENTECOSTALS AND ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISTS MUST TAKE PART IN INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN AFRICA

Dialogue among religions is not a luxury but a necessity. Gone are the years when people and their religions lived exclusively in their own corners of the world and walled themselves off from others. The era of religious, cultural, and political hegemony is fast becoming part of the remote past, including for countries and communities in Africa. The call to dialogue, especially on religious grounds, has become intrinsic to healthy living in most societies and African countries are no longer exempt from that reality, and there are several reasons for this.

First, we operate in social-political structures undergirded by the United Nations Bill of Rights. Among those rights are: the right to life, right to religious liberty, and right to free association. These inalienable rights cannot be justly denied to anyone in Africa, not even by the state. Any infringement of these rights calls for stringent legal and political action against the offender. Therefore, Islamic fundamentalists and Pentecostals who demand, with different kinds of threats, that people convert to their belief system will continue to frustrate themselves, as well as have to contend with civil society. Modern society objects to the idea of forced conversion or the intimidation of people into submission to a faith tradition.

Second, civil societies today are, by default, normatively multi-religious and multi-cultural. This is a *de facto* reality, which is difficult to change or ignore. To demand anything less is to create chaos and anarchy, which is what militant Islamic fundamentalists have succeeded in doing in those parts of Africa where they operate. For the Pentecostals, this norm of a multi-religious society presents a frustrating and insurmountable obstacle. This is because, regardless of their condemnation and hostile theological objection toward people of different faith traditions, those people they object to have the same rights as Pentecostals do in the same society.

Third, the constitution and state powers are the ultimate authorities in modern African states. These are built on the philosophy of a civil society that must honor and protect the rights to religious freedom and freedom of association. When a state like the Republic of Sudan under its current president, Omar al-Bashir, fails to honor or protect those rights, it calls for the wrath and sanction of the international community. The quest for an Islamic caliphate by Islamic fundamentalists in Africa is a mirage and an unattainable goal in modern society. They may succeed in destabilizing the peace and harmony of the communities they raid but it is unthinkable that they will succeed in establishing the religiously exclusive society they seek. How could that be possible in today's globalized world? How long can you survive as a state with no official interaction or economic relationship with the rest of the world? Any form of government that is based on the principles of violence, oppression, and mass murder

must be globally unacceptable. The frustrations faced by ISIS, Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, and al-Qaeda, as outlaws, is a testament to that fact. Unfortunately, the only feasible option available to such exclusive, religiously minded people like militant Islamic fundamentalists is to live the rest of their lives in frustration, actively pursuing self-annihilation through their reckless acts of violence and suicide bombings.

When both Pentecostals and Islamic fundamentalists genuinely recognize and respect the core values of modern civil society and the imperatives of the rule of law, they will invariably come to embrace and respect the indisputable need for upholding and defending the rights of the individual that are critical to living in modern society. Recognizing these facts is also critical to a healthy and happy global coexistence with people of different religions.

EFFECTIVE PENTECOSTAL AND ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALIST DIALOGUE IN AFRICA

According to Ogbu Kalu, “a major aspect of Pentecostal political theology is the lack of a viable theology of dialogue in an increasingly pluralistic public space. This is crucial because the rise of Pentecostalism is implicated in the dysfunctional role of religion in the public space.”²⁸ Kalu concludes, “the Nigerian Pentecostals will need to develop concept of dialogue for the sake of a stable public space.”²⁹

When Islamic fundamentalists and Pentecostals recognize and respect that everyone in society has the right to believe and practice their faith (insofar as the practice does not obstruct others from enjoying the same right), they would be more respectful of the other. Consistent with this mindset, it is imperative for Islamic fundamentalists and Pentecostals to embrace the social reality of *de facto* religious pluralism. This is simply acknowledging from a social perspective that religions have the right to exist and operate, provided their existence does not preclude the existence of others. A religious pluralism worldview recognizes that other religions exist in today’s civil social order, a worldview consistent with genuine coexistence. Given that Pentecostals and Islamic fundamentalists claim to operate a conservative understanding and application of their scriptures, it is essential for both to honor those passages that call on them to recognize and respect the authenticity of other religions—a mindset that is necessary for engaging in effective dialogue.

The Qur’an has several positive references to non-Islamic religions, especially the religions of the Book (Judaism and Christianity). Even more pointedly, the Qur’an alludes not just to *de facto* religious pluralism, but also to *de jure* religious pluralism. According to the Qur’an, differences in religion, race, and ethnicity among people are originally intended by God. God created humans with those differences so they get to know one another (Q. 30:22–29 and 49:13) and compete with each other in acts of righteousness (Q. 2:148 and 5:48). So, based on the Qur’an, Muslims should accept all religions as originating from God. Moreover, according to Q. 2:148 and

5:48, all the different religions are oriented toward the same goals, since they are urged to compete against each other. Q. 29:46 explains that the beliefs of Christians, Jews, and Muslims are identical: "We believe what has been sent down to us, and we believe what has been sent to you. Our God and your God is one, and to Him we submit."

In Q. 4:163–164, God says to Muslims: "We have sent revelations to you as We sent revelations to Noah and the prophets who came after him; and We sent revelations to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and their offspring, and to Jesus and Job [...] and to Moses God spoke directly." The Qur'an also alludes to the common destiny of all believers in God. According to Q. 2:62: "Those who believe—the Jews, the Christians, and the Sabeans—whosoever believe in God and the Last Day and do good works, they shall have their reward from their Lord and shall have nothing to fear, nor shall they come to grief."³⁰ This text affirms the universal salvation of all God-fearing people of different religions.

All these Qur'anic texts should speak strongly to Islamic fundamentalists about respecting and recognizing the religious essence in other religions, especially Christianity. It is therefore incumbent on Islamic fundamentalists to appreciate and recognize other religions since, according to the Qur'an, God himself authenticates and recognizes them. Moreover, if Islamic fundamentalists take the instructions of these texts to heart, they should be better disposed toward engaging in effective dialogue with people of other religions in the interest of peaceful coexistence in society.

From the perspective of the Bible, the revered book that Pentecostals are required to model their lives by, there are texts that speak of God's universal appreciation of people, regardless of, and even with, their religious differences. Acts 2:1–13 gives an account of the beginning of Christianity through the experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the apostles. When Peter addressed the crowd gathered outside the upper room in Jerusalem, the author of the text hinted that the crowd contained people from different regions and cities, Jews and non-Jews, yet the Spirit enabled the crowd to hear and understand the Spirit-led language spoken by the apostles.³¹

In the Acts of the Apostles, there are the stories of the Ethiopian eunuch, Acts 8:26–40, and the conversion of Cornelius and his household, Acts 10:1–11. In the case of the former, Gerald O'Collins hints that the Ethiopian eunuch is "someone who is most probably a Gentile [...] and is more likely 'a leap to the extreme'."³² For a typical Jewish community of that era, the man being "an African and a eunuch, the Ethiopian is doubly an outsider."³³ He does not fit the mold, from a Jewish judgment, of who should be given a special opportunity to encounter God, or for the Spirit of God to recognize the authenticity of his spirituality. The same Spirit that came upon the apostles in the upper room, directed Philip to minister to this religious outsider.

The manifestation of the Spirit of God through the unbaptized Cornelius and his pagan household proves the prophetic proclamation of Peter, "God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is

acceptable to him” (Acts 10:34–35). This statement is a strong endorsement of religious pluralism; a recognition that the same God is at work in the lives of all men and women, despite their religious differences.

A popular biblical text, which Christians often interpret with a bias against other religions or with exclusivist hermeneutics is John 14:6, which reads: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’.” As I have argued in an earlier publication:

A different but profound theological exegesis of the apparent totalizing and exclusivistic text of John [14:6] is given by John Cobb, highlighting its inclusivistic pluralist assumption. Cobb’s approach to this text is based on the Johannine prologue and the divine logos status of Christ. Cobb correlates this logos to the content of the text of Psalm 119:105 (“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path”). Based on his argument he diffuses the seeming tension presented in John [14:6], “No one comes to the Father except through me.” He argues, if we understand that the ‘me’ in question is the word of which we read in the prologue, we need not see this assertion as denying access to God to all who do not relate primarily to the historical Jesus. Since nothing came into being except through the word, and since the word is the light of understanding in all people, it is not surprising that we cannot come to God apart from that word.³⁴

Cobb’s exegesis of that text is indeed classic, but, more importantly, it helps to clarify some Christians’ narrow understanding and interpretation of who Jesus, the Word of God, is to all humanity. Cobb reminds us in that exegesis that God’s Word is available to all God’s people, hence it can be expressed to all, even through different religions.

If Pentecostals appreciate the validity of these texts in the recognition of God’s role in the lives of all people, including those of different faith traditions, it becomes imperative that they honor and respect these religions. In addition, Pentecostals must recognize that God seeks to use them effectively for peace and harmony in every society they belong to. In pursuit of that mission, they must appreciate their need to be positive instruments of God for peace and harmony in their African societies. Consequently, they need to be open to interacting peacefully with the Islamic fundamentalists or risk living in constant fear for their lives and being embroiled in unending violence. Once Pentecostals recognize and respect people of other religions, effective dialogue with those people becomes both possible and potentially successful.

CONCLUSION

Pentecostalism, a brand of Christianity that was once considered a sect and whose members were often described by mainline Christian theologians and sociologists of religion as “religious fanatics who were psychologically unstable, neurotic, and deprived, various forms of what is called the ‘relative deprivation theory’,”³⁵ could be considered the most conspicuous manifestation of Christianity, especially in the African continent. Its theology and spirituality are

becoming normative for Christians, especially among those with middle and low incomes and the youth of Africa. Its freelance approach to theology and its openness to the validity of individual theological hermeneutics has been both its strength and its weakness. Pentecostalism has definitely given Christianity a new paradigm of growth and development across the African continent. It is therefore desirable that this branch of Christianity embraces and addresses some of the existential realities of life in the average African society. One of those existential realities is that African societies will always consist of multiple religions and religious orientations.

Another religion that will always define African societies is Islam, which also has different expressions of the faith, including fundamentalism. It is therefore imperative that Pentecostal Christians seriously consider how to live peacefully in their African milieu with people of other religious affiliations, including fundamentalist Muslims. For Pentecostal Christians to engage people of other religions in dialogue for a more peaceful society, it is necessary that they reconsider their normative exclusive theological stance and social ideology. Pentecostals do not need to repeat some of the historical travesties championed by passionate, exclusivist, theological Christian approaches; an exclusivism that engineered and harbored the horrors of the crusade, the inquisition, anti-Semitism leading to the Jewish Holocaust, and the horrendous crime of slavery in Europe and America.

For Islamic fundamentalists, who often have a strong political agenda as a complement to their theological aspiration, it is imperative they critically reassess their approach to their political goals. The twenty-first century is not likely to accommodate the kind of political triumph that the Uthman dan Fodio jihad sought and accomplished, nor will the global community simply cross its arms and look on while there are attempts at ascendancy as orchestrated in the past by different Islamic caliphates and kingdoms, such as the Abbasid, Mughal, and Ottoman Empires. Today's social-political order will not support any form of governance that promotes and perpetuates mutiny and violence consistent with the rise to power of those political orders. Moreover, all those cited political developments were prior to the emergence of the UN and the premier role of the Bill of Rights in civil society.

Therefore, Islamic fundamentalists must critically reassess their violent modality toward achieving their political goals. They need to take a leaf from the book of the 1986 peaceful revolt of the people of the Philippines against President Ferdinand Marcos' repressive regime. Cardinal Jaime Sin, the Roman Catholic religious leader of the country, led the successful peaceful revolt of the people of the Philippines. Islamic fundamentalists should explore how to replicate the success of the people of Tunisia during the Arab Spring in installing a stable and populist government after non-violently toppling the previous corrupt political leadership. They can definitely learn from the people's peaceful protest and opposition to the attempted military coup in Turkey by a section of the military on July 15, 2016. President Recep Erdoğan, a conservative Muslim, was able to save his regime by asking the people to come out on the

streets and demonstrate their opposition to the coup and their support for a democratically elected government. The people's peaceful protest foiled the coup and enabled President Erdoğan to regain power.

Peaceful revolt and protest are consistent with the ethos of the core social-political claims of both Islam and Christianity and resonate with the most appropriate means in the twenty-first century for religions, including Islam, to seek political change. Successful peaceful revolt and protest require broad support from society and not just the will of a few elements. Such revolt or protest also demand a successful appeal to the conscience of the people, which is totally inconsistent with the threats both Islamic fundamentalists and Pentecostals adopt as their strategy for communicating with the people. While Islamic fundamentalists apply both emotional and physical threats, Pentecostals broadly apply emotional and psychological threats. None of which is justified by critical and constructive theological and philosophical rationales.

Pentecostal Christians and Islamic fundamentalists have a number of features in common, therefore it is imperative that people of both religious persuasions decipher how best to interact with each other. Such interactions are in their own best interest and in the interest of the larger society for a more peaceful and harmonious social condition. Islamic fundamentalists, if they have any desire for longevity, must avoid a disrespect for life and a transient mentality of life, as these are extinctive tendencies, which are reflected in their active search for quick and violent death, and in their violent and aggressive approach to demanding change in society.

Although this chapter is largely exploratory, it has proffered some theological, ideological, and moral appeals against the excessive exclusivist stance of both fundamentalist Muslims and Pentecostal Christians. These theological, moral, and ideological appeals are consistent with maintaining traditional African values for religious diversity and respect for the religious other. This chapter advocates that Pentecostals and fundamentalist Muslims engage in substantive interreligious dialogue with their own and other religions. It proposes the adoption of a religious pluralism worldview as an imperative critical mindset for such a dialogue. Advocating for substantive interreligious dialogue is mandatory in a twenty-first century where religious freedom is a fundamental right for everyone. As citizens, Pentecostals and fundamentalist Muslims are obligated to respect and honor all human rights, for themselves and for everyone else in society.

NOTES

1. See "Global Christianity—A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population," in *Pew Research Center Religion and Public Life*. <http://www.pewforum.org/2011/12/19/global-christianity-exec/>.
2. See "Overview: Pentecostalism in Africa," in *Pew Research Center Religion and Public Life*. <http://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/overview-pentecostalism-in-africa/>.

3. Allan Anderson approves Walter J. Hollenweger's three types of Pentecostals. See Anderson, "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions," in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, edited by Anderson Allan, Bergunder Michael, Droogers André, and Van Der Laan Cornelis (University of California Press, 2010. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/j.ctt1ppt8r>), 16.
4. Anderson, "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions," 19.
5. Classical Pentecostal has become a popular typology used in reference to those Pentecostal churches that replicate the Pentecostal spirituality that originated in the USA in 1906 and spread across the world, with an appreciation of speaking in tongues, baptism of the Holy Spirit, and independent ecclesial authority. See Todd M. Johnson, "Counting Pentecostals Worldwide," *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, Vol. 36, no. 2 (2014): 274–275.
6. Sourced from Pew Research Center, "Tolerance and Tension: Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa," April 15, 2010 (<http://www.pewforum.org/2010/04/15/executive-summary-islam-and-christianity-in-sub-saharan-africa/>). Accessed June 4, 2016.
7. See Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford, UK and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 4–5.
8. Some scholars of the history of Pentecostalism have rejected the theory that the Azusa Street revival mission marked the first global, or even American, beginning of Pentecostalism. There are those, like Allan Anderson, who uphold the theory of an African American origin of Pentecostalism in the USA and there are others who postulate that Pentecostalism emerged in Korea, India, and Chile with no direct link to the USA or that even predated the latter. Many scholars are in favor of multiple origins. See Michael Bergunder, "The Cultural Turn," in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, edited by Anderson Allan, Michael Bergunder, Droogers André, and Van Der Laan Cornelis (University of California Press, 2010. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/j.ctt1ppt8r.7>), 56f; Anderson, "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions," 22f; and Amos Yong and Estrelida Y. Alexander (eds.), *Afro-Pentecostalism: Black Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in History and Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2012).
9. See Anderson Allan, Bergunder Michael, Droogers André, and Van Der Laan Cornelis (eds.), "Introduction," in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods* (University of California Press, 2010. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/j.ctt1ppt8r>), 1–10.
10. *Pew Research Center*, "Historical Overview of Pentecostalism in Kenya," August 5, 2010 (<http://www.pewforum.org/2010/08/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-kenya/>); "Historical Overview of Pentecostalism in Nigeria," August 5, 2010 (<http://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-nigeria/>); and "Historical Overview of Pentecostalism in South Africa," August 5, 2010 (<http://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-south-africa/>). Accessed June 4, 2016.
11. Nimi Wariboko argues that Pentecostalism in Nigeria has three stages of historical development with the pre-1980s as the first stage. See Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2014), 1ff and 20ff.

12. See Marinus Iwuchukwu, *Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Postcolonial Northern Nigeria: The Challenges of Inclusive Cultural and Religious Pluralism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).
13. The full name of this movement is *Izalatul Bidi'a Wa Ikamatul Sunnah*. For details on post-independent Islamic fundamentalism see Iwuchukwu (2013), *Post colonial Northern Nigeria*.
14. See Steve Kroft, "28 Pages" in *60 Minutes CBS News* (<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/60-minutes-911-classified-report-steve-kroft/>). Retrieved April 10, 2016, par. 66.
15. Ibid., par. 50.
16. Choksy and Choksy, "The Saudi Connection—Wahhabism and Global Jihad" (Cover story), *World Affairs*, Vol. 178, no. 1 (May 2015): 27–28. *Academic Search Elite*, EBSCOhost (Accessed June 5, 2016).
17. For more on this see Marinus Iwuchukwu, *Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Postcolonial Northern Nigeria: The Challenges of Inclusive Cultural and Religious Pluralism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 74–77 and 133–135.
18. Choksy and Choksy, "The Saudi Connection," 23–34.
19. Although some scholars accept the multiple origins of Pentecostalism across the world (See Robert W. Hefner, *Global Pentecostalism in the 21st Century* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), 13f), it is phenomenologically true that the current pervasive kind of Pentecostalism in most parts of Africa has very direct and substantial roots in the early twentieth-century Pentecostalism originating from the USA.
20. Steven Sotlof (January 18, 2012). In Libya a Fundamentalist War Against Moderate Islam Takes Place. *Time*. <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2104578,00.html>, par. 6. Accessed July 20, 2016.
21. It should be noted that this data is based on a taxonomy that includes all the different categories of Pentecostalism, including those that belong to the Protestant and Catholic denominations. See Todd Johnson, "Counting Pentecostals Worldwide," *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, Vol. 36, no. 2 (2014): 18.
22. See Ebenezer Obadare (December 16, 2015). Electoral Theologies: Pentecostal Pastors and the 2015 Presidential Election in Nigeria. *Africa at LSE: LSE's Engagement in Africa*. <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2015/12/16/electoral-theologies-pentecostal-pastors-and-the-2015-presidential-election-in-nigeria/>. Retrieved July 20, 2016.
23. See Mkotama Katenga-Kaunda (June 27, 2015). Pentecostalism as a Political Movement in Africa. *International Association for Political Science Students*. <http://www.iapss.org/2015/06/27/pentecostalism-as-a-political-movement-in-africa/>. Retrieved July 20, 2016.
24. See Elias Munshya (October 15, 2015). After We Have Said "Amen": Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Politics in Zambia. *Pentecostalism*. <https://eliasmunshya.org/tag/pentecostalism/>. Retrieved July 20, 2016.
25. See Vincent J. Cornell, "Islam—Epistemological Crisis, Theological Hostility, and the Problem of Difference," in *The Religious Other: Hostility, Hospitality, and the Hope of Human Flourishing*, edited by Alon Goshen-Gottstein (Lanham, Boulder, New York, and London: Lexington Books, 2014), 72.
26. See Allan Anderson, et al, "Introduction," in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods* (University of California Press, 2010). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/j.ctt1ppt8r>, 3f.

27. See Pew Research Center, "Overview: African Pentecostalism." <http://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/overview-pentecostalism-in-africa/>.
28. See Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford, UK and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 225.
29. Ibid., 246.
30. See also Qur'an 5:44–46; 5:69; and 29:46.
31. For more on this see Marinus Iwuchukwu, *Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Postcolonial Northern Nigeria: The Challenges of Inclusive Cultural and Religious Pluralism* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 163.
32. Gerald O'Collins, *Salvation for All: God's Other People* (Oxford, UK and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 148.
33. O'Collins, *Salvation for All*, 149.
34. For more on this see Iwuchukwu, *Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Postcolonial Northern Nigeria*, 161–162. I apologize to my readers that in that previous publication there is a typographical error, that repeatedly quotes John 14:16 instead of John 14:6.
35. Anderson, "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions," 20.



Buy the Future: Charismatic Pentecostalism and African Liberation in a Neoliberal World

Marleen de Witte

INTRODUCTION

Since the mid-1980s the idealistic hopes and dreams that had accompanied independence in most African countries began to fade in the face of deepening economic crises. This intensified in the 1990s as the pace of neoliberal reform was stepped up. International moneylenders imposed Structural Adjustment Programs in the expectation that market deregulation would stimulate economic growth and privatization would attract flows of private investment.¹ African states became increasingly impotent, no longer able to provide the social services citizens had come to expect, most notably in the areas of health, education, and guaranteed employment for tertiary school graduates. As a result, citizens began questioning the legitimacy of the state. Meanwhile, the promise of economic revival proved an illusion and Structural Adjustment resulted in increasing inequality and a mounting tension between inclusion and exclusion as the criteria for successful participation in the globalized market economy became ever more uncertain and subject to speculation.²

Parts of this chapter were published earlier as part of my article “Buy the Future, Now! Charismatic Chronotypes in Neoliberal Ghana,” *Etnofoor* 24, 1 (2012): 80–104. I thank *Etnofoor* for permission to reuse the material. The research on which this chapter is based was generously funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).

M. de Witte (✉)
University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
e-mail: m.dewitte@uva.nl

In this context, religious formulations of the future appear to be very attractive and have a strong impact on many Africans' hopes for the future. In many African countries, the voices that are most powerfully and successfully formulating visions of the future are religious voices, and especially charismatic Pentecostal ones. Concurring with the mounting pace of neoliberal reform—and in many ways entangled with it³—the rise of African charismatic Pentecostal churches since the 1980s alerts us to the close link between political-economic shifts and religious renewal, and in particular between charismatic Pentecostalism and the neoliberal “market in futures.” This chapter provides a case study from Ghana that invites reflection on the intersections between charismatic Pentecostalism, global neoliberalism, and African liberation and progress.

In Ghana's liberalized public sphere, with its many competing versions of modernity, the public figures that are most successful in attracting large numbers of people to a powerful image of the future are charismatic preachers. Their narratives of God-endorsed imminent wealth circulate widely through their television ministries and other media outlets. Their prestigious construction projects and their technologically well-equipped megachurches lend material evidence to the reality of this promise of prosperity, as do the ubiquitous images of their flamboyant, well-heeled celebrity pastors. Extending the ideology of progress that they preach to a rigorous practice of world-making, they materialize a future that the state once promised but never delivered. One of them is Pastor Mensa Otabil, who stands out among his colleagues for his promotion of “Africanness” and his concern with the social and economic challenges facing not only individual Africans, but also Ghana as a nation, and Africa at large. His preaching and embodiment of what Kingsley Larbi has termed an “African-Pentecostal liberation theology” make him a particularly interesting figure to look at in the African Pentecostal scene.⁴ While Otabil shares many charismatic features with his counterparts in Ghana, Nigeria, and other countries, he is clearly different for his particular take on Africanness and African progress.

This chapter unravels the success of Otabil's charismatic project of producing—and selling—an African future. His book *Buy the Future* (2002) has become a popular buy with Christians and non-Christians in Ghana and abroad. Indeed, the future features prominently in Otabil's message and this is what attracts so many aspiring people to his church. Bringing together spiritual empowerment, national politics, African consciousness, entrepreneurial spirit, and entertainment in his preaching and performance, Otabil creates himself as the embodiment of his message, and his church as its materialization. Placing Otabil's message of African liberation and progress in the context of neoliberal Ghana, this chapter examines how it comes to be materialized in building projects and urban space making in the city of Accra. The analysis invites us to rethink the relations between charismatic Pentecostalism, neoliberalism, and African urban space. Just outside the church premises, we encounter a setting that not only explains why this charismatic vision of an African future holds such attraction for so many people, but also reminds us of the harsh flipside of the marriage between neoliberal, consumerist capitalism and Christianity that charismatic Pentecostal churches so often celebrate.

CHARISMATIC PENTECOSTALISM IN NEOLIBERAL GHANA

Religion has always played a major role in Ghana's history of the future. When the first missionaries arrived, they brought with them a potent image of a new future, and conversion to Christianity also meant conversion to modernity. Alongside this implicit framing of modernity as Christian, in post-independence Ghana global development discourse and the Western, secularist, and economic idea of modernity it entailed became very powerful, especially with the progress of state-led and foreign-sponsored "modernization" in the 1980s. Faced with a severe lack of financial resources, the Rawlings government let go of its initial Marxist agenda and anti-Western attitude and in 1984 turned to the World Bank and the IMF for financial support and adopted a Program of Structural Adjustment (SAP).⁵ Development projects all over the nation, and especially building and road construction projects, embodied the nation's future and pointed to the state as the provider of that promising future. At the same time, in exchange for financial support, the SAP forced Ghana toward economic liberalization, privatization of state-run ventures, and deep cuts to government spending on social services and public-sector employment. As neoliberal reforms were intensified after the country's return to democracy in 1992, the idea of the free market as the solution to Ghana's economic problems became increasingly hegemonic. But while neoliberal reforms have been able to effectuate some measures of macroeconomic growth and stability,⁶ the gap between a small minority able to profit from increased business opportunities and a large majority struggling to secure even the most basic livelihood has deepened and overall poverty escalated.⁷ While rural-urban disparities are still significant, sky-rocketing urbanization rates cause particular challenges for Ghana's cities, especially with regard to land use, infrastructure, and services provision (e.g., housing, sanitation, transportation), and the absence of gainful and productive employment opportunities.⁸ Unemployment and poverty especially affect the youth, who make up the majority of the urban population and depend on highly insecure self-employment in the informal sector.⁹ In this neoliberal climate of increased opportunity *and* increased insecurity, many people have lost faith in the formerly appealing development narratives produced by the state. The latter has lost its control over the formulation of the future to the powers of the market and the media. In this "market in futures" charismatic Pentecostal churches appear as promising providers of progress and success. They tell people: "when you look at your living conditions, you may see that you are poor. But God tells you that you are rich." And they claim to offer people the tools to make those divinely granted riches materialize. Relief from the hardship of the present and progress toward a future of plenty increasingly seem to require divine intervention, or at least divine support.

In Ghana, as in many sub-Saharan African countries, the popularity of charismatic Pentecostal churches has been growing quickly since the turn of the century, their rise coinciding with the neoliberal reforms underway in the country during this period. Several scholars have related this exponential growth to the ways in which this new, "born-again" Christianity addresses the conditions of neoliberal capitalism.¹⁰ Pointing to these churches' celebration of

individualized wealth and consumption and their embrace of media technologies and mass culture, Birgit Meyer concludes that Pentecostalism “has become enmeshed with the neo-liberal environment into which it seeks to spread, the opportunities of which it seeks to seize, and upon whose devices its spread depends.”¹¹ Embracing the capitalist market to the fullest, many pastors run their church as a business enterprise, including the selling of church merchandise, the production of media commercials and other public relations, and the establishment of brand identities.¹² Many of them self-confidently and successfully extend their activities to a global scale. Indeed, Pentecostalism, as Paul Gifford and Trad Nogueira-Godsey point out, is one of the few global phenomena in which Africa participates as an equal.¹³ In a context where many people are disappointed with the state’s promises of bringing development and well-being, of making Ghana catch up with the rest of the modern world, charismatic churches offer people an alternative road to modern life and wealth, and a feeling of participation in a global society of successful Christians that transcends national circumstances of poverty, corruption, and unemployment. In addition, their emphasis on a total transformation of one’s lifestyle, also offers people a way to distance themselves from “tradition.” This creation of new individuals in Christ, free from traditional beliefs and extended family networks, ties in well with the neoliberal ideology of individual freedom and progress.

Charismatic Pentecostal leaders vary greatly, however, in how the concepts of success and transformation are understood, and how it is to be attained. Clearly, there is not one “charismatic way” of relating to the future; indeed, these ways can seem diametrically opposed. At Winners’ Chapel, for instance, founded in Nigeria by David Oyedepo and also very popular in Ghana, success is mainly understood in financial terms and is to be reached through the spiritual power of money offerings to God (“seed faith”)—read: the church—and through the “anointing” transmitted by the “Man of God.”¹⁴ Others, such as Sam Korankye Ankrach of Royal House Chapel International or Nigeria’s Daniel Olukoya of Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries, focus more on deliverance from the demonic forces that block one’s divinely granted success in whatever area of life.¹⁵ Others again, and this is a dimension often overlooked in studies of African Pentecostalism, place much less emphasis on spiritual agency and divine intervention and instead trust in the power of the born-again Christian to take the future in his/her own hands and become successful through practical life skills. Mensa Otabil clearly takes the latter direction. With his trademarked social awareness, African consciousness, and plea for education and cultural transformation, he may not be representative of charismatic Pentecostalism in Ghana, let alone in Africa. He is one of the most influential, however, and with his message of individual success, as well as national development, he has become a trailblazer for many other charismatic Pentecostal leaders, from West to East Africa, to emulate.¹⁶ In addressing the causes of Africa’s challenges and the way out of them, he offers a powerful message about a bright future and the way to reach it, as well as a flamboyant embodiment and concrete materialization of this message.

Buy the Future: A Message of African Transformation

Mensa Otabil (Fig. 4.1) is one of the “big five” of Ghana’s charismatic jet set. He is the founder and “general overseer” of the International Central Gospel Church (ICGC), with its 4000-seat Christ Temple in Accra and over 100 branches elsewhere. It is his radio and television broadcast *Living Word*, however, that made him widely known as “the teacher of the nation.”¹⁷ His deep voice can be heard daily on two of Accra’s radio stations (and weekly on several other stations in and outside the capital) and every Sunday evening at 6 p.m. millions of people settle in front of their TV sets to be inspired by his *Living Word*. The circulation of his tapes, videos, VCDs, and books, and his frequent travels across the globe have also brought him international fame.



Fig. 4.1 Mensa Otabil preaching in the Christ Temple. Courtesy of ICGC

Otabil, and for that matter the ICGC, is strongly committed to the development of the country, and particularly to education and entrepreneurship. He propagates what he calls practical Christianity and aims to make the Bible an effective “tool for life” for everybody. Core values are independence, human dignity, and excellence. Like most charismatic Pentecostal preachers worldwide, Otabil’s focus is on success, achievement, self-development, and personal improvement.¹⁸ Similarly, “transformation” is a central concept in Otabil’s sermons, which are also marketed as “life-transforming messages.”¹⁹ However, he does apply these globally shared concepts to specific African or Ghanaian situations. Otabil differs from many other Pentecostal leaders in his special commitment to the mental liberation of black people worldwide, to “true independence,” freedom, and self-esteem.²⁰ The central understanding running through most of Otabil’s teachings is that transformation on a personal level is intimately connected to transformation on cultural and political levels.²¹ In his message titled “Transformation,” he teaches that if we do not “go beyond the set forms, the values, beliefs, practices and systems that rule the time and place we live in,” we will conform to a life that is far below our potential.

Otabil’s preaching, then, presents an intriguing mix of born-again ideology, African consciousness, and a self-development discourse characteristic of management and consultancy literature. The title of his book, *Buy the Future: Learning to negotiate for a future better than your present* (2002), already indicates his advocacy of entrepreneurship as the best way to engage the neoliberal conditions under which the future has become privatized. The book teaches that, as stated in the back cover blurb, “the future has no power to design itself, but only takes the form and shape of our actions and inactions today.” Based on the biblical story of Esau and Jacob, it shows how Esau’s non-productive value system focused on “short-term needs” and Jacob’s productive value system focused on “long-term benefits” continue to influence how individuals, organizations, and nations make choices, manage resources, and thus shape their own destinies.²² Otabil thus makes a case for human rather than spiritual agency, for the power of choice rather than fate, for self-responsibility in life, both on the level of individual persons and that of nations. “The basis we use in formulating our choices,” he writes, “will determine: (1) whether we live in the comfort of what we have today or create better opportunities for tomorrow; (2) whether we live on what we have today or save to invest for tomorrow; (3) whether our choices fulfil short-term needs or long-term purposes; (4) whether we allow the desperation of today to make us ignore the consequences of our decisions on our future.”²³

The future, Otabil writes, occurs in the mind, it is an imagination:

The future [...] belongs to those who use their mind to design what should happen after today. Those who are able to harness the power of forward looking imagination are able to set out what the future would be like. They are the ones who buy the future with today’s currency.²⁴

In contrast to those who emphasize the aspect of insecurity about the future, Otabil tells us to “remember your future is always a potential to be revealed” and urges us to develop that potential.²⁵ His focus, then, is on choice, action, performance, and excellence. In fact, much of what Otabil preaches is not specifically Christian and does not differ so much from business and leadership consultancy discourse or New Age teaching about self-improvement.²⁶ Although “accepting Christ as personal Lord and Savior” and receiving the power of the Holy Spirit are crucial for success, it is not enough, and is not Otabil’s major emphasis. Indeed, nothing of the blurb on the back cover of *Buy the Future* discloses its Christian orientation: “How does your future look? Is it bright, dim, incredible or bleak? Do you wish to discover the tools by which you can design a better future for yourself? The power of choice has been given to each of us. How we formulate our choices now becomes crucial to the quality of life we live in the near future.”

The thin line between charismatic Christian ideology, management consultancy, and New Age self-making espoused here is certainly not unique to Otabil. We see a similar celebration of entrepreneurialism and business success with Nigeria’s Oyedepo (Winners’ Chapel), for instance, as with many others in the US-inspired charismatic field. But whereas at Winners’ the key to entrepreneurial success lies in financial-spiritual “sowing and reaping,” for Otabil it lies in one’s life choices, habits, and mentalities. Indeed, Oyedepo’s catchphrase, “sweatless success,” stands in striking contrast to Otabil’s lesson that “it is not a matter of *praying* for change; you must *work* towards change.”²⁷ What is really unique to Otabil’s Pentecostalism is his recourse to entrepreneurship in a broad, practical sense, conjoined with a plea for cultural transformation, to address the challenges of Africa and Africans.

Cultural Adjustment: Culture, Progress, and Africanness

The recurring question around which Otabil builds his messages is: “Why are we [Africa] in this mess?” His answer is that “one of the major reasons why Africa is where it is today, is because of old, antiquated, unusable, unworkable traditions. You can talk about structural adjustment. It doesn’t really change anything. The real adjustment is cultural understanding adjustment.”²⁸ And “our inability to modify our culture is one of the fundamental causes of our underdevelopment.”²⁹ Culture, then, is an important focus in Otabil’s message and he pleads for a “radical cultural transformation.” At the same time, he is well known for his African consciousness—powerfully expressed by the lavish African robes he wears in contradistinction to his suit and tie-wearing colleagues—and his efforts to make people feel proud of being African. This raises several questions: What is African culture? What is this radical transformation? What does being African entail?

In an interview with him in 2005, Otabil challenged the common distinction between “African” and “foreign” when he said that “English is no longer a foreign language, it is a Ghanaian language. Just like Christianity is no

longer a foreign religion.”³⁰ Contrary to the essentializing understanding of “culture” that dominates public discourse in Ghana, he proposes a historical view of culture which acknowledges that cultural elements can become indigenous over the course of time (and vice versa): “Those are the things that our society has not come to terms with. That these things that were foreign to some people a couple of hundred years ago have now become indigenous to us.” Otabil’s rejection of any clear-cut distinction between what is African and what is European or Western implies a critique of the hegemonic thinking about “Africanness” as “tradition,” as past. As he explained to me:

The whole issue of being African and being modern, we haven’t seriously confronted that. When we define other people we don’t define them by their past, we define them by their current status. But anytime Africa is defined it always goes back to the past, deep deep deep ancient. We Africans have defined ourselves that way. When we talk about our culture it is almost always something very very past, remote. The old Panaficanist movement idolized everything African, reclaimed our Africanness, to restore dignity. But we modernized with the world and kept this African bit behind and anytime we want to be African we have to come back to the past. We can’t move with it. That is the contradiction. And it hinders our development agenda. Africa’s underdevelopment is not because we cannot develop, but we are afraid to develop. Because development is Western and we will feel like we are moving away from our being, our Africanness. Because those who defined it for us, defined it only in the past of the ancestors. That is the challenge we are facing. There has to be a conscious effort to determine what we are moving with and what we are leaving behind. But most of our intellectuals were schooled in the old thinking of preservation of our Africanness. You hardly hear anybody articulating any view of modernity. The intellectuals who must lead the debate are all stuck in the past.

Moving toward the future thus requires a radical decoupling of Africanness and the past. Otabil sees it as his task to trigger a serious debate about “what we are moving with and what we are leaving behind” by calling for “cultural transformation” and tries to convince people that transforming their culture does not necessarily entail becoming “Western” and thus losing their “African identity.”

Being African is not based on the definitions of my ancestors. Neither is it based on the limitations of their understanding at the time. So if my ancestors felt that the way to solve a particular problem at a particular time was in such a way, and over time I have discovered that there is a better way of solving the same problem, I cannot say that because they were my ancestors and that is how they solved the problem I should use the same methodology to solve my problems today. I don’t see that if I move away from their world, I am moving away from my Africanness. I am still African, engaged in a modern, contemporary life with its problems. For all of us there is a tension between being African and being modern at the same time. Because somehow at the back of our minds there is the assumption that

being African is almost the same as being ancient. And traditional or primitive. And I don't see Africanness as being traditional or primitive. It can be contemporary, it can be very modern. And I can think in modern terms and respond to modern challenges. When it comes to issues like child naming, we use very old traditional African symbols to name our children and I don't see any conflict between that and the modern challenges I am faced with. But when it comes to issues related to time management, to value for certain attitudes, that are required for a competitive society as we live in, we have a problem with African culture that slows us down. And I don't think that critiquing those behaviors alienates me from my Africanness. Because my Africanness is intrinsic, it is part of me. Nobody can give it to me and nobody can take it away from me. It is me.

Time management indeed recurs frequently in Otabil's preaching as a crucial skill needed for success in the world today. His plea for punctuality is brought to practice in the running of his church, where activities never start even five minutes late. Apart from "issues of time management," Otabil addresses in his messages many more aspects of "African culture" that are to be left behind or transformed if Africans want to move forward. In the series "Pulling down strongholds," Otabil calls on believers and people of African descent to move away from such unproductive socio-cultural beliefs, arguments, and negative traditions, including an inferiority complex, tribalism, cultural conservativeness and stagnation, idolatry and fetishism, village mentality, bad leadership, and apathy.³¹ Even in messages that do not directly focus on them, Otabil often refers to restraining, ineffective, or harmful practices and habits that he considers part of "African culture." These range from the habit of African men to have multiple girlfriends instead of being faithful and devoted to their wives, the restrictive pressure of the extended family, and the uncritical reverence for the older generation, to the habit of eating fatty foods and leading otherwise unhealthy lifestyles.

But he also often criticizes the common tendency to place all power outside the person in the spirit world and to hold spirits, demons, and witches responsible for one's misfortunes instead of taking responsibility oneself. This is as much a critique of African traditional religion as it is of many of his charismatic Pentecostal colleagues (including some in his own church), who "cast out the demon of poverty rather than fighting the *culture* of poverty,"³² and who cast out ignorance in the name of Jesus rather than casting out ignorance through education.³³ Otabil does acknowledge that "we must pray against evil spirits and there may be witches around that we need to ward off,"³⁴ but he is not called to do those things, he is called to make people think and act. He does emphasize, however, that crucial to this thinking and acting is a deep spiritual life, a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and an inner experience of the power of the Holy Spirit. His conviction of the strong public significance of Holy Spirit power also entails a critique of the secularist notion of modernity that restricts spirituality to private life.

Africa Must Be Free: Leadership and Liberation

One of the key themes of Otabil's "cultural adjustment theology" is leadership. In his speech at the matriculation of the Central University College, the first private university in Ghana founded by Otabil in 2001, he told his audience (and the assembled media): "One of the reasons why Africa is where it is today is because of the immoral leadership we have had for a very long time. Leadership that has elevated corruption of virtue, corruption of character, corruption of choices, corruption of decision, which has resulted in mismanagement of our national resources."³⁵ Otabil's message thus has a strong political component (although he does not restrict leadership to the political sphere). He is well known for his critical stance toward the state and African leadership in general, and his strong voice in public debates. In this, he strongly differs from most African charismatic Pentecostal leaders, who generally keep away from political debate and tend to be easily coopted by the government.³⁶ Otabil openly criticizes the President, for example, for traveling round the world to beg donor countries for money, thus turning Ghana into a begging nation, instead of dealing with structural internal problems.

In his message series "Africa must be free," Otabil locates the causes of Africa's current problems in three periods: precolonial times nurtured a passive, compliant attitude; the colonial regime gave Africans an inferiority complex; and postcolonial dictatorship instilled fear in people:

Some people say the white people brought development. Well, thank the colonial master for some of the things they did, but you see, every railway line established by the colonial master ended up at the port. Every railway line, either Tema or Takoradi. From the mines to Takoradi. The reason is because they didn't do it so that you can travel. You were happy going third or fourth class, but the reason was that they could bring your timber and your gold faster to the port, and gone. So you sit down and say, o, they are developing our country, now we have railway lines. It's not development; it is facilitation of exploitation [laughter and applause].³⁷

But, he said in an interview, "we cannot attribute the causes of Africa's problems only to colonialism as people tend to do. Some of the root causes are much older."³⁸ He traces the untrustworthiness of African leaders to the era of slavery, when African chiefs took their own people captive and sold them as slaves.

We cannot blame the Europeans only for the atrocities of slavery. It was very painful for me to come to the conclusion that Africans participated willingly and knowingly. But it is the truth that people sold their own people for a bit of sugar or a gun. Parents could even sell their stubborn child. The value of a horse was more than that of a human being. When I go to Elmina and I see the castle and the town and the little distance between, I always wonder how it could have been possible that these things were going on so close to where normal life was going

on in the town. And people knew it. They knew that slaves were held in the dungeons in terrible conditions and were shipped. Local people went to the castle to negotiate deals. They knew what was going on there and yet there were no protests. What worries me most about this painful truth is the value of human life. That value was clearly very little. And the frightening question today is: *has this changed?* I believe it has changed only very marginally.³⁹

In a similar vein, Otabil writes in *Buy the Future*:

Much as I hold the European merchants responsible for their low regard for the sanctity of human life, the real question I ask myself is, "How could our African forebearers ever imagine that human life was equivalent to rum, sugar and guns from Europe?" [...] Europe sold us their processed present commodities and we sold them our future.⁴⁰

Slavery is a sensitive issue in Ghana,⁴¹ and Otabil makes it even more so by stating that "African chiefs are still doing it today. These days they are not called chiefs. They are called Presidents and Prime Ministers and they are still doing it."⁴² They are still "selling" their own people because by their bad leadership they leave people no other option than to go and queue and be humiliated at the embassies and airports to have themselves shipped to foreign lands only to suffer and be exploited. "Our young men and women are leaving our nations to labour and build other civilizations. The future is being sold again."⁴³

Because of his critical political vision, many people say they would want Otabil for president.⁴⁴ But although he seriously considered it, he decided that the political game would not leave him enough room to do what he thinks is really necessary for the country to go forward.⁴⁵ Otabil's ultimate concern is the transformation of Ghana, and of the entire African continent, into a success. He is convinced that this should not come from government, nor from "the developed world." Neither can it be attained by praying for the healing of the nation, for God's miraculous intervention. The solution to Ghana's problems lies in the personal transformation of individual Ghanaians and Africans into responsible citizens, responsible entrepreneurs, and responsible leaders in Christ. As the church's current motto puts it, "Raising leaders, shaping vision, and influencing society through Christ."

MATERIALIZING AFRICAN TRANSFORMATION

The message of transformation discussed above plays an important part in explaining the, as of yet, unrelenting success of churches like the ICGC. But equally powerful in attracting people to the promises of charismatic churches are the ways in which these churches materialize this message in their practices of world-making, including their ongoing building projects and the images of success projected through their multimedia ministries.

Pentecostal City Building

Pentecostalism's message of transformation and success translates to its geographical expansion in urban landscapes. As discussed by Asonzeh Ukah for Nigeria, the social manifestation of Pentecostalism is, first of all, an urban phenomenon, the vitality of which is most obvious in the rapid multiplication of church buildings in urban centers and peri-urban estates, with the line of prayer camps along the Lagos–Ibadan Expressway as the most striking example.⁴⁶ In Accra, hundreds of Pentecostal churches make a conspicuous mark on urban life and space. “Fully engaged in recreating the world in line with their plan for it,” these churches have entered the Ghanaian scene with an overt strategy of public presence.⁴⁷ Their impressive buildings on well-spaced compounds, equipped with advanced technological devices, stand out in the urban landscape as icons of success, materializing God's anointing upon the church in question. The open architecture of buildings in Ghana's tropical climate combines with charismatic groups' animated worship styles and use of sound amplification technologies to make for a strong presence in the urban soundscape.⁴⁸ In addition, their multi-channel media ministries make the pastors' images and messages available in public and private spaces throughout the city, and beyond. In short, charismatic churches' technologies of construction, amplification, and circulation materialize the spirit of neoliberalism in the city and attract urban dwellers to their promise of radical transformation, of turning failure into success, poverty into prosperity.

In the case of the ICGC, Otabil's message of African transformation materializes in numerous worship spaces built throughout the city of Accra, in other cities and towns in Ghana, and abroad. Its headquarters is the Christ Temple (Fig. 4.2), situated along Accra's Ring Road at Abossey-Okay and completed in 1996. Every corner of the spacious compound is planned. It has neatly paved lanes and shaded parking spaces, clean and spacious toilet facilities, mowed and all-year green lawns with a few well-kept trees, a refreshment kiosk called Altar Snacks, and a row of seven flag poles, one flying a Ghanaian flag,



Fig. 4.2 Christ Temple complex, Accra. Courtesy of Pearl Boateng, <https://pboats.files.wordpress.com>

the others used during visits of international guest speakers. The main entrance to the building has a “front desk,” the Vision Bookshop, and a small hall that can be rented for wedding ceremonies or burial services. At the back of the church building are the offices and the media studio. Behind it is a baptismal font with a nicely designed waterfall and a half-open “multipurpose hall”.

In the experience of many ICGC members I spoke to, the Christ Temple compound is an island of cleanliness, orderliness, and morality in central Accra’s sea of chaos, dirt, and immoral behavior, a separate city in a city. A city one feels proud to belong to and wants to be committed to. A place of beauty and prestige, where one wants to have one’s photograph taken. A city that, in contrast to much of Accra, is clearly structured and well-organized, and functions properly. A longstanding church member told me how the initial idea was indeed to build “ICGC city.” It would have a nursery, a crèche, primary, junior, and secondary schools, a university, hotels, a hospital, “and all that.” The university (Central University College) has been built, somewhere else in Accra though, and functions well and there are plans for a bank, but the other institutions of “ICGC city” are still future dreams. Meanwhile, construction work never stops and new building projects are always going on. Anytime I visited the Christ Temple since my fieldwork, a new block had been added.

The Christ Temple complex stands in stark contrast to the surrounding areas people pass through on their way to the Christ Temple, and from which the compound is separated by a fence. Immediately to its west lies the large, open, and notoriously stinking Odaw drain that carries the city’s waste water (and with that lots of solid waste) to the Korle lagoon and the sea, where cows “graze” on waste and children defecate on the banks. A narrow bridge over this drain connects the world of Christ Temple to the busy ring road, and behind it, Zongo, the poor Muslim area with its potholed road and open sewers clogged with refuse, and Abossey-Okay, widely known as the place to buy spare parts for cars. Whereas to the west of the Christ Temple the cramped, narrow streets of Abossey-Okay, lined with seemingly disorderly piles of spare parts and tires, make driving a car almost impossible, to the east lies a wide, desolate space—for which all kinds of buildings have been planned, but it has not been developed yet. The ICGC uses part of it as a parking lot for the hundreds of cars that drive in every Sunday, passing the open-air meat market at the back of the neighboring mosque. Just behind these bare hills is the recently appeared slum popularly known as “Sodom and Gomorrah,” where a mass of squatters—many say prostitutes and armed robbers—live in makeshift shelters amid waste and, according to the season, mud or dust.

To put the Christ Temple complex into comparative perspective, let us consider one of the largest and most successful Pentecostal city-building projects in Nigeria, the Redemption Camp of the Redeemed Christian Church of God studied by Asonzeh Ukah.⁴⁹ Located 42 kilometers outside of Lagos, along the Lagos–Ibadan highway, it covers several thousand acres, comprising not only worship spaces and educational and administrative buildings but also residential real estate. Being fully self-sufficient in terms of water and electricity supply, refuse collection and disposal, transportation, healthcare, security, and other

services, the Redemption Camp is of quite a different scale and order than the Christ Temple. Nevertheless, both religious building projects exemplify a similar “deployment of neoliberal practices such as the privileging of profit, the integration of business and market logic with evangelism and doing God’s work,” leading to new configurations of urban and peri-urban real-estate development and religious revival.⁵⁰ Both sites have also come to be understood, by its developers and church members, as urban alternatives to their respective cities of Accra and Lagos, which are perceived as chaotic, unmanaged, and immoral. What we witness here is that churches, supported by their own system of taxation—the principle of tithing that requires church members to offer one-tenth of their income to the church—and by (sometimes dubious) access to flows of finance capital, take over more and more responsibilities from the state—largely incapacitated by structural adjustment measures and political corruption—from providing education, healthcare, social security, and facilities for entertainment and cultural production, to the development, structuring, and maintenance of urban space.⁵¹ In their city-building activities, churches such as the ICGC and the Redeemed Christian Church of God can be considered as what Lanz and Oosterbaan have described as entrepreneurial religions that constitute paradigmatic neoliberal forms of urban organization.⁵²

Projecting an Aesthetics of Success

In addition to the development of urban infrastructure, another aspect of Pentecostal world building is the establishment of a strong audiovisual presence in the urban landscape. Driven by a double predilection for spreading the word of God and marketing churches and pastors, the spatial politics of charismatic Pentecostalism extend far beyond the churches’ premises, involving the dissemination of its messages, sounds, and images to the outside world. Using a wide range of media technologies, charismatic churches firmly inscribe their audiovisually mediated world of success and progress into Accra’s sound- and imagescape.

The Christ Temple complex is well-equipped with modern technology. It has a superb media studio with regularly updated equipment, and its auditorium is furnished with a closed-circuit television system with several cameras transmitting images of the stage performance to two large screens flanking the stage and numerous smaller screens on the balcony and outside. The church’s investment in up-to-date technological equipment not only ensures an optimal multimedia worship experience, it also facilitates a steady output of ICGC media productions. Radio and television broadcasts, audio and video CDs, and marketing materials distribute Otobil’s voice and image in public and private spaces and strengthen the church’s presence in the city (and the country). Since the deregulation of Ghanaian broadcasting in 1992, privately owned, commercial radio and TV stations have been mushrooming, claiming Accra’s mediascape from the state-owned Ghana Broadcasting Corporation.⁵³

Although churches may not legally own broadcast stations, new media freedom does allow them to buy airtime. As a result, the voices of media preachers and the sounds of gospel music and commercials announcing healing crusades and prayer summits are audible throughout the city, heard through radios and cassette/CD players in a range of public spaces, from taxis and taxi ranks to roadside stalls, kiosks, and markets.

Images of church leaders in slick media formats make the blessings of God bestowed upon born-again Christians immediately visible to large audiences. Charismatic pastors, with their corpulent bodies, flamboyant outfits, well-groomed appearances, beautiful wives, and luxurious cars, embody the success and achievement that many aspire to for their own lives. Their portraits appear on television, websites, billboards, banners, and posters, and on the book covers, video jackets, CD labels, and merchandizing produced by their churches.⁵⁴ They serve as icons that attract people to the power of the Holy Spirit to transform lives and shape futures by visualizing its blessings as riches and success. Nigerian Pentecostal leaders seem to take this celebration of flamboyance and material riches to the extreme, leaving their Ghanaian colleagues behind in terms of material blessings. Owning one or more private jets seems to have become an imperative among Nigeria's Pentecostal elite. The abovementioned Bishop Oyedepo is reported to be the wealthiest pastor in the world, with a total net worth of \$150 million—and property including four private jets and homes in the United States and England—while five of the world's ten richest pastors are Nigerian.⁵⁵ While they are a source of growing concern and social commentary, their conspicuous display of material prosperity and well-polished male personalities seems to be part of a general and as yet unchanging tendency within African charismatic Pentecostalism.

Although less extreme, Otabil is no exception in this regard. His public image is highly stylized, produced through PR strategies that depend on both modern media technologies and personal embodiment.⁵⁶ With his well-fed body wrapped in luxurious, costly African outfits, Otabil embodies “the African dream” of many young people in Ghana's cities: to be wealthy and successful, wise and handsome; to have a beautiful wife and kids to be proud of; to live in a global world of unlimited intercontinental travel, foreign currencies, and foreign friends; and yet to be confident about being African. As an icon of success, Otabil exemplifies the self-made man who has made it to the global top through hard and honest work from the same underprivileged position and in the same underprivileged part of the world as many young Ghanaians today. Otabil's body image, as it is produced by the ICGC's media and PR department, and by Otabil himself, becomes a “screen” on which to project ordinary Ghanaians' hopes and aspirations for the future. Indeed, Otabil embodies the future that many would wish for themselves.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

Just outside the Christ Temple compound, in “Sodom and Gomorrah,” we find a setting that not only explains why this charismatic vision of a prosperous African future holds such attraction for so many people, but also reminds us of the harsh flipside of the marriage between neoliberal, consumerist capitalism and charismatic Pentecostalism that these churches celebrate. “Sodom and Gomorrah” in Central Accra’s Agbobloshie neighborhood entered the global news media when foreign journalists and photographers discovered that the wastelands on the banks of the Korle Lagoon had turned into a dump site for electronic refuse from Europe. The place attracts slum dwellers, mostly young men, willing to endanger their health burning discarded computers, mobile phones, printers, and other devices, to harvest the precious metals they contain.

One of the people who brought this to international attention is the South African photographer Pieter Hugo. “This wasteland,” Hugo writes, “where people and cattle live on mountains of motherboards, monitors and discarded hard drives, is far removed from the benefits accorded by the unrelenting advances of technology.”⁵⁷ Far removed, to be sure, from the great majority of people enjoying these benefits, who are still predominantly located in the global North. But the unrelenting advances of technology are no longer exclusively to be found in countries far from this place. Unintended perhaps, Hugo’s pictures also show how near “Sodom and Gomorrah” is to the church presented in this chapter. In some of his pictures, the Christ Temple complex is visible in the background (see also Fig. 4.3).⁵⁸ This shocking proximity of the technology-driven production site of “buy the future” and the dump site of the future of technology lays bare some of the conditions of the neoliberal era that this chapter started out with. Conditions, it argued, to which religious answers of a particular kind appear ever more attractive.

The concurrent development of the neighboring sites of the Christ Temple complex and the “Sodom and Gomorrah” slum illustrates the deepened economic inequality caused—in many parts of Africa—by structural adjustment economic reforms over the last decades. In this area of Accra, the close distance between the new opportunities for economic success and prosperity on the one hand, and bare economic survival on the other, between prosperity and poverty, comes into sharp focus. Charismatic Pentecostalism, it seems, thrives on this insecurity surrounding the tension between the ever more visible possibilities and promises of participation in the global economic order and the harsh realities of marginalization and exclusion from economic success. In such an environment, charismatic churches, whose leaders live the prosperity that they preach and who fully participate in global religious-cum-business networks, offer people a way of feeling connected to and part of the world, of being global citizens—consumers. And that, in the case of Otobil, without having to lose their sense of being African. In an environment in which many people struggle to make it through the day, trying to make ends meet by seizing opportunities on the spur of the moment, these churches promise them new roads to a future of prosperity.



Fig. 4.3 Christ Temple complex seen from e-waste dump at “Sodom and Gomorrah.”
Courtesy of Kevin McElvaney

One element that grounds charismatic Pentecostalism’s successful marriage to the culture of neoliberal capitalism is the radical rejection of stasis and an emphasis on constant renewal. This emphasis on continuous renewal, on a kind of transformation that never results in a static new state, but continually produces “something new,” is deeply engrained in charismatic religiosity. As the hit song “Do something new” by gospel singer Elder Collins Amponsah goes, “Yesterday has gone, another day has come, do something new in my life.” In this continual reproduction of expectation of newness, of a sense of imminent novelty, we can discern an important link between charismatic Pentecostalism and neoliberalism, and in particular with the “ceaseless consumption of novelty” characteristic of “the spirit of modern consumerism.”⁵⁹ The “do something new” of charismatic Pentecostalism and the “buy something new” on which consumerist capitalism thrives go together remarkably well. Churches not only celebrate wealth, consumption, and material progress, but also operate as business enterprises, taking over, in good neoliberal fashion, many responsibilities from the state in their material practices of world making.

But the limits of this success story lie just outside the walls around the posh compounds that house their auditoriums, multi-purpose halls, offices, shops, and media studios. The encroaching strength of poverty right outside Otabil’s Christ Temple speaks in criticism at the message and image of prosperity produced behind its gate. The poverty at the gate tells that the individualized prosperity Pentecostalism preaches can only be partial, at the very least, and exclusionary, if not exploitative, as an increasing number of social commentators

in Ghana (and Nigeria) complain. More particularly, it raises questions about the relationship between the African liberation that Otabil teaches and a prosperity theology that, as argued, sits complacently with a raging neoliberal ideology. Clearly, this is not a liberation theology that challenges the structural inequalities and oppressions of the global capitalist system in any way. On the contrary, it celebrates, and grows on, capitalism's very principles of concentrated wealth accumulation and consumerism and seeks to make African Christians winners in this system instead of losers. But the e-waste dump site at "Sodom and Gomorrah" shows the shocking and dark flipside of this system. The flipside also of capitalism's imperative to "buy something new." Unlike consumer products of the past, today's electronic gadgetry is outdated within two to three years. This built-in obsolescence in industrial design—aimed at generating long-term sales volume by reducing the time between repeat purchases—animates the global capitalist system, but poisons, literally, those on its fringes. The intentional reduction of the life-span of electronic devices, which is said to sustain economic growth, also reduces the life-span of the people who try to live on technology's afterlife in places such as this, creating a lasting problem that cannot but produce, in Hugo's words, a "permanent error" in the system, challenging neoliberalism from within. Sites such as "Sodom and Gomorrah" are undeniably part of the present globalized neoliberal order, even though they usually remain out of the sight of those who enjoy the benefits of technological innovation most, including the affluent pastors and members of the church whose backyard this is. They make an alarming comment on the affinity between the continual production of renewal in charismatic Pentecostalism and the ceaseless consumption of novelty of consumerist capitalism that this type of religion so keenly embraces, on the future that the world is building—and that charismatic Pentecostalism, in Ghana as much as elsewhere, encourages us to buy.

NOTES

1. James Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006).
2. Brad Weiss, ed., *Producing African Futures: Ritual and Reproduction in a Neoliberal Age* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 8–9; Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff, "Millennial Capitalism: First Thoughts on a Second Coming," *Public Culture* 12, 2 (2000): 291–343.
3. Jean Comaroff, "The Politics of Conviction: Faith on the Neo-liberal Frontier," *Social Analysis* 53, 1 (2009): 17–38; Birgit Meyer, "Pentecostalism and Neo-liberal Capitalism: Faith, Prosperity and Vision in African Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches," *Journal for the Study of Religion* 20, 2 (2007): 5–28; Stephan Lanz and Martijn Oosterbaan, "Entrepreneurial Religion in the Age of Neoliberal Urbanism," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 40, 3 (2016): 487–506, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12365>.
4. Kingsley Larbi, "African Pentecostalism in the Context of Global Pentecostal Ecumenical Fraternity: Challenges and Opportunities," *Pneuma* 24, 2 (2002): 155.

5. Jesse Shipley, "The Best Tradition Goes On': Audience Consumption and the Transformation of Popular Theatre in Neoliberal Ghana," in *Producing African Futures*, ed. Weiss, 111–113; Paul Nugent, *Big Men, Small Boys and Politics in Ghana* (London: Pinter Publishing, 1995), 109–116.
6. Kwame Boafo-Arthur, ed., *Ghana: One Decade of the Liberal State* (Dakar: CODESRIA Books, 2007).
7. G. Kwaku Tsikata, "Challenges of Economic Growth in a Liberal Economy," in *Ghana: One Decade*, ed. Boafo-Arthur, 49–85.
8. By 2010 over half of Ghana's population lived in urban areas. The urbanization rate is projected to increase to 72% by 2035. Source: African Economic Outlook (AEO) 2016.
9. Kwame Ninsin, "Markets and Liberal Democracy," in *Ghana: One Decade*, ed. Boafo-Arthur, 99. According to the 2010 Population & Housing Census, 56% of Ghana's urban population was under 25 years of age (Accra: Ghana Statistical Service, 2010).
10. Comaroff, "The Politics of Conviction"; David Martin, *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002); David Maxwell, "The Durawall of Faith: Pentecostal Spirituality in Neo-liberal Zimbabwe," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 35, 1 (2005): 4–32; Meyer, "Pentecostalism and Neo-liberal Capitalism."
11. Meyer, "Pentecostalism and Neo-liberal Capitalism," 21.
12. Marleen de Witte, "Business of the Spirit: Ghanaian Broadcast Media and the Commercial Exploitation of Pentecostalism," *Journal of African Media Studies* 3, 2 (2011): 189–205.
13. Paul Gifford and Trad Nogueira-Godsey, "The Protestant Ethic and African Pentecostalism: A Case Study," *Journal for the Study of Religion* 24, 1 (2011): 16.
14. Paul Gifford, "Unity and Diversity within African Pentecostalism: Comparison of the Christianities of Daniel Olukoya and David Oyedepo," in *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in Postcolonial Societies*, ed. Martin Lindhardt (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 115–135.
15. Gifford, "Unity and Diversity."
16. Michael Perry Kweku Okyerefo, "The Gospel of Public Image in Ghana," in *Christianity and Public Culture in Africa*, ed. Harri Englund (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 212; Päivi Hasu, "Prosperity Gospels and Enchanted Worldviews: Two Responses to Socio-economic Transformation in Tanzanian Pentecostal Christianity," in *Pentecostalism and Development: Churches, NGOs and Social Change in Africa*, ed. Dena Freeman (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 67–76.
17. Marleen de Witte, "Altar Media's *Living Word*. Televised Charismatic Christianity in Ghana," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 33, 2 (2003): 172–202.
18. See for example the series "Turning failure into success" (2002), "The portrait of success" (2005), and "Going beyond your limitations" (2005).
19. The year 2003 was prophesied to be "my year of transformation" and in that year Otabil delivered a message series titled "Transformation."
20. See especially Mensa Otabil, *Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia: A Biblical Revelation on God's Purpose for the Black Race* (Accra: Altar International, 1992).
21. Responding to a common criticism that he does not address people's personal problems (e.g., visa, husband, children, the common subjects in most charismatic churches), he says in "Pulling down strongholds": "When you talk about the problems of Africa, people will say 'well, but you are talking about the big

- problems, I don't want to hear about Africa's problems, I want to hear about my own problems.' What you fail to understand is that your own problems are the reflection of bigger problems."
22. Mensa Otabil, *Buy the Future: Learning to Negotiate for a Future Better than your Present* (Lanham: Pneumalife Publishing, 2002), 6.
 23. Otabil, *Buy the Future*, 6.
 24. Otabil, *Buy the Future*, 85–86.
 25. Otabil, *Buy the Future*, 108.
 26. Indeed, in 2003 Otabil established his own consultancy company, Otabil and Associates, which develops, organizes, and markets leadership training seminars and workshops, for which Otabil packages much of what he preaches in church into a training format.
 27. Message series "Talent, work and profit."
 28. Message series "Pulling down strongholds."
 29. First Ofori-Atta lecture, quoted in Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalising African Economy* (London: Hurst & Company, 2004), 125.
 30. Interview March 16, 2005, Christ Temple, Accra.
 31. Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 125–130.
 32. Teaching service, Christ Temple, April 2, 2002.
 33. Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 122.
 34. Teaching service, April 2, 2002, Christ Temple, Accra.
 35. January 13, 2001, quoted in Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 129.
 36. Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 176.
 37. Message series "Africa must be free."
 38. Interview March 22, 2002, Christ Temple, Accra.
 39. Ibid.
 40. Otabil, *Buy the Future*, 89–90.
 41. Bayo Holsey, *Routes of Remembrance: Refashioning the Slave Trade in Ghana* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008).
 42. "The people don't care," quoted in Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 123.
 43. Otabil, *Buy the Future*, 90.
 44. Radio interview and news item (Me for President? Never! Otabil dashes expectations of Christian majority, Ghanaian Chronicle January 22, 2005).
 45. Interview March 22, 2002, Christ Temple, Accra.
 46. Asonzeh Ukah, "Pentecostalism, Religious Expansion and the City: Lessons from the Nigerian Bible-Belt," in *Between Resistance and Expansion: Explorations of Local Vitality in Africa*, ed. Peter Probst and Gerd Spittler (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2004), 415–441; Asonzeh Ukah, "Building God's City: The Political Economy of Prayer Camps in Nigeria," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 40, 3 (2016): 524–540, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12363>; see also Marloes Janson and Akintunde Akinleye, "The Spiritual Highway: Religious World Making in Megacity Lagos (Nigeria)," *Material Religion* 11, 4 (2015): 550–562.
 47. Meyer, "Pentecostalism and Neo-liberal Capitalism," 16.
 48. Marleen de Witte, "Accra's Sounds and Sacred Spaces," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 32, 2 (2008): 690–709.
 49. Ukah, "Building God's City."
 50. Ukah, "Building God's City," 2.

51. Okyerefo, "The Gospel of Public Image."
52. Lanz and Oosterbaan, "Entrepreneurial Religion."
53. De Witte, "Business of the Spirit."
54. Asamoah-Gyadu, Kwabena, "Of Faith and Visual Alertness. The Message of "Mediatized" Religion in an African Pentecostal Context," *Material Religion* 1, 3 (2005): 336–357.
55. <http://gazettereview.com/2016/02/richest-pastors-in-world/>, accessed September 27, 2016.
56. Marleen de Witte, "Fans and Followers: Marketing Charisma, Making Religious Celebrity in Ghana," *Australian Religion Studies Review* 24, 3 (2011): 231–253.
57. Pieter Hugo, "Permanent Error," *Etnofoor* 24, 1 (2012): 105–116.
58. Hugo, "Permanent Error," 107.
59. Campbell 1987: 205; see also Meyer, "Pentecostalism and Neo-liberal Capitalism," 9.



When Pentecostalism Meets African Indigenous Religions: Conflict, Compromise, or Incorporation?

Naar M'fundisi-Holloway

INTRODUCTION

The market for the study of African traditional religions (ATRs), African independent churches (AICs), and Pentecostalism has been flooded with sociologists, historians, and anthropologists trying to understand their place in the African religious landscape and their impact on the continent's religious expression and practice.¹ These studies became more prevalent from the nineteenth century. An intrinsic connection to the spirit world was central among Africans and continues to be so in the twenty-first century. ATRs existed well before European religious expression and practice permeated Africa. These traditional religions were not only affected by Arabs who brought Islam, but also by Europeans who brought Christianity and colonization.² Pentecostal missionaries from the USA began to visit parts of Africa in the early twentieth century, despite the challenges they faced. Due to the eschatological nature of their beliefs, they posited that Africa needed Christ as a matter of urgency in preparation for the second coming of Christ, and came into contact with ATRs in the process.

This chapter seeks to explore the interface between Pentecostalism and ATRs by understanding the dynamics at play and the product thereof. This will entail asking: What relationship has Pentecostalism had with ATRs? Were Pentecostals passive or active in their interactions with ATR? Has there been a level of negotiation in their interface for compromise and incorporation, or has this collision

N. M'fundisi-Holloway (✉)
The Salvation Army, London, UK

been mainly antagonistic? Did they make hybrids of ATR that incorporated aspects of Pentecostalism? Did they dominate or resist these religions? What impact has this association or detachment had on the growth and development of Pentecostalism and AICs in Africa? This last is to explore how the collision led to the formation of AICs that embraced the Spirit and the practice of charismata (healing, prophecy, and exorcism), similar to some expressions of ATRs.

This contact explains postcolonial dynamics where Africans became independent, not only from colonial rule, but also in creating churches that were independent of mission churches and Classical Pentecostalism. It shall be noted that a number of changes in the postcolonial era led to the growth and development of current dominant AICs and other Pentecostal/charismatic-type churches. The use of Zambia as a case study allows for a more intimate understanding of the relationship between both religious paradigms.

TERMS

The term Pentecostalism could be defined on the basis of: theology (the doctrine of Spirit baptism and tongues as initial evidence); historical roots with links to Azusa Street Revival with J. Seymour and Parham³; or spirituality.⁴ A healthy approach to the term Pentecostalism, according to Asamoah-Gyadu, is not to view it as “clones, consumers and imitators of western innovations.”⁵ Kalu dismissed the view that African Pentecostalism is “a product of Azusa or an extension of the American electronic church.”⁶ The general consensus among African scholars is to look at it in a broader context that embraces various cultural contexts of African Christianity.⁷ For the purposes of this chapter, Pentecostalism, or Pentecostal, focuses on a more theological definition of classical Pentecostalism. It is important to uphold the fact that Pentecostalism is not a Western but a “Third World phenomenon” despite its substantial presence in North America.⁸ Anderson described African Pentecostalism “to include Pentecostal mission churches started by white Pentecostal missionaries, black churches and Pentecostal type churches with historical, theological, and liturgical links with the Pentecostal movement.”⁹

ATR refers to communal religious practices that are rooted within the African context and include the veneration of ancestral spirits and use of symbolic objects in their expression of worship.

AIC connotes those churches with links to either mainline or classical Pentecostal churches that broke away due to the need for independence. These churches still uphold some of the tenets of their mother churches but choose to employ and incorporate practices that appeal to and address problems faced within the African context.

AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS

Mbiti considers religion as part of the African “cultural heritage which dominates their thinking and shapes their cultures, social life, political organizations and economic activities.”¹⁰ Before the coming of Christianity, the spirit world

was alive and prominent in the lives of the people. Community life and existence were deeply connected to both seen and unseen worlds. These African beliefs were more deeply rooted in the beliefs of ancestors in comparison to other religions.¹¹ Despite the fact that the practice of ATRs is not as prominent in the current era, they are still observed by those who have chosen not to disengage with their heritage. An emphasis on the spirit world is key within AICs in both rural and urban areas. Although in the twenty-first century these practices may be associated with the uneducated, there is no doubt that high-profile people in politics, business, and other professions consult witchdoctors (*ng'anga*) seeking wealth or healing when scientific medicines fail. A *ng'anga*'s role is divination that works in two ways to provide solutions for any matter that a person presents either through herbs or by consulting mediums or spirits. However, these solutions can have negative or positive consequences in that, in extreme cases, the remedies can be used to terminate life. In other cases, they can be used to cure diseases, bring back a loved one, cure impotence, or incite romance.

Clement M. Doke studied the Lamba people of Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) in 1930. Not only did this tribe believe in the existence of a creator but they also believed in the spiritual world of disembodied spirits, demons and, other spiritual beings—a spiritualistic belief. Doke speaks of an inherent Lamba belief in the power that exists within humans separate from that of the creator. This power helps in the preparation of charms, potions, medicines, and so on. Doke called this “the cult of dynamism” *Ubwanga*.¹² The charms serve many different purposes: for protection in general, from wild animals for hunters, from witches, in warfare, from crop thieves; to prevent rain; for good hunting skills; as a cure for sickness; for a successful and easy birth; and so on.¹³ It is evident that the African traditionalists are inspired by sources such as “God, the ancestors, the lesser gods, spirits and others like witches, sorcerers and magic.” According to Opoku,

Religion therefore becomes the root of the African culture and it is the determining principle of the African life In traditional Africa, religion is life and life, religion. Africans are engaged in religion in whatever they do—whether it be farming, fishing or hunting; or simply eating, drinking or traveling, religion gives meaning and significance to their lives, both in this world and the next.¹⁴

ANCESTRAL AND CHIEFLY CULTS

In ancestral and chiefly cults, spirits of the departed are venerated.¹⁵ They are “the life force of the lineage, an influence on the continuing of the life of the community of both religious and ethical spheres. They symbolise the continuity of the social structure and the authority the ancestor had in life. The jurisdiction of the ancestors cannot be challenged and therefore such an institution ensures the concept of all who must comply.”¹⁶ Ranger, in his study of ancestral cults in central Africa, speaks of the fact that these cults are territorial and dominate an area rather than a lineage.¹⁷ Therefore, people living in certain

territories were mindful of the cult to which they pledged their allegiance. These cults were centered around “graves, shrines, and paraphernalia”¹⁸ that were usually in the forest. In some instances, a shrine would be erected right in the vicinity of a village or paraphernalia hung on a certain part of the village where adults and children alike would be aware of the sacredness and significance of that particular area. The life force of a village would be dependent on these things and they commanded great respect from the villagers. A village gatekeeper was responsible for maintaining the shrine and ensuring that its sanctity was respected.

Some examples of spirit mediums can be drawn from Mondoro cults in Zimbabwe, Mbona cults, and the Nyau Dance Society in Malawi. According to J.M. Schoffeleers, these cults served “prominent tribal spirits like the Chaminuka” in Zimbabwe.¹⁹ Van Binsbergen, in his work with the peoples of western Zambia and religious innovations, presents a breakdown of the native religions that had existed from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries. He dated the primordial religion and chiefly cults to the seventeenth century and wrote on the Ila prophets of the early twentieth century, the Mupani Visions (1913), Eschatological Prophets (1920), Watch Tower Dippers and Preachers (1920), and the Prophetic Cults of Affliction (1930).²⁰

VENERATION OF SPIRITS

Just as prayer and worship directed to God in a Christian community are vital, whether in personal devotion or in a congregational setting, spirit veneration was pivotal in the lives of Africans. This practice of worship was an activity woven into the fabric of indigenous African communities and each person was required to take part. Spirit veneration was done for many reasons: to say thank you for answered prayers; for good fortune; and to avoid misfortune. Similar reasons could be attributed to Christians participating in the worship of God. The spirits were believed to have the power to control both the physical and the spiritual lives of the living community and any misfortune related to illness, death, or drought, for example, would not be regarded as an expected part of cosmological happenings but as associated with the mood of the spirit of the ancestors. It was believed that if the spirits were displeased and “insufficiently” venerated the consequences would manifest in the form of “disease and misfortune.”²¹

Western perspectives branded ATRs as ignorant and opposed to Christianity and hence saw a need to have them eradicated. What was not taken into account by the critics was that ATR was “holistic due to [the fact that] it impacts every area of the African traditional life, whether in the city or village, in the office or in the farm, in the building of a structure or in marriage.”²²

Karibu best encapsulates this by stating

ATR, on the other hand, is inseparably linked to African cultures and worldviews. That is why, due to the emphasis on enculturation of the Christian faith, the

importance of ATR has been rediscovered. Even if, especially in East Africa, ATR practices are not very visible, it remains a fact, that the thinking of the people, especially in times of crises, especially death, is very much linked to ethnic culture and religious traditions. Without their knowledge a missionary is unable to understand their thinking.

Therefore, he argues that these “traditional religions of Africa are human in the deepest sense, because they focus on people and their everyday problems.”²³

THE RISE OF AICs

In a highly Christianized country, as Zambia is today, any semblance of a traditional practice that is considered contrary to Christian beliefs and practices risks being disparaged. However, AICs attempt to retain contact with that which makes one a part of African culture while maintaining and observing tenets of Christian practice. African Pentecostals in Africa focus on corporate worship, singing together, and a Christian education, which have contextualized and indigenized Christianity in Africa. They are “the African expression of the worldwide Pentecostal movement” because of their Pentecostal style and flavor.²⁴

Although condemned as syncretic, AICs represent two worlds, European as well as African traditional culture. The former is represented in the use of the Bible, congregational buildings, singing of hymns, and sermons; and the latter preserves a deep sense of connection to the spirit world (though replaced by the spirit of God rather than the spirits of ancestors), the focus on healing, exorcism, prophecy, revelations, the use of mantles for prayer, and the invoking of the spirit world are all dynamic forms of worship in their worshiping community.²⁵ McPherson argues that “the Bible does not necessarily lose its universality or sacredness by bearing the imprint of the African, his emotions, his intense yearning to see God through African based forms and formularies which would elicit the best of his spiritual nature and resourcefulness. This is not a demand but a right.”²⁶ AICs, both Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal types, can be likened to charismatic and Pentecostal movements as they intersect on matters of the spirit. In both worlds, an emphasis on the spirit is what holds the foundation of their beliefs together. The development of AICs was born out of a desire for “an adaptation and indigenization of Christianity.”²⁷ This was “an attempt to regain contact with traditional African culture”²⁸—a duality that would be regarded with contempt by missionaries and by those locals who had successfully taken on board Western and missionary teachings and were totally opposed to African religious traditions. Atansuyi, in his analysis of the gospel and culture from the perspective of AICs, stated that “culture is the very life of the people, their beliefs, their practices, their lives and religious beliefs which are interwoven from their way of life making it difficult to draw a clear demarcation between where their ethical life ends and where their religious life begins.”²⁹

From the days of David Livingstone Christianity spread across Zambia to the extent that African traditional beliefs and practices became endangered as missionaries continued to impress upon the hearts of the converts the supposed wickedness of these practices. As these beliefs and practices were downtrodden and regarded as shallow and barbaric, people were torn between two worlds—a world that they and their forefathers knew; and a new world order in which the missionaries viewed their God as superior to that of the Africans.

The nineteenth century onwards saw the establishment of AICs that were indigenous and grew rapidly across Africa. There were various factors that led to their rise, including “the desire for freedom from missionary leadership, the need for contextualised religious practice that was in touch with the main problems that indigenous Africans faced in their daily lives like failures, barrenness, illness, unemployment, prolonged pregnancy, disappointment, poverty, illness”—misfortunes believed to be spiritual causations. They also acknowledged the African worldview, for example “consideration of beliefs in forces of evil, malevolent spirits, witches, wizards, interpret[ation of] dreams, trances and vision.”³⁰

These independent churches had various characteristics that divided them into categories that include: separatist churches, formed due to members having schisms with mainline churches based on a differing theology, leading to excommunications and splits; Ethiopian churches, formed due to political reasons, mainly to reject Western leadership—according to Anderson, the Ethiopian churches “were not as much movements of religious reform and innovation as were the later prophet healing churches but were primarily movements of political protest, expressions of resistance against European Hegemony in the church.”³¹

The following churches were significant because they challenged inequality in the church. Their aim was to draw out the power within black people and they retained the religious practices only of those mainline churches with African leadership: Zionist churches, Pentecostal in nature as they emphasize the work of the Holy Spirit, but they encourage the use of items from traditional religions to create their own Zion; prophetic healing churches, focused on healing from sickness and deliverance from evil spirits through the power of god³²; praying churches, they emphasize prayer for most of their time of worship, for example Aladura churches; Pentecostal churches, their services include healing, speaking in tongues, prophecies, interpretation of prophecies and miracles; and messianic churches, which are focused on their main leader who is seen to be endowed with special powers.³³ According to Gyadu, “members are the clients of the prophets who may be the custodians of powers to overcome the ills of life.”³⁴ The growth and spread of AICs across Africa annulled the idea of “Christianity being the white man’s religion as their aim was to make Christianity “universal” and meaningful to the people of Africa.”³⁵

Within the Zambian context, religious movements headed by indigenous Zambians began to emerge in the early twentieth century. There was a mounting dissatisfaction among those who had become Christian, not only because

of being considered inferior to Europeans who proclaimed the message of salvation, but also because of being delivered right into the chains of oppression and colonialism. The irony of this salvific message is that it held some people captive to a point where they became voiceless among the ruling European elites. The establishment of AICs was a reaction to missionary churches. Hastings describes some of these movements as having a political nature as their rise was also a consequence of increasing frustration with Western missionaries who were tirelessly working toward taking over Zambian indigenous and religious culture, as well as the land. The European sense of authority over the African race was problematic and pushed further the desire for "religious independency"³⁶ and the formation of the AICs was a response to the desire for religious independence.

There were also sociocultural reasons for the formation of AICs. On a deeper level these movements had a social significance as they responded to African needs that could not be explained by science. They served to alleviate the fear of witchcraft, sorcery, and sickness, "sickness being more social"³⁷ than a biological or physical problem.³⁸ Witchcraft, which was a form of "anti-social behaviour," served as a threat to social cohesion and "balanced relationships."³⁹ When people came for healing it was not only a healing of the physical body but a holistic one, to include the mind and social well-being of a person and the community to which they belonged.⁴⁰ Although some of the churches turned out to be "commercial enterprises like the Mucapi Movement"⁴¹ due to monetary charges for services rendered, Father Mallon, a Zambian Catholic priest, speaks of their growth as "indicative of a significant socio-cultural religious need to which they were responding."⁴² Missionaries were unable to counter many of these sociocultural issues. Not only did they fail to understand their seriousness within the indigenous belief system, but they also disregarded them as nonsensical, ignorant, and uncivilized and saw no reason for Africans to be conscious of them.

Therefore, these churches were reductively referred to as Witch Eradication Movements.⁴³ This may be because they had one thing in common. They claimed to have an antidote that would counter the works of witchcraft. Witchcraft was a dominant anti-social problem that kept people disenchanted. Therefore, these churches were relevant in that they offered people a remedy to counteract this venom that caused social disruption and communal unease. As well as proclaiming a salvific gospel, these churches practiced healing and provided a sense of belonging for those determined to retain their indigenous roots. Malone makes an interesting claim in his study of the Mutumwa Healing Movement that originated in the early 1930s in Northern Zambia. He states that "while the new Biblical consciousness has become the legitimization framework within which healing takes place and the Biblical Holy Spirit the new source of power for healing, yet the manner in which healing is perceived as well as therapeutic procedures availed of them fall squarely within the more traditional indigenous African Medico-Religious consciousness."⁴⁴ An example can be drawn from the Lumpa church of Alice Lenshina, whose deep awareness

of African culture introduced certain practices to which people could relate. An example would be one that included the payment of one penny during Sunday service offering. This was adapted from those witchdoctors who claimed very little money from their customers seeking divination; such a low payment was seen as proof of how great a power the witchdoctor had.⁴⁵ This semblance was adopted in Lenshina's movement as something that people could relate to in a quest to prove the power of God.

WHEN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS MET PENTECOSTALISM

Pentecostalism has become a tremendous force, responsible for the sharp growth of many churches that have also metamorphosed into other branches, due to its adaptation to local cultures and its emphasis on the world of the Spirit, which directly links to innate African beliefs. The Pentecostal emphasis on "freedom in the Spirit" has allowed the movement to contextualize to different cultures and societies. "This has made the transplanting of its central tenets in the Third World and among marginalised minorities in the western world more easily assimilated. In Africa, this has resulted in a plethora of indigenous Christian movements that loosely may be termed Pentecostal."⁴⁶ Looking at the success of Pentecostalism in Africa, it is clear that much of it is owed to ATR because it is the generations who practiced ATR that later turned to Christianity.⁴⁷

When Pentecostalism came to Africa it helped to stimulate the formation of "forms of independent churches."⁴⁸ This is why the best description of the product of the interface between Pentecostalism and ATR was the creation of AICs. Unfortunately the creation of AICs met with criticism. This is because "their methods did not fit nicely into western theological categories leading to the gospel being impoverished because the spirit of God was not allowed to fill the void after the Christian message confronted the ancestors, thus injustice being done to African Pentecostal churches who have attempted to provide a solution to this emptiness using contextualised methods."⁴⁹

Looking at the monopoly of the Christian mission churches dotted across Africa in the early 1900s, Africans saw an opportunity to challenge this dominance while holding onto Christian religiosity. Their increasing dissatisfaction at the lack of awareness of inherent challenges that the African faced within their communities, alien to the Western missionary, is one of the main reasons that led to the development of AICs. Other reasons included political causes, schisms within mainline churches, the desire to fulfill their spiritual home (Zion), and to focus on healing and prayer. Pentecostalism in southern Africa—in countries such as Zambia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa—was introduced by Western Pentecostal missionaries, for example John G. Lake from Indianapolis. Both AICs and the Pentecostal movement grew tremendously, wherever they were planted (in some countries quicker than in others), as both appealed to the African social and religious consciousness in ways that differed from the missionary churches. Despite their similar appeal, a disparity has arisen due to

conflicts arising from differing religious practices and airs of supremacy by one over the other.

It would be unfair to dismiss the infrastructural good that came with missionaries, including schools and healthcare facilities in remote areas. However, the native problems that people faced could not always be cured by modern science or a formalized liturgy and prayers read from a prayer book. Issues that had to do with sorcery or witchcraft, demon possession, sickness, and so on, needed an understanding of the African context, otherwise it was easy for the Westerner to disregard the African consciousness of sociospiritual and economic issues. Pentecostalism also gained strength among indigenous Africans due to its capacity to engage with the spiritual domain, which they could relate to.

CONFLICT

The rise of AICs and Pentecostalism helped to bridge the gap and allowed Africans to express themselves without losing their identity. Conflict was inevitable between Pentecostals and ATR because “western cultural forms of Christianity were often regarded as superficial and out of touch with many realities of existential life,” therefore it was important to have a form of African Christianity that was “culturally relevant in each context.”⁵⁰ Pentecostals were also confident that their religious practice was more powerful than ancestral worship, traditional rituals, and witchcraft. For example, African prophets in the early twentieth century—such as William Wade Harris, Garrick Sokari Braide, and Moses Orimolade Tunolase—not only preached the gospel but also healed people and encouraged the rejection of fetishes, witchcraft, and veneration of spirits. Their miracles confounded African traditional priests, leading to conversions.⁵¹ Anderson states that although some Christians believe that ancestors exist, they do not possess power over them and therefore deny traditional customs that are not in sync with Christianity. They reject contact with ancestors because they believe the Bible, which states that there is no contact between the living and the dead. Therefore, anything that is linked to ancestors is seen as demonic and needing to be cast out, and therefore needs to break with the past.⁵²

Monotheism is a main feature of Christianity that comes into direct conflict with ATR and its belief in multiple deities who are responsible for different aspects of life and that, in the event of misfortune, “ancestral spirits and gods are consulted and appeased.”⁵³ Within African traditions, practices of healing and protection were important. The use of items during healing processes was an area that would bring conflict. This is because while ATRs and some Pentecostal groups supported it, other Pentecostal groups believed more in the power of God to heal directly.⁵⁴

Mbiti describes ATR as conjoined with “fatalism rooted in animism (objects and natural phenomena inhabited by spirits or souls) and ancestor veneration.”⁵⁵ Other issues, such as polygamy that was widely accepted in ATRs, were

adopted by prophets like William Wade Harris.⁵⁶ While there were sources of conflict between ATR and Pentecostals, this conflict has filtered into older and newer forms of Pentecostalism. Newer forms preach against tribalism and parochial denominationalism. They are often sharply critical of the older AICs, particularly in what they perceive as the ATR component of AIC practices, which are sometimes seen as manifestations of demons needing deliverance.⁵⁷

COMPROMISE AND INCORPORATION

One way in which incorporation and compromise has happened is by the contextualization and indigenization of Christianity in Africa. These churches can also be deemed as “the African expression of the worldwide Pentecostal movement because of their Pentecostal style and flavor.”⁵⁸ Some practices were misunderstood as syncretism, for example, the use of “water, salt, olive oil, palm leaves, uncolored candles and wine.” However Atansuyi argued over the possibility of Africans practicing their Christianity without their practices being deemed as syncretic.⁵⁹ He defends the use of elements stating, it does not mean that they do not have faith in the power of God, however, it means “healing can also be achieved by consecration of water, olive oil, honey, salt and wine because the African culture is akin to these observances and practices.”⁶⁰

He blamed this Western mentality as distorted due to the “historical tragedy of European exploits over Africa.” One key practice that attracted incorporation of both religious paradigms was healing. “Healing within the African context encompasses all of life’s experiences and afflictions.”⁶¹ This healing within the African context “does not separate the physical from the spiritual” hence it is very holistic.⁶² As the power of God through the Holy Spirit encompassed healing, this incorporation into religious practice, especially within AICs, made it very successful as many Africans were still facing challenges in their physical lives. As opposed to running to traditional healers, they had another avenue which understood their context. To have this level of incorporation was important because “western cultural forms of Christianity were often regarded as superficial and out of touch with many realities of existential life, it was necessary for a new and culturally relevant Christianity to arise in each context.”⁶³ The creation of AICs was a process of incorporation and compromise due to a consideration of local cultures and cultural practices in context. Similar to ATRs, AICs were seen to be “pragmatic and tackling issues of sickness, poverty, unemployment, loneliness, sickness, evil spirits, sorcery and urbanization.”⁶⁴

Another form of incorporation was through their worship and religious practice. In relation to what was being practiced at Azusa with William Seymour, the African American Pentecostal leader, Hollenweger noted their use of “oral liturgy, a narrative theology and witness, a reconciliatory and participant community, the inclusion of visions and dreams in worship, and understanding the relationship between body and mind revealed in healing by prayer and liturgical dance.”⁶⁵ Pentecostalism was successful at “producing a culture of continuity by mining primal and world view, reproducing the identifiable character and

regaining pneumatic and charismatic religiosity that existed in traditional society.”⁶⁶ Lastly, another important aspect of the incorporation of ATR and Pentecostalism is the emphasis on “good things in life like health, long life, children, wealth and titles” which is rooted within African culture.⁶⁷

CONCLUSION

Despite the decline in the number and practice of ATRs in Africa, many of the beliefs and practices continue to resound in the minds of Christians, more so the older generation who may have had a firsthand experience of ATR.⁶⁸ There have been various levels of conflict, incorporation, and acceptance. Either way, it is clear that the practices of ATR continue to exist within some older AICs. It is certain that an exploration of Pentecostalism’s presence on the African continent will show that enculturation of this form of Christianity has happened, which has allowed for the interaction with the African spirit world. People who have raised matters of syncretism have failed many times to realize the obvious parallels that exist between traditional religions and African culture. What the first missionaries failed to see, according to Atansuyi, was the “African social structure and their concept of God.”⁶⁹ This is why they struggled to accept the fact that charismatic gifts were from God and not from evil spirits. This mentality led them to treat AICs as sects and only recently has their contribution to the development of Christianity in Africa and across the globe been acknowledged.⁷⁰

NOTES

1. Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism. The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2007); Eldin Villafane, *The Liberating Spirit: Towards an Hispanic America Pentecostal Social Ethic* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993); Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford, NY: Oxford University, 2008); Amos Yong, *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology* (Cambridge: Wm. B Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010); David Martin, *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish* (Oxford and Maiden: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), especially chapter 4; Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role* (London: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd., 1998), Paul Gifford, *Christianity and Politics in Doe’s Liberia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Paul Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics in Asia, Africa and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Jeff Hynes (ed.), *Religion, Globalization and Political Culture in the Third World* (Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999); Terence O. Ranger (ed.), *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Africa. Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in the Global South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), chapter 6.

2. Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (London: SCM Press, 2007), 149.
3. Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out On All Flesh: Pentecostals and the Possibility of a Global Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Press, 2005), 35.
4. Allan Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost, An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Richard Burgess, *Nigeria's Christian Revolution. The Civil War Revival and its Pentecostal Progeny 1967–2006* (Carlisle: Regnum/Paternoster, 2008).
5. Johnson Asamoah Gyadu, "Renewal within African Christianity. A Study of Some Current Historical and Theological Development within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana," (PhD Thesis, The University of Birmingham, 2000), 25.
6. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, preface, viii.
7. Johnson Asamoah Gyadu, "Renewal within African Christianity. A Study of Some Current Historical and Theological Development within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana," (PhD Thesis, The University of Birmingham, 2000), 16.
8. Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee (eds.), *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 810–830.
9. Allan Anderson, "African Pentecostalism and the Ancestors: Confrontation or Compromise?," *Missionalia* 21:1 (April 1993): 26.
10. J.S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (Nairobi: E.A.E.P, 1969), 4.
11. Lloyd Jarrison, "Pentecostal Doctrines, Beliefs and Practices and African Traditional Religion," *Augustine Research Fellowship*. Last modified, November 6, 2015, accessed May, 2016. <http://arfellowship.com/pentecostal-doctrines-beliefs-practices-and-african-traditional-religion/>.
12. Clement M. Doke, *The Lambas of Northern Rhodesia. A Study of Their Customs and Beliefs* (London: George G. Harp and Company Limited, 1931), 291.
13. For example for hunters there would be a specific potion to protect them from Lions, Snakes and Hippos, in the wild. Ibid., 292.
14. K.A. Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion* (Accra: FEP International Private Ltd, 1978).
15. Oger Lous, *The Lumpa Church: The Lenshina Movement in Northern Rhodesia* (Serenje: The White Fathers Mission, 1960), 5.
16. Ibid., 5.; W.M.J. van Binsbergen, "The Dynamics of Religious Change in Western Zambia," *IFAHAMU, A Journal for African Studies* 6:3 (1976): 70.
17. Terence Ranger, "Territorial Cults in the History of Central Africa," *Journal of African History* 14:4 (1974): 582.
18. Van Binsbergen, "The Dynamics of Religious Change," 69.
19. J.M. Schoffeleers, "River of Blood: The Genesis of a Mtyre Cult in Southern Malawi among the Mang'anja," in T.O. Ranger and John Weller (eds.), *Themes in the Christian History of Central Africa* (London: Heinemann, 1975), 22.
20. Van Binsbergen, *The Dynamics of Religious Change*, 69.
21. James A. Pritchett, *Friends for Life, Friends for Death: Cohorts and Consciousness among the Lunda-Ndembu* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 35.
22. Jarrison, "Pentecostal Doctrines."
23. Stenger Karibu, "Is African Traditional Religion Relevant Today?" *Modern Ghana*, January 28, 2013, accessed March 28, 2016. <https://www.modernghana.com/thread/362362/441904/1>.

24. Jarrison, "Pentecostal Doctrines."
25. Allan Anderson, "The Pentecostal Gospel, Religion and Culture in African Perspective," accessed March 28, 2016. http://artsweb.bham.ac.uk/aanderson/publications/pentecostal_gospel.htm.
26. F. Macpherson, *The Anatomy of a Conquest: The British Occupation of Zambia* (Harlow: Longman, 1981), 179.
27. Maxwell and Lawrie, *Christianity and the African Imagination*, 3.
28. Margaret E. George, "The Lumpa Church. An Investigation into Its Nature and Characteristics" (Religious Education Dissertation for Bachelor of Education, University and Year not cited), 2.
29. H. Olu Atansuyi, "Gospel and Culture from the Perspective of African Instituted Churches," *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* (January 1998), accessed February 6, 2016. <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj3/aic.html>.
30. Deji Ayegboyin and S. Ademola Ishola, "African Indigenous Churches: An Historical Perspective," *Institute for Religious Research* (1997): 10–17. <http://irr.org/african-indigenous-churches-historical-perspective>; Jarrison, "Pentecostal Doctrines."
31. Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 161; Ogbu U. Kalu, "The Third Response: Pentecostalism and the Reconstruction of Christian Experience in Africa, 1970–1995," *Journal of African Christian Thought* 1:2 (1998): 3.
32. Anderson, "The Pentecostal Gospel."
33. Ayegboyin and Ishola, "African Indigenous Churches," 5–8.
34. Kwabena J. Asamoah-Gyadu, "The Church in the African State: The Pentecostal/Charismatic Experience in Ghana," *Journal of African Christian Thought* 1:2 (1998): 56.
35. Atansuyi, "Gospel and Culture."
36. Adrian Hastings, *The History of African Christianity 1950–1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 121; Robert I. Rotberg, *Christian Missionaries and the Creation of Northern Rhodesia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965), 158; Allan Anderson, *African Reformation* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2001), 212.
37. If a person in a given family who was part of the wider community was ill, this affected the social role that they occupied. This could be the role of a grandfather, mother, father, uncle, aunty, child, and so on. Their absence in that particular role due to illness or death would certainly leave a void within that community.
38. T. Adeoye Lambo, "Patterns of Psychiatric Care in Developing African Countries," in Ari Kiev (ed.), *Magic, Faith, and Healing* (New York: The Free Press 1964), 446.
39. George, "The Lumpa Church," 21.
40. Clive Dillone Malone, "The Mutumwa Church of Peter Mulenga, Part 1," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 15:2 (1985): 12.
41. Lous, *The Lumpa Church*, 24.
42. Mallone, "The Mutumwa Churches," 205.
43. Lous, "The Lumpa Church," 21; James W. Fernandez, "The Lumpa Uprising, Why?," *Africa Report* 9:10 (1964): 31.
44. Malone, "The Mutumwa Churches," 206.
45. B.S. Chuba, *The Character of The Lumpa Church and its Conflicts with Government*, unpublished paper, 1984, 10.

46. Allan Anderson and Walter J. Hollenweger (eds.), *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*. JPT Sup. 15 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 128.
47. Jarrison, "Pentecostal Doctrines."
48. Anderson, *Spreading fires*, 162.
49. Anderson, "African Pentecostalism and the Ancestors," 38; Jarrison, "Pentecostal Doctrines."
50. Anderson, "The Pentecostal Gospel."
51. Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 164–167.
52. Anderson, "African Pentecostalism and the Ancestors," 30–38.
53. Jarrison, "Pentecostal Doctrines."
54. Anderson, "The Pentecostal Gospel."
55. J. Mbiti, *Africa Traditional Religions in Contemporary Society* (New York: Paragon House, 1991), 18.
56. Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 163.
57. Gyadu, "The Church in the African State," 56; Kalu, "The Third Response," 3–16.
58. Jarrison, "Pentecostal Doctrines."
59. Atansuyi, "Gospel and Culture."
60. Ibid.
61. Allan H. Anderson, "The Gospel and Culture in Pentecostal Missions in the Third World," *Missionalia* 27:2 (1999): 220–230.
62. Jarrison, "Pentecostal Doctrines."
63. Anderson, "The Gospel and Culture," 2; Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 178.
64. Allan Anderson, "Evangelism and the Growth of Pentecostal in Africa," accessed March 20, 2016. http://www.artsweb.bham.ac.uk/aanderson/publications/evangelism_and_the_growth_of_pen.htm.
65. Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), 23; Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Cassell, 1996), 259.
66. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 186.
67. Ayegboyin and Ishola, "African Indigenous Churches," 81.
68. Jarrison, "Pentecostal Doctrines."
69. Atansuyi, "Gospel and Culture."
70. Ibid.



Pentecostal Panopticism and the Phantasm of “The Ultimate Power”

Abimbola Adelakun

Let any evil monitoring mirror ever used against me under any water, crash to irredeemable pieces, in the name of Jesus.¹

Any power calling for my head before evil mirrors, die with the mirror, in the name of Jesus.²

Every evil monitoring gadget, remote control devices and every witchcraft coven assigned against my life and destiny, be destroyed by the Holy Ghost fire, in the name of Jesus Every spiritual screen and radar, spiritual mirror, spiritual tape, spiritual camera, spiritual satellite and all spiritual properties that Satan has set to monitor me, break into pieces, in the name of Jesus.³

The above prayer points were culled from three different websites of the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministry International (MFM), a Nigerian Pentecostal church with parishes in different countries of the world. The MFM Ministry is one of the largest churches with a wide range of members in Nigeria, Europe, Asia, and North America. The church was founded in 1994 by Dr. Daniel Olukoya, who is currently the General Overseer. The church features spectacular and aggressive styles of prayer and the members are encouraged to develop “violent faith” and engage in “violent prayers” to defeat their enemy.⁴ Unsurprisingly, their prayer rituals feature repeated chants of “Die! Die! Die! Fall down and die! Die by fire!” Their ritual language includes such expressions as “spiritual bullets,” “Holy Ghost machine gun,” and other colorful phrases that appropriate the language of modern warfare. According to the church website, “aggressive prayer is considered as an aid to spiritual focus and

A. Adelakun (✉)

University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX, USA

a check against being overwhelmed by the flesh.” At the MFM Prayer City on the Lagos–Ibadan Expressway, prayer is said to go on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, non-stop, all year round.

One of the prayer points listed above came from the website of the church’s parish in Los Angeles, USA; another from the parish in Finland, Europe; and the third, from the church’s North American women’s fellowship. The three prayer points exude similar anxieties about remote supernatural surveillance and associated threats. The notion of the “monitoring evil eye” from the supernatural realms is a staple of Pentecostal prayer and apprehensions of being visible to unseen occult forces are variously reflected in Pentecostal ritual activities. As a reflection of how supernatural surveillance is popularly understood, the phrase “monitoring spirits” in Nigerian Pentecostal patois gradually shifted from alluding to supernatural forces to now humorously designating busybodies. In each of the instances reproduced above, members of the MFM are concerned about magical mirrors or similar devices that can bring up their reflection in some remote locations, conjured up by somebody, usually for evil purposes. What is at stake in this belief about supernatural surveillance is not only power—who gets to use it and against whom—but also Pentecostalism’s utilization of the rich resource of indigenous religious imagination to enliven its imaginary.

Underlying the anxiety of supernatural monitoring expressed in the MFM prayers is denudation; the thought that their bodies are visible to occult forces across time and space evokes fear and shapes the character of worship and divine solicitation. Fear of the surveilling eye haunts the Pentecostal imagination as a threat that must be banished with prayers and other spiritual activities, such as fasting or invoking verses of the Bible. This chapter is interested in the phantasms of supernatural visibility, surveillance, and the procedures of power that are transacted in the cinematic realism that represents omniscient supernatural eyes. In what ways does the Pentecostal imaginary manufacture and overcome the threatening “other” through metaphors of sight and surveillance? How do Pentecostals repudiate their anxieties about supernatural visibility through representing their God as one who wields “the ultimate power”? What are the implications of the Pentecostals’ exorcism of the other’s demons for freedom of expression and religious worship in a pluralistic democratic society?

The eye as a mode of supernatural surveillance is a cognitive paradigm born out of embedded primal beliefs. This surveillance aesthetic features in contemporary film culture—both Christian and non-Christian—and is latching on to the latent fears and insecurities of living in a postmilitary and postcolonial Nigeria in which modern institutions are failing public expectations and life is precarious. As Afe Adogame has pointed out, the Nigerian Pentecostal movement grew exponentially in the context of socioeconomic and sociopolitical crises, thus reflecting the interconnection between faith and the social context in which believers dwell.⁵ African Pentecostalism has been said to feature the “constant interaction with the preexisting, African spirit world, western culture, and the Christian message”⁶; at the interface is Pentecostalism’s proneness to a destructive condemnation of African traditional religions.⁷ This

chapter explores how the Christian imagination of spectral evil forces finds a translation in the contiguous African indigenous religion and its ready repertoire of phantasmagorical narratives about human teleportation, transmuting bodies, chimeras, and unrestrained access to the supernatural.

Although the idea of an omniscient power that can transcend space and time to "see" human activities are almost a staple of Yoruba/Nigerian films, this chapter is looking at the imaginations of panopticism as a mode of supernatural surveillance and the representation of triumphant power in a popular Nigerian Christian television drama of the early 1990s, *Agbara Nla* (*The Ultimate Power*). *Agbara Nla* typifies the polemic and performative character of Christianity, and its antagonism of indigenous religions, played out through its claims of being able to "see" what the latter is, does, and where its power runs short. The film title itself—*Agbara Nla* or *The Ultimate Power*—presupposes that other systems of belief have inherent performative power but that the ultimate one belongs to the Christian God. This arrogation of ultimate power to the Christian God is significant because it explains why Pentecostalism frequently tussles with the spectral other in prayer and other faith rituals.

The *Agbara Nla* drama, by well-known Christian theater company Mount Zion Faith Ministries, was a major hit when it was broadcast on television in 1993. This can be partly attributed to its engrossing storyline, the morality lesson it offers, the novelty of a Christian television drama with a complicated narrative, and the "spectral affects"⁸ it engaged at a time when some of its film tricks were still compelling. As a preteen growing up in Ibadan when it was first broadcast on Broadcasting Corporation of Oyo state, I recall that *Agbara Nla* was a major TV production that every family watched in the evenings. Since there were only two television stations in Ibadan at the time, *Agbara Nla* had no viable competition for air time and it penetrated many homes and many hearts with the piercing power of mass media. So successful was the drama that when it was broadcast after the 7.00 p.m. news, the streets would thin out as people rushed home to watch. The production company later made an English language version for distribution among non-Yoruba-speaking audiences.

The drama series, according to O.O. Ogunbiyi, marks a "supremacy struggle between African Traditional religion and Christianity" and reflects Christian religious bigotry because of the way it undermined Yoruba beliefs.⁹ Funke Ogunleye, in her defense of Christian drama films, did not acknowledge the damaging portrayal of indigenous religious beliefs but claims Christian evangelical dramas are responses to a cultural portrayal of Christian virtues as outmoded and irrelevant in a modern world.¹⁰ For Akin Adesokan, the premise of *Agbara Nla* was based on "the figuration of spiritualism, the resolution of conflict through religious deliverance, and it has an important consequence for the management of extra-materialist spectacle in the video films."¹¹ While film scholars who have addressed *Agbara Nla* have adequately commented on its popularity and cultural influence, I explore its spectacle and its iconic presentation of ocularity, surveillance, and how the battle for "the ultimate power" reflects tension between Pentecostalism and indigenous African religions. This

tension is inevitable as the success of Pentecostalism in non-Western cultures has been based on its ability to “include and transform at least certain elements of preexisting religion which still retain a strong grip on the cultural subconscious.”¹² As Birgit Meyer shows, in Ewe culture, “images of the devil and demons are means by which to address the attractive and destructive aspects of Ewe’s encounter with global economics and culture.”¹³ In Nigerian Pentecostalism, imaging the devil is also about creating the other on whom social-cultural and sociopolitical anxieties would be transposed, using imageries from indigenous religious imagination.

The intricacies of *Aghbara Nla* evoke embodied cultural beliefs about the ability of the supernatural eye to encroach on private and hidden spaces to surveil people, places, and human activities. If one of the ways to dislocate and disable an ideological edifice is to locate it in the frame of activities when an act is performed for a gaze,¹⁴ then it can be surmised that *Aghbara Nla* illustrates Christian anxiety about a supernatural surveilling gaze and a contest for the trophy of “ultimate power.” In addition to its antagonism of indigenous religions, *Aghbara Nla* also demonstrates what theologian, Nimi Wariboko describes as the “impossibility of *equal* relationships between believers (those who can see behind the phenomenal veil; power-seeking Christians) and unbelievers (those who cannot see behind the veil; powerless Christians).”¹⁵ By radicalizing Christian grace, a Pentecostal sees his/her neighbor not as an other to be loved as him/herself but as a monstrous “thing,” possessed by evil spirits, against whom they must war.¹⁶ *Aghbara Nla* represents the Pentecostal imaginary that hunts down the other with a righteousness based on the biblical text in Ephesians 6:12—“for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”

One might argue that *Aghbara Nla* follows a long series of historical and cultural continuities and discontinuities in popular performance when it presented the born-again imaginary that, “in elaborating a complex and contradictory economy of miracles, inscribes itself within occult forms of accumulation and power.”¹⁷ The development of theatre performance in Yoruba culture owes much to its historical traditions of masquerade performances and its splinter formations of sacred and secular performances. Despite the divergence that occurred as a consequence of modernity, church and theater remained interwoven through the cultural nationalism movement, anti-colonial struggles of post-World War I, and the proximity of theater aesthetics and religious worship rituals. Church services, according to Joel Adedje’s study of Nigerian theater history, was an imbrication of liturgy and entertainment. Secular modern Yoruba theater gradually evolved from a series of historical events precipitated by the same conditions that enhanced the independence movement.¹⁸

In the early stages of Yoruba theater culture, traveling troupes, like that of pioneer Hubert Ogunde, infused cinematic elements into their stage dramas to convey a more authentic supernatural realism to the audience. By the time they progressed to filmmaking, the representation of the supernatural had

become a regular component of their film content. Over time, Yoruba dramas on television became a "celebration of the natural supernaturalism of the Yoruba worldview plus the occult means of tapping into it, and the hypnotic poetry that goes with both."¹⁹ Several Yoruba films and TV dramas, such as *Arelu* (1987), *Yaponyanrin* (1989), and *Koto Orun* (1992), demonstrated supernatural power on television. Almost all featured a rural setting and projected "accustomed menus of *juju* contest, village squabbles between a conclave of witches and vulnerable masses."²⁰ The constant representation of this depiction of supernatural power resulted in a self-reinforcing "techno-religious realism"²¹; consequently, "the boundary between the supernatural and the natural, always thin but distinct in Yoruba cosmology, became blurred on television. Worse still, illusion supplanted imagination."²²

PANOPTICISM: GOD AND OTHER SURVEILLING EYES

In *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault studies the evolution of institutional surveillance and its animating effects on the body by highlighting the panopticon, an architectural design for surveillance in prisons created by Jeremy Bentham, the social reformer and philosopher. The panopticon, he shows, entraps the body in visibility because it functions as a remote control device that compels self-regulating performances from an observed subject who is conscious of being watched by an eye whose policing interest enforces compliance and conformity of behavior. The mechanism of panopticism induces in the observed, "a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power."²³ The observed, aware of a remote surveilling eye, puts his/her body through a self-controlling discipline, without any direct contact or prompting from the gaze. The power of the panopticon relies on disciplinary mechanisms to function independently of the creator, who can see without being seen. Bentham's architecture would inspire cultural imaginaries about a powerful singularized universal surveillance that controls the behavior of the surveilled through the dominant power of its gaze.²⁴ Surveillance studies since Foucault have investigated panopticism through the disciplines of cultural phenomenology, political and social philosophy, literary analysis, sociology, economics, technology and digital culture, utopianism and dystopianism, identity politics, and other sociological paradigms that analyze the procedures of power in contemporary society.²⁵

Panopticism, as a metaphor for surveillance, evokes the observing eye in more than a physical sense. Art historian Astrit Schmidt-Burkhardt's study of the history of Western visual culture describes how the eye became the "dominant paradigm of cognition" and the mediating organ between the self and the world through visual representations of divine omniscience.²⁶ These artistic representations of God's all-seeing eye would become a "stereotypical image which devout Christians became conscious of and which interpellated the regime of surveillance."²⁷ By highlighting the historical trajectory through which the emblematic eye became an anthropomorphism of God or god-like

structures of power, Schmidt-Burkhardt shows how the eye became an emblem of surveillance in secular political and social culture, and has remained an insignia of surveillance. In Western cultures, the eye represents various iconic symbols of omniscience—justice, law, and divine surveillance—although they are no longer immediately relatable to religious cultural history.²⁸ The eye, as an instrument of cognition, is now a symbol of visibility, surveillance, power, and control. Aided by technology, surveillance from a “commanding view” offers a means of power and domination, as well as voyeuristic pleasure to the gazer.²⁹ The lasting impact of characterizing the eye in a transcendental sense is evident in how technologically aided surveillance in modern Western society is “powered by Christian impetus or motifs.”³⁰

As contemporary surveillance studies explore the distance between the eye that sees and the eye that sees itself being seen, they also reflect on the antagonisms of the eye and its twin other. For instance, Judith Butler’s analysis of the 1989 beating of Rodney King and the subsequent trial of the police involved in the assault, questions the integrity of the eye as an independent witness.³¹ Nicole Fleetwood makes a similar argument: that the field of visibility—the distance between our eyes and the black body—and the ontological “darkness” in between, validates its own representations.³² Franz Fanon describes the self-fragmentation that occurs to the surveilled black (male) body held under a white determining gaze as “solely negating.”³³ While surveillance in contemporary Western history has transcended the singularity of the eye, and the procedures of power “move in numerous diverse and rich ways,”³⁴ the anxieties about government surveillance and state invasiveness into people’s personal spaces in Nigeria/Africa are not a topical issue.

One of the contradictions of Nigeria as a modern state is its lack of drive to surveil its citizens and, as a scholar once put it, “Nigeria is a state that actively seeks not to know.”³⁵ The reality of surveillance in Nigeria takes metaphysical dimensions and this is especially paramount among religious populations, Christian and non-Christian alike. The foundation for the belief in supernatural surveillance comes from indigenous African philosophy in which forces, benevolent and malevolent, observe human activities. For African Pentecostals, pan-optical surveillance is neither tied directly to the government nor is it considered an abstract human representation of political power and control mechanisms. Rather, the supernatural determines moral behavior, engenders certain creative performances of self-protection from threatening forces, and upholds the normative content of Pentecostal ethics. Like Bentham’s panopticon, Pentecostals do not “see” who is gazing at them since God is considered a spiritual being, but they are acutely aware of His presence all the same.

Just as indigenous African religions generally believe in the reality of a contiguous other world, Pentecostal Christianity is also haunted by the mental image of God as “Big Brother” watching over the world. There is no reality for the Pentecostal outside the gaze of the watchful eyes of the omnipresent and omniscient gaze of God. However, in the place of an antagonistic foreboding ruler of a 1984 dystopian world is the idea of God as the benevolent father

whose gaze is soothing, not hostile. He is not a passive or disinterested voyeur; God is actively watching *over* His children. The gaze is totalitarian, and its inescapability is expressed by the psalmist in the Christian Scriptures:

Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me. If I say, "Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, And the light around me will be night," Even the darkness is not dark to You, And the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You.³⁶

The psalmist understands that the gaze precedes his existence in the world and its totality exceeds human spheres; it extends through the unwallled borders of the entire cosmos. Psalm 139 suggests a mutual and reassuring relationship between the surveilled human and his omniscient God; that the human character is at ease with God's omniscient gaze bearing down on him/her. The psalmist does not consider God's gaze as threatening, but adores and reveres God for his omniscience. The gaze, to the psalmist, is not a remote ogling eye in the sky but a presence craved as a route to victory in this life and hereafter. Bentham specifically used this verse to epigraph his design, prompting an idea of a "secular omniscience" that would be perfectly acceptable within the religious context in which he lived.³⁷ God, as Pentecostalism reiterates, is not the only one who watches human activities from an other world. There are malicious forces, both disembodied and those that have possessed human agents, all of whom surveil human lives. The gaze of the devil and of his demonic agents are therefore antagonistic and are meant to be overcome by the believer.

THE EYE OF GOD, DEVIL'S MAGIC MIRROR, AND SUPERNATURAL SURVEILLANCE

Agbara Nla tells the story of an evangelist, Kola, and his wife, Bose, who are called by God to go to a rural village community, Muwonleru (meaning: captured and enslaved), to deliver an anguished people who are being held captive by occult power. Kola is also offered a financially rewarding promotion that would take him and his wife to Abuja, Nigeria's federal capital. Kola is initially in two minds but his wife prevails on him to choose the latter, pointing out how the offer would greatly improve their material well-being. Kola opts for Abuja and God chooses another couple, Olaboye and Olatomi, to carry out his assignment. Olaboye and Olatomi go to the village and soon begin to undo the works of the devil carried out by an occult leader called Isawuru. Isawuru uses the supernatural powers of Olori egbe (head of a cult); Ayaba Oluweri (the wife of the king of the sea); and Aro meta (a trio of mystical women who can turn into birds and fly through spaces). Both Olaboye and Olatomi run up against Isawuru who cannot understand the mystery behind the power the

couple uses to release the people he has supernaturally enslaved. Isawuru begins to lose the reverence his mysticism had accorded him among the villagers because of a certain Jesus and his power to save.

The turning point in the film comes when Isawuru wants to destroy Olaboye and Olatomi to redeem his dignity and regain his status among the villagers. He goes to his “power room,” a shrine within his house. He brings out a glass mirror about two feet long, chants incantations, and invokes the image of the couple, who appear in the mirror as still images. Isawuru shoots their images with a Dane gun, and blood spatters across the fragments of shattered glass. Satisfied that he has vanquished his enemies, Isawuru heads for their house to rejoice at their deaths only to see the couple are not only alive and well, but that they had no inkling of what he had tried to do to them. Disappointed, he goes back to his house where he consults another, metaphorical, magic mirror (a piece of white cloth hung on the wall) and demands to know who Jesus is and why he has so much power. A clip of the Hollywood film, *Jesus Christ of Nazareth*, appears in the “mirror” and Isawuru sees the passion of Jesus—the painful and tortuous journey he makes to Calvary. Isawuru comments on the action on the “screen” throughout, wondering why the Jesus character had to go through so much agony. Then, a voice says, “I am Jesus, the Son of the Living God.” Isawuru is so affected that he begins to dismantle his paraphernalia of spiritual power while declaring that no other power he had known was like that of Jesus. After he has gathered all his “occult” material, a light comes from heaven and he is struck blind.

Isawuru manages to find his way out of his house and asks a child to lead him to Olaboye and Olatomi, who pray for him. His sight is restored and he gives his life to Jesus Christ. To further signal the notion of a new beginning, Isawuru changes his name to Paul Esupofu in an echo of the Bible when a light from heaven struck Saul and he became blind. After he had given his life to Christ, Saul received his sight, changed his name to Paul, and became one of the key apostles of Jesus Christ and a vanguard of Christian expansionism. The name Esupofu (the devil is vanquished), however, has political implications (which are explained later). Isawuru, now a Christian, begins to reveal the workings of the powers of darkness to Olaboye and Olatomi, and they channel prayers appropriately to dispense of the power of evil. Isawuru spends much of his time as an evangelist, fighting off his old companions who appear to him in dreams and in embodied forms, excoriating him for rupturing their relationship.

In the city, Kola and Bose have become successful but have also been swallowed up by the ethical and moral corruption that pervades Abuja. Bose befriends a rich and successful woman who spoils her with gifts and requests a blood covenant from her. Bose soon finds out that the woman is a devil incarnate and when she tries to pull out of the relationship, she is afflicted with a sickness that defies Western medicine. Bose becomes possessed by a demon who speaks through her body, yelling “Aya matanga!”³⁸ and echoing with multiple other voices, which suggests her body is inhabited by a legion of demons. The doctors ask Kola to take Bose back home because they had exceeded the

abilities of Western medicine. At some point, Kola loses his job and everything else the couple had acquired. He eventually becomes blind. Bose's pastor tries to exorcize her but God tells him the deliverance was an assignment he had reserved for an old man in the village of Muwonleru. The pastor travels to Muwonleru to fetch Isawuru (now Paul Esupofu). Back in Lagos, the demon in Bose sees Paul Esupofu leaving the village with the pastor, Olaboye, and Olatomi, and begins to get agitated. The prayer team arrive in the city and Paul Esupofu enters the room where Bose is kept. After a spiritual battle of prayer and Bible citations, and resistance by the demon spirit, Bose is finally "delivered" of her demons. At the end of the play, both Kola and Bose head for Muwonleru to complete the assignment God had given them in the first place. At the edge of the village, the husband's sight is miraculously restored.

When *Agbara Nla* debuted, it dredged up the imageries that these Yoruba dramas (some of them produced by artists who identified as Christians, such as Ogunde or Isola Ogunsola) had ingrained into the cultural imaginary, but used them for Christian evangelical conversion. To represent Christian triumph, they needed to demonize indigenous systems of religious belief and their notions of supernatural power by casting them as spectacular monstrosities that can be subdued by the idealized representation of the Christian God who embodies "the ultimate power." *Agbara Nla* unabashedly fabricated what it considered indigenous religious practices using raw materials supplied by prior mediatized representations of power in indigenous religions. An example of this are the awkward incantations chanted as metaphysical or hypnotic poetry in the 13 episodes of the drama. Unlike actual incantations (which are chanted in non-Christian Yoruba films), the made up lines in *Agbara Nla* came across as stilted, inorganic, and inauthentic.

However, underlining the battle for supremacy between the Christian God and the gods of African traditional religion was the symbolism of sight and omniscience. The power of indigenous religions, according to the film, was predicated on its ability to see the realities that are beyond the human eye. While villagers believed in the supernatural forces around them, they could not "see" the mystical forces that Isawuru could see and with whom he interacted on a plane that was beyond their human senses. Like Babalawos in indigenous drama, Isawuru had a "control room" into which he stepped to access extra-material elements with which he resolved issues in the natural realm. When he threw an object at the white cloth on the wall while uttering incantations, images would appear, and he could "see" through any murky issue. A similar aesthetic of supernatural surveillance features in non-Christian movies through material items such as a mirror or water, and they are a product of indigenous beliefs about supernatural power able to transcend time and space with their spiritual eyes. Since supernatural forces are disembodied, but can take on human forms to access natural spaces, it is also believed that seeing into the spiritual world requires certain reflective materials, such as a mirror, clear water, or a piece of white cloth. In a Christian film, however, these panoptical devices are placed in the hands of antagonistic spiritual forces whose ability to "see" threatens a Christian's well-being.

Isawuru had the power to access other people's space from his remote location, and the drama projects this ability as a consequence of dark arts and power. God, as the extra-diegetic character in the drama, is the ultimate omniscient who can see farther than any occult power because, unlike the occult gods, he is not terrestrially bound. He also occupies a remote location, but his space is not a room; it is imagined as a celestial abode from where he overlooks the entirety of human activities. Wole Soyinka has argued that the celestial-terrestrial divide has been one of the internal tensions of African Christianity. He says African religions think themselves as part of a cosmic totality and their "gravity-bound apprehension of self, was inseparable from the entire cosmic phenomenon." Christianity relocated the notion of God from the "underworld to a new locale up in the sky, a purgatorial suburb under the direct supervision of sky deities."³⁹ The placement of God in the sky also implies that the Christian God has a viewing angle that extends farther than the surveillance capabilities of indigenous gods. While this is obviously prejudicial, the idea that the Christian God has the whole world in his hands emphasize his magnificence and power over all other gods. That is why, in *Agbara Nla*, occult forces were depicted as being able to see beyond time and space (for instance, the demon that possessed Bose could see that there was an evangelist coming from the village that could exorcize her and was subsequently threatened). However, none of these dark forces could match the range of God whose power to see beyond time and space comes from his occupation of heavenly heights.

The Christian God is also represented as the light (as Jesus said, I am *the* Light of the world) and pitched against indigenous gods who are agents of (supposed) darkness. From His height, His eyes bore into the dark and remote places inhabited by shady characters that threaten Christian wholesomeness. The notions of darkness and light in religious imaginations, historically, have synesthetic implications. Indigenous African religions have been projected as "darkness" (legacies of the Conradian "heart of darkness") and this metaphorical index that aligns barbarism, evil, violence, and the occult acts with the hue of the African skin and has been used to justify racialized violence. Christianity, on the other hand, is projected as the "light," shared by the people of a "light-skinned" race that is capable of civilizing and washing the darkness away.⁴⁰ The construct of indigenous African religions, the negative other of Western Christian religion reiterates the message of colonialism that "the dark continent" of Africa requires the en-*light*-ened other to penetrate it.⁴¹

The Christian God (who represents light) could trump the indigenous power Isawuru embodied because of the wider sphere of his omniscience and his ability to pierce through the human body to reach even the interior of people's thoughts. The Bible reiterates that the eye of God surveils the length and breadth of the earth so that he might act on behalf of those whose hearts align with Him.⁴² His encompassment of multiple temporalities, ability to cover geographical spatialities, and omniscience, express the realism of supernatural surveillance: God's eyes do not merely see the body but also pierce human innards. The omnipotence of God is not merely based on the information He gathers

because of his omniscience but also on his power to use that knowledge to structure future events according to his desires. For instance, he not only saw the disobedience of Kola and Bose ahead of their refusal to take up the assignment he gave them, he had already prepared surrogates who would manage Isawuru's conversion. Isawuru would, in turn, deliver Kola and Bose and lead them to Muwonleru to take up the mission they had snubbed. In the end, God was not stranded and He triumphed. The occult power, embodied in Isawuru and the demon that possessed Bose, however, did not have such breadth of vision. Their eyes were supplemented by media such as magic mirrors and other material items such as charms and amulets. The Christians in the drama had no such material battle gear to exhibit as their weapons were the Bible, which they were either reading or citing, and, of course, prayer. Their non-materialist power signals their non-limitation, a factor due to the omniscience of their God. Their God has all information at his disposal and can direct them through his indwelling Holy Spirit. By implication, the Pentecostal body is unlimited.

The drama was also significant for its circulation of power through the transitory routes of urban and rural spaces. There has been a consistent demonization of rural areas in Pentecostalism and a valorization of the urban as a space of light, redemption, and modernity. The rural area in popular culture is typically treated as bush or unpenetrated jungle in which resilient and lingering ancestral African spirits (in both figurative and supernatural senses) predominate and threaten the well-being of "enlightened" city dwellers. Simon Coleman remarks that "Pentecostalism in Nigeria is often deeply rooted in idealized imaginaries of the city and demonization of the rural."⁴³ Asonzeh Ukah aptly notes that in Pentecostalism, "rural environments and countryside represents the domains of malevolent spirits and forces such as witches, wizards, demons and sorcerers."⁴⁴ As Marshall explains, indigenous religion is treated as a threat to Pentecostalism because its practices represents the essentialized historical and cultural African past. She says,

Religious "Others," in particular Muslims, are typically demonized in Pentecostal discourse; however, this demonization of the past is less about the contemporary threat that traditional religion poses in terms of religious competition (unlike Islam) and more about its connection with a cultural past that failed to provide the moral grounding for a good society in the present.⁴⁵

Pentecostalism exploits the anxieties of rural-urban migration by encouraging people to break with social relations that tie them to their cultural pasts and to take on a new social and supernatural identity, singularized under the banner of Christianity.⁴⁶ What *Agbara Nla* does is surpass the binary of idealization and demonization of urban-rural spaces. The drama appropriates equal amounts of corruption—spiritual, economic, and ethical—to both spaces. When Kola and Bose forsook their evangelical calling, they moved to Abuja, where they enmeshed themselves in the culture of bribery and corruption that pervades government bureaucracies, and they used Bible passages to justify their receipt

of bribes. The urban space had demonic forces in human form that seduced Christians who wavered in their faith, like Kola and Bose. Urbanity represents temptation, government, corruption, darkness, and an overall failure of modernity. The rural space was equally dark. It was haunted by spectral and oppressive demonic forces that enslaved the people through human agents such as Isawuru.

What is more remarkable about the construction of rural and urban spaces is the use of the former as a typology of a precolonial and essentialized premodern Africa that needs to be redeemed from paganism and heathenistic practices through the “civilizing mission” of Christianity. God, as he is represented in Nigerian visual culture, is white and male.⁴⁷ His gaze on abject Africa, with its perennial poverty, death, and disease, ramps up the consciousness that dark skin is synonymous with darkness and pre-Enlightenment progress. Nigerian Pentecostalism, confounded by the “weight of blackness,” responds to the economic and technological backwardness of the continent by offering more of Christ as the viable route to modernity and progress.⁴⁸ Christian Protestantism, according to Birgit Meyer, has been about journeying toward modernity in the social, economic, and political sense of the term. Pentecostalism employs rhetorical strategies (such as backsliding) that help to temporalize African traditions and characterize their pre-conversion state as a backward past (which makes Christianity a progressive normative present).⁴⁹ Pastors have argued that Africa’s liberation consists of wrenching from the past and embracing the modernity of Christian values and practices to progress.⁵⁰ Thus, offering Christ (the light) as a solution to Africa’s darkness smooths over the creases of racial history and the brutal forces of globalization that dealt Africa a heavy hand in the first place and consigned her to backwardness.

The trope of darkness meets light was evident in the spaces the camera chose to highlight. For instance, while most scenes in *Agbara Nla* that took place in Lagos and Abuja were indoor shots, the scenes in Muwonleru give a visual feast of a “backward” African village. When the characters move through the village we see the usual markers of African preindustrial development: mud and thatch houses; villagers engaged in subsistence farming; fishing; vocational labor; and a typical agrarian culture. There are no immediate indications that modern social and physical infrastructures, such as schools, hospitals, or even telecommunication, have accessed the place, yet Isawuru uses a gun and a mirror! The level of ignorance Isawuru exhibits is prelogical, given the proximity of Muwonleru village to the metropolitan city of Lagos (less than a day’s journey, according to the film). The narrative construct of a pre-Christian darkness into enlightenment was so vital to the drama’s political project that the people of Muwonleru needed to be in the metaphoric darkness (and enslavement) of indigenous religions. Isawuru was so ignorant of the outside world that he had to consult his magic mirror to know who Jesus Christ was! Apparently, distance here is neither geographical nor spatial; it is a temporal one and is bridged by supernatural power. When Isawuru’s enquiry about who Jesus was gets a response from the omniscient Christian God (who structured the entire circuit

of events and who must have been watching and waiting for this moment), what he sees is a Jesus represented by an English actor (Robert Powell) whose phenotypical features are decidedly Western. The cinematic frame—the film, *Jesus of Nazareth*—where his history was captured and beamed to Isawuru via his magic mirror also fits snugly into other symbolisms of Western modernity.

Agbara Nla is not the only Christian narrative that promises modernity to Africans through Jesus Christ. Pastor Daniel Olukoya of MFM, in a sermon some years ago, suggested that Africa is in a state of backwardness because the white missionaries that brought Christianity to Africa focused on making converts of the people. He argued that the failure of the missionaries to banish forever the demons in Africa at the time they brought Christianity still haunts the entire continent and his church is positioned to redress this shortcoming through its deliverance mission. *Agbara Nla* restates this argument by restaging the colonial missionary enterprise using Olaboye and Olatomi as key actors in the evangelical project. Unlike their white predecessors, whose civilizing mission turned out to be superficial, this new band of missionaries was armed with a more charismatic and potent version of the truth. Rather than simply converting the African native, Olaboye and Olatomi were armed with a Christianity that vanquished Africa's demons, set her free, and introduced a superior form of modernity. Their new offering made up for the failure of a secular modernity and its hallmark—a rational intellectual and political culture—that has no use for God. Their missionary enterprise is an "enlightened," embodied, and supernatural gospel that employs charismatic truth to challenge the dead ideology and theology of orthodox Christianity.

After God's omniscience has invaded Isawuru's closet (which, in some sense, is a Christian voyeuristic fantasy of what the pagan other does in private) and shed light on his ignorance, Isawuru goes blind. Thus, his shut eye signifies the end of an era and its systems of beliefs (just as Kola's opened eyes at the village signals the beginning of his assignment). Isawuru's inability to see and his being led by a child (and the Bible says, "a child shall lead them"⁵¹) to the house of the evangelists becomes a form of death. The trek between his house and the evangelists', and the humiliation of that walk re-enacts the shame of Jesus' trek to Calvary (which he was shown in his magic mirror) and the subsequent crucifixion that culminated in Jesus' eventual resurrection on the third day. For Isawuru, this walk to his own Calvary, where he would be resurrected into a new life, was a staging of that performative action that demonstrates his readiness to be crucified. When his eyes are reopened through prayers offered by Olaboye and Olatomi, he becomes "born again." In the Bible, when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden, their "eyes opened" and they realized they were naked. "Naked" for Isawuru, is his realization of his having been in darkness and his eyes going dark/blind was a representation of his inability to see the light, even though he had previously wielded a power that enabled him to access alternate spheres of reality through the magical eyes in his "control room." His alternating experience of open eyes—blindedness—and reopened eyes represents a transition from one form of knowledge to another.

As born again, Isawuru begins another life and identity that he seals by offering himself a new name: Paul Esupofu. In Yoruba culture, names that accompany a birth can be political and are illocutionary acts in themselves. Isawuru combines both Yoruba and Biblical names but while the former name, Paul, legitimates his new birth and signals his attempt to surrogate himself with a similar character in the Bible who also went blind when he encountered Jesus, the latter name Esupofu makes him a living embodiment of the repudiation of indigenous faith and beliefs. While Pentecostalism has been a modernizing influence that urges African converts to “make a complete break with the past,”⁵² we see Isawuru retain a portion by using the name Esu, a Yoruba god whose essence has been willfully bastardized by Christian missionary initiatives.⁵³ Esupofu (Esu—mistranslated as the devil/Satan—has been vanquished) suggests that as a born-again Christian, he walks around antagonizing his past and proclaiming to his former associates that he embodies a new agonistic subjectivity. His new body thus becomes a site where the fault lines of religious and cultural differences will be subsequently contested. By offering himself as a human signboard of a shift in religious and supernatural allegiances, he promotes himself as a new creature whose act of identity establishment is a negation of the social and supernatural ties that bound him to his past life.

He thus enters a new life with a new body, like those of Olaboye and Olatomi whose virtual bodies he could summon supernaturally in his magic mirror. His ability to shoot them, and even have the shattered glass spatter with blood, was a spectacularized representation of the extent of the capability of supernatural panoptical power to travel across space and time and enact evil upon people on whom it casts its “evil eye.” The blood splatter adds to the vividness of the supernatural realism and thus produces an uncanny moment when the viewer sees his/her own vulnerability to occult forces. When it turns out that Olaboye and Olatomi did not die, and were, in fact, unaware of such grand designs against them, we see a disaggregation of the Pentecostal corporeal body from the panopticism of occult power. The mirror was effective to the point that it could bring the images of the couple to Isawuru but his failure to hurt them showed that the preexisting modes of supernatural surveillance have been emptied of their power. Though they still “function” to the point that they can find people and bring them before the evil eye who shoots them, and even have blood issue from the magic mirror, their powers are internally empty and bereft of any material efficacy. Both Olaboye and Olatomi now occupy a Pentecostal body (and metaphorically, the church is considered the body of Christ), which is hidden in a zone that cannot be accessed by occult eyes. The people that came up in the magic mirror were trick images because the photographs of their bodies that were made visible before Isawuru’s eyes were those of their previous pre-Christian existence. Those images had no bearing on their material existence because being in Christ has taken them away from the realm where they could be accessed by the shadowy power of indigenous religions, along with its arcane cults, rituals, and mystical power. They are now subsisting within a new and transparent reality that defeats the dark opacity of the cultic African religions.

Panoptical power in *Agbara Nla* also coopts the eye of the camera in the othering of indigenous beliefs. In visual history, the concept of the evil eye is based on the idea that seeing has aggressive potential. The discerning ability of the eye leads to (re)producing what is seen and banishing what is not seen, condemning it to non-existence. Thus, "the evil eye mimics and mirrors the eye as its double. It reflects the eye and adopts as its own one of its attributes, the killing quality. Separation, splitting, demarcation is the business of the eye; this is how the eye acts on the eye."⁵⁴ The technological eye acting on the biological and social eye is instructive in this case because of the way it brings to light the "dark" practices of occult power to convict them in the court of spectatorial sentiments. *Agbara Nla*, by bringing up what Christians claim to be practices of indigenous religions, first gave the other a semblance of omniscience. *Agbara Nla*'s claim that it has the ability to penetrate the "dark" crevices where indigenous religions carry out their arcane rituals, makes the Christian God (and by implication, the Christians who represent light) omniscient. The camera lens that gazed on Isawuru's private activities and represented them as evil tacitly drags the viewers' eyes to collaborate in the destruction of the other. The viewer, focusing on the story and its unfolding, risks missing the aggression of the technological eye that gazes into activities of the other's religious beliefs, even if the said activities were mostly fabrications.

The incursion of techno-religious politics is instructive to the battle of supremacy of faith and to the triumph of "the ultimate power." As Peter Weibel says, "there are, namely, instruments that penetrate deeper and further into reality than the human eye Technical seeing teaches us that there is a reality that is invisible (to the natural eye) and which can be made visible in (technical images)"⁵⁵ Under the eye of the camera, *Agbara Nla*, brings up what it wants to be seen, represses the more benevolent aspects of indigenous beliefs, simplifies complex religious philosophy, and markets this mix to believers or would-be converts. This eye—a mesh of biological, technological, and cultural—becomes an ontological one that "en-light-ens" the viewer's eyes about the Christian God and his ultimate power. While pitching the practices of indigenous religions as darkness helped the drama series to stage an important victory, it also provided Christians with more iterations of supernatural panoptical ability, such that their prayers constantly express their obsession with exorcizing themselves of demons.

To return to the epigraphs that preceded this essay, the third of the instances (from the North American women's fellowship) even widened its ideas of panoptical devices to include spiritual monitoring gadgets such as screens, radar, and satellites. This shows how much the Pentecostal imagination is open to absorbing the appurtenances of modernity to combine them with the imageries of indigenous religions and to broaden their scope in deliverance rituals. That the three church parishes given as examples at the start of this chapter are in "first world" countries like the USA and Europe, the so-called bastions of "rationality," shows the resilience of these phantasmal beliefs that can travel across local contexts and keep shaping the character of African Pentecostalism, even in the diaspora.

NOTES

1. MFM, Los Angeles. 2017. Accessed March 15, 2017. http://mfmosangeles.com/?page_id=3907.
2. MFM, Finland. 2017. Accessed March 15, 2017. <http://www.mfmfinland.org/mfm-prayer-points/>.
3. MFM, North America Women's Fellowship. 2017. Accessed March 15, 2017. <http://mfmnawomenfoundation.org/wp/2016-august-power-must-change-hands/>.
4. <http://www.mountainoffire.org/messages/archives/2014-08-06>.
5. Afe Adogame, "Dealing with Local Satanic Technology: Deliverance Rhetoric in the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries." *Journal of World Christianity* 5, no. 1 (2012): 75–101. <https://doi.org/10.5325/jworlchri.5.1.0075>.
6. Allan Anderson, "Pentecostal Gospel, Religion and Culture in African Perspective." In *Pentecostal Theology in Africa*. Clifton R. Clarke (Ed.). California: Pickwick Publications, 2014 (Kindle).
7. Rosalind I.J. Hackett, "Discourses of demonization in Africa and beyond." *Diogenes* 50, no. 3 (2003): 61–75.
8. Lindsey Green-Simms, "Occult melodramas: Spectral affect and West African video-film." *Camera Obscura: Feminism, Culture, and Media Studies* 27, no. 280 (2012): 25–59.
9. Olatunde Oyewole Ogunbiyi, "African Traditional Religion and Representation: An Examination of Selected Yoruba Movies." In *Theory, Knowledge, Development and Politics: What Role for the Academy in the Sustainability of Africa?* Munyaradzi Mawere and Artwell Nhemachena (Eds.). Bamenda: Langaa RPCIG, 2016: 242.
10. Foluke Ogunleye, "Christian Video Film in Nigeria: Dramatic Sermons Through the Silver Screen." In *African Video Film Today*. Foluke Ogunleye (Ed.). Massachusetts: Academic Publishers, 2003: 105–128.
11. Akin Adesokan, "'How They See It': The Politics and Aesthetics of Nigerian Video Films." In *African Drama and Performance*. Tejumola Olaniyan and John Conteh-Morgan (Eds.). Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004: 192.
12. Harvey Cox, *Fire From Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century*. Boston: Da Capo Press, 2001: 219.
13. Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity Among the Ewe in Ghana*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999: xxii.
14. Slavoj Žižek, "Notes on Performing, Its Frame, and Its Gaze." In *Žižek and Performance*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2014: 236–252.
15. Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*. University of Rochester, 2014: 269.
16. Wariboko, *ibid.*, 276.
17. Ruth Marshall, *Political Spiritualities: the Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009: 173.
18. Joel A. Adedeji, "The Church and the Emergence of the Nigerian Theatre, 1866–1914." *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* (1971): 25–45.
Joel A. Adedeji, "The Church And The Emergence Of The Nigerian Theatre: 1915–1945." *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* (1973): 387–396.
19. Wole Ogundele, "From Folk Opera to Soap Opera: Improvisations and Transformations in Yoruba Popular Theatre." In *Nigerian Video Films*. Jonathan Haynes (Ed.). Ohio: University Center for International Studies, 2000: 108.

20. Adesokan, "How *They* See It," *ibid.*, 191.
21. Birgit Meyer, "Religious Remediations: Pentecostal Views in Ghanaian Video-movies." *Postscripts* 1, no. 2 (2005): 155.
22. Ogundele, "Folk Opera to Soap Opera," *ibid.*, 108.
23. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*. Alan Sheridan (Trans). California: Vintage Press, 1978: 201.
24. Michel Foucault, "The Eye of Power." In *CTRL [SPACE]: Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*. Thomas Y. Levin, Ursula Frohne, and Peter Weibel (Eds.). Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2002: 96.
25. Peter Marks, *Imagining Surveillance*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015.
26. Astrit Schmidt-Burkhardt, "The All-Seer. God's Eye as Proto-Surveillance." In *CTRL [SPACE] Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*. Thomas Y. Levin, Ursula Frohne, and Peter Weibel (Eds.). Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2002: 17.
27. Schmidt-Burkhardt, *ibid.*
28. Costas Douzinas, "Foreword." In *The Eye of the Law: Two Essays on legal history*. Michael Stolleis (Ed.). London: Birbeck Law Press, 2009.
29. Teju Cole, *Known and Strange Things*. Manhattan: Random House, 2016.
30. David Lyon, "Surveillance and the Eye of God." *Studies in Christian Ethics* 27, no. 1 (2014): 28.
31. Judith Butler, "Endangered/endangering: Schematic racism and white paranoia." *Reading Rodney King/Reading Urban Uprising* (1993): 15–22.
32. Nicole R. Fleetwood, *Troubling vision: Performance, visuality, and blackness*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011.
33. Frantz Fanon, *Black skin, white masks*. New York: Grove Press, 2008: 90.
34. Foucault, *The Eye of Power*, *ibid.*
35. Garuba Harry, *Power and the African Subject: Modernity, Colonialism and Normalisation*. Lecture at University of Texas, Austin. March 5, 2013.
36. Ps 139 vs 7–12 (New American Standard Bible).
37. David Lyon, "Surveillance and the Eye of God." *Studies in Christian Ethics* 27, no. 1 (2014): 21–32.
38. This is a meaningless conjuration of words that, I presume, is supposed to be some supernatural language.
39. Wole Soyinka, *Myth, literature and the African world*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
40. Candice Bradley, "Africa and Africans in Conrad's Heart of Darkness." *A Lawrence University Freshman Studies Lecture*. Appleton: Lawrence Univ. (24 January 1996) (1996).
41. "http://www.theroot.com/how-the-concepts-of-evil-and-darkness-became-linked-to-1790858757." *Theroot.com*. February 10, 2015. Accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.theroot.com/how-the-concepts-of-evil-and-darkness-became-linked-to-1790858757>.
41. Lucy Jarosz, "Constructing the dark continent: Metaphor as geographic representation of Africa." *Geografiska Annaler. Series B. Human Geography* (1992): 105–115.
42. 2 Chronicles 16:9.
43. Simon Coleman, and Katrin Maier, "Redeeming the city: creating and traversing 'London-Lagos'." *Religion* 43, no. 3 (2013): 353–364.

44. Asonzeh Ukah, "Pentecostalism, Religious Expansion and the City: Lessons from the Nigerian Bible Belt." In *Between Resistance and Expansion: Explorations of Local Vitality in Africa*. Peter Probst and Gerd Spittler (Eds.). New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2004: 416.
45. Ruth Marshall-Fratani, "Mediating the global and local in Nigerian Pentecostalism." *Journal of religion in Africa* 28, no. Fasc. 3 (1998): 287.
46. Marshall, *ibid.*, 283.
47. Andrew Esiebo, and Annalisa Buttici, "Na God: Aesthetics of African Charismatic Power." [Pentecostalaesthetics.net](http://www.pentecostalaesthetics.net). 2012. Accessed March 15, 2017. <http://www.pentecostalaesthetics.net/exhibition/>.
48. Wariboko, *ibid.*, 221.
49. Birgit Meyer, "Translating the Devil. Religion and Modernity among the Ewe in Ghana." (1999).
50. Richard Burgess, "Freedom From the Past and Faith for the Future: Nigerian Pentecostal Theology in Global Perspective." *PentecoStudies* 7, no. 2 (2008): 29–63.
51. Isaiah 11:6.
52. Birgit Meyer, "'Make a complete break with the past.' Memory and Post-Colonial Modernity in Ghanaian Pentecostalist Discourse." *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28, no. Fasc. 3 (1998): 316–349.
53. Victor I. Ezigbo, *Re-Imagining African Christologies: Conversing with the interpretations and appropriations of Jesus in contemporary African Christianity*. California: Pickwick Publications, 2010.
John A.I. Bewaji, "Olodumare: God in Yoruba belief and the theistic problem of evil." *African Studies Quarterly* 2, no. 1 (1998): 1–17.
54. Costas Douzinas, "Introduction." In *The Eye of the Law*. Michael Stolleis (Ed.). London: Birbeck Law Publishers, 2009: xiv.
55. Peter Weibel, *CTRL [SPACE]: Rhetorics of surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*. Thomas Y. Levin, Ursula Frohne, and Peter Weibel (Eds.). Karlsruhe: ZKM Center for Art and Media, 2002.



The Pentecostal and Ecumenical Movements in the African Context

Ernst M. Conradie

INTRODUCTION

The origins of both the Pentecostal and the ecumenical movements can be traced back to the day of Pentecost and to the remarkable ability that believers were granted to understand each other despite language differences. Indeed, the miracle was not one of glossolalia but of communication.¹ Both modern movements originated in evangelical awakenings and subsequent missionary movements in the latter half of the nineteenth century and are linked with dates in the first decade of the twentieth century, namely the Azusa Street revival (1906) and the Edinburgh mission conference (1910)—both lay movements rather than initiatives from church leaders. The locations might be in the global North but the events were prompted by experiences derived from diverse locations in the global South, respectively, African forms of spirituality and missionary engagements. Nevertheless, both movements came to be dominated by its North Atlantic exponents.

However, one may argue that the modern ecumenical movement emerged primarily among the so-called mainline churches, while the modern Pentecostal movement emerged from the margins of ecclesial and political power. How, then, is the relationship between the Pentecostal movement and the ecumenical movement to be understood? What shape does this interplay take within the African context? How is this related to political constellations of power? These are the questions addressed in this chapter.

E. M. Conradie (✉)

University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa

e-mail: econradie@uwc.ac.za

Given the divergent forms of the Pentecostal movement in Africa and the many manifestations of the ecumenical movement, it would be helpful to offer reflections on the interplay between the two from within a particular context, starting from the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in South Africa, with reference to various postgraduate projects registered at UWC and some recent conferences hosted by the Department of Religion and Theology at UWC.

On this basis, this chapter offers an assessment of the underlying tensions between the Pentecostal movement and the ecumenical movement. It suggests that such tensions need to be understood in the context of: (1) a number of distinct phases in the history of establishing so-called mainline denominations in (southern) Africa; (2) with reference to six core themes within the ecumenical movement (faith and order, social responsibility, mission, worship, education, and unity); and (3) the various waves of the Pentecostal movement, especially in the African context.² It is within this framework that the complex interface between Pentecostalism and ecumenism is to be understood.

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECTS BY PENTECOSTAL STUDENTS REGISTERED AT UWC

Since all Christians need to discern the movement of the Holy Spirit in their personal lives, local churches, and social contexts, in that sense all Christians could be called Pentecostal. In the same way, all churches are reformed or, better, always reforming. Likewise, all churches are Adventist, Baptist, Catholic, evangelical and, indeed, ecumenical—in that they belong to the one body of Christ located in different places throughout the whole inhabited world. However, since I do not stand in the Pentecostal tradition in the narrower sense of the word, it would seem prudent to rely on the work of some of my postgraduate students have done either as Pentecostal theologians or on Pentecostal theology. A brief sketch follows of some of their projects (in order of completion) that paints a diffuse picture of current concerns that have become manifest at UWC, a government-funded public university located in the Cape Town metropolitan area that was at the forefront of the struggle against apartheid in the 1980s and remains an intellectual home for political fermentation. This medley of projects then serves as a backdrop for further reflections in the subsequent sections.

Brian Herbert wrote a master's thesis entitled "A Conceptual Analysis of Abusive Charismatic Leadership" (2008).³ He served as the Principal of the Community Bible Academy, which was established in Athlone on the Cape Flats in 1989 to offer courses in Bible education and ministerial training for adult learners with little or no formal secondary education beyond Grade 10. Most of these students held positions of lay leadership in the so-called Coloured Independent Churches, an amorphous group of churches that are mostly Pentecostal in orientation and that, given their demographic profile, are distinct from African Independent/Instituted Churches (AICs) and draw their support from within the so-called Coloured part of the South African

population. Herbert is deeply concerned about the ways in which charismatic Christian leaders abuse their positions of authority in various ways (financially, sexually, emotionally). Drawing on Max Weber's notion of charisma, he analyzed the concept of abusive charismatic leadership to pave the way for empirical work in this regard.

Cedric Jansen is a tentmaker pastor of the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), working in the informal settlement of Wallacedene. He wrote a PhD thesis (in Afrikaans) on "The AFM and Poverty: The Place of Poverty in the Multi-Dimensional Missionary Task of the Church" (2008).⁴ His concern was the dualism embedded in the way the AFM distinguishes between its "spiritual agenda" and its "social agenda." The significance of both agendas is recognized but how are they really related to each other? He demonstrated how a multi-dimensional approach does not resolve but actually hides underlying tensions and that priority is often assigned to one or the other. This is related to divergent soteriological metaphors, such as liberation, reconciliation, and well-being—so the relationship between soteriology and missiology needs to be clarified.⁵

John Fisher is a pastor in the Vineyard Christian Fellowship. He wrote a master's thesis entitled "A Theology of Possession in African Christian Theologies" (2008).⁶ He investigated the diverse ways in which the stewardship of material resources is understood in African theologies to help him understand some of the obstacles that he experienced in outreach and development projects in various African countries.

Jeremiah Willemse teaches at the Sarepta Theological College of the AFM in Cape Town. His master's mini-thesis is entitled "The Family in Youth Ministry" (2008).⁷ His concern is the fragmentation of family life (a theme that needs to be understood against the background of South Africa's political history) and the ways in which that can be rectified or exacerbated by youth ministry. Is a family-based approach to youth ministry viable?

Joshua Reichard is based in the USA but completed a PhD project at UWC entitled "Pentecost, Process, and Power: A Critical Comparison of *Concursus* in Operational Pentecostal-Charismatic Theology and Philosophical Process-Relational Theology" (2010).⁸ He observed that process-relational theology and Pentecostal-charismatic theology share geographical origins in the greater Los Angeles, California, area, and have common Wesleyan roots. However, the intellectual tenor of these traditions is rather divergent. Could they be brought in dialogue with each other? Reichard demonstrates that this is possible by focusing on the classic notion of *concurrency*, that is, the ways in which divine and human agency may be related to each other.

Robert Agyarko is a Pentecostal scholar from Ghana who completed a PhD study entitled "God's Unique Priest: Christology Within an Akan Context" (2010).⁹ He observed that there was no priesthood for Onyame (the Supreme Being) in traditional Akan religion because such priests would need to be without blemish. Jesus Christ, who is described as being without sin, may therefore be introduced as God's unique priest. He investigated how the person and work of Christ may be understood as a mediator in the Akan context, given traditional African notions of reconciliation.

Andre Potgieter is a Pentecostal businessman based in Woodstock, one of the older suburbs of Cape Town, where he observed a proliferation of new Pentecostal churches, often with West African leadership. These “storefront” churches make use of office space rather than traditional church buildings. Since he is involved in urban renovation in the area he needed to understand the orientation of such tenants. Using Ninian Smart’s notion of various dimensions of the sacred, he investigated the services of worship in these churches, paying specific attention to their material features, including the use of liturgical space. He offered a thick description of such practices in his master’s thesis entitled “The Material Dimension of Religion: A Case Study of Selected Neo-Pentecostal Churches in Woodstock, Cape Town” (2013).¹⁰

Benson Onyekachukwu Anofuechi is a Pentecostal student from Nigeria who, while based in Cape Town, observed that many new Pentecostal churches had been established in the suburb of Belhar within the previous ten years. Why was it necessary to establish such churches if there were already numerous ones in Belhar, including many with a Pentecostal orientation? Does such a proliferation of churches not lead to fragmentation? In his master’s thesis, entitled “Pentecostalism and the Further Fragmentation of Christianity: An Investigation of the Factors Contributing to the Establishment of New Churches in Belhar Since 2000” (2015), he investigated why such churches were established in the first place and what relationships are maintained with other (Pentecostal) churches in Belhar.¹¹ The study indicates that some pastors do attend ministers’ fraternals but that such local churches are indeed in competition with each other. They are responding to real needs among lower-middle-class inhabitants of the suburbs but these needs are all too often abused by the pastors.

Keith Brooks completed a master’s project entitled “‘Deliver Us from Evil’: A Critical Analysis of Soteriological Discourse in African Pentecostalism” (2015).¹² He focused on the ministry of deliverance as a soteriological symbol and investigated the diverging ways in which such practices in Ghana are understood by Western and Ghanaian scholars working on Pentecostalism. This suggests that divisions between Western and African forms of Pentecostalism are typically related to underlying worldviews. This results in a tendency to understand deliverance in either psychological or religious terms, but typically not in political terms.

Heather Bock is a pastor within the Full Gospel Church in South Africa and a PhD student working on a project registered as “Congregational Schisms in the Full Gospel Church.” She experienced a traumatic split within a local congregation where she was an assistant pastor. Her project is investigating three similar splits within congregations of the Full Gospel Church in the greater Cape Town area that occurred within the previous five years. In each case, a sizable portion of the congregation broke away and established their own church. Issues around leadership are typically involved, while extended family networks, race, and class also play a role. Using the genogram developed by Murray Bowen as an instrument, she is investigating the complex network of relationships that existed in such congregations prior to the schisms in order to understand the contributing factors.

SO-CALLED MAINLINE CHURCHES AND THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Department of Religion and Theology at UWC launched a project on “Ecumenical Studies and Social Ethics” (2012–2015)—in association with the establishment of the Desmond Tutu Chair of Ecumenical Theology and Social Transformation in Africa—to explore a set of questions that would pave the way for the work of the Chair. These questions focused on the relationship between ecclesiology and ethics, that is, between what the church is and what the church does (in terms of its social agenda), or between a focus on either “Faith and Order” or on “Life and Work”/“Church and Society.” This relationship is widely recognized as a core problem in ecumenical theology given the divergent ways in which it is understood.¹³ In short, some churches focus on their particular identity and tend to remain vague on their mission in the world, while others tend to be specific about their mission but vague about the particular contribution the church can make to common agendas—because their identity is underplayed. Ten themes were identified that are related to the interplay between ecclesiology and ethics on the assumption that the insights gained would establish building blocks for understanding this interplay between ecclesiology and ethics.

Ten workshops and conferences were hosted over a three-year period to explore these ten themes.¹⁴ Three of these are relevant here for understanding the relationship between the ecumenical and Pentecostal movements: notions and forms of ecumenicity (see below)¹⁵; the quest for identity in the so-called mainline churches in South Africa; and the Pentecostal movement and the ecumenical movement.

The formulation of these conference themes was based on the observation that Pentecostal and various independent churches together constitute roughly one half of Christianity in South Africa, with the so-called mainline churches constituting the other half. This responds to a particular reading of the denominational history of Christianity in (South) Africa in which four phases can be identified¹⁶:

- The establishment of various so-called mainline denominations derived from church schisms in Europe, each trying to become deeply rooted in South Africa, yet retaining its historical ties with a particular confessional tradition;
- Attempts at ecumenical collaboration and fellowship to overcome such denominational divides on mission, liturgy, theological education, and, of course, the struggle against apartheid and for democracy in South Africa, eventually leading to the formation of the (now more or less dormant) South African Council of Churches (SACC) with its 26 member churches;
- Various early and subsequent waves of breakaway movements from such mainline churches—sometimes over issues of indigenous leadership (the so-called Ethiopian-type churches), sometimes resulting from Pentecostal

renewal movements since 1906, sometimes the result of both these variables (including Zionist Churches), and, more recently, the emergence of a host of neo-Pentecostal or “storefront” churches, typically blending these breakaway movements in an urban environment;

- The current constellation of denominational allegiances that defy easy classification in opinion polls but in which the divide between the so-called mainline churches (which maintain ecumenical fellowship with each other), AICs, and Pentecostal churches are not only obvious but also open to political opportunism.

Given this history, the ambiguous quest for identity in six so-called mainline traditions was explored at a conference hosted in May 2013. This quest is ambiguous in the sense that each of these denominations (Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Reformed, Methodist, Baptist) needs to maintain its own sense of identity, which it has to clarify to its members in relation to others, but that such denominations also sense the need for ecumenical relationships in the South African context, precisely since the differences between them have typically been imported from elsewhere.¹⁷

Since this theme was deliberately one-sided in its focus on mainline churches, and since the very word mainline touched a sensitive nerve for those who are excluded under this label, a follow-up conference on the relationship between the ecumenical movement and the Pentecostal movement was envisaged from the beginning and hosted in May 2014. There seems to be some resistance in Pentecostal churches to being coopted in any form of ecumenical fellowship given the historic reasons why they broke away from such mainline churches in the first place. There are some notable exceptions in this regard, illustrated by the AFM of South Africa, which plays a leading role in the SACC, while the Council of African Instituted Churches is also affiliated to the SACC. How, then, is the relationship between the ecumenical movement and the Pentecostal movement to be understood? This question was explored with reference to six core ecumenical themes of unity, faith and order, social responsibility, education, worship, and mission (see also below).¹⁸

Together these two conference themes indicate an underlying problem in understanding ecumenical relations. One may argue that breakaway movements from mainline churches emerged due to dissatisfaction regarding the (lack of) rootedness of churches in Africa and in overcoming denominational divides, especially those imported from Europe. By contrast, the ecumenical movement is a response to dissatisfaction from within the so-called mainline churches, but then, in a way, that denominational identity is not compromised. This suggests that the tension between the ecumenical movement (predominantly although not exclusively involving so-called mainline churches and long-established Pentecostal churches¹⁹) and independent churches will not be overcome easily. The so-called mainline churches will find it difficult to persuade independent churches that the reasons why they broke away in the first place and/or the reasons why new churches were established are less important

than the need for continuity, mutual recognition, and fellowship among all churches. The same applies at the level of local congregations given the plethora of new churches that are being established because of leadership tussles, on the basis of perceived ministerial needs, or for (financially) opportunist reasons.

The deeper problem is that the ecumenical movement is dominated by such mainline churches and that, at least in South Africa, it seems unable to bridge the divide between such mainline churches (grouped together) and a range of independent churches, including African Instituted Churches (AICs), Pentecostal churches, and neo-Pentecostal churches. This is admittedly a generalization since some Pentecostal churches and AICs do participate in ecumenical structures, such as the biannual Church Leaders Consultation, while there have been longstanding attempts by ecumenical bodies such as the Christian Institute and the Institute for Contextual Theology to build bridges between the ecumenical movement and AICs.

THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT AND SIX CORE ECUMENICAL CONCERNS

The remainder of this chapter explores the relationship between the Pentecostal and ecumenical movements in terms of the six core ecumenical themes of unity, faith and order, social responsibility, education, worship, and mission.²⁰ Admittedly, this allows the ecumenical movement to set the agenda and to pose criteria against which Pentecostal churches can be measured. This agenda may, of course, be challenged from a Pentecostal perspective. I would certainly welcome such a challenge since this would evoke the kind of dialogue that is sorely needed but need to acknowledge up front that the scope of these six themes is so wide that it is difficult to go beyond broad generalizations. To counter that, the following seeks to identify and describe items on the agenda for further theological debate on the relationship between the Pentecostal and ecumenical movements, commenting where appropriate on the political dimensions of such tensions.

Mission

Missiology may well be regarded as the epicenter of theological reflection. This is certainly also true as far as the relationship between the ecumenical movement and the Pentecostal movement is concerned—as the debate between evangelical and ecumenical notions of mission since the 1970s suggests.²¹ Since that time there have been numerous attempts to develop a common understanding of mission and to cross (!) the divide between the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (where advocates for ecumenical fellowship feel more at home) on the one hand and the Lausanne movement (where Pentecostals feel more at home) on the other. This is indicated by representation at their recent conferences in Manila (2012) and Cape Town (2012). The influence of Pentecostal themes can certainly be discerned in the ecumenical mission document *Together Towards Life* (2013).²²

As far as I can see, the debate on an understanding of what mission entails is not all that different in the African context compared to the rest of the world. In fact, (South) Africans have been at the forefront of such debates, both in terms of a more ecumenical, or holistic, approach to mission and in evangelical outreach campaigns. In my view, the underlying issues remain unresolved. This concerns the contrasting soteriological concepts that are employed. Consider the distinct connotations attached to notions of: (political and economic) liberation; deliverance (exorcism from demonic possession); healing (from diseases but this metaphor is often extended); (national, individual, or communal) reconciliation; reconstruction (an organizational metaphor); moral renewal and development.²³ These concepts correlate with classic views of salvation that are deeply embedded in the history of Christianity. It depends which soteriological metaphor is being favored. It is difficult here to generalize or to classify Pentecostal and/or ecumenical tendencies. Nevertheless, this remains the missiological and indeed soteriological storm center of current debates.

Matters of Faith and Order

It is impossible to comment in a paragraph or two on the relationship between the ecumenical movement and the Pentecostal movement as far as matters of faith (doctrine) and (church) order (especially baptism, Eucharist, and ministry) are concerned. To focus on African perspectives would make it even more difficult, partly due to a relative paucity of contributions (which is by itself a rather telling observation). The significance of discussions on faith and (church) order for Pentecostal/ecumenical political allegiances would also not be immediately evident (which is again a telling observation). Nevertheless, such debates are of ecclesial significance as ongoing controversies over baptism suggest. I will restrict myself here to a few brief comments:

First, ecumenical gatherings at a national, regional, or continental level typically do address matters of both ethical and political concern. This is understandable given that matters of common concern would dominate such gatherings. However, at the local level the inverse may well apply, namely that concerns about faith and order are typically dominant, especially in an African context. This is evident from: (1) numerous leadership controversies among Pentecostal/independent churches; (2) the perceived need to attract church attendees in numbers through a particular style of worship service—in competition with other local churches; and (3) the quest for identity in any local church, that is, to explain to its own members why their allegiance to this particular “brand” of Christianity (in terms of history, rituals, symbols, doctrine, ethos) is appropriate, again in competition with others. Admittedly, denominational identity in African Christianity is seldom based on doctrinal differences. As Jesse Mugambi notes, they are the result of missionary scramble and the

partition of Africa.²⁴ In my view, at least in terms of lived faith, the deepest theological divide here is between those churches that assume the Spirit works primarily through Christ and therefore the body of Christ and the witnesses to Christ (Scripture), and those churches that allow for the independent and immediate work of the Spirit. This suggests a divide not only between West and East (the *filioque* controversy) but also between North and South and within the global South.²⁵

Second, many of the tensions between the ecumenical and Pentecostal movements, as far as matters of faith and order are concerned, relate to hermeneutics. At stake are debates on biblical literalism, fundamentalism, and the relationship between letter (exegesis) and spirit (contextual appropriation). Such tensions have a public, if not necessarily a political, dimension given bad publicity over issues such as claims for miraculous healing, excessive rituals (e.g., involving snakes and blood), and the sometimes lavish lifestyle of Pentecostal leaders in the context of the prosperity gospel. The gospel of health and wealth may well be the point where the deep underlying divide between the ecumenical and Pentecostal movements is most obvious. This debate cannot be addressed here in any depth.²⁶ Suffice it to say that my suspicion is that ecumenical controversies in this regard are not merely of a theological nature but indicate an allegiance to either old money (industrial capitalism) or new money (neoliberal capitalism).

Third, debates on faith and order, especially in the African context, are shaped by diverging worldviews.²⁷ All Africans living in Africa have to negotiate the tension between the scientifically informed (Western) worldview and its cultural artifacts (medicine, guns, cars, television, cell phones) and the traditional African spirit world with its emphasis on a cosmic balance of powers (the primal worldview). This interplay takes different shapes in different contexts, sometimes with the added influence of Arabic or Indian ways of looking at the world. As a broad generalization one can say that the mainline churches dominating the ecumenical movement are typically more attracted to a scientific understanding of reality—since this is perceived to be the inner secret of technological power and since this is what attracted many early converts to Christianity in the first place. By contrast, Pentecostal churches are embracing audiovisual technologies even more readily than are mainline churches, but tend to resist a scientific understanding of reality as reductionist and not allowing freedom for the Spirit. Indeed, in California one may well ask what has Azusa Street to do with Silicon Valley? There is a deep irony here. Grant Wacker observes that the genius of the Pentecostal movement lies in its ability to hold two seemingly incompatible impulses in tension, namely to balance the most “eye-popping features of the supernatural” with the most “chest-thumping features of the natural” and to do so without overtly admitting it.²⁸ It provides a synthesis of otherworldly spirituality and this-worldly pragmatism. Indeed, it holds together a premodern notion of miracles, the modern use of technology, and a postmodern sense of mysticism.

Social Responsibility

The political profile of the Pentecostal movement in Africa is discussed in other chapters in this volume. This leaves the question of whether the way in which social responsibility is exercised in the ecumenical movement in Africa is distinct from that in the Pentecostal movement. This is no easy question to answer. In a 1981 article, David Bosch compared the models of mission that prevailed at the conferences of the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism in Melbourne (May 1980) and the Consultation on World Evangelism in Pattaya (June 1980).²⁹ He offered a table of contrasting emphases in these two models of mission, including the one shown in Table 7.1.

This analysis may be helpful to address the question of the relationship between the ecumenical movement and the Pentecostal movement as far as social responsibility is concerned, but with at least three qualifications. First, his analysis focused on evangelicals and not so much on Pentecostals. Second, the focus was not specifically on the African context. Third, there have been some shifts since 1981, also as far as so-called evangelicals are concerned. There are no longer any clear boundaries demarcating the two movements, partly because Pentecostalism has become increasingly amorphous.

Suffice it to offer here one comment derived from Frank Chikane’s unpublished paper from the UWC conference on “The Pentecostal Movement and the Ecumenical Movement in Africa” in 2014. He observed that in the early roots of the Pentecostal movement in Azusa Street it was not possible to distinguish the Pentecostal movement from its social responsibility. The rather brief episode of the ministry of William Seymour in Azusa Street suggests that the

Table 7.1 Models of mission

<i>Melbourne</i>	<i>Pattaya</i>
Starts with human disorder	Starts with God’s plan
Emphasizes orthopraxy	Emphasizes orthodoxy
Social service forms part of Christian mission	Social service falls outside Christian mission
Social ethics is primary	Personal ethics is primary
Sin is a collective matter	Sin is an individual matter
Kerugma (proclamation) supports koinonia (fellowship) and diakonia (service)	Kerugma is primary, leads to koinonia and diakonia
Emphasizes liberation	Emphasizes justification and redemption
Hears the needs of the poor and oppressed	Hears the needs of lost souls
Evaluates the world positively	Evaluates the world negatively
No clear boundaries drawn between church and world	Clear boundaries drawn between church and world
The world is the arena of God’s actions	The church is the arena of God’s actions
Divides the world between rich and poor, oppressors and oppressed	Divides the world between various population or ethnic groups
Is attracted toward socialism	Is attracted toward capitalism
Emphasizes the human nature of Jesus	Emphasizes the divine nature of Christ
God’s great commandment	God’s great commission

Courtesy of Missionalia

inclusiveness of the services of worship, crossing divides of race and gender, was itself a form of social witness. It is not as if the church has a social responsibility; the church as a gathering embodies that social responsibility. One may suggest that something similar applied to the ministry of Jesus. The diverse nature of his followers was already a witness to the inclusiveness of his ministry.

These observations point to a tension between a movement and the institutionalization of that movement. Such institutionalization is necessary to maintain the movement's momentum, but can all too easily bureaucratize the spirit of the movement.³⁰ With the formation of institutions a distinction between the church and its social responsibility becomes not only possible but also necessary. One may argue that this is typical of the ecumenical movement, namely, that it has become trapped in an organizational bureaucracy that is not only expensive to maintain but that is also difficult to move beyond consultation, resolution, publication, and policy statements to authentic liberating praxis. The same may well apply to the more established expressions of the Pentecostal movement, also in Africa. However, as a Pentecostal paradigm, Azusa Street symbolizes that the movement itself demonstrates its social responsibility.

Theological Education

It is not easy or proper to generalize on the relationship between the ecumenical movement and the Pentecostal movement as far as theological education is concerned. It is also not obvious what the political dimension could be. I will again need to restrict myself here to the South African context, which may not be representative of the wider African context. A few brief comments that require a much fuller study may suffice.

First, the so-called mainline churches in the reformed tradition of Dutch origin used political allegiances to establish faculties of theology at several public universities during the twentieth century (Bloemfontein, Stellenbosch, Pretoria, Potchefstroom, University of the North, and UWC). These were typically aligned with particular denominations. Second, so-called mainline churches of British and German origin have been somewhat reluctant to make use of such public universities and have opted to establish independent denominational institutions in Pietermaritzburg, Grahamstown, and elsewhere. Third, the experiments in offering ecumenical theological education that caters for the needs of more than one of these mainline denominations (at Grahamstown and the Federal Theological Seminary) have collapsed. Fourth, theological education at historically "black" universities have tended to become subsumed under departments of Religious Studies or Ethics, as at Durban-Westville (now part of UKZN), Qwa-Qwa, Turfloop, Unitra (now part of Walter Sisulu University), University of the North (now part of Limpopo), Venda (also part of Limpopo), and Zululand, with Fort Hare and UWC as partial exceptions.

Fifth, all the public universities that still offer a bachelor's degree in theology (Fort Hare, Free State, NWU, Pretoria, Stellenbosch, UKZN, Unisa, and UWC) have become ecumenical in their student bodies and now tend to

maintain contracts with several so-called mainline denominations rather than only one. In the sixth place, several traditionally English-speaking universities that have offered courses in Christian Studies (if not in theology) have also become subsumed under departments of Religious Studies (e.g., Cape Town, Wits) while others have changed course in their offerings (e.g., the former RAU, now Johannesburg, and Rhodes). In the seventh place, it should be noted that most students studying theology at bachelor level in South Africa are not registered at public universities but at a wide range of private colleges, seminaries, and universities. Some of these are ecumenical in orientation (e.g., TEE), others are evangelical or Pentecostal in orientation (e.g., SATS, the largest of these private service providers), but most are tied to specific smaller denominations.

Finally, it needs to be noted that the vast majority of students receiving a theological training for the sake of ministry are not doing that at bachelor level or through tertiary diplomas but through an occupational track at a host of other institutions not registered as private service providers. These institutions typically cater for students in independent churches, many of which are Pentecostal in orientation. In order to get recognition of such training through the South African Qualifications Authority, and more specifically the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations, an umbrella body was established in 2014, the Association of Ministry Training Practitioners. This body subsequently joined forces with the South African Association of Pastoral Workers to form the Association of Christian Religious Practitioners in 2016. This suggests that deep divides remain about the depth and scope of theological education in South Africa.

Worship

One may argue that Christian worship is a form of cosmological reorientation. It offers worshippers a way of looking at the world that is often in contrast with current constellations of political and economic power. Through worship believers learn to see the world in the light of the Light of the world.³¹ This may well be a politically subversive process. However, such liturgical reorientation is no easy process, since it may take rather lengthy services to remind people that the dominant power structures do not actually make the world go round and to unlearn the habits acquired during the week in terms of accepting or submitting to the status quo. This is especially the case in congregations situated on the margins of economic power, where such reorientation may be enacted in a highly dramatic and ecstatic (indeed charismatic) way. It is “the Lamb that was slain” who sits on the “throne,” at the right hand of the Father, so that a change in perceptions of power is needed. Reorientation may take even longer in upper-middle-class congregations, yet they may feel that they have neither the time nor need for that.

Given this sketch of liturgical cosmology, what can one say about forms of worship in the context of the so-called mainline churches that are dominant in the ecumenical movement in comparison with Pentecostal forms of worship in

the African context? I will dare one generalization here, namely, that all churches tend to send mixed messages in this regard. Here the material dimension of religious expression is important. Mainline churches, especially in the African context, are often overtly critical of neoliberal economic policies and the forces of globalization. They call for justice, peace, and the integrity of creation—in the African context and in that order. However, they align themselves with administrative structures (if not with particular political parties), with educational structures and, in a word, with old money. By contrast, Pentecostal churches are often overtly apolitical or tend to align themselves with capitalism rather than socialism. Their worship services make extensive use of the latest audiovisual technology. They align themselves with new money and tend to legitimize the upward social mobility of the urban lower-middle class. Yet, in their emphasis on the extraordinary, the miraculous, and the power of the Spirit, they tend to draw on traditional African notions of the spirit world and to help worshippers to engage critically with the world in which they are situated.

Unity

The ecumenical movement is at its very core a quest for unity in the body of Christ. Such unity is not to be understood as uniformity but in terms of a fellowship of churches. This fellowship is understood ecumenically, namely in terms of the whole inhabited world in which local churches have been established and from where the gospel has been spread to other parts of the inhabited world. The locality of the church therefore holds the key to such fellowship. Such unity is not merely a spiritual unity but is expressed through mutual recognition. In *Confessing the One Faith*, one of the major achievements of the Faith and Order commission, this is explained in terms of a mutual recognition of the faith embodied and practiced in other churches as being authentically Christian, even if understood in distinctly different ways.³²

Does such unity also imply structural unity, that is, one in which various local churches need to be united under one ecclesial structure? Few in the ecumenical movement would deem such a form of unity possible, or indeed appropriate. Yet the divisions within the one body of Christ, in terms of the different confessional or denominational brands that stand in competition with each other, remain an obstacle for authentic public witness. In the South African context, the call for unity was famously expressed in the Confession of Belhar (proposed in 1982 and endorsed in 1986). This confession was situated amid the dividedness along racial lines of the Dutch Reformed Church and the then Dutch Reformed Mission Church. It stated that the plausibility of the gospel of reconciliation in Christ is undermined by an endorsement of such divisions. Although the word apartheid is not used in the document, it clearly rejected any doctrine which “sanctions in the name of the gospel or of the will of God the forced separation of people on the grounds of race and colour and thereby in advance obstructs and weakens the ministry and experience of reconciliation in Christ.”³³ The political significance of such unity for issues of reconciliation and justice in the South African context is therefore obvious.

Benson Anofuechi's study on the proliferation of Pentecostal churches in Belhar since 2000 was done in the same suburb, adjacent to UWC, where the Belhar Confession was accepted.³⁴ It is therefore symbolically highly significant and indicates an unresolved ecumenical problem. This problem is one that is manifested within the ecumenical movement and is perhaps epitomized by the failure of the family of reformed churches of Dutch origin in South Africa to come to structural unity. The Uniting Church of Southern Africa was established as a step in that direction but, as the uniting in the name indicates, there is still no structural unity with the Dutch Reformed Church. In 2015, the latter church, after a protracted process, could not muster the required two-thirds majority to endorse the Belhar Confession.

The problem is also manifested within the Pentecostal movement, although it is perhaps fair to say that the call for unity is not often heard among Pentecostal churches. While the further proliferation and fragmentation of independent, stand-alone, local churches does not seem to be a major concern, it is a cause for prayer or a confession of guilt. The motto seems to be "the more, the merrier," but the truth is that such churches are in competition with each other for adherents and for income, if not for registered members (which is seldom secured).

CONCLUSION

Christians in Africa may well ask: What does Azusa Street have to do with Geneva? One may observe that both Azusa Street and Geneva are responses to forms of spirituality and engagement that emerged from within the African context. It may therefore be better to ask what has Accra (arguably a symbol of Pentecostal proliferation, but also the locus of the Accra Confession of 2004) to do with Nairobi (the headquarters of the All African Conference of Churches), or what has Axum (the spiritual center of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church) to do with Durban (where the proliferation of Pentecostal Churches, independent churches, and new religious movements is more visible than in most other places). This poses both a theological and a political problem. The question cannot be answered in any simplistic manner, but this does describe an agenda for further reflection.

NOTES

1. This is the argument of Michael Welker in *God the Spirit* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), pp. 228–278.
2. A discussion of these various waves of African Pentecostalism may be found in several major works, including Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
3. Brian Herbert, "A conceptual analysis of abusive charismatic leadership," MTh mini-thesis, University of the Western Cape (2008).
4. Cedric Jansen, "Die AGS en armoede: Die plek van armoede in the multi-dimensionele missionêre taak van die kerk," DPhil thesis, University of the Western Cape (2008).

5. See also Ernst M. Conradie, "Missiology and soteriology: The power and limits of a multi-dimensional approach," *Missionalia* 39:1/2 (2011), pp. 83–98.
6. John Fischer, "A theology of possession in African Christian theologies," MPhil thesis, University of the Western Cape (2008).
7. Jeremiah Willemse, "The family in youth ministry," MTh mini-thesis, University of the Western Cape (2008).
8. Joshua Reichard, "Pentecost, process, and power: A critical comparison of consensus in operational Pentecostal-Charismatic Theology and philosophical process-relational theology," PhD thesis, University of the Western Cape (2010).
9. Robert Owuso Agyarko, "God's unique priest: Christology within an Akan context," PhD thesis, University of the Western Cape (2010).
10. Andre Potgieter, "The Material Dimension of Religion: A case study of selected neo-Pentecostal Churches in Woodstock, Cape Town," MTh mini-thesis, University of the Western Cape (2013).
11. Benson Onyekachukwu Anofuechi, "Pentecostalism and the further fragmentation of Christianity: An investigation of the factors contributing to the establishment of new churches in Belhar since 2000," MTh thesis, University of the Western Cape (2015).
12. Keith Brooks, "'Deliver us from evil': A critical analysis of soteriological discourse in African Pentecostalism," MPhil thesis, University of the Western Cape (2015).
13. There is a corpus of ecumenical literature on ecclesiology and ethics but the most significant document is the volume edited by Thomas F. Best & Martin Robra (eds.), *Ecclesiology and Ethics: Ecumenical Ethical Engagement, Moral Formation and the Nature of the Church* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1997). For a recent exploration of the relationship between ecclesiology and ethics from within the African context, see the volume of essays edited by Ernst M. Conradie, Hans S.A. Engdahl & Isabel A. Phiri (eds.), "Ecclesiology and Ethics: The State of Ecumenical Theology in Africa," *The Ecumenical Review* 67:4 (2015), pp. 495–497, 498–663.
14. For an overview, see Ernst M. Conradie, "The UWC Project on Ecclesiology and Ethics," *The Ecumenical Review* 67:4 (2015), pp. 514–530.
15. See Ernst M. Conradie (ed.), *South African Perspectives on Notions and Forms of Ecumenicity* (Stellenbosch: SUN Press, 2013).
16. This brief denominational history suggests a certain logic but does not by itself offer a survey of different forms of African Christianity. There have been many attempts to capture such diversity.
17. The papers from this conference were published in Ernst M. Conradie & John Klaasen (eds.), *The Quest for Identity in so-called Mainline Churches in South Africa* (Stellenbosch: SUN Press, 2014). See especially the leading essay by John W. de Gruchy, "The Quest for Identity in so-called 'Mainline' Churches in South Africa" (pp. 15–31) in which the term "mainline" is rightly questioned.
18. The papers from this conference were unfortunately never published, except for my own paper on the relationship between the ecumenical movement and the Pentecostal movement regarding matters of Faith and Order, See Ernst M. Conradie, "Ecumenical Perspectives on Pentecostal Pneumatology," *Missionalia* 43:1 (2015), pp. 63–81.
19. It is telling that Jesse Mugambi, in a recent overview entitled "Ecumenism in African Christianity," opted to focus on the "main" Protestant churches. In Elias Kifon Bongmba (ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Christianity in Africa* (New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 232–251.

20. No fewer than 23 manifestations of ecumenicity are described in my extensive essay entitled "Notions and Forms of Ecumenicity: Some South African Perspectives" in *South African Perspectives on Notions and Forms of Ecumenicity* (Stellenbosch: SUN Press, 2013), pp. 13–76. It is widely acknowledged that the six themes discussed here are core to the modern ecumenical movement since 1910.
21. The best discussion of this debate remains David Bosch's *Witness to the world: The Christian Mission in Theological Perspective* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1980). In *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1991) Bosch subsequently regarded this debate between "evangelicals" and "ecumenical" as unfruitful and developed in response a theory of distinct missiological paradigms, including an emerging ecumenical paradigm. Nevertheless, the tension between these notions of mission remains prevalent. This was explored in a conference hosted in Livingstone, Zambia, on "Mission as evangelism or development?" See Musonda Bwalya, Betty Marlin & Charles Peter (eds.), *Evangelism or Development? Interpreting Christian Mission in the 21st Century* (Eldoret: Zapf Chancery, 2010).
22. See Jooseop Keum (ed.) *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes with a Practical Guide* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2013).
23. See again Conradie, "Missiology and soteriology" (2011), also David J. Bosch, "Salvation: A Missiological Perspective," *Ex Auditu* 5, pp. 139–157.
24. Mugambi, "Ecumenism in African Christianity," p. 239.
25. For this argument, see Ernst M. Conradie, "Only a Fully Trinitarian Theology will do, but where can that be Found?" *Ned Geref Teologiese Tydskrif* 54:1&2 (2013), pp. 1–9.
26. See Ernst M. Conradie, *Christianity and a Critique of Consumerism: A Survey of Six Points of Entry* (Wellington: Bible Media, 2009); also "Globalisation, Consumerism and the Call for a *status confessionis*," in Allan A. Boesak & Len Hansen (eds.), *Globalisation Volume II: Global Crisis, Global Challenge, Global Faith—An Ongoing Response to the Accra Confession* (Stellenbosch: SUN Press, 2010), pp. 53–76.
27. The term worldview is widely discussed in the literature, especially within African theology. It is used in diverging ways though. For an overview, see Ernst M. Conradie, "Views on Worldviews: An Overview of the Use of the Term Worldview in Selected Theological Discourses," *Scriptura* 113 (2014), pp. 1–12. See also Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 169–186.
28. Grant Wacker, "Early Pentecostals and the Study of Popular Religious Movements in Modern America" in Michael Welker (ed.), *The Work of the Spirit: Pneumatology and Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids: WB Eerdmans, 2006), pp. 126–146 (133, 143).
29. David J. Bosch, "In Search of Mission: Reflections on 'Melbourne' and 'Pattaya'," *Missionalia* 9:1 (1981), pp. 3–18.
30. For a discussion, see Ernst M. Conradie & Miranda N. Pillay (eds.), *Ecclesial Deform and Reform Movements in the South African Context* (Stellenbosch: SUN Press, 2015).
31. See the argument in Ernst M. Conradie, *The Earth in God's Economy: Creation, Salvation and Consummation in Ecological Perspective* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2015), pp. 32–57.

32. See World Council of Churches, *Confessing the One Faith*, Faith and Order Paper 153 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1991).
33. There is a huge body of literature on the Belhar Confession. A classic early discussion is found in G. Daniel Cloete & Dirk J. Smit (eds.), *A Moment of Truth: The Confession of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church* (Grand Rapids: WB Eerdmans, 1984).
34. Anofuechi, "Pentecostalism and the further fragmentation of Christianity" MTh thesis, University of the Western Cape (2015).



CHAPTER 8

Pentecostalism, the Prosperity Gospel, and Poverty in Africa

Samson O. Ijaola

INTRODUCTION

The prevalence of the prosperity gospel in Africa is connected to Pentecostalism. From the percolative classical Pentecostalism to the pervasive neo-Pentecostal and charismatic movements, the prosperity gospel as an antidote to poverty became widespread in the global religious space in the twentieth century. Although it is described as a virtue in some religious milieux, and treated palliatively by Protestants and classical Pentecostals, and as a curse, humiliation, and yoke that must be destroyed by anointing for the neo-Pentecostals, poverty has become a Christian ministry specialty that has altered the aspects of Christianity in Africa. Unarguably, the prosperity gospel presents itself as the good news to the poor and accentuates the need for Christians to be rich monetarily and materially. Although some prosperity preachers emphasized such instances in the Bible—when Jesus Christ performed a miracle and produced raw money from the belly of a fish to pay tax¹—the majority promote generous giving from believers and encourage entrepreneurship under a prophetic anointing of their churches, as the faith prescription for getting out of the captivity of poverty dominant in Africa.

Africa today is part of the global structure driven by money in its various forms. Either in capitalist or socialist economies, money is inescapably a need. It is apparent that countries are classified as either rich or poor based on various economic indices, especially Gross National Income (GNI) and Gross Domestic Products (GDP). Interestingly, the GNI is the basic criteria for World Bank

S. O. Ijaola (✉)
Samuel Adegboyega University, Ogwa, Nigeria

economic classifications for both operational and analytical purposes.² Out of the 55 African countries on the list of World Bank African Development Indicators for 2012/13, only Equatorial Guinea had a GNI of above \$12,276 in 2010. There were nine countries with upper-middle incomes, that is, a GNI per capita of \$3975, but below \$12,276; and there were 19 countries, including Nigeria, in the lower-middle income category, with a GNI above \$1006 but lower than \$3975. The bottom category contained 29 countries with a GNI of \$1005 and under.³ In comparative terms, sub-Saharan Africa's GNI was \$1737 (2014) and \$1631 (2015); Middle East and North Africa were \$4689 (2013) and \$4584 (2014); South Asia was \$1479 (2014) and \$1537 (2015); Latin America and Caribbean were also at \$9509 (2014) and \$8631 (2015); Europe and Central Asia were \$9604 (2014) and \$8243 (2015); East Asia \$6230 (2014) and \$6471 (2015).⁴ It is obvious therefore that most African countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where the prosperity gospel is widespread are not wealthy countries.

Africa has been struggling with great poverty since the long years of colonialism, aided by missionary religion. Africans, since colonialism, were made to believe in the blessings of the world to come by the missionaries, even when their cultural and natural wealth were being depleted by the West. Therefore, it is arguable that, among Africans, missionary Christianity promoted a doctrine of pauperism and enduring poverty as a destiny with divine assent in the face of growing materialism among elites, thereby widening a growing inequality. Africans' general perspective on the impact of colonialism is undoubtedly of cultural and economic exploitation. The connections between Africans' spiritual exploitation and the trade in human and natural resources in the continent to enrich the West, further impel the need to decolonize the religious space in Africa. It can be posited, therefore, that missionary religions—Catholic and Protestant evangelicals—were complicit in the exploitation of Africa.

Just as classical Pentecostalism was a renewal movement that emerged from the Protestant Holiness movement, with an emphasis on prayer and the Holy Spirit's power and gifts, neo-Pentecostalism is a movement that replenishes the classical Pentecostal beliefs with an optimism derived from faith that defines prosperity as a part of the redemption package for Christians. Therefore, the prosperity gospel hails from a long history of Pentecostalism. Its roots in the Western Pentecostal prosperity gospel movement is incontrovertible. From North America to Africa, the prosperity gospel preachers are attracting throngs of people from the mainline churches and are churching the unchurched. However, this movement has been heavily criticized by both classical Pentecostals and some mainline churches for what is conceived as its material inclination.

The fact that the prosperity gospel-inclined Pentecostal churches and their preachers are flashy, money seeking, and luxury minded, has generated some contextual and fundamental concerns from the public and from non-prosperity church adherents in particular. These concerns can be placed in three categories. First is theological concern, which has elicited various questions over the

hermeneutical basis of the gospel of prosperity. Second is sociological concern, which seeks to unravel the modes and impacts of the prosperity gospel on society, families, and individuals. The third concern is philosophical in the sense that it seeks to interrogate the rationality and morality of the prosperity gospel.

The common theme that resonates both in arguments for and against the prosperity gospel from these various contexts, especially with regards to Africa, is poverty. In other words, the performance of the prosperity gospel since its advent in Africa is being measured by the level of poverty among prosperity gospel church members. Thus, the justification and condemnation of the prosperity gospel are premised on the number of adherents who have truly experienced a transformation from poverty to wealth while conforming to both scriptural and societal moral standards of honest labor to earn their wealth. It is against this background that this chapter discusses Pentecostalism and Pentecostal movements, traces the history of the prosperity gospel, and examines its performance in mitigating poverty in Africa.

PENTECOSTALISM AND PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENTS IN AFRICA

Pentecostalism denotes a brand of Christian spirituality characterized by the emphasis on the baptism of the Holy Spirit and manifestations of his charismata [gifts].⁵ The authoritative *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* defines Pentecostal and charismatic movements as “one worldwide trans-denominational outpouring of the Spirit of God.”⁶ It describes “a work of grace subsequent to conversion in which Spirit baptism as evidenced by glossolalia [that is, speaking in tongues].”⁷ On the other hand, a charismatic movement is defined as “the occurrence of distinctly Pentecostal blessings and phenomena, baptism in the Holy Spirit with the spiritual gifts of I Corinthians 12:8–10, outside a denominational and/or confessional Pentecostal framework.”⁸ This definition aimed to separate the major dimensions of Pentecostal trajectory as they evolved, and described the Western history of Pentecostalism from 1900. The main classification in Western history is classical Pentecostalism, which progressed from the Holiness movement associated with Wesleyan theology that emphasized deep spirituality.⁹ Laid on the theological framework of Charles Parham in 1900, Pentecostalism, or preferably classical Pentecostalism, burgeoned through William Seymour, an African American, on Azusa Street in the United States in 1906.

Charles Parham’s theology depended on the materials and reports of the manifestations of the second blessing of the Holy Spirit before his time—even though they were few. It was first of all based on the teachings of the apostles as written in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. Thus, “Pentecostalism rejects the classic Christian and Protestant position that the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were for the time of the Apostles only, and that they ceased after the death of the Apostles.”¹⁰ This theology is also affirmed by St. Augustine, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and all the Lutheran and Reformed churches. Prior to Charles Parham’s theology were sermons and teachings of preachers,

authors, and healers who manifested various Pentecostal traits. They included: Vincent Ferrer (1351–1419), “a Dominican itinerant Preacher” who manifested both glossolalia and healing power; Manuel De Lacunza, author of *The Coming of the Messiah In Glory and Majesty*, which captured the end-time perspective of the later Pentecostal movement as far back as 1790¹¹; *Unity in the Church* written by a Catholic German, Johann Adam Moehler, who corrected the Pentecostal idea of the church as a supernatural body, with the Holy Spirit giving her gifts.¹² Some experiences of the manifestations of the Spirit’s gifts among devoted women were observed between 1825 and 1830 with shaking, healings, and tongues.¹³ Edward Irving, a Scottish and Presbyterian pastor in London, was also known for his prophetic, healing, and glossolalia gifts as far back as 1830.¹⁴ Although excommunicated by the church on the ground of heretical Christology, he went ahead to form the Catholic Apostolic Church.¹⁵

The teachings and demonstrations of healing power through devotion to holiness by Dorothea Trudell of Switzerland in 1851 was integrated into the teaching of the “new Pentecost” of Phoebe Palmer (1807–1874) in New York by Charles Cullis, whose teachings and books were believed to have had great influence on both the later classical Pentecostal and charismatic movements.¹⁶ The 1880s to 1990s was observed as a period in which Pentecostalism could be said to have budded in different places in the United States. Robert Longman aptly observed:

There were scattered rumors of xenoglossia [the speaking of known languages that are unknown to the speaker] at various revival meetings in the Southern US, and one or two incidents which may even have crossed into glossolalia [ecstatic speech]. It seems as if no one knew what to make of them, and the incidents remained scattered, going no further. And when it happened, it involved some very shady characters, thus discrediting it in the eyes of most believing Christians. Yet, there were several Holiness leaders who had openly expected such speech as a “sign from God” that full-scale revival was about to sweep the land, wondering aloud why people were not speaking in unhindered tongues as they did in the days of the early church. Also, there was an explosion of books about the Holy Spirit. Most of these books were very poorly thought out and are best forgotten, but nearly all of them talked the kind of talk we would think of today as being Pentecostal.¹⁷

The schism that occurred included the Baptists, on account of holiness teaching, associated with the growing influence of “second blessing” as an independent experience from salvation by water baptism, and left the Methodists worst hit with the emergence of the Church of the Nazarene.¹⁸ “The most telling name for one of these Holiness splinters from Methodism was that of Ambrose Crumpler’s Pentecostal Holiness Church.”¹⁹ Charles Perham undoubtedly encountered some of the holiness preachers and faith healers—such as Alexandra Dowie and Benjamin Irwin²⁰—who manifested various gifts of the Holy Spirit before formulating his Pentecostal theology.

Scholars have retraced the root of Pentecostalism from the monolithic cradle of Azusa Street in North America, to the broader context of the diffused evolution of the various strands of Pentecostalism. Allan Anderson and Ogbu Kalu in their different works observed the independent emergence of various Pentecostal strands. For instance, Anderson discovered that Korean Pentecostalism predated “the myth of Azusa Street.”²¹ Other places where Pentecostal experiences are independent of the Western experience include: “Pune, India, from Pandita Ramabai’s Mukti Mission ... in 1905 (which) resulted in scores of young women forming evangelistic teams; Wakkerstroom, South Africa, from where the first African Spirit churches in South Africa under Daniel Nkonyane and others were formed; Lagos, Nigeria, from where the first *Aladura* (healing) movement began in the 1918 influenza epidemic” and others.²² Thus, Pentecostalism is regarded as a global phenomenon that exploded among different people in different contexts across the globe.²³ It is also observed that Pentecostalism is “probably the fastest expanding religious movement in the world, according to statistics [and depending on definitions] between 300 and 570 million adherents worldwide in 2004, up to a quarter of the world’s Christian population and predominantly now a non-western and independent church phenomenon.”²⁴

Interestingly, the beginning of African Pentecostalism has no link to Western Pentecostalism. It emerged from the missionary churches, first as charismatic movements before they finally gained autocephaly—as an African response to the perceived cold spirituality, and a rebuttal, of the Western spiritual hegemony. Apparently, in the long run it synergized with Western Pentecostalism to gain theological footing and prominence among the Catholic and evangelical dominated churches and to escape the persecuting colonialists in Africa. In addition, Pentecostalism, unlike both the Catholic and Protestant churches, is absolved from colonial dominance. However, the heterogeneity of African Pentecostalism, both in liturgy and theology, is ineluctable.

Ogbu Kalu rhetorically asked: “‘who is a Pentecostal in Africa’ is an interesting question that does not yield an easy answer precisely because people do not use the terminology as in the West.”²⁵ The “ferment”²⁶ of Pentecostalism has been observed from the itinerant prophetic movement of Garrick Braide that broke away from the mainline churches, the peripatetic evangelistic effort of William Hades, the *Aladura* among the Yoruba in Nigeria that later transposed to Faith Tabernacle Churches, the *Ufuma* prayer house in the old Eastern Nigeria, and the *Kimbagu* in Central Africa, to the *Abaroho* (spirit people) in East Africa. Their diffusion and metamorphosis from a charismatic movement to what aptly denotes Pentecostalism, birthed African Pentecostalism, which does not merely believe in the manifestations of the power of the Holy Spirit, as in the day of Pentecost, but expresses Africanness in diverse forms.²⁷ African Pentecostalism as a renewal movement explored the spirituality of faith healing, unlike the missionary Catholic and Protestant churches dependent on medical services. They strongly believed in and demonstrated the supernatural manifestations of God that could confront and destroy the wickedness of witchcraft prevalent in their society through prayers.

The earliest Pentecostal movements in Africa can be described as classic African Pentecostal movements known for their conservativeness, and a gospel without an emphasis on prosperity. Some of the pioneers, such as Joseph Ayo Babalola of Christ Apostolic Church, Bayo Sadare of The Precious Stone Church, John Aluko Babatope and Samuel Adegboyega of The Apostolic Church, were known for their conservativeness, whereas Moses Orimolade of Cherubim and Seraphim was known for his asceticism.

The emergence of the prosperity gospel in Africa began in the 1970s, much like the heterogeneous African Pentecostalism and the imported Western Pentecostal movements. The Nigerian Faith Tabernacle was a new name for the Diamond Group/Precious Stone Society as a result of its affiliation with the Faith Tabernacle, a Holiness movement based in Philadelphia, USA. They later became The Apostolic Church of Nigeria by affiliation with the British Apostolic Church, a Pentecostal movement that emanated from The Apostolic Faith. Some African Pentecostal movements—such as the Christ Apostolic Church founded by the trio of Ayo Babalola, Odubango, and Akinyele, the Precious Stone Church as reorganized by Joshua B. Shadare—and other churches broke away from the British Apostolic Church Nigeria. These churches, except the Precious Stone Church, extended their presence to other West African countries, including Sierra Leone, Togo, Benin Republic, and Ghana. The influence of the Garrick Braide evangelical fellowship and the Precious Stone prayer group, popularly called the Aladura, influenced the Ufuma prayer houses all around the old Eastern Nigeria. These prayer houses were for some time charismatic movements within the Anglican Church. The Church of Jesus Christ, which broke away from the Faith Tabernacle Congregation in Abia, Eastern Nigeria, paved the way for the burgeoning Assemblies of God Church to enter Nigeria through affiliation in 1934.²⁸

Prior to 1934, the influx of Western Pentecostal missionaries into Africa through affiliations and individual missionaries' enterprise dated back to the advent of the Assemblies of God in South Africa in 1908.²⁹ Furthermore, "the Assemblies of God started a rural ministry in Sierra Leone in 1914, Burkina Faso in 1920, and entered the northern region of Dahomey (now the Republic of Benin) in 1947."³⁰ Individual missionaries were observed to have established churches in both western Kenya and Liberia between 1906 and 1912.³¹ The Apostolic Faith, a Pentecostal group from northern America spread through charismatic groups in Nigeria in 1944 to the Republic of Benin in 1948, and in the same year accepted the affiliation of the Faith of the Apostles Church in Ghana.³² Its missionary work also spread across Liberia, Congo, Zimbabwe, and Zambia around 1952.³³ The Evangelical Pentecostal Foursquare Gospel Church, which became established in Nigeria in 1954 and Ghana in 1964, is in this category.³⁴

Both the imported Western and the African classical Pentecostal movements were known to focus largely on the end-time teachings, especially the imminent second advent of Jesus Christ, which often led to soul searching. Although they believed in the power of the Holy Spirit to combat witchcraft and dark forces, they gave less emphasis to prosperity as a special kind of gospel as it later evolved among the neo-Pentecostals in the 1970s.

PROSPERITY GOSPEL ROUTE TO AFRICA

Unlike the difficulty that shrouded the origin of Pentecostalism, the prosperity movement amidst Pentecostal mainlines is indisputably linked to American Pentecostal creations. While evangelicals will disagree that the prosperity gospel is not a preserve of any denomination as they were not preaching the poverty gospel, the conceptualization of what is today known as the prosperity gospel among Pentecostals has a Western root. It is therefore pertinent to ask, what is the prosperity gospel and how did it emerge in Africa? In the same vein, what makes the prosperity gospel different from other Christian gospels? This section intends to trace the origin of and delineate the prosperity gospel in Africa.

Scholars appear unanimous on the North American origin of the prosperity gospel, which is apparently a form of Pentecostalism technically known as neo-Pentecostalism. Its claim to be part of the Pentecostal movement rests in its belief in the exhibition of charisma of the Holy Spirit, including speaking in tongues, faith, signs, and wonders. However, it distinguishes itself by the doctrine of wealth and health. The prosperity gospel is often defined against the backdrop of the nexus between the experience of a spiritual rebirth—salvation—and the existential reality of poverty. Umoh's definition of salvation aptly fit this background, since he described salvation "as a detachment from material possession and option for heavenly realities."³⁵ Therefore, "practicing the virtue of poverty and modesty as regards earthly wealth is imperative and paramount for authentic Christian living in view of the kingdom."³⁶ In contradistinction, therefore, he defined prosperity gospel as a Christian religious doctrine teaching that financial blessing is the will of God for Christians, and donations to Christian ministries will always increase one's material prosperity.³⁷ This doctrine is underscored by popular biblical passages, such as Luke. 6:38 and Malachi. 3:10–12, used by both prosperity and non-prosperity gospel preachers to encourage donations such as tithes and all manner of offerings.

However, Umoh's definition of salvation raises some common fundamental questions in regard to the prosperity, poverty, and salvation discourse. For instance: Does salvation or the post-salvific experience of a believer require poverty as penance? More explicitly: Is poverty a *sine qua non* for holy living (sanctified life), expected from both new and old converts to Christianity, so they can avoid the influence of worldliness, which they claimed they were being delivered from? There is also a need to further query if poverty logically depicts the theistic perspective of God's nature. The prosperity gospel preachers apparently differ from Umoh's definition. For instance, David Oyedepo, one of the foremost prosperity gospel preachers in Africa, opined that:

Why then do you think that your lack excites God? Which father is excited to see his children begging all around? Have you ever heard somebody give a testimony, saying, "I thank God, two of my sons are beggars"? Your children's children will never beg! I want you to know that the prosperity God has planned for you has nothing to do with your profession, your career or your family background.³⁸

For many prosperity gospel preachers like Oyedepo, poverty is not consistent with the nature of God, and obviously not with Christianity but is an erroneous choice of believers. Oyedepo further proclaimed: "Poverty stinks! Poverty bites! Poverty humiliates! It makes her victim vulnerable to sicknesses and diseases. Poverty kills! One of the most destructive social vices is poverty."³⁹

Folarin identified some definitions of the prosperity gospel such as "the gospel that promises financial break-through, 'or the preaching that does not address the concern of salvation from sin but only emphasizes God will make everyone materially rich ... the gospel that defines poverty as sin, as derogatory and misleading.'"⁴⁰ He however commented that these definitions emerged from non-prosperity gospel preachers. Not surprisingly, the prosperity gospel is "comically, described as 'health and wealth', 'name it and claim it', 'confess it and possess it.'"⁴¹

Rotimi, Nwadiolor, and Ugwuja engaged the Marxist description of religion as the "opium of the masses,"⁴² to describe the prosperity gospel as a "message popular among Pentecostals that advocate financial blessing, good health and wealth as irrevocable plans, programmes and desire of God for men."⁴³ They further justified the rationality of the prosperity gospel through the empirical analysis of St. Aquinas' theory of divine intervention. Supporting their claims through a survey of Christians attending prosperity gospel churches, they observed that people are being helped out of poverty.⁴⁴ Furthermore, they opined that "it is not out of place for God to bless one materially as indeed Abraham was blessed of God and became very wealthy in livestock, and in silver and gold."⁴⁵ Nevertheless, their survey is unable to provide an actual percentage for church members who have been helped out of poverty; neither does it measure how the prosperity gospel has essentially changed lives.

In light of the theory of divine intervention, the claims of the prosperity gospel are regarded as a miraculous provision of money. The question is, to what extent should the prosperity gospel be regarded as a miracle, if some form of services are to be delivered to earn income, considering both the strict and weak sense in which miracle is defined? The miracle discourse associated with prosperity further opens it up to criticism, owing to the point that a number of prosperity preachers allude to one form of service or the other having to be rendered by a believer for God to bless them. And it is now commonplace to find instances of members of prosperity gospel churches who are corrupt civil servants, business owners, entrepreneurs, politicians, and other workers who claim to have received divine blessings.

Highlighting Kenneth Copeland's perspective of the Pentecostal gospel of health and wealth, MacTavish described prosperity as an integral part of the Abrahamic covenant accessible to unbelievers once they accept Christ; and that the platform of their generous giving to God will acquire a multiplier effect that yields 100% in "an heavenly account," which is released to believers through their faith.⁴⁶ Kenneth Hagin Sr. in his book, *The Midas Touch: A Balanced Approach to Biblical Prosperity*, disagrees with the teaching of a 100% return and considers it an erroneous hermeneutical flaw.⁴⁷ He rhetorically

asked, “should a believer expect a monetary payback at the rate of one hundred percent to one when he pays his tithe or gives an offering? Absolutely not!”⁴⁸

From Kenneth Hagin’s practical life perspective, one may define the prosperity gospel as the doctrine that believers have the authority through faith in Christ to claim money, or whatever material blessings they desire, to meet their needs.⁴⁹ Other prosperity preachers have placed an emphasis on giving tithes and all manner of offerings (which are regarded as covenant practice), and not mere positive confession, as the trigger for manifold returns. Adherents often tie their offerings (as in the Old Testament where animal sacrifices and offerings are ascribed to sin or guilt, or fellowship, or request) to the desires or expectations they want God to fulfill. Some preachers even use lottery ploys such as, “the more you give the more your chances of winning,” as they emphasize that the “more you give, the more God gives in return” when it is your turn for God’s blessings.

In a study of the Copperbelt Zambian neo-Pentecostals, Naomi Haynes observed that “at the level of official prosperity gospel doctrine, seed offerings are gifts to God and God alone, in the Copperbelt, seed offerings are also mobilized in believers’ social efforts, binding Church leaders and lay people together in the ongoing exchange of material gifts on the one hand and spiritual service on the other.”⁵⁰ Interestingly, Eskridge, quoting Bowler, noted that the prosperity gospel movement “offers a comprehensive approach to human conditions and sees humanity as creatures fallen, but not broken.”⁵¹

The prosperity gospel can be described as an affordance of Pentecostalism in shared and contested theological, religious, and social spaces, where both lines drawn of revelations and values are not static. This is because religious revelation is gradual, dependent on both the nature of God and the abilities of religious persons to appreciate, conceptualize, and construct epiphanies for religious purposes. In the same vein, value creation that extends to social life denotes what results are anticipated—social and economic well-being. Apparently, it is arguable that the thrust of the prosperity gospel is to afford a Christian doctrine of spirituality accompanied by material blessings, a participation in a social life. Thus, unlike classical Pentecostalism that promotes otherworldly over this-worldly issues, neo-Pentecostalism emphasizes the link between the two. It not only accentuates spiritual well-being, but expands on how Christians can explore their spirituality to actualize material blessings. Whereas there is an apparent overestimation of social life given by the flamboyant lifestyles of some prosperity preachers, the primary goal is the arrival of believers at their heavenly mansionette on streets laid with gold and other precious stones. Thus, the prosperity gospel engages the this-worldly as a continuum to the otherworldly.

A number of scholars have argued that the New Thought movement popularized by the philosophers Ralph Waldo Trine, Norman Vincent Peale, and E.W. Kenyon, was instrumental to the emergence of the prosperity gospel. The connection between the New Thought movement of positive thinking and the prosperity gospel is further established by the obvious similarities between the words of E.W. Kenyon and Hagin’s Word-Faith theology.⁵²

Kenneth Hagin Sr. debunked McConnell's accusation of plagiarism with a contention that "where the words were similar, it is because of the same Holy Spirit that was inspiring him as had guided Kenyon ... decades earlier."⁵³ Kenyon was a Baptist minister but was heavily influenced by the New Thought movement and Pentecostalism. He maintained a relationship with Charles Emerson, who ended up as a Christian Science minister and was a classmate of Ralph Waldo Trine, the author of *In Tune with the Infinite*.⁵⁴ MacTavish noted that while Anderson claimed that there is no substantive evidence to link the prosperity gospel to New Thought,⁵⁵ John S. Haller "contends that in actuality, the beliefs of the Word of Faith movement lie somewhere between Pentecostalism and New Thought."⁵⁶ Little wonder, Coleman asserted that the prosperity gospel is a revision of classical Pentecostalism in the light of the New Thought movement.⁵⁷

It is arguable that neo-Pentecostals sought to hypostatize the Spirit's blessing into a material blessing. Classical Pentecostalism's emergence from the Holiness Movement was regarded as the religion of the savages, the poor masses of American immigrants. While racism is less pronounced in neo-Pentecostalism, criticisms for it promoting materialism as the Spirit's blessing is unabashed. Similarly, classical African Pentecostalism also rejected materialism promoted through missionary churches.

Bowler noted that "the healing crusades of the early 1950s featuring Pentecostal preachers such as William Braham, A.A. Allen, Kenneth Hagin Sr. and most notably Oral Robert"⁵⁸ provided the springboard for the prosperity gospel. He further argued that this "Faith healing movement gradually transmuted into prosperity movement ... to include Gordon Lindsay and T.L. Osborne, Le Roy Jenkins, young Kenneth Copeland and others"⁵⁹ Oral Robert was known for his television evangelism, through which he spread the prosperity gospel; Kenneth Hagin was known for the Rhema Bible School that graduated several of their protégés, who advanced the doctrine and practice of neo-Pentecostalism. Disciples of Oral Robert and Kenneth Hagin Sr. included Kenneth Hagin Jr., Frederick K.C. Price, Jesse Duplantis, Benny Hinn, Robert Tilton, T.D. Jakes, Eddie Long, and Creflo Dollars, who spread the gospel in the United States.⁶⁰

Historically, the prosperity gospel spread to Africa through young classical Pentecostal and charismatic renewal movement believers, including Benson Idahosa, David Oyedepo, Duncan Williams, Ayo Oritsejafor, and a host of others who were attracted to the teachings, crusades, and seminars of American prosperity gospel preachers such as Oral Roberts, Kenneth Hagin, Gordon Lindsay, and Kenneth Copeland, organized in both Africa and the USA. Coupled with their crusades and seminars aimed to introduce African Christians and their leaders to this new form of Christianity, the continent was inundated "with their books, magazines, pamphlets and radio programmes."⁶¹ While Copeland went as far as to commit "10% of the gross income of his ministry to help other preachers get prosperity message out, Hagin Sr. & Hagin Jr. from 1974 till date kept providing the theology of prosperity gospel to churches and para-churches."⁶² Thus,

financial and theological resources were provided to spread the prosperity gospel to the African mission field. But Efe Ehioghae and Joseph Olarewaju further opined that:

The growth of Pentecostalism generally and in Africa particularly has been connected to American capitalist mentality as it found fertile ground in the boom years of the 1960s and 1970s when “success through a positive mental attitude was the rule” and Pentecostalism was becoming increasingly tied to growth oriented American commercialism.⁶³

The earliest link of the prosperity gospel to Nigeria dates back to 1971, when Benson Idahosa, a lay preacher in the Assemblies of God attended Christ for All Nations Bible College in Dallas, Texas, through the connection and sponsorship of Gordon Lindsay.⁶⁴ Adebayo observed that the Bible College was a prosperity gospel-based school. MacTavish also noted that Idahosa had his first experience of prosperity theology, which aptly “fit his entrepreneurial nature.”⁶⁵ Idahosa did not complete his course in the school but, equipped with the tool of the prosperity gospel, returned to Nigeria to spread it in 1971⁶⁶; having dazzled his teachers with the knowledge he acquired within a short stay. Following Benson Idahosa’s establishment of the prosperity gospel in Africa, there were a number of missionary visits by neo-Pentecostal American preachers to ensure its further propagation across the whole of Africa. MacTavish observed that “Hagin Sr. and Copeland taught prosperity gospel in a series of teaching missions ... on a trip to Nigeria in the early 1990s and as a result ... churches exploded after that into millions of members” across the southern part of the country.⁶⁷

The late Archbishop Benson Idahosa indubitably changed the face of Christianity, and in particular classical Pentecostalism, in Africa. Beside his aggressive planting of the Church of God Mission, he ran the first Christian TV evangelism program, known as “Redemption Hour,” in Nigeria, like Oral Robert did in the United States.⁶⁸ He also established the All Nations for Christ Bible Institute attended today by most prominent prosperity preachers, including non-Nigerians like Duncan Williams of Action Chapel, Ghana, and Suleiman Umar of Niger⁶⁹; others who have attended the school include 15 students from Ghana, seven from Chad, four from the Ivory Coast, three from Kenya, two from Cameroon, and one each from Sierra Leone and Togo.⁷⁰ Those from Nigeria include Ayo Oritshejafor, David Oyedepo, Felix Omobude, Fred Addo, and Chris Oyakhilome.⁷¹

These protégés of Benson Idahosa have followed his footsteps to advance the prosperity gospel beyond the shores of Africa to the global North. Their successes in return missions to the West are quite laudable, as they penetrate and populate their church branches in the USA, the UK and other Western countries. MacTavish commented that “the Archbishop used his apostolic succession authority to attract entrepreneurial pastors to the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria.”⁷² This new breed of ministers also desired to add some form of

legitimacy to their need for episcopal governance in the churches they founded.⁷³ Thus, the Pentecostalism, entrepreneurship, and episcopatism that were brought to bear in African religious spaces flowed from US neo-Pentecostals through Benson Idahosa. Not surprisingly, the idea of ownership of a ministry by neo-Pentecostal pastors and preachers has become prevalent in the prosperity gospel.

One main implication of entrepreneurial episcopal neo-Pentecostalism is the dominant nature and autocratic tendencies of the leader. Because they are often deified, criticism, even if constructive, may be regarded as confrontation. In addition, “Most of these preachers have changed denominational affiliation during their ministerial careers in order to minimize bureaucratic control and maximize personal financial command of their entrepreneurial activities.”⁷⁴ Thus, most prosperity gospel church founders tend to develop their own doctrines and practices for their own members. For instance, “Idahosa wanted nothing to do with the classical Pentecostal church governance which emphasized a congregational polity that was tied into a denominational hierarchy.”⁷⁵ This precedent has been followed by prosperity gospel preachers in Africa. It is also common knowledge that the vision or desire of the founder-leader directs what projects church finance is used for.

In most cases, the money spinning prosperity churches have gradually advanced to run a number of businesses for and along with their church ministries. For example, “the Copeland 18,000 square feet home, the nine airplanes owned by the ministry and their links to an array of for-profit companies involved in livestock, aviation, real estate development and gas and oil wells.”⁷⁶ Thus, they not only share the contested religious space but also compete within the economic sphere to carve niches for themselves, acquiring the status of the “Big Man of God.”⁷⁷

Oral Robert was known to have acquired jets, built a university, and run a money-making television ministry. It is noteworthy that African prosperity preachers appear to have outdone most of their American counterparts in their investments in education, banking, aviation, publishing, hotels, oil and gas, and real-estate businesses. Little wonder Forbes has included African pastors in the list of Africa’s richest men and the world’s richest pastors. Today’s African prosperity preachers—including David Oyedepo, Enoch Adeboye, Ayo Oritsejafor, Chris Oyakhilome, and Temitope Joshua—fly customized private jets.⁷⁸ Some who claim to be modest, drive the latest signature automobiles. Neo-Pentecostal churches gradually grow from small beginnings as mushroom churches into big auditoriums, acquiring more land to arrive at the status of megachurches. The latest goal for most of these pastors is to attain the status of a megacity, such as the Redemption City of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Canaan City, owned by the Living Faith Church Intl. (LFC), Prayer City by Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries (MFM), and others.

PERFORMANCE OF PROSPERITY GOSPEL IN MITIGATING POVERTY IN AFRICA

Deliverance from poverty is both a promise and an attraction of the prosperity gospel, especially in Africa. Therefore, the performance of the prosperity gospel can only be determined by an improvement in the socioeconomic well-being of its numerous adherents. Poverty in Africa has defied copious volumes of work, conferences, seminars from scholars and experts, culminating in various policy interventions at both national and international levels. Unlike the USA and most European countries, where the economic indicators are good, most African countries show pitiable evidence of high rates of unemployment, low quality of education with many unschooled children, artisans, and poor infrastructural development. It is within this context that Africa witnessed the advent of the prosperity gospel movement. This section of the chapter therefore focuses on how the prosperity gospel has delivered on its promise of escape from poverty in view of determinants provided by the World Bank.

The acceptability of the prosperity gospel among Africans is not unconnected to its promise of deliverance from poverty, sickness, and evil spirit possession. While “the mainline churches failed to address these problems, condemning the solution offered by traditional religions, some of the evangelical churches conceived the intense suffering of the poor Africa as a mirage or at least played it down as though it was nothing to attract much attention.”⁷⁹ The economic quagmire in Africa, which had impoverished Africans since the colonial period, undoubtedly promoted the prosperity gospel.

Poverty has been described as “lack of what is necessary for material well-being, not only food, but also housing, land and other assets. In other words, poverty is the lack of multiple resources that leads to hunger and physical deprivation.”⁸⁰ Kurien further defined it as “a state where an individual is not able to cater adequately for his or her basic needs: food, clothing and shelter; unable to meet social and economic infrastructure such as education, health, potable water and sanitation; and consequently has limited chance of advancing his or her welfare within the limit of his capabilities.”⁸¹ Pointing to the need for democracy, Oyekan, cited the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development definition of poverty as “not having enough to eat, a high rate of infant mortality, a low life expectancy, low educational opportunities, poor water, inadequate health care, unfit housing, and a lack of active participation in the decision making process.”⁸² Not surprisingly, Naraya and Petesch commented that “poverty is humiliation: a sense of being a liability, consequently becoming an object of political rudeness, insults, and societal misuse such as prostitution and thugery.”⁸³

An interesting statistics states that “the share of African population in extreme poverty did decline—from 57 percent in 1990 to 43 percent in 2012,”⁸⁴ but the number of people living in extreme poverty still increased by more than 100 million, from 280 million in 1990 to more than 330 million in 2012, thanks to the expanding population of Africa.⁸⁵ As a result, it is

“projected that the world’s extreme poor will be increasingly concentrated in Africa.”⁸⁶ Whereas national poverty lines are often based on the cost of basic needs, including food, clothing, and housing, the international poverty line is based on the purchasing power parity of gross domestic products. In 2008, this was assessed at \$1.25 per capita per day at 2005 prices but updated to \$1.90 at 2011 prices in 2015.⁸⁷

Nevertheless, there are poverty indexes that are difficult to monetize, such as education, health, security, political freedom, peace (absence of violence), and social acceptance of the minority and the vulnerable. Although they are measured in a way to determine poverty in most nations.⁸⁸ The urban and rural poverty indices are also significant; happily, there is significant improvement of all these indices in Africa, with urban and rural poverty on the decline.⁸⁹ According to NEEDS (2006), the dynamism of poverty describes a situation in which people move in and out of poverty, year in year out, as a result of such factors as natural disaster, health problems, lack of access to credit, or the lack of natural resources.⁹⁰ It is apparent that it is the expanding population that remains a major cause of poverty in Africa.

The Pentecostal movement provides platforms for both social well-being and social intercourse by reinventing the *koinonia*—fellowship—among believers, despite the growing global anomie.⁹¹ It affords psychological and emotional coping mechanisms for both external and internal “socio-economic forces” militating against Africa.⁹² And this is achieved through prosperity gospel programs, such as: anointing services (spiritual power packed services where curses or yokes of poverty and others are destroyed); Holy Ghost meetings with various attractive captions; almanacs; recitations of a theme of the week (such as “My Week of Unprecedented Favour”) with a bible verse that supports the theme; business empowerment seminars; singles seminars, which provide an avenue for marriageable single men and women to meet; liturgy, such as “prayer retreat, tarrying, music, dance, homiletics, and testimonies provide healing catharsis, and their hermeneutic perfumed with Biblical certitudes, transform the inner person.”⁹³ Furthermore, the prosperity gospel has the ability to “find its characteristic location among the aspiring poor, particularly women, seeking moral integration, security, modernity, and respect.”⁹⁴ Thus, neo-Pentecostalism provides an enlarged social and religious space, which not only aids the achievement of spiritual fulfillment but also allows adherents to “engage in safe quest for spouses in a religious atmosphere that privileges family values.”⁹⁵

The positive engagement on both social and gender fronts by prosperity preachers is to help adherents to deconstruct a negative mentality of defeat, failure, lack, and so on, and to construct a positive mental and spiritual outlook. The economic benefit of this positive mentality is obvious as “the people are empowered to engage the modern economic space and technologies, to operate with optimism that God is with them in the market place, to reject defeat from economic failures of the nation or the domestic impact of the World Banks’ Structural Adjustment Programs.”⁹⁶ In the words of Paul Gifford,

this is called “victorious living.”⁹⁷ LFC, popularly called Winners’ Chapels, gives Paul Gifford an example of prosperity churches in Africa that have perfected his six ways of “victorious living”:

First, through motivation. A church can inculcate drive and determination, creating success through a positive mental attitude. Second, through entrepreneurship. At an increasing number of churches, at least once every service one must turn to one’s neighbor and ask: “Have you started your own business yet?” Third, through practical life skills—like hard work, budgeting, saving, investing, organizing time, avoiding drink. Fourth, through the “Faith Gospel,” by exercising faith, usually “seed faith” from the biblical metaphor of sowing and reaping, so having faith and giving tithes and offerings to the church become instruments of one’s advancement. Fifth, and increasingly, success and prosperity come through the anointing of the “man of God”; pastors increasingly claim the ability to enhance the prosperity of their followers, and often make themselves indispensable. Sixth and related to this last point, the pastor can deliver followers from the evil spirits that impede the progress that is one’s due as a Christian.⁹⁸

Whereas “some argue that prosperity and faith claim theology breed dependency and weakness as people expect miracles and do not work hard; others imagine a band of business men using the gospel as a weapon in their struggles to be the head and not the [tails], and to tithe because of the law of sowing and reaping.”⁹⁹ These two arguments can easily be supported on the ground that, in real life situations, adherents of the prosperity gospel may not believe or react to prosperity teachings in the same way. However, it is commonplace in Africa to find different kinds of adherents: those who believe deeply in miracles and engage in prayer and other religious activities to the detriment of socioeconomic activities; and those who maintain a balance between spirituality and socioeconomic activities. But, as Paul Gifford noted, while prosperity gospel preachers advocate faith to claim wealth, they also motivate members to be pragmatic by doing business.

The classical Pentecostal brand, for fear of materialism that corrupts spirituality, is less engaged with modernity and more focused on the acquisition of the power of the Holy Spirit, in order to be worthy of heaven, and are therefore more concerned with divine provision in a bid to earn a living. They appear to enjoy a certain “moral innocence of the global-economy.”¹⁰⁰ Malawi provides instances of such Christians for Harri Englund’s conclusion, cited in Kalu, that “most Christians in Chisanpo are too poor ... the stuff of their Pentecostal lives is their personal relationship” with God.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, this does not suggest that all classical Pentecostals are poor. The point is that they do not promote prosperity as a doctrine, and the wealthy ones among them are conservative. The prosperity gospel promotes global interconnectedness and the use of modern technology. The adherents are often more educated than classical Pentecostals and share some elements of capitalist society. Ogbu Kalu observed that “the organization and strategies of mega churches (typical

of prosperity preachers) are portrayed as replications of western corporate models and, therefore reductionistic of the essential gospel and betrayal of national identities.”¹⁰²

It is arguable that prosperity gospel churches in Africa have responded to poverty through their various programs, which aim to impact adherents and facilitate social networks. Moreover, a careful analysis of prosperity churches’ business investments in aviation, banking, cottage industries, education, real estate, health, mortgages, peace building, philanthropy, publishing, and more, further reflects their performance in the pursuit of the social and economic well-being of their followers. Some megachurches, and those who have successfully turned the churches into cities, have widened the horizon of the gospel and church ministries to include businesses, investments, and developmental projects.

Church engagement in business investments for the well-being of their members, and to raise extra revenue apart from tithes and offering, is not a new development peculiar to prosperity Pentecostalism. Some mainline churches, such as Anglican and Baptist denominations, have engaged in developmental projects such as building schools, providing health services, and publishing. Interestingly, the Catholic Church appears to be the leading denomination in business investments and developmental projects all over the globe. Thus, like the mainline churches, prosperity gospel churches have participated actively in the World Bank objectives of alleviating poverty and realizing its Millennium Developmental Goals and Sustainable Development Goals. The World Bank’s claim that non-monetary indicators, such as education, literacy, health, political freedom, security, and social acceptance have improved considerably in Africa is obviously not only a function of government efforts. It is common knowledge that corruption and bad governance is prevalent in most African countries. A number of African countries wallow in poverty because of inept leadership. It is no news that the various levels of government in Africa often neglect public institutions such as schools and health services.

The various investments of some prosperity churches are available on their websites but the majority are captured through the news. For instance, the RCCG has built over 50 primary health centers, 44 primary and secondary schools, and a university.¹⁰³ The church also owns a mortgage bank with four branches, a property management firm, numerous hotels and guest houses, a travel agency and a number of cottage industries. LFC, also known as the Winners’ Chapel, claims to own 144 primary and 22 secondary schools, primary health centers and two universities.¹⁰⁴ LFC also owns properties in many countries in the West, a microfinance bank, an airline and hanger,¹⁰⁵ a transportation company, and others. MFM also owns primary and nursery schools, a university, and investments in sport and other sectors.¹⁰⁶ Believers Love World’s investments range from hospitality, entertainment, broadcasting, and publishing, to banking.¹⁰⁷ The ministry multimedia digital production studio, World Plus Limited, boasts modern production equipment, the digital printing press Global Plus Communication Limited, a free to air channel in South Africa, the

K&G Events Center, and others.¹⁰⁸ It is interesting that due to their various investments some of these pastors have been listed in *Forbes* as Africa's richest pastors, with David Oyedepo leading the rest.

A number of the leaders of these prosperity churches do claim to create various outlets through which they share their personal wealth or donations. Olukoya of MFM and his wife own Daniel and Fola Biotechnology Foundation, a registered NGO established to provide modern laboratory skills in molecular biology and biotechnology.¹⁰⁹ David Oyedepo Foundation also offers scholarships to indigent but bright African students to study in any Nigerian university.¹¹⁰ There are many more of these foundations and charitable outlets to help the poor through the leaders of prosperity churches. They also claim to have employed and empowered a number of adherents in their various business investments. However, the persistence of pandemic poverty supports the argument that these efforts have only minimal impact on the well-being of the growing number of their followers.

Nevertheless, it is apparent that there is a shift from the "claim it and have it" prosperity formula to "work and have it" by faith. And this is evident in the bid of these prosperity churches to encourage entrepreneurship. Again, the gap between a few wealthy members and the large population of the poor, who keep joining the churches, is inevitably responsible for increasing inequality in the prosperity churches and the rising number of the poor among them. This is coupled with the problem of inequality in outcomes; the gap between the poorest and the richest depends not only on opportunity, but also on effort, and the degree to which individuals take risks. The new paradox in Africa is that as poverty indexes improve, the number of poor people increases. As the World Bank claims, the increasing population in African countries will keep increasing the number of poor people, therefore the more members there are in a prosperity church, the more poor people there will be among them.

The case of inequality between prosperity preachers and their members has become one of the scandalous images of Pentecostalism available to the public. There are even a number of fraud cases involving members of prosperity churches within either church organizations or workplaces. Most prosperity pastors who have acquired great wealth are being criticized for spending funds raised by their churches on luxuries such as the latest customized automobiles and jets. Some of these pastors have also been criticized for acquiring properties in foreign countries such as the USA, the UK, China, the UAE, and others. In addition, most universities and schools established by the donations, tithes, and offerings of their members are beyond the financial capacity of the majority of the members themselves because of their high fees. Whereas some adherents, in defense of these super-rich pastors, consider these practices as being of biblical provenance, others have argued that there is an apparent disconnection between luxury acquisitions and the gospel mission.

The lure of wealth, arising from the struggle to bridge the inequality gap, has inevitably led many Pentecostals into corrupt practices and other criminal activities. Even some prosperity pastors have been found to engage in the

performance of devilish rituals and false miracles to attract crowds and enlarge their congregations. Thus, the claims of prosperity preachers to deliver people from poverty have been faced with both theological and social criticism.

CONCLUSION

The prosperity gospel is undoubtedly attractive to, and appears needful for, the poor people in Africa where most countries suffer from lack of good governance, unequal distribution of national wealth, inept leadership, and lack of quality education. The entrepreneurial and positive teachings of the prosperity gospel have encouraged and helped some of their adherents to climb out of poverty. Nevertheless, this gospel is open to misunderstanding and misapplication because of the flamboyant life styles, materialism, and the attendant greed it encourages. This is evident in some of their adherents who are involved in various degrees of corruption and other crimes but yet make donations to the church. Nevertheless, the paradigm shift to promote work before claiming wealth by faith, which is obvious in the participation of these churches and ministries in the private sector economy, seems to indicate a new theological direction that the miracle of divine monetary provision still requires individuals to labor, and not rely solely on transcendental formulas.

It can be argued that the extent to which prosperity gospel preachers have impacted the well-being of their adherents is difficult to determine. There are other important factors, such as governmental policies, which play no less a role in poverty reduction, but which are not in the purview of prosperity preachers. Unfortunately, the emphasis on the “claim it and have it” gospel still has numerous adherents, who should be responsible citizens doing more to properly and responsibly engage the various organs of governments in their countries to tackle inept policies that could mitigate poverty. This doctrine of “claim it and have it” also negatively impacts some individuals who solely rely on divine provision for virtually all things. Nevertheless, some of the prosperity preachers and their adherents have started a gradual engagement in politics, some for their selfish purposes and others to promote wealth creation. One can only hope that the prosperity gospel in Africa, over the coming years, will witness a significant transformation that will enable a more balanced theology that links this-worldly and otherworldly concerns in a way that not only removes the flashy adornment from the salvation message, but also pragmatically tackles the poverty scourge on the African continent.

NOTES

1. Matt. 17:27 (King James).
2. The World Bank, *African Development Indicators 2012/2013* (Washington, DC: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2013), accessed March 30, 2017, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/13504/9780821396162.pdf?sequence=1>, p. 3.
3. The World Bank, *Africa Development Indicators 2012/13*, p. 5.

4. World Bank, "Poverty and Equity: Regional Indicators Data Bank" (The World Bank Group, 2017), accessed March 30, 2017, <http://povertydata.worldbank.org/poverty/region/EAP>.
5. David Yamane, "Charismatic Movement," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Society* (Walnut Creek: Alta Mira Press, 1998), accessed August 15, 2016, <http://hrr.hartsem.edu/ency/cmovement.htm>.
6. David J. Engelsman, "Pentecostalism: What Is It?" Last modified November 11, 2001, accessed August 15, 2016, http://www.prca.org/pamphlets/pamphlet_91d.html.
7. Engelsman, "Pentecostalism: What Is It?"
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Robert Longman, "Pentecostalist Pre History: What Led to the Pentecostal Revivals," last modified, July 17, 2015, accessed August 14, 2016, <http://www.spirithome.com/pentecostalist-history.html>.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Allan Anderson, "The Origins of Pentecostalism and Its Spread in the Early Twentieth Century" (Lecture, Oxford Centre for Missions Studies, Graduate Institute for Theology and Religion, University of Birmingham, October 5, 2004).
22. Anderson, p. 11.
23. Ibid., pp. 11–12.
24. Ibid., p. 1.
25. Ogbu U. Kalu, *A Discursive Interpretation of African Pentecostalism*, p. 5.
26. Ogbu U. Kalu, "A Trail of Ferment in African Christianity: Ethiopianism, Prophetism, Pentecostalism," in *African identities and World Christianity in the Twentieth Century: Proceeding of the Third International Munich–Freising Conference on the History of Christianity in Non-Western World*, ed. Klaus Koschorke & Je Holger Schjøring (Wiesbaden: Otto Narrassowitz Verlag, 2005), p. 1.
27. Kalu, "A Trail of Ferment in African Christianity ...," p. 37.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. The Apostolic Faith Mission, S.A "Important Milestone," accessed July 7, 2017, <http://www.afm-ags.org/history>.
33. The Apostolic Faith West and Central Africa, "The Chronology of the History of the Apostolic Faith in Africa," accessed July 23, 2016, <http://www.afm-ags.org/history>.

34. The Foursquare Church Nigeria, "The History of the Church in Nigeria," accessed July 27, 2016, foursquare.org.ng/our-history/html.
35. Dominic Umoh, "Prosperity Gospel and the Spirit of Capitalism: The Nigerian Story," *African Journal of Scientific Research* 12, no. 3 (2013): 657.
36. Umoh, "Prosperity Gospel," 657.
37. Ibid.
38. David Oyedepo, *Understanding Financial Prosperity* (Lagos: Dominion Publishers, 1997), 3.
39. David Oyedepo, *Winning the War against Poverty* (Lagos: Dominion Publishers, 2006), 5.
40. George Folarin, "The Prosperity Gospel in Nigeria: A Re-examination of the Concept, Its impact and Evaluation," *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* Sec 2 & 3.
41. Larry Eskridge, "The Poverty Gospel Is Surprisingly Mainstream," *Christian Today*, (2013): 1–5. <http://www.christiantoday.com/ct/2013/august.html.star=1>.
42. Nkechi Rotimi, Kanayo Nwadiakor & Alex Ugwuja, "Nigerian Pentecostal Churches and their Prosperity Messages: A Safeguard against Poverty in Nigeria," *Mgbakiogba, Journal of African Studies* 5, no. 2 (2016): 10.
43. Rotimi et al., "Prosperity Messages," 12.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Ron MacTavish, "Pentecostal Profits: The Prosperity Gospel in the Global South" (master's thesis, University of Lethbridge, 2013), 14, <http://www.uleth.ca/dspace/bitstream/handle/10133/3527/Pentecostal%20Profits-The%20Prosperity%20Gospel%20in%20the%20Global%20South.pdf?Sequence=1&isAllowed=Y>
47. Kenneth Hagin, *The Midas Touch: A Balanced Approach to Biblical Prosperity* (Oklahoma: Rhema Bible Church, 2000), 152.
48. Hagin, *Midas Touch*, 151.
49. Ibid.
50. Naomi Haynes, "Affordance and Audiences Finding Difference Christianity Makes," *Current Anthropology* 55, no. 10 (2014): S360, <http://about.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/67885>.
51. Eskridge, "The Poverty Gospel," Sec 4.
52. MacTavish, "Pentecostal Profits," 18–19.
53. MacTavish, "Pentecostal Profits," 20.
54. MacTavish, "Pentecostal Profits," 22.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid., 23.
57. Ibid.
58. Eskridge, "The Poverty Gospel," Sec 2.
59. MacTavish, "Pentecostal Profits," 22.
60. Adebayo, "How Prosperity Gospel Started and Spread to the Whole World," Sunday1967.com (blog), October 9, 2011, <http://Sunday1967.blogspot.com.ng/2011/10/...html>. Sec 2.
61. Adebayo, "Prosperity Gospel Started," Sec 4.
62. MacTavish, "Pentecostal Profits," 17.
63. Efe Ehioghare & Joseph Olarewaju, "A Theological Evaluation of the Utopian Image of Prosperity Gospel and the African Dilemma," *IOSR Journal of*

- Humanities and Social Science* 20, no. 8 (2015): 66–75. <http://www.iosrjournals.org>, 71.
64. Adebayo, “Prosperity Gospel Started,” Sec 6.
65. MacTavish, “Pentecostal Profits,” 118.
66. MacTavish, “Pentecostal Profits,” 120.
67. MacTavish, “Pentecostal Profits,” 27.
68. MacTavish, “Pentecostal Profits,” 121.
69. MacTavish, “Pentecostal Profits,” 122.
70. MacTavish, “Pentecostal Profits,” 126.
71. Adebayo, “Prosperity Gospel Started,” Sec 4.
72. MacTavish, 125.
73. MacTavish, 124.
74. MacTavish, 125.
75. MacTavish, 124.
76. MacTavish, 27.
77. MacTavish, 126.
78. Ogaga Ifowodo, “God’s Private Jets,” *Vanguard*, November 28, 2012.
79. Ehioghare and Oluwajau, Utopian Image of Prosperity, 71.
80. World Bank, Development Report, 2001.
81. C.T. Kurien, *Poverty, Planning and Social Transformation* (Mumbai: Allied Publishers, 1978), 56.
82. Oluwaseyi Oyekan, “Poverty And the Philosophy of Aid in Africa: Beyond Odera Oruka’s Theory of the Right to a Human Minimum,” *Thought and Practice: Journal of the Philosophical Association of Kenya* 5, no. 2 (2013): 19–34. <http://www.ajol.info/index.php/tp/article/download/104302/94390>.
83. Deepa Naraya and Petesh Patti, “Voices of the Poor from Many Lands” (World Bank Report, 2002).
84. Kathleen Beegle, et al., eds. “Introduction,” in *Poverty Rising in Africa* (World Bank Report, 2015), 22.
85. Beegle et al., *Poverty Rising in Africa*, 22.
86. Beegle et al., *Poverty Rising in Africa*, 49.
87. Beegle et al., *Poverty Rising in Africa*, 22.
88. Beegle et al., “Poverty from a Nonmonetary Perspective,” in *Poverty Rising in Africa* (World Bank Report, 2015), 84.
89. Beegle et al., “Revisiting Poverty Trend,” in *Poverty Rising in Africa* (World Bank Report, 2015), 57.
90. National Economic Empowerment Development Scheme (2004) National Planning Commission Publication.
91. Ogbu Kalu, “A Discursive Interpretations of African Pentecostalism,” 41, no. 1 (2009): 14.
92. Ibid.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid.
97. Paul Gifford, “Healing in African Pentecostalism: The Victorious Living of David Oyedepo,” in *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing*, ed. Candy Gunther Brown (<https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195393408.003.0013>).
98. Gifford, “Healing in African Pentecostalism,” 251–252.

99. Ogbu Kalu, "A Discursive Interpretation," 14.
100. Ogbu Kalu, "A Discursive Interpretation," 17.
101. Ibid.
102. Ibid., 17.
103. MacTavish, "Pentecostal Profits," 141.
104. Living Faith Church, "Education," accessed October 1, 2016, <http://faithtabernacle.org.ng/?p=229>.
105. Ogaga Ifowodo, "God's Private Jets," *Vanguard*, November 28, 2012.
106. Daniel and Fola Biotechnology Foundation, "About Us: Daniel Olukoya," <http://www.mountainoffire.org/about/dr-d>.
107. "Oyakhilome's Divorce Mess (22): Inside His N300 Billion Empire," September 9, 2004. [Encomium.ng/oyakhilomes-divource-mess-22/](http://encomium.ng/oyakhilomes-divource-mess-22/).
108. "Oyakhilome's Inside His 300 Billion."
109. Daniel and Fola Biotechnology Foundation, "About Us: Daniel Olukoya," <http://www.mountainoffire.org/about/dr-d>.
110. David Oyedepo Foundation, "About Us," accessed October 15, 2016, davidoyedepofoundation.org/portal/scholarship.



Soft Tongue, Powerful Voice, Huge Influence: The Dynamics of Gender, Soft Power, and Political Influence in Faith Evangelistic Ministries in Kenya

Damaris Seleina Parsitau

INTRODUCTION

Female spiritual leaders are increasingly leveraging soft power as a means to gain power and influence in the public sphere. In this case, it is important to ask if soft power is imperative to bringing in more women to public life. Based on recent ethnographic studies carried out during 2012–2017, this chapter examines how evangelist Teresia Wairimu Kinyanjui, the founder and head of Faith Evangelistic Ministries (FEM), one of the largest and most influential neo-Pentecostal churches in Kenya, constructs, appropriates, and embodies soft power and influence, and how she mediates spirituality as an alternative model to contest public life. It further attempts to understand the intersections between soft power and spirituality, two realms that represent important domains of power for women seeking public life.

The chapter is guided by the following questions: Is soft power emerging as a new space for neo-Pentecostal women to engage in politics and public life? Does soft power offer a new space that propels religious women into the

This chapter is written with generous research grants from the Nagel Institute, USA, for which I am profoundly grateful. Damaris Parsitau is a Research Associate and Visiting fellow at the University of South Africa (UNISA).

D. S. Parsitau (✉)
Egerton University, Nakuru, Kenya

public sphere? How do spirituality and soft power represent important domains of power for neo-Pentecostal women and how are these new domains reconstructed, negotiated, and appropriated? Is soft power an alternative model for Pentecostal women contesting public life in Kenya? How does FEM differ from other churches and how is soft power appropriated and mediated to produce the kind of sociopolitical power and influence it engenders? These questions allow for a deeper investigation and understanding of the field of gender and public life in African Pentecostalism. They also allow for a greater understanding of how gender and spirituality impact not just politics but also the whole of society.

WOMEN, SOFT POWER, AND LEADERSHIP

The leadership of women in politics, business, and society is becoming increasingly recognized across the globe.¹ Growing numbers of women are becoming political leaders around the world, a few most recent examples include: US former Secretary of State Hilary Rodham Clinton, the Democratic Party Presidential nominee for the 2016 election; Theresa May, UK Prime Minister; German Chancellor Angela Merkel; Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf; Joyce Banda, former Malawian President; Aung San Suu Kyi, Burmese pro-democracy leader and Nobel Peace Laureate; Brazil's first female President, Dilma Rouseff; Chile's Michelle Bachelet; Argentina's President Christina Kirchner; Tokyo's Governor and former Japanese Defense minister, Yuriko Koike.

In individual countries around the globe, women are doing well in politics, although many can still do better. The law and constitutions are creating more opportunities and new spaces for women. Indeed, in a number of countries such as Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and India, women are increasingly contesting political space because of legal and constitutional requirements for female representation. In 2013, for example, India reserved a third of the seats in its legislature for women.² In Kenya, the new constitution of 2010 created special seats reserved for women and persons living with disabilities. Rwanda and South Africa are leading in the number of women in Parliament worldwide. At 64%, Rwanda has the highest share of women Parliamentarians in the world, according to latest statistics.³

Women are equally rising to the fore in business as exemplified by Oprah Winfrey of the Oprah Winfrey Network (OWN), Facebook COO and author of *Lean In*, Sheryl Sandberg, General Motors (GM) CEO Mary Barra, and Kenya's Tabitha Karanja of Keroche Breweries Ltd. Women are also rising to the forefront in other spheres of life, particularly in education, the arts, music and popular culture, and in decision making in their societies and communities. At the same time, women's voices in leadership and decision-making power may be present at household, community, national, or organizational levels. Many women are also increasingly founding and heading spiritual organizations, such as churches and other spaces of worship.

Whether women's voices, access to, or participation in decision making translates to greater power and influence is a matter of conjecture. However,

history abounds with examples of women who have had a great deal of power and influence beyond their countries. For example, Oprah Winfrey, Hilary Clinton, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and Michelle Obama have used their positions and platforms, as well as soft power, to influence people beyond their home countries and continents. Michelle Obama, for example, has used this kind of power to influence a great many causes ranging from girls' education (as exemplified by her *Let girls learn* and #bringbackourgirls activism), to health and well-being (as in her *Let's move*) and has used fashion to influence trends and styles the world over. A common thread that runs through all these women is that many attained their greatest achievements by influencing others. From the aforementioned, it is clear that women are increasingly appropriating soft power to contest public life.

Voice, decision making, and leadership are understood as elements of women's empowerment that can have positive effects on individuals and their communities. Throughout the world, soft power is increasingly emerging as a preferred type of power over hard power. Women in public life, including spiritual leadership, are increasingly appropriating soft power to gain power and influence. Given its importance, it is imperative to understand what soft power is.

WHAT IS SOFT POWER?

Joseph Nye, Jr., the former Dean of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, is credited with developing and popularizing the concept of soft power in the 1990s. But what is soft power and how is it different from hard power? As defined by Nye, "soft power is the ability to influence people through persuasion or attraction or by co-option as opposed to coercion."⁴ Further, Nye describes soft power as the ability to obtain preferred outcomes through attraction rather than coercion or payments.⁵ Nye's definition of soft power was deliberately appropriated for public policy and international relations, specifically in the context of American politics, diplomacy, and international relations.

As Mahapatra reflects, soft power does not rely on hard instruments of power, such as military tanks.⁶ Rather, its influence is felt subtly or surreptitiously, as one feels attracted to certain types of music or food. The major difference between soft and hard power, according to him, is that the latter *coerces* the actor to do something, while soft power persuades without coercion. Soft power, it seems to me, encompasses nearly everything other than economic and military power.

Soft power is said to be humane. It does not rely only on persuasion or the capacity to convince people with argument but is also a sign of an ability to attract, and attraction often leads to acceptance of associated ideas. As Nye, aptly points out: "If you can get others to be attracted to what you want, it costs you much less in carrots and sticks." Soft power therefore uses attraction, persuasion, and cooperation. It also entails an attraction to shared values, the justness and duty of contributing to the achievement of those values, according to Nye.

Jeffrey Haynes,⁷ influenced by Peter Katzenstein,⁸ examines the use of soft power in the context of religious and cultural groups and their influence on foreign policy. He argues that soft power should include cultural (including religious) actors, who seek to influence foreign policy by encouraging policy makers to include beliefs, norms, and values in foreign policy. According to Mahapatra, the major characteristics of soft power include cultural and religious values, beliefs, and practices that can have an impact on policies and international relations.⁹ Mahapatra cites examples of how India and China have continued to spread their power and influence through exporting soft power and values such as food and culture (e.g., yoga and various meditation practices).

RELIGION AND SOFT POWER

The role of religion in shaping politics cannot be gainsaid, particularly on the African continent where the separation between religion and politics is increasingly blurred. Religious soft power can be an important component of power, just like hard power or material resources. For a long time religious organizations have channeled soft power to others by exporting its values and beliefs channeled through ideas, experiences, and practices. Is soft power compatible with religious ideals? It seems to me that religion has a language that resonates with the qualities and characteristics of soft power, such as compassion, empathy, non-violence, peace making, a sense of community, people centeredness, participation, support, spiritual power, warmth, cooption, collaboration, consultation, and many more. In fact, religion and spirituality speak the language of soft power, and soft power draws substantially on the language of spirituality and religiosity.

Yet very few studies have focused on the relationship between religion and soft power. Joseph Nye only briefly referred to religion, noting that for centuries organized religious movements have possessed soft power.¹⁰ He focused most of his attention on secular sources of soft power. Yet, analysts such as Jeffrey Haynes would agree that it is now impossible to ignore the influence of religion in public life and, especially, the role of soft power in influencing people's values and practices.

In fact, there is a religious resurgence in many parts of the world—as attested by significant literature devoted to this theme.¹¹ In Africa, religion can be a powerful force in national politics and public life. Religion in and of itself may be a form of soft power. This is because soft power builds on the ability to mold the preferences of others, to get them to want to do things that you want them to do. When religious actors seek to project soft power, they do not necessarily restrict their efforts to attempts to influence how ordinary people think and act; many also try to influence state policies on issues such as human rights, women's rights, constitutionalism, and democracy.

Similarly, there is a growing importance of soft power in organizations, both secular and religious, as well as in world politics. Less often noted are attempts by religion to influence foreign policy through wielding soft power, encouraging principles, values, and ideals. This is even more critical in Africa given the

prominence of religion in both public and private spheres, and its impact on African politics cannot be ignored. Even less importance is dedicated to how female clergy appropriate and mediate soft power and spirituality. Is soft power inherently spiritual? These questions are particularly relevant to the context of women spiritual leaders using soft power to gain influence.

PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIANITY, WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP, AND THE APPROPRIATION OF SOFT POWER

The leadership of women in the spiritual and religious spheres is becoming increasingly evident and recognized in Africa. Growing numbers of Pentecostal women are becoming founders of churches as bishops, evangelists, and pastors in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa.¹² In Kenya, women are increasingly contesting spiritual spaces, and many are ordained bishops running their own churches. Examples include Bishop Margaret Wanjiru of Jesus Is Alive Ministries (JIAM), Evangelist Teresia Wairimu of FEM, Reverend Kathy Kiuna of Jubilee Christian Centre (JCC), Elizabeth Wahome of Single Ladies Interdenominational Ministry (SLIM), and many others. This scenario is replicated in West Africa, especially in Ghana and Nigeria where women are increasingly emerging as founders and heads of churches and ministries.¹³

Women in Kenya still have very limited access to positions of political leadership and decision making. And, while there has been progress in increasing the number of women in elected posts both at local and national levels, women are still underrepresented in politics and other areas of public life.¹⁴ In the social sphere, women engage in civil society by forming or participating in civic associations and social movements and by acting collectively to lobby government and others on the basis of shared interests. In these cases, women shape the decisions and behaviors of power holders through their activism outside of government and the state. In fact, women are more likely to organize and mobilize through civic associations and social movements and directly influence government decisions than to hold public office. Churches and faith based organizations (FBOs) can become important channels through which women in civil society express voice and influence and interact with the state; whether formally or informally, institutionalized or ad hoc, and at community, subnational, and national levels.

Pentecostal female clergy are increasingly appropriating soft power to gain power and influence not just in their respective organizations but also in all issues in public life. Yet, few studies have explored the role of women spiritual leaders and the use of soft power to gain power, voice, and influence. Even more importantly, fewer studies have focused specifically on how religious women leaders have used soft power to gain social, political, and economic influence as well as to ascend to leadership positions and decision making. Yet, examples abound of religious women who have used their spirituality and religiosity not just for immense social good but also to influence others, and who have rallied this influence for social justice and humanitarian undertakings. But

is there a causal connection between systemic discrimination and women's empowerment and the possibility that Pentecostal women can use religion and spirituality to gain power and influence?

The late Mother Theresa of Calcutta, India (and now Saint Teresa of Calcutta) achieved so much power, recognition, and influence through her spiritual and humanitarian undertakings. She became a much revered and loved personality because of her compassion working with the poor and the sick in the most vulnerable of constituencies in India. In Kenya, Reverend Teresia Wairimu has used her FEM not just to gain voice, respect, and power but for influence in Kenya's public sphere, influence she has used for immense social good.

Is soft power an avenue through which Pentecostal women can gain influence to contest and impact public life in Kenya? Soft power can open up space and create opportunities and is another avenue through which women in patriarchal cultures can access power in realms such as politics, business, and society. Spiritual power brings about respect and influence and women can use spiritual power to contest public life or political power. In contemporary Pentecostal churches, and despite these churches generally conservative and patriarchal theological and social narratives, women often rise to positions of considerable influence and authority through charisma invigorated by God's calling. This is especially the case in churches with no fixed ordination rules or those that are founded and headed by women. Does women's participation in religious leadership strengthen their voice and influence and their leadership access to political power and decision making? In Kenya, this seems to be the case, as exemplified by a number of female spiritual leaders.

Bishop Margaret Wanjiru, the founder of JIAM has used her spiritual power to gain political power. In 2007, Bishop Wanjiru served as a Member of Parliament and an Assistant Minister for Housing.¹⁵ She signaled her intention to contest the Nairobi gubernatorial position during the August 8, 2017, general election. But that ambition was not realized. Besides using their spiritual platforms to gain influence and voice, women such as Bishop Wanjiru can also influence public opinion through mass media, both traditional and social. Many religious actors can become actors in policy, politics, and international relations that are in tune with their values, norms, and beliefs.

This chapter explores these issues using the example of Evangelist Teresia Wairimu of FEM. Wairimu, either consciously or unconsciously, uses soft power to infiltrate the public sphere. It examines how this model of leadership can offer women in public life lessons on how to tackle challenges they face in their pursuit of leadership and decision making. It argues that this form of leadership might be best suited to the African, particularly the Kenyan, context, where women grapple with issues of patriarchy and countries that frown upon female leadership. The chapter's main argument is that if Pentecostal women and the religious organizations they head manage to get the ear of the state or government, they may be able to gain voice and influence and use them to impact significant issues in public life, such as poverty, social justice, women's empowerment, peace building, national cohesion and integration, interfaith relations, and policy issues that touch on the most vulnerable of populations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL SETTINGS

The chapter is based on ethnographic research carried out between 2008 and 2016, including face to face interviews, participant observation, and an analysis of sociopolitical issues in the country, as well as this author's personal reflections and experiences, coupled with firsthand knowledge and understanding of FEM. This church was one of the case studies for my PhD research carried out between 2008 and 2012 that adopted leadership praxis and feminist theoretical frameworks in analyzing gender dynamics in the public life of female spiritual leaders in African and Kenyan neo-Pentecostalism. The data came from FEM, a faith healing, women-centered ministry, founded and led by Evangelist Teresia Wairimu Kinyanjui in 1985. FEM is one of many such churches that have proliferated in Kenya since the 1980s.

The broad theoretical approach was inspired by cross-national scholarship on how women employ religious, doctrinal, and organizational tools in their struggle for equality and advancement, particularly the appropriation of religious soft power to gain social and political influence. The literature uses both historical and contemporary cases to argue that women are increasingly appropriating soft religious power, piety, and the platform of their church to transform the religious realm from within to gain voice and influence, and to reposition religious teachings and norms to enable and promote women's agency and empowerment.¹⁶

More specifically, however, the conceptualization draws from a body of interdisciplinary studies, namely, feminist and gender studies, the sociology of religion, foreign policy studies, and journal articles that seek to explain how women are increasingly appropriating soft power and the consequences inherent in it to contest public life. Some critics argue that the idea of soft power, as developed by Nye Jr., might not be applicable to other countries and might entail grafting an American concept on to other situations. Yet, it is hard to ignore soft power and its significance as appropriated by female Pentecostal clergy. The core concept useful for this chapter is religious culture, particularly those aspects that are attractive or pleasing to others. Against this background the chapter examines how Pentecostal women have used and appropriated soft power to gain power, voice, and influence.

The chapter draws upon the idea of soft power as developed by Nye, and of communicative power, to explore how religious groups and faith actors play an active role in shaping the moral values of a country. It argues that these groups have the ability to change discourse and practice and to shape public opinion through their communicative power, which may take the shape of information politics, accountability politics, or even leverage politics. It also draws on data on female-led and founded Pentecostal churches to understand how they navigate and mediate between spiritual power and soft power.

The data appears to suggest that there are two main pathways and trajectories that Pentecostal women have used to ascend to authority and influence to advance not just their own empowerment but that of other women. These

trajectories include those single unmarried women who left mainstream churches to found their own ministries; and the wives of Pentecostal church bishops who carved out space for themselves and assumed a leadership role by virtue of association with their husbands. Teresia Wairimu belongs to the former category, alongside Margaret Wairimu of JIAM, while Kathy Kiuna of JCC and Reverend Lucy Muiru of Maximum Miracle Centre belong to the latter category. Irrespective of their marital status, these women have carved out a space for themselves and enjoy considerable respect, legitimacy, and influence in Kenya's public life and beyond.

Ethnographic data suggests that Evangelist Teresia Wairimu has gained not just a large religious following but that she has also attained tremendous influence, voice, and respect on the social and political scene because of her appropriation of soft power and charisma, generated over the years as the head of FEM. Using the case of Evangelist Wairimu, this chapter argues that the profound transformation in gender ideologies that has emerged is grounded in alternative forms of spiritual or religious authority, and is offering women new opportunities for leadership and influence. It examines how Evangelist Wairimu is using soft power to build dialogue, peace, and conflict resolution; and what her influence is on politics, humanitarianism, women and youth empowerment and mentorship, and the building of social and spiritual capital among members of her church and beyond.

EVANGELIST WAIRIMU AND THE FEM

Reverend Teresia Wairimu Kinyanjui is the founder and director of FEM and its international branches, Teresia Wairimu Evangelistic Ministries International. FEM started as a 12-woman prayer fellowship, comprising mostly single women, who met at Nairobi's Huruma residential estate for prayer and fellowship in 1985. The fellowship soon metamorphosed into a large group, so much so that it required a reorganization in 1989, when Wairimu founded FEM International and registered it at the Office of the Registrar of Societies.

The birth of her ministry was marked with meetings taking place once a month. Later, they moved to city hall in Nairobi, but the crowds swelled and broke the door, prompting a black listing against using the facility by the City Council.¹⁷ Wairimu then moved to the Kenyatta International Conference Centre, the largest indoor conference hall in Kenya, but was only there for a month as it soon filled up. The ministry grew so much that there was a constant search for adequate facilities. In the early 1990s, Wairimu decided to hold regular meetings and revival crusades at Uhuru Park in Nairobi, the first female preacher to do so at this venue for many political and religious meetings. It was estimated that the venue hosted an audience of no fewer than 300,000 people every month.¹⁸

Over the years, FEM has metamorphosed into a large church with its headquarters in Nairobi. In 2009, Wairimu began to construct a state of the art sanctuary in Karen, Nairobi, that could seat over 30,000 people. It was opened

and dedicated on August 14, 2016, by His Excellency, President Uhuru Kenyatta, in a ceremony that was beamed live on national television and other platforms. FEM is also a global ministry with international outreach, networks, and headquarters and branches in the USA, the UK, and Europe. The UK chapter based in London doubles as the main ministry headquarters covering several other branches in Europe.

FEM has become a household name in Kenya, particularly because of its initial monthly crusades at Uhuru Park, especially in the 1990s, and for Wairimu's ministry to single women.¹⁹ Barely three decades after its inception, FEM has metamorphosed into a fully fledged, neo-Pentecostal church in the country. Wairimu herself has grown to become a revered and respected spiritual leader, a leading public personality, and a significant voice in Kenya's public sphere. Her influence goes beyond her church constituency to include ministry to single mothers, mentoring the youth, providing shelter for homeless street children and the frail and elderly, as well as speaking about important national issues such as ethnicity, national cohesion and integration, peace building, and training and nurturing leaders.

This chapter reconstructs the life story of Teresia Wairimu to discuss some of the qualities and attributes that women have used to gain power, influence, voice, and decision making. It focuses on her role in Kenya's public sphere to demonstrate how she has used her spiritual resources to gain social and political influence. It attempts to explain who Wairimu is and why she is so influential in Kenya's public and religious life based on participant observation, interviews with people who knew her well, media interviews, and information gleaned from her personal autobiography. It also attempts to describe some of the leadership qualities observed in her over the decade of this research on Pentecostal churches.

WAIRIMU'S LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE IN KENYA

Women leaders such as Evangelist Wairimu have both personal and leadership attributes that they have used to increase their power and influence. But who is Evangelist Wairimu and what makes her so powerful? Teresia Wairimu Kinyanjui was born on November 5, 1957, in Waithaka, on the outskirts of Nairobi, to Catholic parents, James Kinuthia Kinyanjui and Jane Njeri Kinyanjui. She has said that her baptismal name of Teresia Wairimu, derived from the Greek word, *theresa*, means 'a reaper'—one who is kind and patient with others, an acute person, sharp and keen, a person who knows style, comeliness, and polish, who is held in high esteem by all who know her, whose eyes carry a magical glow, a girl who improves her surroundings, is a hard worker, and never gives up.²⁰

Wairimu, who obviously takes pride in her name, believes that all the qualities and attributes described above fit her character and personality and that her name not only describes and sums up who she is but has also influenced what she has become. Whether this is true or not is debatable; what is not in doubt though is that Wairimu's very persona epitomizes power and influence. Her friends, followers, and admirers describe her as "an incredible woman,"

“a woman of valor,” “integrity,” “honor,” and many other such adjectives. Evangelist Wairimu cuts the image of a dignified woman who loathes controversy and does not seek the limelight, a trait that has earned her a lot of respect and admiration.²¹

According to church members interviewed by this author, one of the reasons she is influential is that she is both humble and respected. Wairimu is described as a humble woman but a force that moves with spiritual power, anointing, and prophesy. One writer describes her as possessing an electrifying demeanor and as a crowd puller.²² Interviewees over the years have described her as interactional and one who knows how to build and sustain relationships. According to one church member, “Wairimu and FEM church integrates everyone and does [*sic*] not treat people according to class.” Wairimu is described as a force that moves many and inspires positive change. “Even though she has power, influence and appeal, she makes no fuss about it,” said another member of the church. She appears to wield so much power and effortlessly attracts thousands to her church without shouting too loud, joining in politics, or stirring up controversy.²³ When asked by a journalist how she navigates this terrain, she replied: “I am a servant of God and his people; No more no less!”²⁴

How has she managed to gain so much influence? The steady growth of this church over the years not only shows the strength of Reverend Wairimu’s resilience but also that she has remained true to her calling and maintained a high level of dignity and integrity, says Mrs. Nancy Gitau, a long-time friend of Wairimu and church member.²⁵ “This woman has not allowed power and fame to go into her head,” said Catherine, a long serving member of the ministry, “and she shuns controversy and the public limelight like disease. She does not comment on controversial issues, instead she exerts her influence quietly and diplomatically.” In other words, Wairimu has managed to balance power and influence yet remain true to herself. This is one of the qualities that attracts people to her.

During the formative years of her ministry, Wairimu admired the German Evangelist Reinhardt Bonnke for his supernatural power and she always wanted to preach the gospel to the masses just like him. It was while at Uhuru Park that she prayed to God to give her power and anointing just like Bonnke so that she could do for God what Bonnke did for him. She also prayed to God to connect her to Bonnke so that “he could lay his hands on her, anoint her and impart her with God’s power.” In 1988, she traveled to Oslo to attend a meeting at which Bonnke was to speak. At this meeting, Bonnke prayed for Wairimu. When he laid his hands on her, she narrates that she was “slain by and filled with the Holy Spirit,” and received power and anointing, traits that she believed would later enable her to perform miracles. The encounter with Bonnke, as she explains in her autobiography, totally transformed her life.

Following the 1988 experience, she preached at Uhuru Park for over 14 years. She also preached in open-air crusades, churches, schools, and other institutions of learning throughout the country and beyond. In 1998, together with Bonnke, she held a well-attended gospel crusade at Uhuru Park. She then

teamed up with Bonnke and set out to evangelize Africa from Cairo to Cape Town. They have worked together in ministry and evangelism for over three decades, holding crusades in Nairobi, Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Africa, Botswana, Uganda, and other parts of the continent. They have also preached together in the USA and Europe, particularly at the Euro-Fire Conferences in Germany.

Bonnke, who Wairimu describes as her friend, spiritual father, and mentor, ordained her as a minister of the word of God on August 16, 1996. He has featured and retold her story and works in many of his worldwide newsletters. After the Uhuru Park experience and for many years after Bonnke prayed for her, Wairimu claims that her ministry took a dramatic turn. She experienced a new zeal, passion, and power to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Energized by her spiritual encounter at Uhuru Park, coupled with prayer and the anointing by Bonnke, Wairimu set out to evangelize the country with her prayer group and fellowship members.

The colossal evangelistic crusades she carried out thereafter not only gave her many followers but also the space to expand her influence and public profile. Yet her crusades were always driven by compassion for the sick and suffering and she wanted to uplift them through prayer and healing. For these reasons, she attracted thousands to her crusades where miracles and healing are said to have taken place.

Another quality that has helped propel Wairimu to power and influence is her gift of oration, her good public speaking and communication skills. She explains that her father recognized this gift in her early on, as a young girl. Wairimu describes her father as a loving but firm disciplinarian and a successful businessman.²⁶ Because of this family background, Wairimu and her siblings had a privileged upbringing. Her parents being strict disciplinarians fostered in her the values of hard work, taking responsibility, kindness, and honesty, traits and skills that she would later require in ministry and in public life. Wairimu explained that she was gifted with words and could talk herself out of any sticky situation.²⁷ Her wits helped her evade the wrath of her father whenever she did not do well in school. In her autobiography, she narrated how her father told her: “Wairimu, the reason why I see no point in beating you is because that gifted mouth of yours will earn you a decent living in future.” She explained that her father sensed that his daughter’s gifts of oration and social skills would place her in a position of authority. What she did not know at the time was that she would use her oratory skills to become a great public speaker and a good communicator.

Evangelist Wairimu’s healing ministry is driven by compassion and empathy toward the sick and hurting. From the inception of her ministry to date, faith healing has been a core function of the church. Wairimu is described by those who know her as a woman with multitasking abilities. Her ability to focus on many different objectives has helped her run a church like FEM, where there are always multiple layers of service involved. For example, FEM is an evangelistic ministry with a myriad activities, goals, and programs, such as women’s and youth empowerment, faith healing, leadership and mentorship, humanitarian engagement, peace building, and evangelism.

Wairimu is further described by people who know her as a gentle and warm woman who treats all people with gentleness, dignity, and respect, qualities that many find attractive. This has helped her steer her large and devoted congregations to greater heights. This is combined with passion for her followers and her ministry. Wairimu is passionate about her work as a minister of the Word of God, and she has put all her strength and energies into her ministry. At the same time, Wairimu appears to be relationally savvy. This is not surprising as pastoral ministry is incredibly relational. This requires people who are gifted in interpersonal relationship to navigate relational problems in the work place, especially peace building and conflict resolution.

Above all, what has helped in her work and personal life is integrity. Wairimu cultivates an image of integrity and dignity. She is well respected, revered, loved, and admired by her followers, other clergy, and members of the public. She has never been mentioned in a scandal, shuns trouble, and weighs her words carefully before she utters them. This has earned her respect and love from the public. Besides, she is confident, authentic, highly effective and trustworthy, qualities that are important for any leader. People trust Evangelist Wairimu and she inspires many Kenyans. They believe in her and her ministry and activities. Wairimu therefore weaves her ideas with faith and trust, empathy and compassion. Her unshakable faith in God is part of what makes Wairimu capable of pulling people together into her congregation.

In 2008, the African Ministry Prayer Network (AMPN), in conjunction with Watchers for Africa—both are intercessory prayer groups in Africa—conducted a nationwide search to identify and honor an exceptional person in the gospel ministry. Many participants recognized Wairimu as an exceptional person whom the nation of Kenya recognizes as a spiritual mother and a protector and defender of the gospel of Jesus Christ. As a result, Wairimu was honored and awarded the Golden Eagle Award for her work.²⁸ She is an active and founding member of both the Africa House of Prayer and the Kenya House of Prayer, as well as AMPN and Watchers for Africa, all interdenominational groups whose sole purpose is to pray for the nations of the world. She is also a member of other regional prayer groups, such as Prayer Watch, Fourth Watch, and many other such groups tasked with praying over the country to rid it of malevolent spirits.

In a similar study, to find “those persons deemed at local, regional and national levels to have made significant contribution to leadership and African Christianity and whose stories are indispensable to an understanding of the church in Africa,” Wairimu has appeared with the likes of the Ugandan Martyrs, the late Cardinal Maurice Otunga, Mannases Kuria, Bishop David Gitari, and Timothy Njoya (the firebrands of democratization in Kenya in the 1980s and 1990s) and with many other religious visionaries in Kenya and East Africa. In fact, she was the only woman cleric to be recognized for her transformative work and leadership. Such is the power and influence of this woman in Kenya’s spiritual and public sphere.

TERESIA WAIRIMU: BETWEEN SPIRITUALITY, SOFT POWER, AND PUBLIC LIFE

During the previous quarter of a century of its existence, FEM and its founder have grown tremendously. The Reverend Teresia Wairimu has grown to become one of the most influential religious leaders in Kenya, attracting the rich and powerful—including ambassadors, vice presidents, celebrities, and government officials—to her church to mingle with the lowly in her ministry every Sunday and on special occasions. Evangelist Wairimu rarely speaks to the press and shuns the limelight whenever possible, even though she wields tremendous power and influence, while her church services and crusades attract the high and mighty. How did this publicity-shy pastor manage to attain so much influence, power, and authority? Just what makes this woman so powerful and influential that she attracts the high and powerful to her church? The following sections discuss several areas of public life in which Wairimu has had great influence and success.

Social Welfare and Humanitarian Undertakings

Evangelist Wairimu and her ministry are engaged in varied social, welfare, and humanitarian activities. Field research revealed the story of Virginia Wanjiku of FEM, a former street girl who was rescued from the streets and taken into foster care at Huruma Children's Home in Nairobi. Wanjiku was taken to FEM church where she received salvation, counseling and rehabilitation. When she was well reformed, she received a scholarship to train at a leading hair and beauty salon, Nairobi's Ashley Beauty College and Salon. By 2009 Wanjiku was a qualified beautician and she volunteers for FEM's social ministry by helping in the rehabilitation of former street children and families.²⁹

When asked why she is prominent in mercy and humanitarian undertakings, Evangelist Wairimu explained: "The religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is to look after the poor, orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."³⁰ The desire to preach a holistic and practical gospel appears to be the motivation for this woman cleric and her church to meet the welfare needs of members and communities. The social programs in FEM are designed to care for the welfare of the vulnerable and many vulnerable people and groups have therefore found themselves welcomed in the ministry, while many others joined the church because of potential benefits.

To acknowledge the Reverend's humanitarian works, former President Daniel Arap Moi often sent out messages of goodwill to Evangelist Wairimu. The former President was also a frequent guest at FEM Evangelistic crusades, anniversaries, national conferences, and the grand opening of the Church's brand-new sanctuary. One such message read: "The destiny of our great country hinges on the decisions that our leaders make. This is why my government continuously supported the work of Rev Wairimu and I will continue to do so even in my retirement."

Entrepreneurship and Business Development

A salient feature of Evangelist Wairimu's FEM is its ability to teach skills and business acumen to its members. Every year, FEM trains members and non-members alike in business and entrepreneurship training. This is normally done through conferences and workshops that bring in experts to share business skills and knowledge with members of the church and neighboring communities. Further, FEM trains its harvest partners (understood as people who have committed themselves to support this ministry financially), and further prays for them and trains them in leadership and business ideals. More importantly, being entrepreneurs who extol business ideals, they attract other entrepreneurs into their congregation. Professionals, business people, and students populate the pews most Sundays, together with those seeking favors and breakthroughs. By building the business and entrepreneurial capacity of its members, FEM has continued not just to grow but has also gained in popularity with such groups, who are appreciative of the church's investment in them.

Spiritual and Social Capital, Networking, Trust, and Soft Skills

Aside from the business and entrepreneurial skills that they receive, members also benefit from the social capital the church generates. The benefits of spiritual and social capital are evident in the form of support that members receive not just from their churches but also from each other. Respondents suggested that the support they receive from their communities is both spiritual (prayer, encouragement), and social or material (solidarity, trust). Through their involvement people have been able to develop networks with other believers that are generally wider geographically and socially than traditional networks of family and kinship and are often based on social trust.

Social trust and networking is one obvious form of social capital evident in FEM. Social trust is vital because relations of trust are hugely supportive in most kinds of human enterprise, business or otherwise. Because of their involvement in church life, believers can create social bonds, which are a source of economic and emotional support during difficult times. Most members of FEM have formed elaborate social and spiritual networks among themselves. Members also benefit from the material support of the church community.

Upon joining the church, a member is immediately supported by a system of informal networks, small-scale welfare groups, home groups, cell groups, male, female, and youth groups. The church urges members to help one another, pray for each other, facilitate business networks to assist people to find work, and mentor those starting new families, jobs, and careers. Thus, an immediate resource is the local congregation as a vital source of social capital. Many members narrated how they often received support from fellow congregants in times of need, especially during weddings, childbirth, sickness, and bereavement. Many interviewees claimed that fellow members stood by them in solidarity when they were faced with challenges. Other forms of support members receive from each other are prayer, encouragement, fellowship, material, and financial.

Peace Building and Promoting National Cohesion

A significant area in which Wairimu and her FEM ministry has had significant impact is in peace building and national cohesion. Wairimu often preaches about peace, good neighborliness, and national cohesion. She also preaches against ethnicity and tribalism, seeking to promote a brotherhood and sisterhood of believers. It is in the area of peace building and national cohesion that Evangelist Wairimu's church seems to have had the greatest impact and gained recognition, including winning awards. Evangelist Wairimu has sought to build a concern for peace and national integration into her evangelistic undertakings and social ministries.

During times of crisis, such as post-election violence—especially that witnessed during the 1990s and early in the new millennium—Wairimu was prominent in efforts to build and nurture peace and cohesion among different factions and groups. For example, during the 1997 and 2007 general elections, which were marred by fatal clashes and massive displacements of thousands of people and communities, Wairimu not only gave humanitarian assistance to the displaced but she also preached messages of peace, urging all parties to live harmoniously with each other.³¹

Similarly, during the 2007/2008 post-election violence in Kenya, Wairimu addressed the whole nation through a press conference and urged Kenyans to choose the path of peace instead of war, love instead of hatred, and forgiveness and tolerance. She pleaded with the warring factions to shun violence and bloodshed and urged all people to dwell in unity, peace, and liberty, as espoused in the national anthem. Her message was “we can live together” irrespective of our ethnic and political differences. Asked why she got so passionately involved, she said: “As far as I am concerned, the gospel I am called to preach included peace and reconciliation. We had to be at the forefront as a church. From the inception of FEM, I have endeavored to imitate the ministry of our Lord Jesus—preaching a practical and wholesome gospel.”

Together with her team, Wairimu crisscrossed the country, visiting the internally displaced, offering them prayer, sympathy, counseling, and tangible support. She preached the message of peace and tolerance. In this sense, she assumed the role of mediator and peace builder, listening to women and men recount their ordeals and traumatizing experiences, and promoting forgiveness and healing. She also visited the camps for internally displaced persons, irrespective of the ethnic composition—during the crisis, communities were ethnically segregated. She argued in her autobiography that her Christian obligation goes beyond ethnicity. She said, “God sees beyond tribe, race and creed. All he sees is people. And he loves them all equally.”

It is this kind of reasoning that underlines all her humanitarian efforts and responses to crises like post-election violence. Wairimu is known as a peace-nurturing individual who has preached against negative ethnicity. Her efforts to bring lasting peace and to initiate reconciliation between warring communities in the Rift Valley Province have been particularly significant. For these

reasons and on May 9, 2008, Evangelist Wairimu was honored with the Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Award for her humanitarian service during the post-election violence and for her vocal campaign among church leaders.

Her peace-building initiatives also put women at the center of peace building, especially using religious resources to promote national cohesion and integration. Her humanitarian and social ministries remain the bedrock of her religious organization's works on peace building and are clear examples of how FBOs are working to promote peace, national cohesion, and integration. Wairimu has gained tremendous influence in Kenya's social and public sphere because of she has used her pulpit and her position as a respected cleric to call for peace and hold the perpetrators and victims to account.

Leadership Training and Mentorship Programs

Another important area in which Wairimu has had great impact and influence is in the area of leadership training and mentorship programs. FEM undertakes these programs for both members and non-members alike through organizing leadership conferences and workshops. Wairimu often organizes major leadership and integrity conferences and meetings in her church that are meant to nurture and train leaders to become men and women of integrity and accountability. However, she also makes efforts to bring together leaders from various denominational backgrounds. These efforts are not only hailed locally but are also testimony to her thirst to promote ecumenical dialogue and a cooperative spirit among clergy from different Christian denominations. She is particularly well placed to do this because she enjoys the respect and admiration of other clergy from both mainline and Pentecostal church traditions. In this sense, the evangelist is credited with striving to promote interreligious harmony and respect among various Christian groups.

Influence Through Mentorship and Role Modeling

Evangelist Wairimu has equally become an influential figure in Kenya's social and religious scene as a role model and because of her mentorship of many youth and women, especially female clergy. A significant number of women have been mentored through leadership training and empowerment for ministry. Female leaders such as Kathy Kiuna of JCC, Reverend Elizabeth Wahome of SLIM, Nancy Gitau of Deborah Arise Africa, and Evangelist Alice Mugure of Zion Prayer Mountain and Kenya House of Prayer have been mentored by the Evangelist, as most of them served as ushers and organizers in her ministry before founding their own churches/ministries.

She has also mentored male pastors, for example, Bishop Allan Kiuna of JCC, thereby exemplifying the fact that male clergy respect and esteem her. Many female clergy view her as a role model and mentor whom they not only look up to but also admire and respect. Wairimu believes in role modeling and advises women to follow her example. She has encouraged single women, and indeed

all women, to rise above cultural inhibitions and to overcome gender-based discrimination in church and society. The egalitarian theology implicit within neo-Pentecostalism provides space in the church and ministries where women can exercise their spiritual gifts. Wairimu has also developed strategies for changing the condition of women within her church and beyond. These include an array of female-centered activities, such as women's fellowships, conferences, conventions, and workshops.

Despite all these activities, whose objectives are to empower women spiritually, Wairimu has not come out clearly to fight the social, cultural, and religious structures that still view women as subordinate to men. At the same time, women spiritual leaders find themselves confronted by other realities engendered in heavily patriarchal societies and many are forced to conform to the gendered world around them. Rarely does their rise to positions of authority explicitly clash with deeply entrenched, omnipresent, gender inequalities and with the pervasive stereotypes about women's subalternity—the stereotypes to which most women church leaders still readily subscribe.

Hence, the expansion of women's religious leadership roles both challenges and reasserts the patriarchal gender ideology and social hierarchies and relationships in society. Although formal leadership does empower women and grant them influence and voice, at the same time, the power that women leaders gain remains mainly limited to certain matters and is exercised largely within the gendered constraints of religious ideologies. This dialectical reality parallels, with appropriate caveats, the findings of a growing number of studies that show that women's "doing" of religion³² promotes their empowerment by creatively engaging with their faith without fundamentally rocking the boat or challenging the ideological and symbolic boundaries of the religion's doctrines.³³

From the aforementioned, it is clear that Evangelist Wairimu has used her church to make an impact on her congregations and the country at large, especially through leadership training, role modeling, peace building, and humanitarian undertaking. Because of these activities, she has gained tremendous influence, respect, and power. However, she has yet to put structures in place to address the real social and structural gender issues that affect women in Kenya. Instead, Wairimu appears to have used her spiritual platform and space to grow her influence among political leaders, state officers, spiritual leaders, business leaders, members of the diplomatic communities, and judicial and media personalities. The next section demonstrates, with specific examples, how Wairimu has earned the respect of the state and those in power but at the same time this coziness with the state stifles her abilities to hold the state accountable.

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS? POLITICS AND RELIGION IN KENYA

On Sunday August 14, 2016, President Uhuru Kenyatta presided over the grand opening of the FEM sanctuary situated in Karen, Nairobi. The event was beamed live on Citizen TV, K24, and various other platforms, such as social media (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube). The Karen Sanctuary is a state of the art building like no other in Kenya. Its construction cost about one billion

Kenyan shillings, without a bank loan or the usual Kenyan *harambee* spirit (which means pulling together), where people raise funds for the project. It took about eight years to complete. Evangelist Reinhardt Bonnke led the service. Addressing the congregation, President Kenyatta said that the new sanctuary was the most beautiful he had ever seen and he pledged to partner with Evangelist Wairimu's ministry in the provision of healthcare and other development efforts it was engaged in. This was not just a recognition of the work of the ministry but an endorsement of the Evangelist's work in Kenya.

The grand opening attracted the who's who in Kenya's public life, including government dignitaries, county officials, governors, civil society, politicians and their spouses, members of the clergy, media personalities, celebrities, gospel artists, diplomats, members of the judiciary, Nairobi's middle class, and many others. The sermon was delivered by Evangelist Reinhardt Bonnke, whose centrality in the life of Wairimu came out very clearly, not just because he was the guest preacher on such an important day, but also because he presided over the dedication ceremony of Wairimu's granddaughter during such an important day for the FEM ministry.

During the sanctuary's grand dedication, Bonnke was given a rousing welcome and a standing ovation. A video of his gigantic crusades during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s was aired for the audience to see and appreciate his contribution to evangelism in Africa. Bonnke is a very much beloved figure in Pentecostal circles and is hugely respected and influential. Many describe him as Christ's general or servant of God, for Africa's presidents attended his megacrusades. Former President Moi not only hosted him in State House, Nairobi, whenever Bonnke visited Kenya, but he also attended his crusades.

Watching Evangelist Wairimu walk side by side with the president and all other dignitaries was a pointer to her sociopolitical power and influence. But it was also a pointer to the easy mix between religion and politics in Kenya. Politicians and clergy court each other for respectability and legitimacy on both sides of the divide. Politicians patronize the clergy and vice versa. Churches have large constituencies of members who are also voters. Aligning themselves with churches is the smart thing to do to draw legitimacy from the huge Christian voting bloc. The clergy on the other hand need the politicians so as access state resources and other aligned goods.³⁴

Another instance in which Evangelist Wairimu's power and influence came to the fore was shortly after the 2013 general elections, when her church hosted a thanksgiving service for the election of President Uhuru Kenyatta and his Deputy William Ruto. The Sunday following the historic general election held on March 4, William Ruto, accompanied by his wife Rachael, attended a thanksgiving service at FEM church in Karen. While there, the Deputy President became emotional during the worship session and broke down and sobbed uncontrollably for some time as the congregation watched in disbelief while others joined him in the sobbing. This was his way of thanking God for the election victory, despite the International Criminal Court charges facing him at that time. But Deputy President William Ruto is not the only dignitary to frequent this church.

President Uhuru Kenyatta also attended a service at FEM, alongside his wife Margaret, Mrs. Rachael Ruto, and other dignitaries a month after the election. Similarly, former President Moi throughout his reign frequently attended FEM services and crusades and continued to do so post-retirement, as well as sending messages of goodwill to Reverend Wairimu during church celebrations and special events. At the same time former Vice President, the Honorable Kalonzo Musyoka, was a frequent guest of FEM and a personal friend of Evangelist Wairimu. Celebrities both local and international frequently troop to this church, as they did during the jubilee celebrations.

While it might seem that Wairimu has star appeal, it makes sense for the clergy to align themselves with politicians and state resources for the reasons stated above. Nevertheless, Wairimu wields tremendous power to attract the state and its goodness and this has not just bolstered her image but also her influence in the political sphere. It is hard to ignore the number of government dignitaries and private sector chiefs who arrive for church services and other meetings in their gleaming cars.

Even though Wairimu rarely issues press releases about politics and politicians, she nevertheless has cultivated a symbiotic relationship with the state, which makes it impossible for her to hold the government to account and to offer constructive criticism. For example, there have been tremendous criticisms about massive corruption in the Jubilee government, as well as accusations about nepotism, tribalism, human rights abuses, increased and unsustainable debts, high prices of food commodities, a biting hunger and a shortage of maize flour (which is a national food staple) and sugar, and many other shortcomings.

Yet, Wairimu has not addressed any of these tensions in Kenyan society. While she has called for peace and unity in the country, this has not led to a sustained critique of the government in an effort to hold it to account. Herein lies the tensions and paradoxes when clergy and politicians coopt each other. Wairimu is not the only cleric to get comfortable with the state. Many have decried the loss of a prophetic voice in Kenya's public sphere when there is a near absence of the voice of the church in holding the state to account.³⁵ Even though Wairimu has gained so much power and influence from her church platform and space, that power and influence has not translated into a sustained critique of the government and appears to be signaling a new form of engagement in issues in public life in which cooption and prayer for the government are the new forms of engaging the state.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown how women leaders of religious organizations, such as Teresia Wairimu, have sought to use their spiritual platform to gain power and influence and contest public life. Churches and FBOs can be important channels through which women not only gain power and influence, but also use this to mobilize around civic and public issues, and to indirectly influence government decisions rather than hold public office. Since women religious leaders

seem to gain respect by virtue of their spiritual work, women in patriarchal societies who want to contest public life can indeed appropriate their church platforms and spaces to ascend to leadership positions and gain voice and influence. Yet, this power, voice, and influence has not generated a social and religious capital that brings about a transformation of the civic and public domain, the kind that holds to account those in authority. In conclusion, it argues that, although women clerics have used religious spheres to attain power and influence beyond their churches into the public sphere, this has created its own tensions and paradoxes. To begin with, many such as Evangelist Wairimu, in an attempt to attain power and influence, find themselves coopted by the state in a way that stifles their civic roles and voices. We have seen how Wairimu's coziness with the state has put her in a situation where she cannot speak against the shortcomings of the same government with which she has worked so closely.

NOTES

1. Nayar, V. (2011), Women and Soft Power in Business, *Harvard Business Review*. [www.http://hbr.org](http://hbr.org).
2. Moodley et al. (2016), Women Matter Africa: Making Gender Diversity a reality, a report commissioned by McKinsey and Company, Africa.
3. Nye, J. (1990), "Soft Power," *Foreign Policy*, No. 80, pp. 153–171.
4. Nye, J. (2004), Soft Power: The means to Success in World Politics. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/.../soft-power-means-success-world-politics>.
5. Nye, J. (2004), *Soft Power: the Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs).
6. Mahapatra, D. A. (2016), *From a Latent to a Strong Power? The Evolution of India's Cultural Diplomacy* (Boston: University of Massachusetts). <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/31148441>.
7. Haynes, J. (1996), *Religion and Politics in Africa* (London: Zed Books). See also Haynes, J. (1993), *Religion in Third World Politics* (Buckingham: Open University Press) and Haynes, Jeffrey (2007), *An Introduction to International Relations and Religion* (London: Pearson).
8. Katzenstein, P. (1997), *Cultural Norms and National Security: Police and Military in Post War Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).
9. Mahapatra, D. A. (2016), *From a Latent to a Strong Power?*
10. Nye, J. (2004), *Soft Power*.
11. Gifford, P. (2009), *Christianity, Politics and Public Life in Kenya* (London: Hurst & Co.). See also Deacon, G. & Parsitau, D. S. (2017), "Empowered to Submit: Pentecostal Women in Nairobi," *Journal of Religion and Society*, Vol. 19, pp. 1–17. <http://wwwhdl.handle.net/10504/109164>.
12. Parsitau, D. S. and Mwaura, N. J. (2010), "Gospel without Borders: Gender Dynamics of Transnational Religious Movements in Kenya and the Kenyan Diaspora," in Afe Adogame & Jim Spickard (eds.), *Religions Crossing Boundaries: Transnational Religious Dynamics in Africa and the New African Diaspora* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV), pp. 185–210. See also Parsitau, D. S. (2011), "Arise Oh Ye Daughters of Faith: Pentecostalism, Women and Public Culture in Kenya," in Englund, H. (ed.), *Christianity and Public Culture in Africa* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press), pp. 131–148.

- Deacon, G. & Parsitau, D. S. (2017), "Empowered to Submit: Pentecostal Women in Nairobi," *Journal of Religion and Society*, Vol. 19. <http://www.hdl.handle.net/10504/109164>; Soothill, J. E. (2007), *Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power: Charismatic Christianity in Ghana* (Leiden: E. J. Brill).
13. Sackey, B. M. (2006), *New Directions in Gender and Religion: The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield).
 14. Kamau, N. P. (2010), *Women and Political Leadership in Kenya, Ten Case Studies* (Nairobi: Henrich Boll Foundation).
 15. Parsitau, D. S. (2011), "Arise Oh Ye Daughters of Faith," pp. 131–148. See also Parsitau, D. S. (2012), "Agents of Gendered Change: NGOs and Pentecostal Movements as Agents of Social Transformation in Urban Kenya," in Freeman, D. (ed.), *The Pentecostal Ethic and the Spirit of Development: Churches, NGO and Social Change in Neo-Liberal Africa* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).
 16. Agadjanian, Victor (2015), "Women's Religious Authority in Sub-Saharan African Settings: Dialectics of Empowerment and Dependency," *Gender & Society*, No. 6, pp. 982–1008; Chong, K. H. (2008), *Deliverance and Submission: Evangelical Women and the Negotiation of Patriarchy in South Korea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press); Hollingsworth, Andrea and Melissa Browning (2010), "Your Daughters Shall Prophesy (As Long as They Submit): Pentecostalism and Gender in Global Perspectives," in Michael Wilkinson and Steven M. Studebaker (eds.) *A Liberating Spirit: Pentecostals and Social Action in North America* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications), 161–184; Sackey, B. M. (2006), *New Directions in Gender and Religion: The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield); Soothill, J. E. (2007), *Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power: Charismatic Christianity in Ghana* (Leiden: E. J. Brill); Parsitau (2012); Mwaura and Parsitau (2011); Mwaura, P. N. (2005a), "Gender and Power in African Christianity: African Instituted Churches and Pentecostal Churches," in Ogbu Kalu (ed.), *African Christianity: An African Story* (Pretoria: University of Pretoria); Mwaura, P. N. (2005b), "Nigerian Pentecostal Missionary Enterprise in Kenya," in C. J. Korieh and G. U. Nwokweji (eds.), *Religion, History, and Politics in Nigeria* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America); Mwaura, P. N. (2002), "A Burning Stick Plucked Out of the Fire: The Story of Rev. Margaret Wanjiru of Jesus is Alive Ministries," in I. Phiri and S. Nadar (eds.), *Hidden Histories of Women of Faith in Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications); Parsitau, D. S. and Mwaura, N. J. (2010), "Gospel without Borders: Gender Dynamics of Transnational Religious Movements in Kenya and the Kenyan Diaspora," in Afe Adogame & Jim Spickard (eds.), *Religions Crossing Boundaries: Transnational Religious Dynamics in Africa and the New African Diaspora* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV), pp. 185–210; Mate, Rekopantswe (2002), "Wombs as God's Laboratories: Pentecostal Discourses of Femininity in Zimbabwe," *Africa*, Vol. 72, No. 4, pp. 549–658; Griffith, Marie (1997), *God's Daughters: Evangelical Women and the Power of Submission* (Los Angeles: University of California Press); Nadar, Sarojini (2004), "On Being the Pentecostal Church," *The Ecumenical Review*, Vol. 56, No. 3; Nadar, Sarojini and C. Potgieter (2010), "Liberated through Submission: The Worthy Woman's Conference as a Case Study of Formenism," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 1–151.

17. Manana, Francis (2000), "Wairimu, Teresia." *Online Dictionary of African Christian Biography*. http://www.dacb.org/stories/kenya/wairimu_teresia.html (accessed, October 13 2008).
18. Parsitau, D. S. and Mwaura, N. J. (2010), "God in the City: Pentecostalism as an Urban Phenomenon in Kenya," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp. 95–112.
19. See Parsitau and Nwaura (2010); Parsitau (2011), and Manana (2002).
20. Wairimu, T. K. (2011), *A Cactus in the Desert: An Autobiography of Reverend Theresa Wairimu Kinyanjui* (Nairobi: Revival Spring Media), pp. 100–102.
21. Parsitau & Mwaura (2010); see also Parsitau (2011).
22. Manana, Francis (2000).
23. Interview with Nancy Gitau on November 10/2012 in Nakuru, Town.
24. Wairimu (2011).
25. Interview with Nancy Gitau.
26. Wairimu (2011: 99) and Manana (2000).
27. This information was gleaned from excerpts in Wairimu (2011).
28. Wairimu (2011: 23).
29. Testimony given by Virginia Wanjiku of FEM, a former street girl rescued by FEM. Virginia now also volunteers for the ministry.
30. Wairimu (2010).
31. Parsitau, D. S. (2011), "The Role of Faith and Faith Based Organizations among Internally Displaced Persons in Kenya," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 3, pp. 493–512.
32. Mate (2002); Deacon and Parsitau (2017).
33. Chong (2008).
34. Gifford (2009).
35. Gifford (2009), See also Parsitau, D. S. (2012), "From Voices of the People to Discordant/Stifled Voices: Theological, Ethical and Social Political Voice and Voicelessness in a Multicultural/Religious Space, Perspectives from Kenya," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, Vol. 38, pp. 243–268. <http://uir.unisa.ac.za>.



The Role of Women, Theology, and Ecumenical Organizations in the Rise of Pentecostal Churches in Botswana

Fidelis Nkomazana

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a survey on the role played by women in the rise of Pentecostal churches in Botswana. It demonstrates that this was a radical move, looking at the fact that both African and Christian contexts were, at the time, strongly patriarchal in leadership.¹ This was complicated by the fact that Bechuanaland Protectorate administrators supported the male-dominated missionary organizations at the expense of independent and Pentecostal churches, a process that further marginalized women. One other interesting factor was the relationship that developed between the women founders and the men who hitherto had played a leading role in the founding of churches in Botswana. To some extent these men became backseat drivers, influencing developments, directions, and patterns in these female-founded churches.²

The chapter also reveals that the most outstanding contribution by women in Botswana is in church planting and growth. The factors that contributed to these developments can be traced back to the period after Botswanan independence in 1966, which marked the end of the British colonial administration and the monopoly enjoyed by missionary churches, especially those founded by the London Missionary Society (LMS). As part of its strategy, the colonial administration connived with this British-founded missionary organization at

F. Nkomazana (✉)
University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana
e-mail: nkomazaf@mopipi.ub.bw

the expense of other religious bodies. The LMS missionaries, for instance, for many years claimed Bechuanaland Protectorate (now Botswana) as their own field of operation, with the backing of the colonial government.³ For instance, in the early 1890s, they condemned the activities of the Ethiopian movement (the precursor of African Independent Churches, AICs) and denied it permission to operate in Botswana.⁴ In all these operations, British administrators saw religious stability as very important for the maintenance of law and order in the territory.⁵ Both the political and religious structures of the time were fully controlled by men, who only recognized the efforts of men and ignored the roles played by women.⁶

The Botswana Declaration of Independence in 1966, which was accompanied by the introduction of a new constitution that especially advocated for freedom of speech, worship, religious ideas, and association, was followed by the rise of independent denominations. Some of the Pentecostal and AICs had been in existence long before this time, but had been operating secretly for fear of victimization by the colonial administrators, who did not tolerate their style of worship and leadership, which greatly differed from that of the missionary churches. Encouraged by the new constitution, which permitted various groups to work without interference, the women within these churches became notably active. Even where women were not founders, they were among some of their earliest and most devout followers. These churches, with a focus on Pentecostal churches which originated before or after independence, are a focus of this study because of the noble services rendered in them by women—despite the fact that the male-dominated world highlighted male achievements as if women did not exist.

To facilitate discussion of the trends in the development of these Pentecostal women-founded churches, the chapter examines the following issues:

1. Sources of research on women Pentecostal church leaders in Botswana, which helps to show the volume of research that considers the contribution of women.
2. The cultural and historical background in Botswana versus the experiences of women. This examines how past cultural and historical contexts have impacted on the rise of female Pentecostal church founders. It demonstrates how the social, political, economic, and religious cultural contexts of the Batswana marginalized and subordinated women in general. This was complicated by the belief in a divine justification for male superiority, that went beyond societal laws and customs.
3. The experiences of women in the history of the church in Botswana to 1966. This section demonstrates that, as in the cultural context, male missionaries used patriarchal language to restrict women's roles to the home, hence closing all avenues for them to access leadership positions in the church. While missionary wives, single women missionaries, and Batswana women converts did make an immense contribution to the growth of the church, this was not given much attention in missionary

literature and modern nationalist historiography, which largely concerned itself with the imperialist effects of missions, hence ignoring the role played by women in the history of the church. Despite these setbacks, missionary wives and single women missionaries led the way for Batswana women, which not only left an important legacy, but also made a great impact on the development of Pentecostal women founders.

4. Territorial Christianity, the New Constitution and Pentecostalism. The missionary (mainline) churches established themselves in different ethnic groups and gained the solid support of both traditional and colonial leaders. When Pentecostal and AICs came into the picture in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, they were denied permission to operate and were subsequently persecuted, forced to go underground, and operate in secret. This seriously hampered the emergence of Pentecostal women leaders, thus delaying their work until 1966, when the new constitution that promoted freedom of worship, association, expression, and assembly was introduced.
5. An examination of interdenominational (ecumenical) organizations that are associated with Pentecostals and that played an important role in empowering women in Pentecostalism. This section also presents three brief case studies on women who founded Pentecostal churches in Botswana that demonstrate their impact.
6. A brief analysis and conclusions.

The chapter draws on historical sources of information about the churches studied, including the author's long-term observations as a participant and personal interviews with leaders of the Pentecostal movement over some 40 years.

RESEARCH ON WOMEN PENTECOSTAL CHURCH LEADERS IN BOTSWANA

The most valuable source of information for the study of women in Pentecostal churches in Botswana is James Amanze's book entitled *Botswana Handbook of Churches* (1994), which lists 210 churches, religious organizations, and institutions in Botswana. Out of those churches and religious institutions that had registered with the Registrar of Societies at the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs by 1994, more than 27 were founded and established by women. This is an outstanding development, which deserves recognition. Beyond Amanze (1994) there has been a rapid increase of women coming to the fore, establishing new ministries/churches.⁷ An examination of these churches and associations founded by women contributes immensely to the construction of the history of women in the development of Pentecostal churches in Botswana. This is crucial because it helps to illustrate that women were actively involved in the history of the church in Botswana in general and Pentecostalism in particular.

This development challenged the popular view that only men could be in leadership structures of, or were the only ones responsible for the founding of, Pentecostal churches in Botswana. The significant role of women in the history of the church in Botswana was spearheaded by the emergence of AICs in the 1950s. Prior to this, mainstream churches had dominated the religious milieu, with minimal regard for women, who were relegated to the background and not recognized for their efforts. The subservience was relieved with the emergence of AICs and Pentecostal churches, whose theology recognized the vital role played by women in the church.⁸

Another important source is Dube's chapter, entitled "God Never Opened the Bible for me": Women Church Leaders in Botswana,"⁹ which discusses the strategies used by women to assume active leadership in the church and society. It also assesses how they subversively read biblical scriptures that were previously interpreted as patriarchal.

The chapter creates alternative ways of women's empowerment thus expanding the boundaries of women's history.¹⁰ Dube's paper published in 1994, "Readings of Semoya: Botswana Women's Interpretation of Matthew 15:21–28," is also an important publication. It shows that Botswana women were inspired by Bible stories to break cultural barriers that had hindered them in directly approaching Jesus and playing various meaningful roles in the life of the church. A University of Botswana dissertation by Goememang Tshinamo (1999), "Women Church Leaders in Botswana: A Documentation" is a valuable source that shows an increase in the number of women penetrating the church's public space and seeking for ordination and leadership positions. My own article on "The Profile of Reverend Mrs Rebecca Motsisi of the Pentecostal Holiness Church in Botswana" shows that while Motsisi had accepted the cultural and patriarchal demands of Botswana society, she had boldly accepted her call to full-time ministry, and was successfully pastoring her own congregation and demonstrating that women were capable church leaders.¹¹ Saroj Parratt's article, "The Status of Women and Issues in Development in Botswana," demonstrates that women at that time were playing key roles in the economic development of the country, especially in its educational, political, and religious development.¹²

BOTSWANAN CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND THE EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN

The cultural and historical background of the place of women in Botswanan society is an important context for understanding the role of women in Pentecostal churches. Culturally, women were marginalized in various ways and discriminated against by the very Tswana sociocultural system that should have protected them. In all dimensions of life, whether social, economic, political, or religious, women were disadvantaged, including in religious practices and beliefs, and political structures and traditions, which worked against their empowerment. Traditional laws and power relations were all in favor of

disempowering women. The *badimo*, the ancestral spirits, were also identified in ways that promoted men. They were seen as dominant and had implacable sources of power over laws and customs. In fact, the most powerful *badimo* were believed to favor men at the expense of women. This not only subordinated women, but also gave divine justification to male superiority and created a complex worldview that was invariably conceived in terms of powerful, superior males.¹³ Patriarchy, therefore, was basic to the cultural religious structure. The King and his national *dingaka*, who were always men, were, for instance, at the center of religious beliefs and practices. Again, women were excluded from officiating at any of the principal sacrificial rites, such as rain making, fertility of crops, and rites inaugurating war.¹⁴ The position of women in Tswana traditions and culture was believed to continue beyond the grave, which is evident in burial and death practices.¹⁵

As mentioned, women in Tswana society were traditionally regarded as inferior, which was clearly evident at social gatherings and feasts, for instance, not only because men and women sat apart, but also because the former were given a better reception. Certain spots, such as the *kgotla* (a traditional court or assembly point), were normally reserved for men. These traditional distinctions were many. The political arena itself had no place for a woman. Only men were generally ordained as chiefs and headmen. In the sphere of economic production, there was a well-defined division of labor, with tasks traditionally allotted according to sex. Female chores were treated as inferior to those of their male counterparts. Women were traditionally excluded from political debates and from holding political office, just as they were barred from officiating at religious ceremonies. *Bongaka* (medicine), like *bogosi* (kingship), were, therefore, essentially male occupations. Legally, customs of inheritance, *bogadi* (bride wealth), marriage, divorce, and so on, all discriminated against women. Acquisition and ownership of property was predominantly a patrilineal affair. Daughters, sisters, and wives were, historically and traditionally, excluded from any form of inheritance, which kept them economically dependent on men.¹⁶

THE MISSIONARIES AND THE EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN TO 1966

As the above paragraphs have shown, the experiences of women within the cultural context were characterized by marginalization and discrimination in all spheres of life. Using the same patriarchal language, the majority of male missionaries restricted women's roles to the home and this further contributed to restricting them from participating in church leadership positions.¹⁷ It is also evident that women featured in missionary history only when writers wanted to illustrate how Christianity had benefited them. Seeing gender in terms of power, the missionary historiography preserved some of the key social historical traditions, especially those that seemed to facilitate their objectives in Africa. A critical review of the missionary literature, however, shows that Tswana women were not as silent as was portrayed.¹⁸

What is interesting is that the early missionaries, who also came from a patriarchal society, did not see anything wrong in allowing the same mindset to continue in the life of the church.¹⁹ This was because these missionaries came from a society that had itself struggled with the question of the place of women in the church and that had been influenced by cultural practices and beliefs in their society.

While, historically, the methods of selecting the church leadership during the missionary era excluded women in favor of men, for the first time, women began not only to penetrate the inner circle of Tswana Church leadership, but also featured in political power struggles and revolutions. This developed to such an extent that, in the 1920s, women were even initiating and influencing political and religious changes. However, female and male missionaries seemed to perform different functions. In spite of this, male missionaries and Tswana Christian men generally determined what should be the role and position of women. At times they inspired women to revolt against those customs, which they saw as an obstacle to the spread of Christianity, but their efforts were not to empower women to rise to leadership positions in the church.²⁰

From the 1920s onwards, the activities of missionary wives, single women missionaries, and Batswana Christian women began to transform the Batswana and the general view of the role of women. The women, especially the single women missionaries and the Batswana women, of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did much to soften anti-female views and attitudes when they penetrated Tswana public life, particularly the political and religious spheres. Batswana Christian women, inspired by a missionary education they tried to relate to their own environment as far as possible, began to integrate their new work experience into a traditional life cycle, especially family life. European single women missionaries, at times, strongly challenged certain foreign and local oppressive measures on women, despite the similarly patronizing attitudes that were exhibited by their “culturally superior” counterparts, the male European missionaries.²¹

The cultural male superiority and female inferiority complexes were supported and perpetuated by missionary notions of male dominance in Christianity.²² Some Tswana traditional notions, as discussed above, therefore found a resonance within Christianity. The indigenization of Christianity made it difficult to eliminate past disparaging views about women. In spite of the European superiority and Tswana complexities that influenced and molded these women, it was realized that their contribution to the work of women was invaluable.

The historical contribution and response of women to Christianity was, in fact, not given much attention in missionary literature.²³ Whenever they used the term “native,” it predominantly referred to men.²⁴ Although the missionaries realized that women were being marginalized from Christian activities in some instances, they did not address such issues in their missionary debates. As in the missionary literature, the modern nationalist historiography justified

and largely concerned itself with the imperialistic effects of the missions, and ignored the role played by women in history.²⁵ The role and influence of women preachers, converts, and missionaries in the early years of Christianity in Botswana, were therefore never fully documented, neither was the unique contribution they made to the planting of the church fully appreciated. In spite of their pervasive influence, women received very scant attention from historians.

As for the contribution of missionary wives, it must be reiterated that they played a major role in the planting and growth of Christianity among the Batswana, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In spite of the European culture, which influenced their understanding of Christianity, their contribution to missionary work was outstanding. It is also worth noting that the attitude of these women, like that of their male counterparts, to Tswana culture varied from person to person and over time and space.²⁶

Missionary wives became role models for Batswana women. In many ways, they led the way for Batswana women, motivating them by their Christian zeal to respond to cultural problems and questions of the past and to increase their involvement in their communities. Although missionary wives do not feature much in missionary literature and journals, they did as much useful work as their husbands. They taught young children to read and write, they introduced adult women to the basic skills of sewing and dress making, bakery, and cooking in general, hygiene and nursing of the sick in the village, which male missionaries found very difficult to perform and work that was not always recognized as essential missionary work. The activities performed by these women attracted many people to the church.²⁷ Women were quick to make friends with royal women, making it much easier for their husbands to work with *dikgosi* (traditional kings/leaders, singular *kgosi*), who could be complex people for missionaries to understand. This immensely contributed to their husband's success in mission work. Many missionary wives were the first to learn and fluently speak the local language, called Setswana. This was possible because they spent most of their time with Batswana women, whom they greatly admired. Some of these women subsequently assisted in the translation of the Bible into Setswana and in the production of other Setswana learning materials. Despite this, their contribution was never recorded in the annals of missionary history, only ever mentioned as an afterthought.

Some missionary wives, such as Mary Moffat, Mary Livingstone, and Elizabeth Lees Price, made a substantial contribution to the development of Christianity in Botswana. They particularly inspired Botswana women to participate in the public life of their communities, by introducing them to reading and writing, and practical skills such as sewing, dress making, cooking, and other forms of home economics.²⁸ Their contribution needs to be recognized and celebrated by the church in Botswana and all those who care about the cause of women in Africa.

TERRITORIAL CHRISTIANITY, THE NEW CONSTITUTION, AND PENTECOSTALISM

The first churches to be introduced in Botswana were the mainline Catholic, Anglican, and Methodist churches that were introduced by the missionaries from Europe and America. They were branches and extensions of the mother churches, which provided financial support, spiritual guidance, and sent missionaries. Given the number of Botswana's ethnic communities, the missionaries identified with particular ethnic groups and chiefs, which, to a large degree, gave rise to churches being associated with, and developed along, ethnic lines.²⁹ Ethnic solidarity was reinforced by large populations being concentrated in big towns and highly centralized forms of government. These factors caused chiefs to be reluctant to readily accept and permit missionaries who represent different denominations to operate and function within a single ethnic group, since it would weaken ethnic solidarity and effectively endanger the chief's influence. The chiefs thus opted to be associated with and supported by a particular denomination as a way of strengthening ethnic solidarity. However, this process worked against the freedom of worship and did not serve the interests of promoting inter- and intra-religious relations.³⁰

While the proliferation of Pentecostal churches in the country has now gathered momentum, for many years the pioneers were persecuted, rejected, and denied freedom of worship; largely because of associations between tribal leaders, colonial authorities, and missionaries. The introduction of Pentecostalism during the colonial period was therefore marked by rejection and isolation, which contributed toward the spirit of mistrust and misunderstanding. The African traditional religions and the missionary churches, particularly the United Congregational Church in Southern Africa (formed by the LMS missionaries), therefore enjoyed the political support of the *dikgosi* and the colonial administrators. The *dikgosi*, who were the symbols of traditional power, connived with colonial and church authorities against the Pentecostal movement.³¹ By the turn of the twentieth century, the missionary churches had successfully established territorial empires for themselves that were no-go areas for other missionary organizations. The LMS, for instance, had firmly established itself among the Bangwaketse, Bangwato, and Batawana; the Lutheran and Catholic churches had occupied the Balete territories; the Dutch Reformed church had entrenched itself in the Kgatlang district; and the Methodists dominated the Barolong territories. Each church regarded the territory it had occupied as its area of operation, and not only monopolized it, but also hindered the efforts of other churches and religious organizations to establish themselves in that area.

When the Pentecostals arrived in Botswana in the early 1940s, they found that other churches had already firmly established themselves with the support of the traditional and colonial authorities.³² This created a negative environment for religious dialogue and relations between the early Pentecostals and other religious bodies. Although African traditional religions tended to be inclusive and accommodating, the chiefs, who were to some extent part of their leadership, connived with the older missionary churches and colonial authorities to

suppress Pentecostalism. As part of a survival strategy, Pentecostalism went underground and operated secretly for several years. The evangelistic approach of the pioneers of the Pentecostal movement did not help to ease the situation. Their radical and uncompromising style of preaching further hardened the hearts of the authorities, who were determined to eliminate the movement from those territories controlled by different missionary churches. As a result of the sour relationship that already existed between the authorities and Pentecostalism, there was misunderstanding and misrepresentation, mistrust and misconception, which created a barrier against dialogue and relations between Pentecostals and mainline churches. The different mission organizations that were formed by the different church denominations in Botswana also used to work independently and in opposition and conflict with one another.³³ This contributed to the suppression of Pentecostal women leaders in Botswana. Like their male counterparts they worked underground for many years until the introduction of a new constitution in 1966.

The introduction of this new constitution on Botswanan independence was probably the most critical phase in the development of Pentecostalism and its relations with other churches and religions. Botswana's founding fathers fully understood the importance and implications of inter- and intra-religious relations and values of freedom in society. They believed that government had the responsibility to safeguard basic civic virtues, rights, and freedoms of the individual. This development assisted the Pentecostals to come to the fore and seek ways to engage in dialogue. Botswana's new constitution specifically stipulated and protected the rights of all citizens by underlining the necessity for religious freedom, expression, and assembly.³⁴ It therefore protected the rights of each and every person to adopt a religious belief of their choice. Individuals or groups were free to manifest their religious beliefs in worship, observance, practice, or teaching as long as these did not interfere with the rights of other people. This development created a positive environment and new possibilities for the growth of Pentecostalism. It was at this stage that Pentecostal churches began to be involved in dialogue and cooperation among themselves, with other churches, and with other religions.³⁵

THE ROLE OF ECUMENICAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE RISE OF PENTECOSTAL WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

Before specifically talking about Pentecostal churches founded by women, this chapter examines the role played by Pentecostal ecumenical organizations in inspiring women to participate actively in church leadership.³⁶ These were some of the most important historical developments that influenced the role of Pentecostal women in Botswana. Ecumenical organizations mainly emerged after independence and played a leading role in creating fora for understanding, mutual respect, and tolerance between churches. This period was characterized by the belief among Christians that the best way to solve the problems faced by churches in contemporary Botswana was by working together and cooperating closely. The process thus involved consulting with

and supporting one another in mission endeavors. It is beyond doubt that this spirit of cooperation has been the driving force in the formation of umbrella organizations with the primary objective of enhancing the spirit of ecumenism among the different churches in Botswana generally, and within Pentecostal churches specifically.

Four major ecumenical organizations were founded with the aim of encouraging cooperation, dialogue, and unity in dealing with national issues. In the past, doctrinal differences had contributed toward divisions and the persecution of Pentecostals by the older missionary churches.³⁷ The four ecumenical organizations were: the Botswana Christian Council, founded on May 21, 1966; the Evangelical Fellowship of Botswana (EFB), the ecumenical organization for Pentecostal churches established in February 1973; the Organization of African Initiated Churches, which brings together AICs³⁸; and the Ministers Fraternal, an ecumenical forum for church leaders in Botswana.³⁹

The major objective of the EFB is to represent the Pentecostal churches and all the organizations that promote Pentecostal theology.⁴⁰ At the helm of EFB is the National Executive Committee, whose current Secretary General is a woman prophetess, Dr. Gaolekwi Ndwapi, the founder and leader of the Battle Cry Ministries. Her role as Secretary General of the EFB is historic since she is the first woman to occupy that position.

ECUMENICAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Pentecostal women have continued to play an important role in the development of Pentecostal ecumenical bodies in Botswana. Their impact has not only been felt in the area of founding churches, but also in the roles they play in Christian women's associations. The most important of these ecumenical women's associations and fellowships are the Young Women's Christian Association, Christian Women's Fellowship, the Church Radio Council, and the Women's Aglow Fellowship International in Botswana (WAFI). WAFI is fully examined because it promotes Pentecostal theology and practice.⁴¹

WOMEN'S AGLOW FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL IN BOTSWANA

The WAFI, popularly known as Aglow, is a local network of caring women, a unique organization that is *by* and *for* women and international in scope, and yet is a one-on-one ministry. In 1999, it had fellowships in 145 nations and more than 3300 local groups called "lighthouses" in the USA. Aglow is the largest international, interdenominational organization of evangelical Christian women worshippers in the world. These charismatic and spirit-filled women meet outside the formal church structure for healing, prayer, worship, testimony, and teaching. They are united by their commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord.⁴²

Aglow's mission statement contains: "to lead women to Jesus Christ and provide opportunities for Christian women to grow in their faith and ministry to others." Aglow, therefore, concerns itself with helping today's women draw

close to God, to find life and hope in Him. It is seen by many women as a safe place to seek answers, to discover who God is and who they are in Him. It is a place where women minister to women because they understand each other better than men do.⁴³ The purpose of Women's Aglow Fellowship is to worship, praise, and glorify God, to win souls for Jesus Christ, especially those not reached by commonly used methods of evangelism, to share with believers everywhere the full gospel of Jesus Christ, including Jesus as Baptizer in the Holy Spirit and as Healer, to work for spiritual unity among Christian believers, to foster fellowship among women, to encourage women to be members of and participate in the activities of their local church, and to help women realize their proper roles and relationships according to the scriptures.⁴⁴ Aglow is the largest international ecumenical organization for evangelical women in the world. The women are mainly charismatic and spirit-filled and are involved in fellowship through healing, prayer, and teaching.⁴⁵

In Botswana, WAFI is both an important local Christian network founded for and by women, and is international in scope for the fellowship of women. The leading personality in the establishment of the Botswana chapter in 1994 was Jana Lackey, who was its National President. With her husband Jerry Lackey, Jana began a Love Botswana Outreach Mission in 1987 among the unreached Basarwa, Bayei, and Bambukushu ethnic groups of the Okavango Delta and the Kgalagadi Desert. During the early phase of their ministry Jana began to develop a love and vision for women and to build and expand relationships.⁴⁶ Jana's interest in Aglow actually started when she happened to be on furlough in the USA with her family. She relates the beginning of her story with Aglow as follows:

One of their board members with Lackey Ministries, J. Doug Stringer, recommended to me that I contact Aglow. I was encouraged to do so because I was baptised in the Holy Spirit through the ministry of Aglow in 1976 at the age of 14, three months after I gave my heart to Jesus. So I did contact them and they have been more than helpful in facilitating the development of Aglow in Botswana. They have helped with materials, training, finances, and have even sent people to help guide us, and have been there for us every step of the way. We started in Maun and had our first National Conference in the first year with the aim of building awareness. We have found Conferences to be a real strength of Aglow and a highlight of every year. We also have a South-East Africa Regional conference every two years, an international conference every 2nd year and a National Conference every year. We only had another conference in 2000 to get Gaborone going. The 3rd National Conference was in Francistown in 2001.⁴⁷

Aglow is governed by an international Board of Directors. The Africa Director, Trena McDougal, and the regional directors have visited Botswana and conducted teaching meetings for Aglow women in Gaborone, which were some of the historic moments that contributed to the growth of Aglow in Botswana. In each village and town where Aglow is represented, many churches are involved, the largest section being Pentecostal. As part of a strategy to intro-

duce their vision, Aglow focuses on building relationships with the pastors of these different churches and their wives. They usually have dinners and luncheons for this purpose. They regard the input of pastors as advisors to their local and national boards as important. The Maun and Gaborone Chapters, for instance, have maintained a regular attendance over the years of about 75 to 100, other chapters are also steadily growing.⁴⁸ The focus and vision of Aglow Botswana has a strong local relevance, as it engages in community projects such as prison outreach, hospital ministry, street ministry to prostitutes and children, with a bias on women and the girl-child. The current President of Aglow Botswana, Pearl Kupe, a Botswana citizen is a frequent commentator on radio and television in South Africa, Botswana, and internationally. She is said to function as both Apostle and Prophet. She is also the leader of Hebrew Midwives Ministry and Kingdom Chamber of Commerce in Africa and is described as a Kingdom citizen and activist with grace for the marketplace. Kupe uses her legal experience to address governments, cabinets, and parliaments all over the world, and has served in a number of international ministries.⁴⁹

The national leadership of Aglow Botswana is a recent development. It was only in 2000 that the first committee was put in place, which was seen as a stepping stone to growth. The first National Committee members were Jana Lackey as President; Pearl Kalonda as Vice President; Gail Tyson as Secretary/Treasurer; Thandie Setlhare as Member and Prayer Coordinator. A National Board was put in place in 2002, which gave the organization more independence from the South Eastern Africa Director, through whom they had been running everything while in their growth stage. This was an indication that Aglow had provided accountability and support. The board now deals directly with the USA international office. The fellowship also has National Advisors in the persons of Dr. Enoch Sitima, Reverend John Phillip, and Reverend Matt Buckley.

PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES FOUNDED BY WOMEN

The first and foremost woman church leader in Botswana was Mrs. Christinah Nku, a prophetess and church founder, whose work made an immense impact on the lives of women in Southern Africa in general and in Botswana in particular. She broke away from the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), a Pentecostal church brought to South Africa by American missionaries in 1908, and founded the St John's Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa in 1952. The challenges she was facing were not only that she was black but also that she was a woman. Due to her influence, there was an increase in the number of women seeking leadership positions in different churches.⁵⁰ Some presented themselves as prophetesses, others as healers. About the contribution made by Mrs. Nku, Lagerwerf, a leading researcher on church-related issues, writes that:

The Botswana's history of independent churches has been greatly influenced by the famous healer and prophetess, Mrs. Christinah Nku, who in 1952 founded the St John Apostolic Faith Mission in South Africa and during her trips to Bechuanaland Protectorate she blessed and prayed for several men and women who later founded their own churches.⁵¹

The coming of Pentecostal women into the spiritual landscape of Botswana has added much value and activity to the life of the church in Botswana.⁵² The list of Pentecostal female church founders is long but some churches and their founders are:

1. The Prevailing Christian Ministries, Reverend Christinah Allotey
2. God's Foundation Church, Pastor Gerty Shabani
3. The Gates of Praise Wall of Salvation Ministries, Pastor Dorna Young
4. Battle Cry Ministries, Prophet Dr. Gaolekwi Ndwapi
5. World Soul Winners' Church, Pastor Kathrine Motlhageng
6. Interdenominational Intercession International Club, the Reverend P. Kgori
7. Crown of Glory International Church, Pastor T. Sizani
8. Day Break Ministries, Pastor Moakofhi
9. High Calling Ministries, Pastor Matsemane
10. Olorato Community Church, Pastor Kgositintwa
11. Potters House Christian Church, Pastor Makwato
12. Redeemed Christian Church, Pastor Betty Matshidiso
13. Unceasing Prayer Centre, Pastor Emmy Kgaswane
14. Kingdom Life Church of God, Pastor G. Sibanda
15. Life Hope Ministries, Pastor Maipelo Bosa
16. Oasis of Love, Apostle M. Mhlanga
17. River of God Ministry, Pastor Precious N. Nkomazana⁵³

To appreciate the work of these Pentecostal women church founders, one has been selected for an in-depth discussion and analysis. It is also worth noting that while Pentecostal churches such as AFM, Assemblies of God (AOG), and Pentecostal Holiness church (PHC), had ordained pastors much earlier, it was only in 1992 that the first Pentecostal church was founded and led by a woman in Botswana.

CHRISTINAH ALLOTEY AND THE PREVAILING CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES (PCM)

Reverend Christinah Allotey, a Ghanaian citizen, did all her primary and secondary education in Ghana, where she was born on July 4, 1962. For her ministerial training she studied with the Centre for International Christian Ministries in the United Kingdom. She has been living in Botswana since the early 1990s with her husband, a lecturer at the University of Botswana. Christinah Allotey has been chosen as a good example of an outstanding female personality in the Pentecostal movement in Botswana. She founded and officially registered the PCM with the Registrar of Societies in July 1992. Its birth, including the drafting of the constitution and the naming of the church, were her own initiative under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The church is independent, particularly in terms of governance, leadership, and financial support. However, it does see itself as a member of the worldwide Pentecostal movement and the Body of Christ.⁵⁴ It thus seeks affiliation with the local

church, especially the EFB. This makes Reverend Allotey the first female church founder to be officially associated with the EFB. This was a great achievement, for her and all women, who had been marginalized from the leadership of Pentecostal churches in Botswana for so long.

As a typical Pentecostal church, PCM uses the Bible as the basis of its doctrinal teaching, with an emphasis on salvation, holiness, Holy Spirit baptism attested by speaking in tongues, and the second coming of Christ.⁵⁵ The church promotes monogamous marriage and teaches against cohabitation, homosexuality, and polygamous marriage. Their main Sunday service is characterized by lively music, clapping of hands, dancing, and loud rejoicing, praising, and worshiping of God. This atmosphere, especially the music, attracts many youths and young adults because they are at liberty to sing and perform their favorite dances as an expression of joy, which is justified by Psalm 100: "Sing to the Lord all the earth and worship Him with joy." At times, people are invited to come forward during the service to testify of the goodness of God, especially in saving them from their sins, healing them from disease, reversing their financial problems, providing employment, blessing them with marriage, promoting them at work, and so on.

Reverend Allotey is described by the membership of the church as charming, strong, and evangelical—leaning more toward Pentecostalism. Many interviewees found her to be a powerful leader whose preaching attracted multitudes to her church for prayer and ministration. These eyewitnesses testified to great miracles, with the sick leaving the church walking, leaping, dancing, shouting, and praising God. Reverend Allotey is said not to entertain anything that creates an inferiority complex in her life or in the lives of the congregants. In whatever she does for God, she has learned to be tough, strong, and bold. Abraham T.T. Nyoni described Reverend Allotey as "very friendly," "very good public relations officer," "good communicator," and "charismatic." He praised her for "bravery in entering a profession mainly dominated and controlled by men," especially in a society where "women are mostly subjugated and ignored in religious matters."⁵⁶ Nyoni further pointed out that:

She is a typical woman of the nineties, who is out to prove that women are just as capable as men in preaching and leading the church. The fact that she has founded a church is an achievement which will encourage and challenge Batswana women to stand up and take their place in the church in Botswana. Most of Botswana Christian women have been very reluctant to challenge issues that have been a barrier to the ministry in the church. Allotey is a woman who will not be intimidated by men. She knows why she is there.⁵⁷

Despite all the discouraging and disparaging remarks intended to deter her from leading a church as a woman, Reverend Allotey persevered. She started PCM as a small fellowship meeting in the Computer Science department of the University of Botswana. In 1998, they met in Marang Community Junior Secondary School, but continued to search for land to put up a building of their own. They moved to the Gaborone West Shopping Centre in 2005, where they rented a building for their activities.

Allotey's story is very significant in that it shows how women can hold the highest leadership positions in the church through their own initiative, and with or without the support of men. It is also a challenge to women in Botswana who have not taken part in public affairs. However, a note of caution from the past, churches founded by Africans from countries outside Botswana have encountered local leadership crises, especially when the leader eventually decided to move elsewhere. PCM has no current training plan for local pastors so the leadership of the church mainly rests on Reverend Allotey—although this is a deviation from the main thesis of this chapter, which is to demonstrate the impact of women on the life of the church in Botswana. The main point is that continuity is important for lasting results.

Another general observation is that there has been a rapid increase in the number of churches founded by missionaries from other parts of Africa, especially West Africa. They are making a big contribution to the life of the church in Botswana and attract a large number of expatriates from other African countries, who otherwise would not have been reached by the church. Although this tendency is declining, it is still true that some Batswana consider their worship style foreign, especially the singing, and would usually hesitate to join these churches, especially where leaders use tunes from their home countries.⁵⁸ Others say that these churches adopt an elitist approach, possibly due to the use of English as the major language of communication. While this may be an important factor, most Pentecostal churches in Botswana use English, especially when it comes to preaching, but through an interpreter, especially where everybody speaks Setswana. These difficulties are likely to be resolved as the church attracts more Batswana and engages assistant local pastors who relate to the people within their own cultural context.

Allotey sees the spread of the gospel as the answer to human suffering. Through her vibrant ministry, Pentecostals are starting to recognize the vital role that women can play in the spiritual revival of the church in Botswana. As a Ghanaian and an African, she has demonstrated that women can serve as pastors, evangelists, and missionaries. Perhaps her example will increase the number of women with potential and a calling to full-time ministry, who have been discouraged, denied the opportunity, and marginalized because they are women. Christinah Allotey epitomizes a leader who has blended personal charm, fluency, prayerfulness, and the love of a caring mother. She has had the advantage of understanding the problems of the needy, in the church and in society, more than her male contemporaries and has been able to win their devotion. This has become an important aspect of her ministry. She strongly believes that the gospel is the only answer to people's needs. Obviously, Reverend Allotey does not need to be a man to be a spiritual leader or a successful pastor. At any rate, she has been accepted as the voice of the organization she is leading. She presides over all the church's conventions, boards, councils, and committees. Furthermore, she is responsible for appointing all elders, deacons, and other officers of the church. Although she may not necessarily be doing it on her own, she is seen as responsible for facilitating the process and providing the overall leadership.

CONCLUSION

The above case studies demonstrate that the focus of Pentecostal theology is the expression of life and the vitality of faith, which dominates the practices, beliefs, and operations of Pentecostals. For Pentecostals, God is God of the now, the present life and challenges, and not the distant past. This underlies and dominates their theology, which focuses on the people and emphasizes dynamism and experience. It is functional and operational and not about the detail of beliefs and creeds to be followed. Beliefs are explored and pursued in the context of praxis and life through activities such as healing, miracles, deliverance, exorcism, prosperity, poverty, and forgiveness. Pentecostal theology is therefore presented in an engaging style and manner. Keith Warrington (2008) calls it "A Theology of Encounter" which deals with beliefs and praxes regarded as important and highly controversial by those outside the Pentecostal tradition. The second point came through the involvement of Pentecostals in interdenominational organizations, such as EFB and Aglow, that present Pentecostal theology as promoting dialogue, cooperation, and partnerships.⁵⁹

The formative years (1950–1966) marked the foundational elements of Pentecostal thought in Botswana, when the new spirituality and theology spread to villages such as Kanye, Moshupa, Molepolole, and Gakgatla, where it was largely rejected by the traditional churches and the Protectorate authorities. This forced the first generation of Pentecostals in Botswana to go underground. During these years Pentecostals were alienated from other Christian groups and frequently treated as cultic or heretical. Both George Curtin and Samson Makwati,⁶⁰ early leaders of Pentecostalism in Botswana, were persecuted and seen as enemies of the accepted religious and political order and were treated as aliens in their own communities. Therefore, their services took place in unspecified locations and were usually unplanned because the Holy Spirit was believed to divinely guide each one. The services were spontaneous and characterized by worshippers lifting and clapping hands, dancing, stamping their feet, moving from side to side, shouting, praying, praising aloud, and testifying of the greatness of Jesus Christ. Since the second coming of Jesus was believed to be imminent, the message of salvation from sin was presented with urgency. This was followed by baptism into the Holy Spirit with evidence of speaking in tongues. While the early Christians were open to female ministry, it is evident that they were heavily influenced by the cultural context of their time and by their interpretation of the Bible, which continued to marginalize women. It must also be pointed out that conversion to Christianity in this early period was characterized by the rejection of Tswana tradition and the criticism and rejection of baptism by sprinkling of water on the forehead, which the early Pentecostals saw as opposed to the total immersion they practiced and as unbiblical.

The years 1966 to 1980 were a period of establishment and adaptation, characterized by the new constitution, in which theological education was developed at the Botswana Bible Training Institute, an ecumenical college that leaned toward Pentecostalism, and the Assembly Bible College, an Assemblies

of God project. The Bible training schools were established to meet the need for basic ministerial training.⁶¹ These institutions were not interested in rudimentary theological understanding or developing the critical thought or scholarly research common in colleges and universities, but in mastering Pentecostal doctrines and scripture. Pentecostals, especially before the 1960s, believed that the Holy Spirit would personally and practically lead the learner and Christian into all truth, hence there was no need for an academic degree to become a minister. This need is a recent development, hence you still find that most Pentecostal leaders, especially the women, are without formal training.⁶² It was also during this period that Pentecostals were coming together and working under EFB, the main Pentecostal umbrella body, while others, such as the revivalists and fundamentalists, were rejecting ecumenical concerns. It was also during this time that new doctrines addressing contemporary social or cultural issues were introduced, such as the prosperity gospel, which taught that material wealth, financial blessing, and physical well-being were effected or increased by giving, faith, and positive speech/thinking.⁶³ Closely related to the prosperity gospel was the positive theology, which insisted on positive confession on matters of sickness and wealth. And there was a continued emphasis on restorationist perspectives such as healing, exorcism, and deliverance.⁶⁴ While the role of women in ministry increased during this period, there was still an attitude in the Pentecostal churches that frequently relegated their ministry to children and music.

The years 1980 to 2017 were the age of the mushrooming of Pentecostal churches, popularly known as the fire churches, with an increasing usage of the title of prophet among its leaders, including the women founders.⁶⁵ This period also experienced an increase in the number of ordained women in classical Pentecostal churches, such as the AFM, AOG, and PHC. Some women left these churches and pioneered their own with a variety of other ministerial capacities.⁶⁶ There was also growth in the charismatic movement within the mainline churches, such as the Roman Catholic and the United Congregational in Southern Africa. This movement, like the Pentecostals, believes in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with an emphasis on charismatic gifts of the Spirit, such as healing, prophecy, faith, miracles, wisdom, knowledge, discernment of spirits, and so on, but with no emphasis on the empowerment of women for leadership and ordination, particularly for the Catholics. Many charismatics do not believe that speaking in tongues is the initial physical evidence or that a person baptized in the Spirit need necessarily speak in tongues. It is also worth pointing out that among charismatics from denominations with a high degree of theological training for its clergy, few women form their own churches, as they felt inadequately trained for full-time ministry, because in their tradition training was a prerequisite for becoming a church founder and minister. The other factors facilitating or discouraging the growth of women-founded churches are the mentoring and partnership strategies adopted by the fire type of Pentecostal churches, a strategy that excludes women apostles/prophets.

In conclusion, Pentecostal women have played a vital role in the growth of the church in Botswana. Their active involvement was a turning point in how they were perceived. They made a valuable contribution to the life of the church, notwithstanding Tswana tradition and male-dominated Christianity, both of which tried to marginalize or completely deny them meaningful participation in the public affairs of the church, especially in leadership. Traditional values continue to impose a low self-image on women. Despite their achievements women still find themselves having to succumb to cultural expectations that only men can be leaders, which is why some successful women, even after establishing churches on their own, felt inadequate to lead without the help of men. In most cases, they invited their husbands to become overseers of the church, while they themselves functioned as pastors.

The major achievement of these women, however, is that they unconsciously penetrated male spheres of power and made a meaningful contribution to the life of the church in Botswana. As this chapter shows, the formation of women-led Pentecostal churches in particular, was seen as a reversal of the belief that a woman's place was in the home. They demonstrate that women could assume the roles of church founder, prophet, and pastor. Many women responded more readily because they were being offered positions denied them in traditional society. The major factor responsible for the development of this trend was their claim of extraordinary religious experiences in the form of healing and deliverance, the possession of healing powers that gained them recognition as prophetesses.

Another factor that contributed to the firm establishment of these churches was their insistence on developing self-propagating and self-supporting organizations. This chapter has shown that women in Botswana are and can be the backbone of their churches. Women are now assuming many responsibilities and playing a very important role in the life of the church. They have advanced from the background to the forefront, founding churches, healing the sick, and prophesying a hopeful future for the unemployed, discouraged, unmarried, and many others.

NOTES

1. James Amanze, *African Traditional Religions & Culture in Botswana* (Gaborone: Pula Press, 2002), 62–114; Musa Dube, “‘God Never Opened the Bible to Me’: Women Church Leaders in Botswana,” in *Aspects of the History of the Church in Botswana*, edited by Fidelis Nkomazana & Laurel Lanner, 210–216 (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publishers, 2007).
2. Musa Dube, “God Never Opened the Bible to Me.”
3. Howard Williams (Palapye) to LMS, August 18, 1898, SOAS: B55; Moffat to LMS, Kudumane, February 10, 1858, SOAS: In-Letters, S/A, B31 F1 JA; Moffat to LMS, Mahalapye, September 5, 1859, SOAS: B31 F3 J.B; Charles Croonenbergs, July 24, 1897 on their journey to Bulawayo quoted in D. Borschman, 1989: 64 (Thesis: Harvard University).

4. David Barrett, *Schism & Renewal on Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 135–136.
5. Fidelis Nkomazana, "London Missionary Society, Church & State in a Colonial Bechuanaland: The Case of Bangwato, 1857–1923," *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa*, 71, no 4 (1999): 303–312.
6. James Amanze, *African Traditional Religions & Culture in Botswana* (Gaborone: Pula Press, 2002), 345–350; Musa Dube, "God Never Opened the Bible to Me."
7. Fidelis Nkomazana, "The Profile of Reverend Mrs Rebecca Motsisi of the Pentecostal Holiness Church in Botswana," *Religion & Gender in BOLESWA Occasional Papers in Theology & Religion*, 1, no 7 (2000): 44–59.
8. Musa Dube, "God Never Opened the Bible to Me."
9. Musa Dube, "God Never Opened the Bible to Me."
10. Musa Dube, "God Never Opened the Bible to Me"
11. Fidelis Nkomazana, "The Profile of Reverend Mrs Rebecca Motsisi of the Pentecostal Holiness Church in Botswana."
12. Saroj Parrat, "The Status of Women and Issues in Development in Botswana," in *The Role of Christianity in Development, Peace & Reconciliation*, edited by Isabel A. Phiri, Kenneth R. Ross, & J.I. Cox, 140–155 (Nairobi: All Africa Conference of Churches, 1997).
13. John Mackenzie, *Ten years North of the Orange River* (Edinburgh: Hodder & Stoughton, 1871), 397.
14. John Mackenzie, *Ten years North of the Orange River*, 380–381.
15. William C. Willoughby, *The Soul of the Bantu* (London: SCM, 1928), 2.
16. Fidelis Nkomazana, "The Experiences of Women Within Tswana Cultural History & Its Implications for the History of the Church in Botswana," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, XXXIV, no 2 (2008): 83–116.
17. Fidelis Nkomazana, "The Contribution of Missionary Wives in the Planting of the Church in Botswana in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae (SHE)*, 34, Supplement (2008): 333–358.
18. Fidelis Nkomazana, "The Contribution of Missionary Wives in the Planting of the Church in Botswana in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries."
19. Robert Moffat, *Missionary Labours in Southern Africa* (London: John Shaw, 1842), 66–67.
20. Ibid., 5/1 Serowe, 1913, A. Jennings, 1914.
21. Fidelis Nkomazana, "The Experiences of Women Within Tswana Cultural History & Its Implications for the History of the Church in Botswana"; Fidelis Nkomazana, "The Contribution of Missionary Wives in the Planting of the Church in Botswana in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries."
22. J. Mackenzie, *Ten Years Beyond the Orange River* (1871), chap. 18: A Chapter of Bamangwato History. It traces the Ngwato tradition which simply preserves the names of prominent kings and their ideas. There is not a single mention of the role of women.
23. James D. Hepburn, *Twenty Years in Khama's Country and Pioneering Among the Batauan of Lake Ngami* (London: Frank Cass, 1895); John Mackenzie, *Ten Years Beyond the Orange River*; Robert Moffat, *Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern Africa* (London: John Snow, 1842); David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1857);

- Edwin Lloyd, *Three Great African Chiefs* (London: T. Fisher Inwin, 1895); Richard Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795–1895, Volume I* (London: Henry Fowler, 1895); John du Plessis, *A History of Christian Missions in South Africa* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1911).
24. John Mackenzie, *Ten Years Beyond the Orange River* (1871), p. 348 says: “Soon after my arrival (at Shoshong) ... I availed myself of the custom of the natives, and asked the chief to point out where I might build, which he was very willing to do.” The allocation of land and its legislation was a sole responsibility of men. On p. 369, when referring to hunters and cattle herdsman, he uses the word “natives” over and over again.
 25. Mutero J. Chirenje, *A History of Northern Botswana: 1850–1910* (London: Associated University Press, 1977); Anthony J. Dachs, *Kgama of Botswana: African Historical Background* (London: Cox & Wyman Ltd, 1971).
 26. William C. Willoughby, *The Soul of the Bantu* (Edinburgh: SCM, 1928), 179.
 27. Mutero Chirenje, *A History of Northern Botswana, 1850–1910*, 181; Thomas Tlou, & Alec Campbell, *History of Botswana* (Macmillan: Gaborone, 1984), 141.
 28. Fidelis Nkomazana, “The Contribution of Missionary Wives in the Planting of the Church in Botswana in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries,” *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* (SHE), 34, Supplement (2008): 333–358.
 29. Onulf Gulbrandsen, “Missionaries and Northern Tswana Rulers: Who used whom?,” *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 23 (1993): 44; Berthold A. Pauw, *Religion in a Tswana Chieftdom* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 117.
 30. Fidelis Nkomazana, “London Missionary Society, Church & State in a Colonial Bechuanaland: The Case of Bangwato, 1857–1923,” *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa*, 4, no 71 (1999): 303–312; Fidelis Nkomazana, “Gender Analysis of Bojale and Bogwera Initiation Among Batswana,” *BOLESWA Journal of Theology, Religion & Philosophy*, 1, no 1 (2005): 26–59.
 31. Fidelis Nkomazana, “Livingstone’s Ideas of Christianity, Commerce and Civilization,” *Pula: Botswana Journal of African Studies*, 12, no 1 & 2 (1998): 44–57.
 32. In 1880, the Catholic Church missionaries were denied entry to the Ngwato territory by Khama III, arguing that Ngwato already had missionaries and that he did not want conflict between two societies in his town.
 33. Jane Sales, *The Planting of Churches in Southern Africa* (Grand Rapids: William Eerdmans Company, 1971), 79–90.
 34. Constitution of Botswana, “Protection of Freedom of Conscience, Protection of Freedom of Expression & Protection of Freedom of Expression & Protection of Assembly and Association,” Gaborone: Government Printers, chap. 2: Sections 11, 12 & 13.
 35. There is no indication that a religious organization has been denied registration, with the exception of the Unification Church in 1984. This was because its members isolated themselves from society and practiced a community lifestyle, sharing property, accommodation, and meals. They also contributed a large portion of their monthly income to a common pool to support their activities and conducted marriages without involving their families.
 36. Fidelis Nkomazana, “The Growth of Pentecostalism and Christian Umbrella Organizations in Botswana,” *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, XL (2014): 153–173.

37. James Amanze, *Botswana Handbook of Churches* (Gaborone: Pula Press, 1994), 192, 221.
38. African Independent churches are sometimes referred to as African Initiated or African Indigenous churches.
39. James Amanze, *Botswana Handbook of Churches*, 192, 221.
40. Interview with Sam Makgaola of the Assemblies of God, August 22, 2006; Interview with Prophet Dr. Gaolekwi Ndwapi, February 28, 2017 at the University of Botswana; also see Smith, 1997:13, 25.
41. Amanze, *Botswana Handbook of Churches, Gaborone*, 60–62, 306–307; Leny Lagerwerf, “*They Pray for you*”: *Independent Churches and Women in Botswana* (Leiden/Utrecht: Interuniversitair, 1982), 90.
42. Aglow International Web Site: <http://www.glow.org/>.
43. Aglow International Web Site: <http://www.glow.org/>.
44. Aglow International Web Site: <http://www.glow.org/>.
45. Aglow International Website: <http://www.glow.org/>.
46. www.lovebotswana.org.
47. Email Interview with Jana Lackey, May 5, 2003 led to other contacts with other members of Board such as Thandie Setlhare, May 2017.
48. Interview with Lana Lackey, August 2002.
49. www.Lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles-php.
50. James Amanze, *Botswana Handbook of Churches*, 265–266.
51. Leny Lagerwerf, “*They Pray for you*”: *Independent Churches and Women in Botswana*, 76.
52. Classical Pentecostal refers to a group that arose around the turn of the century originating in the teachings of Charles Parham and William Seymour. These movements hold that speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and tends to be institutionalized in their own denominations.
53. List compiled by Gaolekwi Ndwapi, The Secretary General of the Evangelical Fellowship of Botswana, Rizka Building, Floor 2, office 6, African Mall, Gaborone, 6 March 2017.
54. Kingsley E. Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra, Ghana: Centre for Pentecostal & Charismatic Studies, SAPC, 2001), 68–89.
55. Larbi, 2001: 57–89; Nkomazana & Tabalaka, “Aspects of Healing Practices and Methods Among Pentecostals in Botswana, Part 1,” *BOLESWA Journal of Theology, Religion & Philosophy*, 2, no 3 (2009): 137–159; Abel Tabalaka & Fidelis Nkomazana, “Faith Healing and Reasoning: The Aspects of Healing Practices and Methods Among Pentecostals in Botswana—Part 2,” *BOLESWA Journal of Theology, Religion & Philosophy*, 2, no 3 (2009): 160–169.
56. Seminar Paper presented by Abraham Nyoni in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies of the University of Botswana on March 26, 1998.
57. Seminar Paper presented by Abraham Nyoni in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies of the University of Botswana on March 26, 1998. Developments in 2017 show that the church continues to grow, with new branches in other parts of the country. In terms of leadership, Dr. M. Ditlhogo and Professor Joseph Allotey, pastor and senior pastor respectively, have now come in as key national leaders, while Pastor Christiana Allotey is now the overseer (Contacts with Dr. Ditlhogo and Professor Joseph Allotey, University of Botswana, Gaborone, 24 May 2017).

58. Personal Observation/Visit, PCM Church Service, Gaborone West Mall, 22 May 2005.
59. Fidelis Nkomazana, "The Development and Role of Pentecostal Theology in Botswana," in *A Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*, edited by Isabel Apawo Phiri & Dietrich Werner, 402–410 (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2013).
60. I collected this information from people such as George Curtin and Samson Makwati, who were interviewed by the author in August 1980 before their deaths. The collection of this information from eyewitnesses was part of an effort to preserve the unrecorded history of Pentecostal churches in Botswana, which has no other sources.
61. Fidelis Nkomazana, "The Development and Role of Pentecostal Theology in Botswana," in *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*, edited by Isabel Apawo Phiri & Dietrich Werner, 402–410 (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publishers, 2013).
62. David Seithamo, an ordained minister of the AFM and who is pursuing a master of divinity (in 2014), and Phodiso, the principal of ABC and pursuing a PhD, see it differently.
63. David Maxwell, *African Gifts of the Spirit: Pentecostalism & the Rise of Zimbabwean Transnational Religious Movement* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2006), 151–155.
64. David Maxwell, *African Gifts of the Spirit*, 187.
65. The first phase of the rapid growth of Pentecostalism was marked by Reinhard Bonnke's Christ for All Nations Tent Crusades in 1980.
66. David Maxwell, *African Gifts of the Spirit*, 191.



Neither Jew nor Greek? Class, Ethnicity, and Race in the Pentecostal Movement in Africa

Asonzeh Ukah

INTRODUCTION

Unarguably, the most significant transformation in Africa in the last 100 years is religious in character. In 1910, less than 20% of African citizens belonged to either Christianity or Islam and African indigenous religions were in the majority. In 2010, more than 85% of Africans belonged to one of the two major, intensely competitive, religions, while African indigenous religions have become minority traditions. Of the 1.2 billion people in Africa, about 900 million belong to the two conversion-driven religions of Christianity and Islam.¹ In the 2000s, about 53% of Africans identified themselves as Christian, up from 5% in 1900, forcing Douglas Jacobsen to say, “Never before has Christianity expanded so quickly in any region of the world.”² No continent has so changed in its adoption of foreign religious traditions in so short a time as Africa. The aggressive encounters between Christianity and Islam have transformed Africa into a battleground for religious affiliation. Considering that before the importation of Christianity and Islam into the continent Africans had not converted from one religion to another, the import of this seismic shift in religious allegiance becomes clearer. Even more important is how religious affiliations and reaffiliations relate to ethnic identities, to discourses on race, and to formations of new social, economic, and political classes in Africa. Thus, attempts at understanding the ongoing changes in Africa necessarily involve unpacking the subtle, yet

A. Ukah (✉)

University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa

e-mail: asonzeh.ukah@uct.ac.za

© The Author(s) 2018

A. Afolayan et al. (eds.), *Pentecostalism and Politics in Africa*,
African Histories and Modernities,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-74911-2_11

profound, ways in which religious beliefs and belongings rework cultural and ethnic identities, political affiliations, and socioeconomic practices.

In Africa, Pentecostalism is ethnicized and racialized, and ethnicity and race are Pentecostalized.³ To complicate this mix, class has been in existence from the origins of the Pentecostal movements in Africa. Class, ethnicity, and race form a “conceptual triad” that provides significant insights on the development and trajectory of the Pentecostal movement on the continent and draws together much of the movement’s dynamism and energy.⁴ Class, ethnicity, and race are independent concepts and discourses that, when analyzed together, provide a strong discursive template for understanding how religion transforms and is transformed by culture and practice, particularly in rapidly evolving societies, as in Africa. In the context of Pentecostalism, these concepts form a strong defining feature of the earliest members and of the cultural context of the emergence of a global Pentecostal movement. For a long time, those attracted to and by Pentecostal spirituality came from the “crossroads [of] clashing cultures and economic conflicts.”⁵ The Azusa Street Revival, which in no small measure launched the global Pentecostal movement, was characterized by strong support and membership from the multi-racial and multi-ethnic working class. Scholarly debates are ongoing surrounding the sources of influence in the emergence of the Pentecostal movement, whether it was founded by African American Methodist preacher William Joseph Seymour (May 2, 1870–September 28, 1922) or by Charles Fox Parham (June 4, 1873–January 29, 1929).⁶ This is indicative of the strong racialization and ethnicization of religion—as a resource for empowerment and identity—not only in the USA but also around the world. Similarly, Africa in the twenty-first century is divided by a triple heritage of religious traditions (Christianity, Islam, and indigenous religions) and further subdivided by a myriad ethnic nationalities, warehoused by political constructs engineered by European colonial interventions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Africans who have so enthusiastically embraced Pentecostal spirituality are caught up at the crossroads of rapid socioeconomic and cultural transformation, especially evident in urban centers where conflicting traditional cultures come face to face with modernizing tensions and trends.

As J.D.Y. Peel argues in *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*, missionary activities solidified ethnic identity and consciousness in many parts of Africa.⁷ Two potent factors that influenced the production of ethnicity and class in Africa are colonialism and Christianity. In many sub-Saharan African countries, with a visible cultural plurality within the colonial nation-state, nationalist struggles were imbued with a strong ethnic component. In the wake of disconcerting globalizing processes, such ethnic consciousness is yet to be weaned, even in the twenty-first century, as ethnicity has become an important instrument for the contestation of political and social goods such as recognition and respect. Colonialism and Christianity inhabit the idea of progress as legitimizing tropes for their practices in Africa, while Pentecostalism self-presents as a modernizing ideology that extends the rhetoric of the postcolonial state. With the emergence of “ruling and subordinate groups,” economic inequality has become obvious in postcolonial Africa as discourses on class flourish.⁸

ETHNICALLY PENTECOSTAL?

The religious transformation of Africa has proceeded with unparalleled force since the 1970s in the form of a multi-faceted wave of Pentecostal conversions. Particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, Pentecostalism has emerged from obscurity (between the 1910s and 1960s) to ubiquity (from the 1970s to the present). Scholars of Pentecostalism often reference Africa as the epicenter of the global Pentecostal movement without considering the implications of its popularity and appeal on issues of identity, citizenship, ethnicity, and economic mobility. The role of culture in Pentecostalism's appeal in Africa has been noted by scholars such as Ogbu Kalu and Allan Anderson, but not the (in)capacity of the religion to coherently rework and imbricate cultural and ethnic identities, instantiate an emergent religio-economic class, and drive sociopolitical mobility.⁹ Pentecostal leaders also maintain that the popularity and widespread appeal of Pentecostalism in Africa is an indication or an outworking of the special "divine mandate" (Wariboko calls this "high destiny"¹⁰) given to the continent and its black-bodied citizens by Yahweh to disseminate the gospel before the Parousia. According to this view, Africans, like the Jews of old, are God's special instrument for the spiritual liberation and revitalization of global Christianity in contemporary times. As this narrative is often widely echoed, African Pentecostal Christians may have (inadvertently) constituted themselves into a new sacred ethnicity with a divine purpose. Consequently, African missionary zeal and vigor are both a sacred obligation and a method of achieving global renown and progress. In a world driven by intellectual property rights and internet-based innovation, the belief that Africa and Africans are specially predestined to produce religiosity rather than technology approximates to a myth, a consolation and rationalisation for underperformance in the realms of technological productivity.

The myth and notoriety of African religiosity sometimes mask the force of social analysis in accounting for the transformative dynamics of Pentecostal expansion on the continent.¹¹ The perpetuation of such a myth makes Pentecostalism just another layer in the manifestation of Africa's incurable religiosity rather than enabling a scrutiny of the social sources and drivers of Pentecostal innovation and expansion. As Africans reaffiliate from one religion or Christian denomination to Pentecostalism, how does this move rework their self-understanding as Africans embedded in primordial cultures and identities? In rereading the Judeo-Christian scriptures, African Pentecostal Christians explore vistas of possibilities and liberation that redefine their role and situation in the contemporary scheme of things. According to the rhetoric of African Pentecostals, although in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, God in his power and wisdom thwarts the power of the strong, elevates the weak, and saves mighty warriors in his cause. African believers, by their zeal and (s)election, are those warriors energized to bring the unsaved into the light of salvation, on the path to wholeness. In this sort of thinking, African Pentecostal Christians are different from other non-African Christians or even other Pentecostals; they constitute a sacred ethnicity with privileged access to divine intention and purpose.

Ethnicity and religious belonging share some commonalities; they are identity tools for the production and maintenance of distinctiveness and boundaries. Originally used by the ancient Greeks to describe neighbors they considered uncivilized outsiders, provincial, even irreligious and primitive foreigners lacking in cultural refinement, the concept of ethnicity was appropriated by Western philosophers and thinkers from the European Enlightenment period onward to describe distinct groups of peoples believed to share a common place or geography, history, and religion. As used by post-Enlightenment European scholars and writers—who thought themselves at the pinnacle of human evolution and civilization—ethnicity described non-Europeans who spoke different languages and who were generally considered inferior, uncivilized, and even barbaric.¹² Ethnicity now signifies distinct groups of people united by a common language, history, culture, and often religion. As David Chidester demonstrates, the colonial classification of the religions of the outsider and the ethnicization of African peoples was an important structure and instrument for the cultivation of otherness and self-awareness, for “comparing without being compared, eating without being eaten.”¹³ Not recognizing themselves as distinct ethnicities, Europeans who came to Africa proceeded to map and classify the peoples within their specific areas of influence into different *tribes* (and ethnicities) as a tool of conquest and administration through intermediaries. Soon, for the African, ethnicity emerged as a structure of competition and self-presentation that informed a person’s membership of a group based on history, language, location or place, and—as was frequently the case—religion. The heart of ethnicity is cultural distinctiveness. Ethnicity presupposes that a specific society is composed of discrete, locally bounded, territorially delineated cultural entities or units, often suffused with their own social consciousness. This constructed image never corresponds to reality. While ethnicity and religion may not always be coterminous or coalesce, both are identity-producing attributes. In the modernizing ethos of postcolonial Africa, the creation of ethnic consciousness was something new, imbued with a modernizing energy. The African Pentecostal Christian who believes that God has given her, as an African, a special mission to proselytize the frontiers of dis/unbelief or wrong belief, is imbricating and sacralizing ethnic consciousness. It is the generation of a Pentecostal ethnicity.

Christianity upholds the doctrine that Yahweh, the father of Jesus the woodworker from Nazareth, created all humans. Therefore, all humans are the children of God. As a loving father, God has no favorites.¹⁴ Yet, doctrinally, Pentecostalism thrives on the creation and maintenance of binaries and boundaries: the saved and the damned; the prosperous and the poor; the civilized and the primitive; belonging and lost; friend and enemy; leader and led; first and last.¹⁵ The adherent who believes correctly becomes special and legally entitled to favors denied others by a just God. By extension and eisegesis, Pentecostal believers often ascribe to their nations or countries a favored status before God. “Based on the discernment of some noumenal signs, Nigerian Pentecostals are claiming that their nation has been specially chosen by God to lead the final evangelization of the world before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and to draw the black race into global economic and technological supremacy.”¹⁶ While

it is not clear how evangelization creates global and technological supremacy, the appropriation of scripture and religious resources as instruments for rewriting salvific history is a realization of political power. As the Pentecostal fire gathers momentum and social visibility and is able to recruit from an economically comfortable segment of society, so its leaders retheorize the relationship between the national collective and the sacred. Another paradox of Pentecostalism is that as it spreads and claims to be a universal religion, so it privileges a process of ethnicization of religious privilege and right. The valorization of the privileges of black nations in the unfolding salvific history of the world is in tension with the universal mission and message of Pentecostalism. The ethnicization of Pentecostal belonging delegitimizes and creates the other, constructed so that they need to be proselytized.

In many African countries, the affiliation to Pentecostalism is sometimes associated with ethnic origin. Dominant ethnicities in urban areas seem to be exposed to Pentecostal influence earlier than those in the hinterlands. More significantly, areas of high urban concentration produce intense ethnic social consciousness. This is because, in colonial and postcolonial Africa, "urban centers were the arenas of social encounter and competition, where group labels came to structure the rivalries over a host of scarce resources: jobs, schools, places, land plots, trade licenses."¹⁷ In Nigeria, for example, the largest group of Pentecostal Christians are of Yoruba ethnic nationality since the Pentecostal movement was first initiated in Yorubaland, where the Aladura religious movement had already predisposed the people to religious innovativeness and leadership. Furthermore, with the exception of Benson Idahosa and Chris Oyakhilome, it is Yoruba Pentecostal leaders who have built the major transnational and transcontinental Pentecostal empires in Africa. Examples of the conflation of ethnicity and religious affiliation can be multiplied across the continent, indicating, but not explaining, the role and patterns of mobilization of ethnic identities in Pentecostal conversions.

Pentecostalism has blossomed in Africa during a period when the continent has been gripped by fiscal crises and reforms. Grappling with a protracted existential uncertainty has resulted in the emergence and dominance of the informal economic sector, of which the religious economy is a key, but often neglected, component. Aside from the claim by providential historiographers of Pentecostalism that the Holy Spirit is the driver of the movement, economic uncertainty and fragile postcolonial African states unarguably provide a marked impetus to the movement's runaway global expansion.¹⁸ It claims to provide and fulfill all the promises of the postcoloniality, such as wealth, prosperity, and health for all. As African Pentecostal Christianity "has been made a way of commerce ... a way of reveling," its ethnicity increasingly manifests as a structure of competition and an exercise of power and authority over resources, material and non-material.¹⁹ As the demographics of Pentecostal membership changes from the very poor, socially weak, and economically and politically marginalized to the very rich, economically and politically powerful and connected, what are the ramifications for the structure of economic belonging, wealth creation, and (re)distribution in Africa?

“NO FLESH, NO COLOUR”: PENTECOSTALISM AND RACE

Writing in the Azusa Street magazine, *Apostolic Faith* of January 1907, William Seymour says, God “recognises no flesh, no colour, and no name. We must not glory in Azusa mission, nor in anything but the Lord Jesus Christ” (p. 1). This statement captures both the core and the contradiction of global Pentecostalism, which has developed along the path mapped out by the pioneers (such as Seymour, Parham, and Hagin) and has often followed an intensely racialized path. The social relevance of a religion that stressed personal, as against social, salvation was a focus of criticism of Pentecostalism in the aftermath of its emergence and during the period of the civil rights activism in the USA.²⁰ Such critique placed a severe strain on the doctrine that God does not reckon with skin color or human bodies. The contradiction is all the more evident in African Pentecostalism, which is driven by personalities who are “big men and women of a Big God”.²¹

Race and racism are concepts laden with values and emotion, often devoid of a neutral analysis and, therefore, have informed social, legal, and political practices throughout history. Race is the analysis and classification of humanity according to observable physical differences of an anatomical nature. Racism is a judgment based on a classification that privileges one race group—believed to constitute a genetic stock—over another, which can degrade and dehumanize some groups. Racial ideologies have been used in the justification of such horrendous acts as the Jewish holocaust in Nazi Germany, the massacre of Tutsis by Hutus in Rwanda, and the apartheid policy of the National Party in South Africa. Although racial practices from the distant past have been documented—as in David M. Goldenberg’s seminal work, *The Curse of Ham*²²—it was only in the twentieth century that a scholarly analysis of racism emerged. According to Thomas Schirrmacher, “The first definition of racism was formulated in 1940 by [...] Ruth Benedict: ‘[...] the dogma that one ethnic group is condemned by nature to congenital inferiority and another group is destined to congenital superiority. It is the dogma that the hope of civilization depends on eliminating some races and keeping others pure. It is the dogma that one race has carried progress with it throughout human history and can alone ensure future progress’.”²³ Racism is a dogma (a set of unquestioned [religious] beliefs) and a judgment of the differential social value of historical collectivity based on sociobiological traits believed to be hereditary, on the basis of which some social groups are excluded while others are included in a hierarchical distribution of scarce resources and respect. It is an ideology of power dependencies that constructs a group of people as superior or inferior according to a presumed order of nature, and is therefore difficult, if not impossible—according to those who espouse such an ideology—to change or reorder. Consistent with racialized ideologies, assumed differences based on “biological ancestry” are unalterable, and therefore permanent.²⁴ In this understanding, racism is a “bio-power mode” that seeks the supremacy and “purity of racial destiny.”²⁵ Oludamini Ogunnaike argues that the root of modern racism is traced to post-Enlightenment Western European civilisation that is characterised by the decline of religion as well as the beginnings of European modernity.²⁶

The Pentecostal phenomenon and innovativeness emerged against the backdrop of a long history of racialization of the divine economy in both the Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions. The burden of race (racial stereotype, prejudice, discrimination, biases, etc.) is what Africans and peoples of African descent have endured and been plagued by for centuries. The paradox of Africa is that it is the place of origin of the earliest known human species, and of the oldest and foundation cultures. However, it is the least developed in socioeconomic terms. Even in contemporary times, societies far removed from the sources and sites of racism in the Abrahamic religions, such as Australasia, explicitly denigrate Africa and Africans. Some scholars argue that this is because of Africa's low economic performance: "the black skin is heavy; it makes ears dull, it weighs heavily on being, pressing relentlessly on the shoulder, soul, and spirit of its bearers."²⁷ This perspective, as correct as it may seem in light of contemporary events and experiences of Africans around the world, it does ignore the long history of the degradation of the black body in the name of a God of purity who darkens the skin of some people as a physical sign of sin and a stain on the soul. The mistreatment of the black skin and the black body has been a way of defending the justice of (a white and pure) God in the face of human frailty and recalcitrance. Africa is a global joke partly because it is the only continent that has so readily and speedily jettisoned its cultures (languages, religions, material productions, indigenous identities, etc.) in preference for foreign cultures and religions, so that African identity is now constituted by the black skin and the physical characterizations that go with it.

The burden of Africa goes beyond the level of performance of its countries' gross domestic product. It includes how African Pentecostal leaders have framed the "problem of Africa." Leaders such as Enoch Adeboye, David Oyedepo, Helen Ukpabio,²⁸ and Daniel Olukoya,²⁹ in explaining the fate of Africa, believe and teach that Africa is "where demons are most active" sabotaging God's designs. Adeboye, for example, teaches that "the wisdom of the black man, which supersedes that of the whites, is being used destructively today [as] a consequence of the curse Noah pronounced" on Ham—therefore, that the black skin is a symbol of universal salvation is in tension.³⁰ This type of metaphysical causality buys into, rather than challenges, the larger racial narrative of the cursed continent and its dark peoples developed by Europeans and foisted on African consciousness through centuries of domination, exploitation, and slavery. Seymour's statement cited above interrogates the privileging of the white body against any other body, and not the production of a revised or inverted privileging of the black skin against any other type of skin color. The Pentecostal valorization of the black body is a serious burden on Pentecostal consciousness; it is a retribalization of African agency as, historically, no society has been known to develop holistically through the production of religion, Max Weber's *Protestant Ethic* hypothesis notwithstanding.³¹

While Seymour believes that race is a fiction, and therefore does not exist in the economy of the Holy Spirit, African Pentecostals internalize the dogma of race and racial difference imposed through colonial hegemony. Missionary

Christianity and colonialism in Africa were premised on the racial superiority of Europeans over Africans. Along with the classification of Africans into ethnic groups (tribes) and the production of ethnic consciousness, race was an ever-present discourse and organizing dogma of colonial practice in Africa. Racial hegemony of the colonial state, as Young points out, created two distinct consequences: (1) racial mythology of the superiority of a white race and the inferiority of a black race; and (2) a racial solidarity among nationalist Africans to contest but not discredit, the claims of the European hegemony.³² Again, as David Goldenberg demonstrates in *The Curse of Ham*, black Africa was part of the ancient Near East and played a significant role at several periods in the history of this region. However, people with dark shades of skin color have long been the subject of religiously formulated, motivated, and maintained racial biases. The Bible taught that dark-skinned people inhabited “the furthest southern reach of the earth” or “at the end of the earth,”³³ a point that many interpreted to mean they were farthest from civilization, revelation, and salvation. However, the universalist ethos of apostolic Christianity was captured by the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles that identified the first gentile convert as an Ethiopian, who supposedly, came “from the most remote part of the world.” The Ethiopian, as Goldenberg points out following interpretations by the early Church Fathers, signifies “Christianity’s conversion of the world.”³⁴ When the black body is converted it shows that the light and merits of Christianity have conquered the whole world. The irony is that the African Pentecostal reevaluation of this apostolic understanding is that the black race has a divine mandate to convert the whole world before the Parousia.

The slave trade, both trans-Saharan and trans-Atlantic, solidified and institutionalized centuries of negative cultural perceptions and treatment of black people in the West and Near East. Race and racialized grand narratives were central to European colonial enterprise around the world, but more so in Africa, where Africans were taught that a superior race had brought spiritual salvation, economic development, and social civilization. Colonization in Africa worked beyond the threshold of reorganizing the body politic to the restructuring and colonizing (subjugation) of consciousness, forcing the internalization of the colonizers’ racial hegemony.³⁵ Religion, specifically Christianity and Islam, provided, and still provides, diverse forms of religious justification or rationalization for racial prejudice against the black body. William Seymour’s statement to the effect that in Christ there is “no flesh, no colour, no name” is a reclamation of the *ur-mandate* of primitive Christianity to reach the ends of the world through the ministration of those who dwell in the margins of the earth. The energy of African Pentecostalism is partly to subvert the received narrative about race and produce in its place an alternative about the place of the black person in the pneumatological economy of salvation. Constructing this alternative narrative starts with recapturing and reconstituting the fairness and justice of God, who privileges not by skin pigmentation or eye color but as a consequence of the indwelling of the Spirit in the life of a believer. The Pentecostal reevaluation of the role of the black body assumes the existence, rather than the fictiveness, of races as divinely created categories and entities.

Pentecostal theory of race is a reworking of received race narratives from the West. The first Europeans to Africa claimed and propagated the notion that Africans lacked religion, and, therefore, were less than human, and lacked any basis for the organization of social, moral, and political life.³⁶ Later, when this disinformation could no longer be sustained, Europeans ascribed to Africans a false, erroneous religion which they called by a variety of derogatory terms, from idolatry and superstition to devil worship. These were “the religions of the lower cultures.”³⁷ Centuries later, a new thesis emerged about Africans’ incurable religiosity. African theologians, especially John S. Mbiti, popularized the thesis of Africans’ extreme, notorious, and incurable religiosity.³⁸ African Pentecostal Christians have appropriated and reshaped the thesis by assigning to it a teleology explaining the purpose and direction of their conversion to Christianity and the consequences of the work of the Holy Spirit on the black body. African religiosity and Christian conversion (re)direct the world to its source being, God. For African Pentecostals, this mission is “the divine mandate of the [African] race.”³⁹

African Pentecostal Christians frequently invoke this mandate to explain why and how they are at the forefront of exporting and expanding their unique understanding and reconstruction of Christianity and their missionary zeal in targeting Western and South Asian societies with their gospel. These targeted societies, it seems, have flourishing economic and technological cultures. In the case of the West, there is the impetus of a waning and declining Christianity. From the pattern of spread, African Pentecostal missionaries are demonstrably reluctant to risk their lives or be exposed to total destruction as a manifestation of obedience to the call of discipleship or the burden of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁰ African Pentecostal missionaries, despite the rhetoric of loving and serving the Lord and doing the bidding of the Spirit, tend to avoid high-tension, high-risk societies (such as Muslim and Hindu enclaves) for low-tension, low-risk environments (such as major cities and nominally Christianized environments).⁴¹ This lopsidedness notwithstanding, the divine mandate of the races is an important strategic reappropriation and subversion of a historical and ongoing denigration of black peoples. While other races have mundane purposes, such as economic and technological, Africans have a cosmic purpose; since they are at the end of the world, they are to initiate the announcement and evangelization of the world before the Parousia, the end of time and history as we know them. The racial destiny of evangelizing the world has two important consequences: (1) it will bring about the greatness (economic, cultural, social, and technological) of the black person⁴²; (2) it will accomplish a cosmic function, the spiritual reordering of the races and of the world.⁴³ It shall fulfill the scriptural prophecy that the last shall be the first (Matt. 20:16).

The African Pentecostal attitude to race is about the processes by which and through which the black race is restored to its divinely appointed position at the end of times. The fallen state of humanity thwarted and distorted the divine vision and order. By accomplishing its spiritual and racial mandate, the black race will restore order and the divine plan. African Pentecostal Christians

challenge racial theories and ideologies by redirecting attention to a *teleos* and proposing a replacement with a spiritualized racialized theology, a theology that seeks to transform humanity and all relations within it. It does not, however, discard and discredit race as a useful category of analysis.

“EXCEEDINGLY RICH IN CHRIST”: AFRICAN PENTECOSTALISM AND CLASS

Socioeconomic class describes the differential levels or distribution of material possession, wealth, power, prestige, respect, and authority in a society. This difference often influences access to other socially valued goods such as education, leisure, and healthcare. Generally, variations in resources and outcomes constitute the basis for socioeconomic inequality and differences in class status.⁴⁴ As a grassroots movement, Pentecostalism was in at the inception of class conscious. Its message of empowerment through the superior working of the Holy Spirit on the bodies of poor and marginalized persons found traction and relevance among the lower or working economic classes. While there are many factors that make Pentecostalism attractive to a variety of social groups, it is particularly appealing to the poor whose faith “helps them endure the harshness of life [and] provides them with a sense of power and purpose. The power of the Holy Spirit gives them the ability to bind demons, to heal the sick, to live at peace with their neighbors, and when necessary to stand up for their rights.”⁴⁵

The power of the invisible Holy Spirit to transform and elevate the human body through speaking in tongues (a form of spirit possession), healing, or generating a new person, is a pivotal feature of Pentecostal Christianity. Among those who claimed to possess this power, a new social cleavage—in other words, class—of ostensibly pure, saved, and spiritually enriched believers emerged. Since the protection and furtherance of economic interest is central to class formation and consciousness, by interacting with capitalist and neoliberal practices Pentecostalism soon developed a class of entrepreneurs of the Spirit, a special group of men and women experienced in the production and distribution of the power of the Spirit and the goods of salvation. The emergence of this new and empowered spiritual class of believers challenged the socioeconomic status quo, sometimes necessitating the mobilization of media, or even legal, instruments to constrain their actions and practices. The history of Pentecostalism and the transformation of practices and organizations demonstrate the power and attraction of a new source of wealth, prestige, control, and capacity to exercise authority over human and non-human resources. This is most evident in the emergence and popularity of so-called prosperity Pentecostalism.

An important, although neglected, aspect of the study of African Pentecostalism is the emergence of an elite Pentecostal class who articulate and defend a common economic interest. As Pentecostalism emerged from the shadow of its pioneers and transformed into a public religion of great social, commercial, and global consequence, its “class structure” has become more discernible. The Pentecostal big wo/man is a member of that elite group of

producers who structure their organization according to a neoliberal culture driven by the profit motive. For many reasons this Pentecostal class has escaped analysis, until recently. The association of the study of class to Marxist theory and the collapse of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s partly accounts for this neglect.⁴⁶ Furthermore, the largely unsubstantiated assumption that there is a democratization of the gifts and power of the Holy Spirit among believers obscures the performance of power within Pentecostalism. This blind spot confuses “the relationship between religious ideas and practices,” between religious form and content.⁴⁷

“Claim[ing] Africa for Christ,” an early Pentecostal impulse in Africa, is more than a religious message of conversion, it is also economic and political in its ramifications.⁴⁸ As the work of Ruth Marshall clearly establishes, African Pentecostalism aims to address and redress the political condition in African postcolonial societies.⁴⁹ According to the perspective of many African Pentecostal leaders, because the postcolonial state was under the control of non-born-again politicians, it was presided over by the devil, who multiplied poverty, suffering, and misery. Born-again Christianity aims to change this situation to give lasting prosperity to believers. A new class of Pentecostal entrepreneur is pushing this message widely and aggressively, claiming that God rewards, with stupendous wealth and material well-being, all those who believe correctly and give generously to the mission works of a given “Pentecostal Big (wo)man of God.”⁵⁰ Pentecostalism is a power religion, and the staging of power is central to African Pentecostalism. The pastor is a powerful wo/man of God with special access to the unseen world because s/he is imbued with unusual charisma to perform as a divine ATM, a dispenser of material and non-material goods of salvation. As a sacred reservoir of power, the pastor is a special institution and an enunciator of a new order of prosperity and well-being. The emphasis on material well-being has introduced a new ranking of believers according to their manifestation, real or perceived, of material wealth. In many African Pentecostal churches the wealthy have specially marked out seats, separated from the seating arrangement for those considered “ordinary members.” It is an institutionalized practice within the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), one of the largest transnational Pentecostal empires in Africa, where:

the ability to secure good seating is often correlated to one’s social standing ... [T]hose with the proper relationships (invited guests and so on) have access to reserved seats near the front of the [staging] arena. Ushers and security officials diligently guard those reserved seats and demand the proper accreditation before granting access. Similarly, those with adequate resources and connections can secure housing in the limited or guest quarters in contrast to those who sleep underneath the roof of the Arena or elsewhere on the open campground. [...] [Q]ualified church members with enough resources can purchase land or houses in one of the church-owned housing estates on the vast campus.⁵¹

As in the RCCG, so it is in many other large, prosperity-oriented Pentecostal organizations.

The popularity and widespread acceptance of Pentecostalism in Africa poses a serious challenge not only for secular governance and its underperforming institutions but also for democratic pluralism and liberal economic enterprise. The challenge partly stems from the Pentecostal critique of state and corporate failure to produce and distribute wealth from the bottom up. Furthermore, because of perceived failures in the economic system, Pentecostal leaders have frequently engineered their organizations and its doctrines to proffer alternative pathways to wealth creation and well-being.⁵² At least in theory, even when reality and practice have significantly deviated from, and eroded, this objective. In practice, Pentecostalism has not consistently represented and responded to the initial working-class ethos and aspiration. Leaders of the movement have embraced and incorporated class ethos and all its symbolism, segregating membership according to a value system that privileges material wealth and conspicuous consumption, and that celebrates distinctions based on economic interest and possession. If Pentecostalism creates wealth at all, this is concentrated in the hand of leaders who justify the appropriation of collective wealth as a sign of God's blessing in their lives. In this way, African Pentecostalism has aligned itself with oppressive class structures and cleavages in Africa.

CONCLUSION

Pentecostal Christianity is rapidly transforming the African social, religious, and economic landscapes; however, this is far from the general expectation of the direction of transformation. Pentecostal theory about the nature and power of the Holy Spirit abrogates distinctions based on ethnicity, race, and riches. African Pentecostal practice, however, incorporates and heightens these distinctions by claiming a separation between the saved and the unsaved, assigning a special role in God's salvific plan for the black race, and claiming that God is rich and poverty is the work of the devil. In the charged words of Enoch Adeboye of the RCCG, "God is not poor at all by any standard ... the closest friends of God were wealthy people [and] God is the God of the rich, and his closest friends are very wealthy."⁵³ While this image of God counters the old understanding of God as a lover of the poor (the *Anawim* of Yahweh⁵⁴)—and as some may argue, promotes an entrepreneurial spirit among believers⁵⁵—at the same time it privileges wealth and possession and elevates them to being a virtue necessary for spiritual salvation, or being in friendship with God. Further, such teaching and practices relating to wealth and economic class have produced a new form of leadership in the African church, the "new big [wo]/man rule," as John F. McCauley aptly describes it.⁵⁶ This African Pentecostal leader incorporates the traditional forms of "big man" with the modern celebrity system of leadership, in which the leader is not a servant but a dominant and often oppressive figure who demands unquestioning obedience, entitlement, privileges, and service. The claim that poverty is the work of the devil demonizes the oppressed and ignores the structural causes of poverty and institutional issues of corruption.

The ideology of individual empowerment by the Holy Spirit, conceived as universally operative and transforming of the believer, has consistently been dressed in ethnic, class, and racial undertones. The paradox of Pentecostalism is the movement's core concern with the "epistemological quest" for the invisible, which plays out in the realm of class, ethnicity, and racial relations.⁵⁷ If one thing made the Azusa Street revival stand apart from previous evangelical revivals of the Holiness movement, it was the coming together of ethnic, class, and race issues. The two personalities at the center of the Pentecostal movement in America, Charles Parham and William Seymour, one white and the other black, represent the coming together of segregated ethnic segments in American society of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The acceptance of the emotionalism and energy of Pentecostal worship, and of the centrality of baptism by the Holy Spirit as a doctrinal development from previous revivals, all point to the inscribing of West African ethnic religiosity on Pentecostalism. Even in the face of its universal intentions and pretensions, Pentecostalism is, at core, an ethnicized spirituality. Just as the events described in Acts of the Apostles (2:4) were witnessed by peoples of various nationalities, the six-year-long revival (1906–1912) that took place at 312 Azusa Street was an event that drew together many people from various nationalities and countries. As Marne L. Campbell argues, the Azusa Street revival was "a predominantly working-class religious movement [...] led by black preachers and missionaries and which attracted a multi-racial, multi-ethnic following."⁵⁸

The initial dismissal and opprobrium of the movement were partly because of its subversive potentialities in terms of ethnic and racial relationships, as well as working-class leadership and adherents. A movement that claimed the empowerment of the Spirit and espoused practices assumed to have the capacity to undermine elite religious establishment and culture was rightly thought, even feared, to be Babel. Similarly, in many parts of Africa, the Pentecostal movement emerged and was organized as an urban, working-class movement, addressing the mundane and spiritual concerns of members of the working class (sometimes the working poor), a feature that provided a strong impetus for its attraction and spread especially among the very poor and the downtrodden. The movement's emergence and concentration in cities and peri-urban centers was partly because of its ties with the working-class sector of urban dwellers. In Africa, Pentecostal ethnicity, that is, the way Pentecostal spirituality is attractive to specific ethnic nationalities, has become a powerful tool of political, social, and economic power.

Africa is, in material terms, the poorest continent in the world. According to some scholars, at the heart of Africa's poverty and "lack of political or social agency" is "a core belief in the power of spirits that can be harnessed by mediums."⁵⁹ African Pentecostal Christians disagree. On the contrary, they believe that their intense religiosity is not a product of culture, but of a predestination intended for a specific eschatological purpose. The black race has a special positive function in God's plan for the end time, as it has been preselected to accomplish global evangelization before the Parousia. The racialization of

Pentecostalism is most evident in the processes of reverse mission whereby Africans, through mission and migration, are reworking the global religious landscape, particularly in the West and in Southeast Asia, by building Pentecostal communities and spreading their version of ethnicized Christianity.⁶⁰ African Pentecostalism is a religion of inversion; it subverts the rhetoric structure of the old order in which Euro-American missionaries privileged Western culture during the missionary enterprises of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the contemporary order, those who inhabit the farthest point on earth, and whose cultures did not originally have the practice of religious conversion, are bearers of the gospel message to the wealthy societies of the West. Rather than abrogate race and special duties according to “racial endowments,” African Pentecostalism appropriates race and imbricates it new forms of biopower.

NOTES

1. Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, *Tolerance and Tension: Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Washington: Pew Research Center, 2010), i.
2. Douglas Jacobsen, *The World's Christians: Who they are, Where they are, How they got there* (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 163.
3. This statement is an adaptation of “religion is racialized, and race is spiritualized” by Michael O. Emerson, Elizabeth Korver-Glenn, and Kiara W. Douds, “Studying Race and Religion: A Critical Assessment,” *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, vol. 1(3), 349.
4. M. Crawford Young, “Nationality, Ethnicity, and Class in Africa: A Retrospective,” *Cahiers d'études africaines*, vol. 26, no. 103 (1986), 421.
5. Marne L. Campbell, “The Newest-Religious Sect has started in Los Angeles’: Race, Class, Ethnicity, and the Origins of the Pentecostal Movement, 1906–1913,” *The Journal of African American History*, vol. 95, no. 1 (winter 2010), 3.
6. Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press): 11–12; David Martin, *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers): 1–7; Joe Creech, “Visions of Glory: The Place of Azusa Street Revival in Pentecostal History,” *Church History*, vol. 65, no. 3 (1996): 405–424; Ian MacRobert, “The Black Roots of Pentecostalism,” in *African American Religion*, ed. Timothy Fulope and Albert Raboteau (New York: 1997), 295–309.
7. J.D.Y. Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000).
8. M. Crawford Young, “Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Class in Africa,” 422.
9. Heidi Østbø Haugen, “African Pentecostal Migrants in China: Marginalisation and the Alternative Geography of a Mission Theology,” *African Studies Review*, 56, Issue 1 (2013), 81–102.
10. Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, (Rochester: Rochester University Press), 5.
11. The myth that “the African is notoriously religious” was popularized by John S. Mbiti although it predated his intervention, John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1969), 1; Jan G. Platvoet and Henk van Rinsum, “Is Africa Incurably Religious?,” *Exchange: Bulletin of Third World Christian Literature*, vol. 32, issue 2 (2003), 123–153.

12. D. Bruce MacKay, "Ethnicity," in *Guide to the Study of Religion*, eds. Willi Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon (London: Cassell, 2000), 98–99.
13. David Chidester, *Empire of Religion: Imperialism and Comparative Religion* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014), 88; also, *The Savage Systems: Colonialism and Comparative Religion in Southern Africa* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town, 1992), 153.
14. Acts of the Apostles 10:34 "Then Peter addressed them, 'I now really understand', he said, 'that God has no favourites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him'." This idea is also found in the letters of Paul (e.g., Romans 2:11: "There is no favouritism with God").
15. Amos Yong, *Hospitality and the Other: Pentecostal Christian Practices, and the Neighbor* (MaryKnoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2008); Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fire*, 17 f.
16. Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, p. xii; Asonzeh Ukah, *A New Paradigm of Pentecostal Power: The Redeemed Christian Church of God in Nigeria* (New Jersey: Africa World Press), 199–207.
17. M. Crawford Young, "Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Class in Africa," 444.
18. Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, xx; J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gydu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity: Interpretations from an African Context* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2013), 1; Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 29.
19. Simeon Afolabi, *Repositioning the Church* (Lagos: Amen Media Ventures, 2006), 89.
20. David Chidester, *Christianity: A Global History* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2000), 253.
21. Ogbu U. Kalu, "The Big Man of the Big God: Popular Culture, Media, and the Marketability of Religion", *New Testament Review*, vol. 20, no. 2 (May 2007), 15–26; Asonzeh Ukah, "Roadside Pentecostalism: Religious Advertising in Nigeria and the Marketing of Charisma", *Critical Interventions: Journal of African Art History and Visual Culture*, vol. 48, nos. 3 & 4 (2008), 128–131.
22. David M. Goldenberg, *The Curse of Ham: Race ad Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).
23. Thomas Schirrmacher, *Racism* (Bonn: Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft, 2012), 11.
24. *Ibid.*, 12.
25. Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 253.
26. Oludamini Ogunnaiké, "From Heathen to Sub-Human: A Genealogy of the Influence of the Decline of Religion on the Rise of Modern Racism", *De Gruyter Open Theology*, issue 2 (2016), 785–803.
27. Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 226.
28. Helen Ukpabio, *Freedom Pact* (Calabar: King View Publications, 2009), p. 79 f.
29. On David Oyedepo and Daniel Olukoya, see Paul Gifford "Unity and Diversity within Africa Pentecostalism: Comparison of the Christianities of Daniel Olukoya and David Oyedepo," in Martin Lindhardt (ed.), *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in Postcolonial Societies* (Leiden: Brill, 2015): 115–135.
30. Enoch Adeboye, *The Excellent Christian* (Lagos: CRM, 1993), 31; *The Making of Divine Champions* (Lagos: CRM, 1998), 37.
31. Max Weber's argument that economic rationality emerged in the West through the Calvinist puritan group who applied religious ideas to economic behavior

- and practice is highly contested. Indeed, it argues that the wealth of the West could be traced to economic rationality rather than the exploitation of other peoples, a point that ignores the history of Western atrocities against other peoples around the world. See: *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, revised 1920 edition, translated & introduced by Stephen Kalberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press [1920], 2011); Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty* (New York: Crown Business, 2012).
32. M. Crawford Young, "Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Class in Africa," 451.
 33. David M. Goldenberg, *The Curse of Ham*, 24–25.
 34. *Ibid.*, 25.
 35. Jean and John L. Comaroff, "The Colonization of Consciousness in South Africa," *Economy and Society*, vol. 18, no. 3 (1989): 267–296.
 36. David Chidester, *Savage Systems*, 11–20.
 37. David Chidester, *Empire of Religion*: p. 36. On the derogatory names European writers and scholars called African religions, see Bolaji E. Idowu, *African Religion: A Definition* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1973, 108–134).
 38. John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann, 1969), 1. For a sustained debate surrounding Mbiti's assertion, see: Jan Platvoet and Henk van Rissum "Is Africa Incurably Religious? Confessing and Contesting an Invention," *Exchange*, vol. 32, issue 2 (2003): 123–153; Kehinde Olabimtan, "Is Africa Incurably Religious? II: A Response to Jan Platvoet & Henk van Rissum," *Exchange*, vol. 32, issue 4: (2003): 322–339; Jan Platvoet and Henk van Rissum, "Is Africa Incurably Religious? III: A Reply to a Rhetorical Response," *Exchange*, vol. 37, issue 2 (2008): 156–173.
 39. Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 253.
 40. Frieder Ludwig and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu (eds) *African Christian Presence in the West: New Immigrant Congregations and Transnational Networks in North America and Europe* (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 2011); Anna D. Quaas, *Transnationale Pfingstkirchen: Christ Apostolic Church und Redeemed Christian Church of God* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Otto Lembeck, 2011).
 41. Asonzeh Ukah, "Re-Imagining the Religious Fields: The Rhetoric of Nigerian Pentecostal Pastors in South Africa," in: Magnus Echtler and Asonzeh Ukah (eds), *Bourdieu in Africa: Exploring the Dynamics of Religious Fields* (Leiden: Brill, 2016): 70–95.
 42. The growth in Pentecostal tourism engineered by miracle entrepreneurs who attract large pools of miracle seekers to parts of Africa, mainly Lagos in Nigeria, is sometimes cited as a manifestation of the importance of Africa's growing Pentecostal power and culture.
 43. Ukah, *A New Paradigm of Pentecostal Power*, 209; 349.
 44. Max Weber, in his thesis on Protestant ethics argues that "class" as an economic category was "entirely absent outside the modern West. Indeed, it could not appear outside the West precisely because a rational organisation of *free labor* in *industrial enterprises* was lacking" (emphasis in original); see: Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism*, 243. Weber's ideas in this respect are contestable since traditional African societies developed their own categories and specializations which gave rise to distinctive economic classes; (see: J.D.Y Peel, *Christianity, Islam and Orisa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction* (California: University of California Press, 2016), 76–78.

45. Douglas Jacobsen, *The World's Christians*, 51.
46. See Ebenezer Obadare "Pentecostal Presidency? The Lagos-Ibadan 'Theocratic Class' & the Muslim 'Other'," *Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 33, no. 110 (2006), 666.
47. Martin Riesebrodt, *The Promise of Salvation: A Theory of Religion*, translated by Steven Rendall (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 80.
48. Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 151.
49. Ruth Marshall, *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 3.
50. See Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 113–114.
51. Adedamola Olusegun Osinulu, "City on Edge: Constructing Efficacious Pentecostal Sites in Lagos," PhD. Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles (2011), 112–114; also see Ukah, A New Paradigm of Pentecostal Power, 189, 243.
52. Nimi Wariboko, "Pentecostal Paradigms of national Economic Prosperity in Africa," in Katherine Attanasi and Amos Yong (eds), *Pentecostalism and Prosperity: The Socio-Economics of the Global Charismatic Movement* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 35–59.
53. Enoch Adeboye, *How to Turn your Austerity to Prosperity* (Lagos: CRM Books, 1989), 2–3.
54. In the Bible, the *Anawim* (literally: those who are bowed down) designate the very poor (marginalized, oppressed, of low status and powerless in every sense of the word) who depended on Yahweh for everything they owned, for their salvation, and who will inherit the earth as a result (see, for example, Ps. 37: 3, 9, 11; Lk. 1: 53; Mtt 5:3).
55. See Sanya Ojo, "African Pentecostalism as Entrepreneurial Space," *Journal of Enterprising Community: People and Places in the Global Economy*, vol. 9, no. 3(2015): 233–252.
56. John F. McCauley, "Africa's New Big Man Rule? Pentecostalism and Patronage in Ghana," *African Affairs*, 112/446: 1–21.
57. Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, xiii.
58. Marne L. Campbell, "The Newest Religious Sect," 3.
59. Richard Dowden, *Africa: Altered States, Ordinary Miracles* (London: Portobello Books Ltd., 2008), 3. Also, Martin Meredith, *The State of Africa: A History of the Continent since Independence*, revised edition (Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2011).
60. Jehu J. Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom: Globalization, African Migration, and the Transformation of the West* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2008), 207f.

PART III

Pentecostalism and/as Politics in Africa

Pentecostalism, Political Philosophy, and the Political in Africa

Adeshina Afolayan

No account of any movement is complete that does not take account of the ideas, emotions and even fantasies of its leaders ... in short, of the *idée forces*.

—J. Ayo Langley¹

I believe that the church in Nigeria is one of the greatest problems we have ... We Christians like to judge, condemn and point fingers at the politicians. In some cases some churches are worse and some of the practices in churches might be worse than what the politicians do.

—Pastor Sunday Adelaja, Ukraine²

INTRODUCTION

Let me begin with a statement of purpose, and then some caveats. This study is a critical contribution to an existing matrix for reflections about a Pentecostal political philosophy in Africa. It sets out to outline the nature of politics and especially politics in Africa, and how Pentecostalism modifies and is modified by the nature of the political. As such, it is a tentative exploration that is meant to complement existing studies on the political theology of Pentecostalism on the continent. Now to the caveats. First, this is essentially a conceptual contribution in the sense that it examines the *nature* of Pentecostalism and of politics for the purpose of outlining possible points of inflections, interactions, and interchanges. Second, it is a conceptual exploration that is meant to contribute to, and be modulated by, the empirical studies of Pentecostal practices across

A. Afolayan (✉)
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

the continent. Third, the concept of “Africa” as used in the title seems methodologically suspect. This is because the conceptual analysis in this chapter moves from a specific Pentecostal configuration in Nigeria outward to general conceptual assumptions about Pentecostal practices on the continent. There is a justification for this. Pentecostalism has one of its most vibrant manifestations firmly established and rooted in Nigeria, and Nigeria’s postcolonial political economy represents, to a very large extent, a template for understanding political and socioeconomic dynamics in other African countries.

The chapter therefore develops a preliminary outline of a Pentecostal political philosophy circumscribed by four dynamics of African Pentecostalism. First is the socioeconomic circumstance of postcolonial suffering and trauma which encroaches on the Pentecostals’ power of being (to use a Tillichian phrase), and which in turn generates a theology of worldliness and materiality. Second, African Pentecostalism is caught in the understanding of the political and political exchanges in Africa which the African state modulates. In Africa, that is, Pentecostalism lives and thrives in the shadow of the rogue African state against which it struggles and with which it is also mostly complicit. Third, and as a corollary, African Pentecostalism can only be understood as a practice mediated by its leadership and by pastoral power. The leadership’s mediation of political exchanges requires a theology of complicity and duplicity, deriving from the state–society relationship, which determines the Pentecostals’ mode of reacting to political events and dynamics. Fourth, and as a further corollary, the idea of pastoral power mediates the tension in which African Pentecostalism is caught, between the care of the soul and the care for external material things.

ON POLITICS AND PENTECOSTAL PHILOSOPHY

The emergence of the Pentecostal movement, especially in Latin America and Africa, has a distinctly political and socioeconomic undertone. In other words, the traction that Pentecostalism has gained in the lives of tens of millions of people in Africa alone has gone beyond the realm of religious dynamics, or the movements of the Holy Spirit. Its rapid growth and spread has a lot to do with trauma and, by association, the glaring failure of the state apparatuses in Africa. In the absence of an effective and efficient public service to mediate the infrastructural deficit, Africa has become a dark continent of enormous suffering, this deriving, in the first place, from the failure of the African leadership to deliver on their promises of postcolonial reconstruction and empowerment. But because the colonial dynamics was too deeply ingrained, especially in the manners in which it affects the mentality, the economy, the sociocultural and the political structure of African societies, it became a herculean task to found social reconstruction of the ex-colonies on the same structure of colonial exploitation and subjugation that the African nationalist leadership inherited.

Suffering, by its very nature, calls for the political transformation of existing social formations and dynamics, and the political economy underpinning them. Suffering, that is, generates a need for an alternative vision of political being-

ness, and of a polis founded on justice, egalitarianism, and well-being. Suffering instigates the need to reconfigure hope in a finite and temporal world while waiting for the salvation of the hereafter. For Beardsworth,

Indeed it could be argued that the ways in which the object of human thought and the end of human action are displaced from the infinite to the finite 'constitute' the field of modernity as such. It is these displacements that allow for the modern understanding of the "political" as *an active process of self-transformation*. In doing so these displacements cannot fail, therefore, to transform the relation between the infinite and the finite since this relation determines *what* is human, *where* the human lies and *when* the human is 'truly' human.³

Pentecostalism therefore stands as a mediation of the infinite and the finite, especially with regards to suffering, temporality, and hope. In *Political Spiritualities*, Ruth Marshall speaks to the relationship between religion and political action. If suffering denotes the yawning gap between present realities and the expectations of goodness, then religion intervenes as a means of combating human failures through a relocation of the locus of hope as well as a combative ontology founded on the reinterpretation of suffering. This is the very point that brings the religious and the political together in Africa:

Pastor Ojewale speaks of power and struggle, of revolution, of coming battle, of militancy and strategy, of raising an army to hasten the changes required not only at the level of "everyday, natural realities of our personal lives" but also the "political, religious, economic and social systems." Invisible powers, heavenly visitations, unceasing prayers, prophecies, spiritual visions: we can see that this is no regular army, no ordinary battle. But, while the language of Ojewale's call appears eminently political, we find it difficult to reconcile these invisible and ephemeral forces with more classical political forms of representation and action. Indeed, religious belief is not reducible to political militancy or ideology. And yet, taken in all their irreducibility, the forces of faith that have driven and continue to drive this movement contribute as such, rather than by default, to the historical conditions in which the complex field of political practice and representation is produced.⁴

Within the traumatic context created by postcolonial suffering, religion engages the failure of politics to generate existential meaningfulness for Africans. One needs the power of God to take back all that the devil has taken in terms of God's promises. One needs a spiritual intervention to actualize the political dynamics that will ensure socioeconomic transformation. This Pentecostal religious intervention is nothing short of a revolution that affects the constitution of the self as well as of the society and of government.

Being "born again" translates therefore into a new ontological consciousness of being-in-the-world. On the one hand, the "born again" Pentecostals are prepared by conversion for a new kingdom which is not of this world. This otherworldly ontology demands some specific theological requirements, especially righteousness and holiness. Pentecostals, in other words, are in the world

but are not of the world. On the other hand, they are still in the world all the same, and hence are partakers of the trauma of existence. As *dasein*, a Pentecostal Christian is “taken in by its world.”⁵ Pentecostals are brutally immersed in the world and all its vicissitudes. Like all humans, they are equally “born unto troubles as the sparks fly upward,” to quote the fundamental existential characterization of humanity in the Book of Job. As *dasein*, the Pentecostal is grounded in what Heidegger calls the “everydayness” of existence. The essence of a Pentecostal Christian must therefore be interpreted existentially.⁶

The existential-ontological being of the Pentecostals in Africa is even more precarious. Suffering generates a peculiar rationality, which insists on a political agency that calls for change and the transformation of government in a way that makes life more meaningful in this world. Being born again in this context of trauma also translates into a contestation for power. Or, to put it more appropriately, it represents a contestation for an alternative vision of society. To use a Geertzian framework, religion often intersects with common sense, which allows the people, and Pentecostals in this context, to deal meaningfully with the world and all its twists and turns. Thus, what is called the “religious perspective” constitutes an existential-ontological response to trauma, uncertainty, and suffering; an attempt to make errant cultural and socioeconomic phenomena fit metaphysically into the framework of an accepted worldview.⁷ We can say, therefore, that the Pentecostal philosophy is founded on an *imaginary*, à la Taylor, as an explicit perception of what society should be.

How does this existential-ontological perspective square with the revolutionary desire to rethink government? In other words, how do we understand the Pentecostal unraveling of the task of political philosophy in Africa? How does the idea of hope generated by the new birth translate into a rigorous political statement that inscribes Africa’s political cultures and practices? In this sense, Pentecostalism is not just a bundle of elite political influence like *Mami Wata* or the Ancient Mystical Order Rosae Crucis (AMORC).⁸ On the contrary, Pentecostalism challenges the basis and the responsibility of government.

RAISON D’ÉTAT AND THE BIRTH OF THE STATE

In *Political Spiritualities*, Marshall gives us an analytic framework that allows us to think across the putative divide of the religious and the political. The bigger point to make is that the social science orthodox that strains at undermining the religious, especially in the matrix of the political, fails to make allowance for the fact that the secular is inherently religious; or for the argument that grounds the religious nature of the modern state itself (contrary to the Enlightenment understanding of secularity). In Rousseau, we find a first firm linkage between the religious and the political. His analysis of historical facts from ancient Greece to modern Europe led him to the conclusion that “no state was ever founded without being based on religion.”⁹ The best religious affiliation of the state is what he calls “the religion of the citizen,” which is good and effective because

it combines divine worship with love of law, and by making the citizens' country the object of their worship, teaches them that to serve the state is to serve its guardian deity. It is a kind of theocracy, under which there can be no other pontiff but the ruler, and no other priests but the officers of government. In this way dying for one's country is to achieve martyrdom; to violate a law is to commit an impiety; and to sentence a guilty man to public execration is to abandon him to the wrath of the gods: *Sacer estod*, "May you be accursed".¹⁰

In Rousseau's assessment, therefore, the state is good, except when it is founded on errors and lies and becomes tyrannical and intolerant. Rousseau is emphatic, however, that Christianity cannot constitute the basis of a state because it is essentially opposed to the "social spirit": "so far from giving to the citizens, in their hearts, an attachment for the state, it detaches them from the state, as from everything else on earth."¹¹

With Derrida, we have a more insistent understanding of the religious nature of the state. While for Rousseau a state's religious foundation is based not on the management of religious dogmas, but rather on "a purely civil profession of faith" as "sentiments of sociability,"¹² Derrida speaks of the "irreducibility of the religious model in the construction of the concept of ideology."¹³ The presumption that what we call the "secular" state is already inherently religious undermines the binary relationship between the secular and the religious. On the contrary, the presumption speaks to the critical point that the secular and the religious implicate each other significantly in ways that not only undermine the orthodox of replacement found in the Enlightenment understanding of secularity, but also clarify our understanding of the modern state and its acts for or against religious faiths. Hamner provides four possible views about the relationship between the secular and the religious:

(1) in modern and postmodern secularization, the religious is not absorbed by the secular, but *reorganized* through it, so that the secular may actually serve as evidence of the religious; (2) *secularism* is a modern (and postmodern) fundamentalist ideology that emerges from *within* religion, not outside it; (3) a central characteristic of the modern and postmodern religious is the paradoxical attempt to *control the transcendent by immersing the self in virtual communion with the spectacular*, whether the setting is the internet, the cinema, a theme park, or a megachurch; and (4) our religious-secular binary can only be fleshed out when we recognize how it erases both the distinction between and the interpenetration of faith and knowledge.¹⁴

The critical issue in this regard is the relationship of the state to the religious. If the secular state is inherently religious, according to Derrida, then in modernity it would seem that the state everywhere doubles back on its founding principle, as it were, to hypocritically inflict violence on religious practices, especially those that challenge its capacity to meaningfully order the lives of its citizens. It is in this sense that Derrida also considers all sovereign states as rogue states that are instituted in conspiracy. The conspiratorial act

consists in the artificiality of the state; there is nothing natural about the state coming into existence. Rather, its existence was the result of a conjuring act. Derrida's lectures on zoopolitics, and especially on the relationship between the figure of the wolf and the idea of sovereignty, outline the coming into existence of the rogue state as a beast that preys on its own citizens. The wolf allegorizes "hunting and warfare, prey and predation."¹⁵ In a critical deconstruction of the French phrase *pas de loup* ("stealthy as a wolf"), Derrida delivers the political underpinning of the wolf as a sovereign figure that is absent but more powerful in its very absence. For him, "this absence bespeaks at the same time power, resource, force, cunning, ruse of war, stratagem or strategy, operation of mastery. The wolf is all the stronger, the meaning of its power is all the more terrorizing, armed, threatening, virtually predatory ... [Thus] The strength of the wolf is all the stronger, sovereign even, is all the more all-conquering [*a raison de tout*] for the fact that the wolf is not there."¹⁶ As such, the wolf becomes insensible in two senses: "(*insensible* because one neither sees nor hears it coming, because it is invisible and inaudible, and therefore nonsensible, but also insensible because it is all the crueller for this, impassive, indifferent to the suffering of its virtual victims)."¹⁷ In this sense, we arrive at the fundamental saying that "man is a wolf to man" (*homo homini lupus*). Thus, from the presumption that the secular state is inherently religious, we equally arrive at another presumption, that "the animal is already political."¹⁸ The beast becomes the sovereign.

This figure of the wolf as a representation of sovereignty pronounces a significant historical moment in Europe, within which the essence of politics was transformed almost irrevocably. This transformation of the language of politics from politics as the acts of good government to politics as the reason of state occurred in Europe between the end of the sixteenth century and the commencement of the seventeenth century. And its essence is that it turned the state into a sovereign that is strong enough to devour those it commands. Maurizio Viroli presents a critical explanation of the historical events that led to what he calls the revolution of the language of politics. According to him, "Not only did the meaning and the range of the application of the concept of 'politics' change, but also the ranking of political science, the role of political education and the value of political liberty."¹⁹ The revolution consisted in the demotion of the art of politics: "politics no longer meant the art of ruling a republic according to justice and reason [...] but instead had come to mean reason of state—in the sense of the knowledge of the means of preserving domination over a people."²⁰

The concept of *reason* does not have the same usage in both definitions. In one, reason refers to the universal principles that enable good government and the preservation of the republic according to the dictates of the common good. In the other, reason is understood in the instrumental sense as the stratagems that enable the preservation of the state through the exercise of power, coercion, and control. With the help of such political philosophers as Niccolò Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes, the language of politics was progressively

pushed into the realm of realism that justifies political action the way it is done. This understanding of the content of the two ideologies of politics should definitely not be taken as two incommensurable languages. Rather, there are significant compatibilities, as should be expected. Thus, ruling the republic must sometimes demand the use of power and coercion—creating unjust laws, treating the citizens unjustly, transforming public institutions into private fiefdoms, waging unjust wars—which Machiavelli eloquently describes in *The Prince*. Thus, politics as the art of good government became predominant when the wolf arrived as the lord sovereign. By the time Louis XIV of France uttered the famous “L’état c’est moi” in the seventeenth century, the conception of politics as *raison d’état* had already triumphed.

POSTCOLONIALISM AND THE PENTECOSTAL SOCIAL IMAGINARY

The colonial state signifies the most eloquent and brutal manifestation of the transformation of the language of politics away from good governance to the reason of state, especially in Africa. According to Mbembe, colonialism instituted specific relations of subjection called the *commandement*. The commandement is a unique “imaginary of state sovereignty.”²¹ This state sovereignty, for Mbembe, has two major features. The first is that “it combined weakness of, and inflation of, the notion of right: weakness of right in that, in the relations of power and authority, the colonial model was, in both theory and practice, the exact opposite of the liberal model of debate and discussion; inflation of right in that, except when deployed in the form of arbitrariness and the right of conquest, the very concept of right often stood revealed as a void.”²² The second feature is that colonial sovereignty was established on violence of three sorts.

The first was the founding violence. This is what underpinned not only the right of conquest but all the prerogatives flowing from that right. Thus it played an instituting role, in at least two ways. First, it helped to create the space over which it was exercised; one might say that it presupposed its own existence. Second, it regarded itself as the sole power to judge its laws—whence its one-sidedness, especially as, to adopt Hegel’s formulation, its supreme right was (by its capacity to assume the act of destroying) simultaneously the supreme denial of right. A second sort of violence was produced before and after, or as part and parcel of, the conquest, and had to do with legitimation. Its function was ... to provide self-interpreting language and models for the colonial order, to give this order meaning, to justify its necessity and universalizing mission—in short, to help produce an imaginary capacity converting the founding violence into authorizing authority. The third form of violence was designed to ensure this authority’s maintenance, spread, and permanence. Falling well short of what is properly called “war,” it recurred again and again in the most banal and ordinary situations. It then crystallized, through a gradual accumulation of numerous acts and rituals—in short, played so important a role in everyday life that it ended up constituting the central cultural *imaginary* that the state shared with society, and thus had an authenticating and reiterating function.²³

Apart from these two, the *commandement* is equally a regime of exception in its departure from a single common law; it is a regime of privileges and immunities; in the *commandement* there is a very thin line between ruling and civilizing; and lastly, the *commandement* is defined by its circularity—"The institutions with which it equipped itself, the procedures that it invented, the techniques that it employed, and the knowledge on which it rested were not deployed to attain any particular public good. Their primary purpose was absolute submission."²⁴

The *commandement* also instituted a tight continuum "of infinite permutations between what was just and what unjust, between right and not-right."²⁵ And furthermore, the colonial state equally doubled back on its zoopolitical origin by conceiving of the natives in a prototypical animal image. This doubling back of colonial sovereignty functions in terms of the reconfiguration of the self-other relations; in terms, that is, of the human-monster relationship. Thus, if the former is individuated by capacities and the latter by mere drives, then that fact alone justifies the latter's domination through violence.²⁶ Thus, Mbembe argues, "At the heart of that relationship, the colonized could only be envisaged as the property and *thing* of power. He/she was a tool subordinated to the one who fashioned, and could now use and alter, him/her at will. As such, he/she belonged to the *sphere of objects*."²⁷

In essence, the *commandement* represented a regime of violence and force that expropriated the colonies and undermined the being of the natives. When the state apparatuses that propped colonization eventually passed into the hands of the all-too-eager African nationalists, it soon became obvious that they would be forced to maintain the architecture of state violence that the *commandement* instituted. Thus, after independence, the African nationalists were faced with the solid but debilitating sociopolitical and economic excrescence that ensures the preservation of the African state, and the national question this would eventually generate would become more fundamental than the social reconstruction of the institutions of government, or the social question. For most African states, the major issue since independence has been the thorny challenge of national integration of unruly and unyielding diversity. While the national question may not necessarily exclude answering the social question, the enormity of the infrastructural deficit in most African states attests to the failure of social empowerment which constitutes the core of meaningfulness in the lives of Africans. It is against this background of a *raison d'état* that the Pentecostal social imaginary could be understood.

The trauma of postcolonial existence in Africa envelops everybody, except those who have a deep connection to the machinery of state founded on Africa's extractive economies. Pentecostal Christians are not left out of the existential struggles to make sense of existence and being, especially in the light of God's promises for those who walk upright. For instance, according to Marshall, the idea of the Pentecostal revival "as a mode of practice that will solve the problems of the age, as a way of overcoming the ordeal of everyday life, and as a means for personal redemption and national regeneration" only

came about at a particular point in the postcolonial crisis of government and governance in Nigeria.²⁸ It was at this juncture that Pentecostal Christianity made its own entry into Nigeria's political space in a militant manner that lent spiritual explanation to the need to redistribute the national cake. The Kingdom of God was ready to take what belongs to it by force. Pentecostalism forcefully enters into a plurality of interests and of citizenship,

each with its own internal moral economy, invented history, symbolic form, model of power and authority, and institutional expression, all interacting in the context of an authoritarian power whose control over public goods and accumulation is constantly under the pressure of their claims and whose legitimacy is challenged by their alternate visions.²⁹

Thus, by this very act of reimagining itself as a legitimate part of a plural whole, Pentecostal Christianity in Africa effectively politicizes the ontology of the Christian body in relation to the body politic. Ogbu Kalu identifies four interlocking axes of Pentecostal political engagement in Africa:

1. rebuilding the individual, thus bestowing the power to be truly human;
2. a predominantly covert form of social activism, attacking socio-political and moral structures;
3. an increasing assertion for the rule of saints and the politics of engagement; and
4. building the new Israel by empowering communities to participate in the foretaste of God's reign. It thus breaks the dichotomy between the various categories—individual/society, private/public—using the resources of the gospel to weave a multifaceted and holistic response to the human predicament in the African ecosystem.³⁰

Nimi Wariboko provides a significantly nuanced philosophical exploration of this political act that relates the Pentecostal body to the African body politic in his analysis of Nigerian Pentecostalism. He sets out to provide an approach to understanding Pentecostalism, especially in Nigeria, based on an epistemological matrix that explains, in an ingenious way, "Pentecostal religious life; Pentecostals' understanding of postcoloniality, interpretation of politics, and the possibility of founding stable forms of sovereignty and political community..."³¹ For him, the religious production of knowledge under what he calls the "spell of the invisible" gives us a critical insight into how the Pentecostal body engages the body politic in Nigeria. Wariboko asks: "How does a society's understanding of human bodies interface with its understanding of the political, the way the political works, and how persons approach the political either to acquire the power of domination or to transform it for the common good?"³² This question is most significant, especially when linked to a continental understanding of Pentecostalism in Africa, because it provides a clear context within which Pentecostalism performs itself as a postcolonial political dynamics that is not just otherworldly but deeply immersed in the here and now.

The need to unravel the “body question,” for Wariboko, commences first from the understanding that the body is political, especially when it is acted upon by Pentecostal spirituality. In other words,

Pentecostal spirituality is a way of acting on bodies, of effecting *natality*, enacting *actions*, initiating something new in communities and also of *normalizing* them. Besides, the moral predicates and practices by which the subject maintains his or her Pentecostal identity and the “interior frontiers” of the social body are actuated by *disciplinary normalization* and protocols of the body (politic).³³

Thus, ultimately, when Pentecostal spirituality acts on the body it eventuates in some forms of communal consequences with political undertones. For Pentecostals, the body is some kind of paradox. On the one hand, it is considered to be the concrete manifestation of sinfulness; and on the other, it is the sole recipient of spiritual knowledge and goodness. Thus, under the spirit’s prompting, the body is continually subjected to the processes of normalization. And this determination to make the body good also coincides with the desires of the body politic to create a law-abiding social body. The Pentecostal body and the body politic both meet at the point of power, according to Wariboko. Politics at both the spiritual and the political level translates therefore into a power play to control bodies. Following Elizabeth Grosz, Wariboko argues that “power operates directly on ‘bodies, behaviors, and pleasures, extracting from them information necessary for the emergence of knowledges’ that constitute the mechanism of governance, control, and domination.”³⁴

And so, because bodies interact with one another and weigh against one another, Pentecostals’ understanding of politics and its effects on the bodies creates a social imaginary that is founded on how the Pentecostal bodies, as exteriorized spirits, can facilitate the transformational power of politics. Because, as Wariboko puts it, the existential predicament of being is always at stake in the issue of politics and the political, it becomes significant that Pentecostalism in Africa signifies a social imaginary around which political engagement could be facilitated, especially within the charged context of plurality. A social imaginary, for Charles Taylor, is “what enables, through making sense of, the practices of a society.”³⁵ The social imaginary, in other words, is “the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations”³⁶ It is an existentially engaging mode of being that motivates activities and actions.

Pentecostalism in Africa represents a certain kind of social imaginary, an entire ensemble of philosophies and strategies, which enables the Pentecostals to make existential sense of the postcolonial conditions in Africa. My central thesis is that given the centrality of the rogue state in Africa, and the evolution of what we can call the theology of corruption, the implicit hope generated by the Pentecostal social imaginary seems compromised. This is essentially because

a political engagement with the African state not only undermines the sense of a distinct moral–spiritual dynamics which Pentecostalism wields, but also enables the Pentecostals to develop theological explanations that allow the spiritual to interact freely with the material.

PENTECOSTAL POLITICAL REGIME? POLITICAL AUTHORITY AND MORAL IMPERATIVES

If political philosophy is described as a normative inquiry into the possibility of good government, then we can argue that the Pentecostal social imaginary coalesces around the vision of birthing a city of God on earth that answer the existential questions of Christians. Since its arrival on the African scene, Pentecostalism has achieved two significant feats. First, there is a substantial and substantive displacement of development from the state to the church. The socially active Pentecostal paradigm ensures that development projects—schools, water, electricity, healthcare, and so on—are commissioned in the context of government’s conspicuous absence from people’s lives. Second, there is a clear and increasing consciousness of politics and the political arising from (a) the minimal essence of politics as the exercise of power over a community of people—in this case, a community of Pentecostals—by a small group of leaders; (b) a median sense of exercising power as a philanthropic social framework that transforms people’s lives; and (c) the maximal sense of directly influencing the political decisions and affairs of the state.

But it is clear that all these do not really transform into a legitimate capacity to challenge the *ancien régime* as a normative imperative arising from a morally stable political community. In what sense, therefore, can Pentecostalism and Pentecostal practices in Africa be legitimately interpreted and interrogated as a contribution to an unfolding political philosophy? According to Miller, political philosophy is an “investigation into the nature, causes, and effects of good and bad government.”³⁷ Government in this sense is broader than the set of people that constitute political authority at any particular point in time, and the state as a particular ensemble of political institutions—the law enforcement, parliaments, courts, armed forces, cabinet, and so on—through which political authority is exercised. Government in this sense refers to “the whole body of rules, practices and institutions under whose guidance we live together in societies.”³⁸ If political philosophy is therefore concerned with the difference between a good and a bad government, one essential perspective is to outline how Pentecostalism in Africa can enable the constitution of the best form of government that will instigate spiritual, physical, and material well-being.

To grasp the implication of this question further, there is a need to unravel several points. First, the formation of either a good or a bad government is a joint effort that requires the leadership and the followership. In other words, if either type of government is in existence, then it takes the effort or the lack of it from both critical components. Two, the effects of good or bad government

affect people's lives at the spiritual, physical, and material levels. There is a cogent point to be made here: government is essentially a spiritual and social contract that is directed towards the care and well-being of the soul of the citizens. This draws implicitly on the religious foundation of the state. And thus it becomes a conscious endeavor to which all knowledge, spiritual and political, is directed. Third, the spiritual and the political therefore participate in the founding of either the good or the bad government. Since political philosophy is concerned with identifying the type of government that will facilitate the care and well-being of the soul, then it becomes pertinent that all hands must be on deck to sustain such a good government when it is achieved. In other words, *all things being equal*, political agents must not act in a manner that will undermine such government.³⁹

Political philosophy on the continent of Africa has to contend not only with the colonial enterprise and its hegemonic political excesses, but also with its postcolonial crippling effects and the valiant intellectual efforts to rethink Africa's political fate around such issues and concepts as the nation-state, development, democracy and democratization, modernization, and sociopolitical order. In this sense, postcolonial African political philosophy is caught in between the national and the social questions mediated by the rogue African state. If the spiritual is political and the political is spiritual, therefore, then to what extent does Pentecostalism contribute to our understanding of the form of government that will make our souls better?

To answer this question, we need to retrace our steps a bit to reconceptualize the moment and the consequences of Pentecostal Christianity's entry into the national political space as a radical and committed participant. It seems simplistic to think that the act of entry was just an act instigated by the necessity of remoralizing the political space in order to transform the individual African state from the city of man into the city of God, or at least to keep one's spiritual purity away from certain contaminations. In *The City of God*, St. Augustine sets himself the task of defending Christianity against the charge of being responsible for the fall of Rome in the hands of the Visigoth invaders who sacked the city in 410, and to redirect the attention of Christian away from the city of Man to the city of God in heaven. Right from the opening statement, Augustine reveals his prejudice for *civitas Dei*:

The glorious city of God is my theme in this work ... I have undertaken its defence against those who prefer their own gods to the Founder of this city,—a city surpassingly glorious, whether we view it as it still lives by faith in this fleeting course of time, and sojourns as a stranger in the midst of the ungodly, or as it shall dwell in the fixed stability of its eternal seat, which it now with patience waits for, expecting until “righteousness shall return unto judgment,” and it obtain, by virtue of its excellence, final victory and perfect peace.⁴⁰

The metaphor of the two cities introduces a sharp separation between this-worldly and otherworldly concerns. Christians are children of the city of God and hence are advised to look up rather than down into worldly pleasures that

are fading away (Rome was a prime and graphic example for Augustine). The implication of this is the irrelevance of earthly politics and political participation. We are in this world but are certainly not of this world. On the contrary, Pentecostalism in Africa adroitly combines this-worldly and otherworldly concerns. Wariboko is right about the centrality of the religious production of knowledge in the understanding of Pentecostalism and its attempt to survive the postcolonial predicament in Africa. For him, the “spell of the invisible,” that is, an access to an invisible realm of knowledge, enables the Pentecostals to transform “*noumenal knowledges* into *phenomenal technologies* of existence.”⁴¹ In other words, through the mining of spiritual data, Pentecostals are able to meander between their faith as “care of the soul” and/or as “care of external things” in the service of existential meaningfulness.

The critical point of inquiry is therefore the move of the Pentecostal self from body to body politic. How does the mediation between the care of the soul and the care for material comfort square with the possibility of African Pentecostalism transforming into a viable political community that normatively challenges the African state? Put simply, can Pentecostalism in Africa become a *political regime*? This question is significant because it would seem that a normative political community, like the one Pentecostalism could constitute, would have the means to challenge the state to, say, adequately answer the social question in a manner that will satisfy the Pentecostals’ care of external things. There are two interesting reactions to this question by two significant scholars of Pentecostalism in Africa, Nimi Wariboko and Ruth Marshall. Both are agreed, for instance, on the methodological need to situate Pentecostalism in Africa within a more nuanced and deeper understanding of politics than has hitherto been the case. Thus, Pentecostalism and politics are not binary concepts that stand across parallel lines in deep opposition to one another. Wariboko affirms, within the context of Nigerian Pentecostalism, that the relationship is a complex matrix of “power, political site, and spiritual presences.”⁴² For Marshall, if we firmly reject the binary model that, for instance, opposes state to society and accepts a model of institutional interaction, then we have a plausible understanding of how different forms of power relations, “crystallized in different sites of ‘government’,” interact and intersect one another incessantly.⁴³

However, both authors came to a radically different conclusion on the possibility of Pentecostalism in Africa becoming a political regime. Space constrains me from repeating the fine points of their arguments. But, not to take sides, let me simply say that I deeply appreciate Marshall’s arguments, especially for their portrayal of the nuanced socioeconomic realism within which Pentecostalism is forced to operate, while Wariboko’s analyses, though overlaid by a unique understanding of Pentecostal epistemology, take spirituality too seriously within a postcolonial context of gross underdevelopment that traumatizes even the spirit as exteriorized body. In what follows, I will attempt to complicate both analyses further in manners that will better focus Marshall’s and Wariboko’s preeminent analyses and arguments. The pertinent question

for me is how the nature of politics in Africa can enable our understanding of Pentecostalism and its growing political consciousness. Can Pentecostalism in African weather the imperatives of the political? These are conceptual question which I hope will help complicate the practice of Pentecostalism in Africa.

The nature of politics is defined by many characters that are not so determinate. First, politics is characterized as essentially *res publica*, a public thing. In other words, what makes for the political has a close relationship with the understanding of the idea and nature of the public. Out of its many definitions,⁴⁴ the public is usually considered to be connected with what the entire community has and holds in common. Public institutions are political because they are concerned with, for instance, the dispensation of justice, the enforcement of social order, the regulation of the economy, national defense, and such other issues that are beneficial to the whole community. By this very fact of its being public, the *res publica* therefore demands that inquiry into political matters be determined according to the demands of public knowledge. This implies that anything public cannot be aligned with a private or mystical mode of cognition. Political knowledge is further mediated by political action. In Arendt's political thought, political action is the very essence of politics. Action, that is, is "specifically *the condition*—not only the *conditio sine qua non*, but the *conditio per quam*—of all political life."⁴⁵ The framework of political action is supplied by public laws and public institutions which permit citizens to participate in debate, deliberation, and the decision-making processes of the political community. For both Aristotle and Arendt, not to actively participate is to forfeit membership of the community.⁴⁶

But what interest does political action serve? This is a loaded question on which the literature on the nature of politics is divided. Between Aristotle and Arendt on the one hand and the pluralists on the other, we have two opposing understandings of politics in the public space. The pluralists conceive politics as a matrix of conflicting interests, preferences, and bargaining. In this account, even the state has a stake in the political space and its scarce resources. Arendt deployed an Aristotelian framework to argue that politics is a realm unto itself, differentiated from economy or the civil society.

How does Pentecostalism in Africa square with this understanding of the nature of politics and the political? First of all, there is no Pentecostal organization in Africa that yet has the capacity, which the medieval Catholic church had, to become a political regime. Being a political regime definitely increases the cogency of the authority to dictate political affairs according to the will of heaven, or to model earthly affairs according to the architecture of the City of God. Yet a political regime comes at a huge cost, the critical diminution of religious or spiritual functions. It seems that Pentecostalism is too otherworldly for such an ambition. We can deploy Arendt's concept of the worldlessness of Christianity as a foil to buttress this point. Arendt considers the Christian community as essentially non-political and unpolitical. And this is because, for her, the principles that hold such a community together—love and charity—possess an inherent worldlessness that denies the transcendence that shapes the space

of the political. For the Greeks, the polis is a space for achieving immortality; “It is what we have in common not only with those who live with us, but also with those who were here before and with those who will come after us.”⁴⁷ On the other hand, however, the Christian principle of charity,

while it is incapable of founding a public realm of its own, is quite adequate to the main Christian principle of worldlessness and is admirably fit to carry a group of essentially worldless people through the world, a group of saints or a group of criminals, provided only it is understood that the world itself is doomed and that every activity in it is undertaken with the proviso *quandiu mundus durat* (“as long as the world lasts”).

The idea of the *corpus*, the body, even in Paul (I Cor. 12: 12–27), was modeled on the relationship that occurs in a family from which a public realm cannot evolve.

Thus, if Pentecostalism in Africa is conceived in the Arendtian sense as an essentially worldless corpus bound together by love and charity, then its obvious aspiration for increased political authority falls down, or we must look for another explanation of Pentecostalism’s politicalness. But first, we need to make a point about Arendt’s excessive valorization of the Greek polis and its idea of the political. The new theology of Pentecostalism as well as its insertion into the postcolonial context of Africa makes for a clearly complex dynamics way beyond the Greek conceptual understanding of the polis. For one, Pentecostalism in Africa is not defined by its worldlessness or otherworldliness. It also has its materialist inclination, or worldliness. It is bound on one side by the care of the soul and on the other by the care of external things, Pentecostals are not of this world but yet they *are* in this world. “This world” is an African context defined by a zero-sum politics, a highly dangerous affair circumscribed by the multiplicity of conflicting interests and desires in search of the power to influence political matters. It is in this highly volatile political realm that Pentecostals desire to intervene in Africa. And, following Wariboko, a significant weapon in their arsenal is the “spell of the invisible,” the harvest of spiritual data from the noumenal world that would enable spot-on political action by, and on behalf, of the faithful.

Does the “spell of the invisible” therefore provide useful information on how Pentecostal political action can help “reconstruct a shattered world of meanings and their accompanying institutional expressions [that could in turn] fashion a political cosmos out of political chaos”?⁴⁸

PENTECOSTALISM AND THE THEOLOGY OF COMPLICITY

If being a political regime is too big an ambition for Pentecostalism in Africa, what other option is available? Being a political community is already rejected by Arendt. But could Pentecostalism be seen, alternatively, as a certain way of reacting in the political space, as *politeia*?⁴⁹ If this suggestion is correct, then

the Pentecostals constitute not just a worldless corpus, but also essentially a pseudo-sovereign that is indistinctly caught between being and becoming political but with a certain way of reacting in the African political domain. But that is not the last word on the matter. As *politeia*, we have the opportunity of reflecting on the implications of Pentecostalism's relationship with the political in Africa. In the rest of the chapter, I will raise several issues that will complicate this way of looking at Pentecostalism in Africa as a political factor whose internal dynamics keep it short of achieving actuality as a political community.

The critical question I begin with is in what sense can the demands of public knowledge be squared with the mystical nature of Pentecostal religious cognition. In the *res publica*, any form of inquiry into political matters is constrained by the epistemic dynamics that limits public knowledge. But Pentecostalism intervenes in the public space based on the spiritual mode of cognition. That makes its first and most significant point of contact with the public incongruous. The form of knowledge promised by Pentecostalism is not public in any sense. Wariboko provides a brilliant theory of Pentecostal epistemology founded on what he calls "the spell of the invisible," conceived "as a strategic project in the context of epistemological insecurity of life in the Nigerian post-colony." It is a kind of knowledge that provides, at a primary level, a "pneumatological assist" to aid Pentecostal flourishing in the world. According to him,

Pentecostal spirituality [constitutes] an attempt to bridge the gap between noumenal and phenomenal subjectivity in such a way that the subject-in-itself becomes directly accessible, noumenally exposed in its naked, unmediated presence for the phenomenal gaze. This is a spirituality that imaginatively synthesizes the subjectivity of engagement and objectivity of existential pressures to perceive present realities as symbols of beings and processes beyond themselves. It creates and nurtures the habit, the disciplined practice, to simultaneously see what is obvious and ordinary and what is not yet and extraordinary. We have in this form of spirituality an empirical realism, which seeks for concrete demonstrations of divine presence and power in signs and miracles, and an abstract religious idealism that sets reality above the concrete, visible world in search for hidden (uncommon) wisdom.⁵⁰

The spell of the invisible is meant to intervene and mediate in the deep spiritual ambivalence, and indeed tension, that characterizes the relationship between the care of the soul and the care for external things; or, in political terms, holding two mutually exclusive citizenships—of heaven and of an African state. I am not sure Wariboko notes the significance of this tension because it seems his analysis possesses an idealistic dimension that outlines how Pentecostalism *appears* to operate and not how it really does, especially within the circumscription imposed by the tough existential predicament inscribed on the lives and spirituality of most Africans. And this is rather surprising because Wariboko seems to place spirituality outside his very nuanced understanding of politics in Africa as a set of complex interactions and interchanges between the "entitative" and "non-entitative" realities of politics. For instance, consider his itemization of the nature of politics within which the Pentecostals operate:

1. Politics is understood both entitatively and nonentitatively. The latter dimension points not only to the magical substratum of culture but also to the very social and historical practices that constitute human beings.
2. Power operates in both juridical and networked modes.
3. Hence resistance to power involves both contesting notions of sovereignty and law and the generation of collective forces to counter the insidious operation of power in microrelations.
4. It is an encounter and struggle between persons, each with his or her own power of being. The encounter is agonistic and determines the *who* of the contestants.⁵¹

But then he goes on to claim that

Spirituality becomes, among other things, a weighing-in against the deadly structures and dynamics of being; it is an agonistic contestation of the concentric contextures and their accompanying powers that generate, structure, and animate human socialities in ways that organize death and dying, the destruction of destinies and hopes, and impose social suffering.⁵²

What seems to be missing in this analysis is a theology of complicity and conviviality which will see spirituality not only as “a weighing-in *against* the deadly structures and dynamics of being,” but also fundamentally as a complex intervention in which even the spiritual itself is modified and modulated by the political in the strenuous attempt to intervene in postcolonial suffering. The very notion of “political spirituality” gestures towards an entangling picture of power relation in African politics. Mbembe gives us the analytic understanding to tackle the deeper implication of the “political spirituality” that we found in Wariboko. From his understanding that the postcolony is essentially an *entanglement*, a period that “encloses multiple *durées* made up of discontinuities, reversals, inertias, and swings that overlay one another, interpenetrate one another, and envelope one another,”⁵³ Mbembe goes on to argue that the postcolony further generates a kind of relationship that transcends the dominant–dominated model (a paradigm within which Wariboko seems to place Pentecostalism’s relationship to the African state). On the contrary, the dominant and the dominated have become circumscribed in mutual enslavement:

postcolonial relationship is not primarily a relationship of resistance or of collaboration but can best be characterized as convivial, a relationship fraught by the fact of the *commandement* and its “subjects” having to share the same living space. Precisely this logic—the necessary familiarity and domesticity in the relationship—explains why there has not been (as might be expected from those so dominated) the resistance or the accommodation, the disengagement or the “refusal to be captured”, the contradiction between overt acts and gestures in public and covert responses “underground” (*sous main*). Instead, this logic has resulted in the mutual “zombification” of both the dominant and those apparently dominated. This zombification means that each has robbed the other of vitality and left both impotent (*impouvoir*).⁵⁴

Wariboko's understanding of spectrality as a defining component of politics in Africa is significant in this regard, but it needs to be pushed beyond where he is willing to deploy it. In fact, it forms the basis of a missing theory of Pentecostal political leadership in Africa. Such a theory will outline the role of the Pentecostal leadership in the antagonistic plurality of the Pentecostal movement which, together with its complicity, essentially undermines Pentecostalism's political agency while not denying it its growing political consciousness.

The postcolonial predicament generates the "spectral presence of physically dead and those living dead wrestling under the weight of socially imposed suffering." And the suffering is, in part, the fault of the "ghostly" African leaders: "The corrupt, rapacious African rulers are the ghostly remains of their former colonial masters, the spooky materialization of a dematerialized presence, the nasty snarl of the vanished Cheshire cat, and the surreal sucking sound of disembodied colossal foreign vampires. African elites are also eating what is left in the teeth (or the droppings) of their old and new masters."⁵⁵ Following this analysis, I think it would be disingenuous if we did not acknowledge the ghostliness of the Pentecostal leadership too and the mediatory role it plays between the Pentecostals and the state in Africa. One direction, following Foucault, is to argue that pastoral power and political power both produce docile bodies; bodies that, on the one hand, depend on the Pentecostal leadership for any kind of action (including the political), and bodies that are disciplined by the state itself. In fact, one could risk a Foucaultian hypothesis that pastoral power is a form of disciplinary project caught in a trilemma: making the Pentecostals good citizens; orienting them towards heaven and away from the sinfulness of this world; and ensuring their prosperity in the world.

The preceding analysis—of spectrality and the convivial nature of the post-colony—points us in two directions. It suggests a rethinking of the spell of the invisible and of our understanding of spiritual warfare. To begin, Wariboko presents his epistemological framework for understanding Pentecostal religious knowing, the "spell of the invisible," as essentially an unproblematic one that delivers spiritual intelligence which "converts *noumenal knowledges* into *phenomenal technologies* of existence." Yet, as with all epistemological projects, religious knowing is even more subject to the skeptical challenge for its non-rational foundation. For Kant, to whom we owe the term, the noumena designate the things-in-themselves or intelligible existences (as different from the sensible existences or phenomena). The noumenon is characterized essentially by its incomprehensibility. It only serves the purpose of limiting "the objective validity of sensuous cognition." For Kant,

In the end, however, we have no insight into the possibility of such noumena, and the domain outside of the sphere of appearances is empty (for us), i.e., we have an understanding that extends farther than sensibility problematically, but no intuition, indeed not even the concept of a possible intuition, through which objects outside of the field of sensibility could be given, and about which the understanding could be employed assertorically. The concept of a noumenon is therefore merely a boundary concept, in order to limit the pretension of sensibility, and therefore only of negative use.⁵⁶

Thus, any attempt to cognize the noumena realm falls hopelessly into skepticism. This is because the noumenon is forever hidden behind the veil of the phenomenon. The thing-in-itself is essentially unknown and unknowable. What does this tell us about Pentecostal epistemology and the spell of the invisible? It essentially throws into fundamental doubt any spiritual data that purportedly derive from the noumenal realm. For one, the fundamental problem becomes that of interpretation. This is how Mudimbe puts the problem: "The question of the relationship between God and human beings in African experience presents itself as a contradictory and paradoxical sign. Nothing about it seems obvious, definitive, or clearly founded, and the very concept of God is not transparent."⁵⁷ Interestingly, therefore, the idea of Pentecostal epistemology is itself subject to epistemic doubt.

And this doubt concerns the mediation of the fundamental tension between the care of the soul and the care of external things which confronts the Pentecostals. Pentecostals' deep concern for the otherworldly spiritual matters—of salvation and redemption—does not in any way attenuate their recognition of their existential struggle and care for external things circumscribed by political exigencies and socioeconomic incongruities that define the dynamics of the African political space. In fact, it seems axiomatic that the pursuit of the good life is intricately grounded in the complexities of the political community. Pentecostalism, therefore, confronts the dynamic complexity of materiality and prosperity in Africa. This is where the fundamental skepticism that attends the "spell of the invisible" is often broken by recourse to supplementary religiosity and pragmatic insertions in practices and structures that enable survival. To all intents and purposes, heaven helps those who help themselves. This is the essence of the entanglement of the leadership and the followership within the same episteme that reacts to the political and its regime of trauma and suffering. Conviviality breeds connivances and compromises—the myriad little means by which people, and Pentecostals too, confront, engage, deceive, and evade power. This understanding raises the concept of "testimonies" to the level of political, rather than spiritual, triumphs for the Christians.

It also expands our understanding of politics as warfare and a struggle for survival. Spiritual warfare is not just limited to confronting the demonic in entitative politics, but also involves the efforts at staking the Pentecostals' claim to prosperity within the context of corruption of state–society relations. This requires an onto-theological explanation that allows for a material beingness which permits the Pentecostals to achieve material promotion and reproduction while still clinging to an otherworldly aspiration. In fact, it is in this sense that material achievements become the gateway to a more fulfilling spirituality. Prosperity therefore becomes a distinct framework for compromises, both spiritual and political.

We have argued earlier that it seems less problematic to conceive Pentecostalism in Africa as *politeia*, as a certain way of reacting in the political domain. As a normative responsibility, *politeia* represents a moral imperative that moderates our understanding of the nature of good government. To

return, therefore, to an earlier question, to what extent does Pentecostalism in Africa contribute to our understanding of the form of government that will make our souls better? There is no straightforward answer to this question, which lies at the heart of a Pentecostal political philosophy in Africa. One answer, to follow the logic of postcolonial conviviality I have sketched in this chapter, would imply that Pentecostals and the Pentecostal leadership are, in equal measures, complicit in the current antidemocratic political situation that compromises good government. Pentecostalism as a categorical imperative is compromised in Africa. For Pentecostals, the “spell of the invisible” is also a universal spell that commands them to a moral duty to uphold what is right, what is good, what is just, and what is true. In other words, by the demands of Pentecostal spirituality, everyone has the power to *know* and hence work out the moral duties and act on them. There is also the capacity to do the right thing simply because it came from the spirit. But then, between knowing and doing, there is a range of complexity that merges politics, spirituality, and materiality within a context of postcoloniality. Within that context, truth and justice often become the victims when being is at stake.

NOTES

1. J. Ayo Langley, *Pan-Africanism and Nationalism in West Africa: A Case Study in Ideology and Social Classes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 13.
2. Sunday Adelaja, “Churches teaching too many wrong values,” Interview with Sunday Oguntola, *The Nation*, August 9, 2015.
3. Richard Beardsworth, *Derrida & the Political* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 49.
4. Ruth Marshall, *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 2.
5. Martin Heidegger, “Being-in-the-World as Being-With and Being a Self: The ‘They’,” in Martin Heidegger, *Philosophical and Political Writings*, edited by Manfred Stassen (New York: Continuum, 2003), 152.
6. *Ibid.*, 155.
7. Adeshina Afolayan, “The Miraculous Seen: The Idea of Culture, Religion, Ethics and Corruption in Nigeria,” in Akin Alao (ed.) *Politics, Culture and Development in Nigeria: A Festschrift for Gabriel Olatunde Babawale* (Lagos: CBAAC, 2011), 67.
8. Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
9. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Political Economy and The Social Contract*, translated with an Introduction and Notes by Christopher Betts. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 162. However, he makes the other point that, contrary to Warburton, Christianity is not the firmest support of the body. Rather, “the Christian law is at bottom more harmful than useful in strengthening the constitution of the state.”
10. *Ibid.*, 163. Christianity, or what Rousseau calls “the religion of man”, even though is “true, sacred and holy,” has no particular relationship with the body politic. According to him, “it does not add to the strength of the laws, but leaves

- to them only the strength they derive from themselves; so that one of the greatest bonds of particular society remains ineffectual.”
11. Ibid. Of course, Rousseau is wrong to underestimate the political significance of Christianity, especially in its postcolonial Pentecostal forms. Political spiritualities are far from being just otherworldly.
 12. Ibid., 166.
 13. Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, translated from the French by Peggy Kamuf (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 185.
 14. Everett Hamner, “Introduction: The Religious and the Secular,” *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies* 7: 2005, 5.
 15. Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume 1*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 23.
 16. Ibid., 26.
 17. Ibid.
 18. Ibid., 35.
 19. Maurizio Viroli, *From Politics to Reason of State: The acquisition and the transformation of the language of politics 1250–1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1.
 20. Ibid., 2.
 21. Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), 25.
 22. Ibid.
 23. Ibid.
 24. Ibid., 32.
 25. Ibid., 26.
 26. Ibid.
 27. Ibid., 26–27.
 28. Marshall, *Political Spiritualities*, 92.
 29. Ibid., 99.
 30. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 213.
 31. Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2014), 5.
 32. Ibid., 113.
 33. Ibid., 113–114.
 34. Ibid., 118.
 35. Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004), 2.
 36. Ibid., 23.
 37. David Miller, *Political Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 2.
 38. Ibid., 4.
 39. Robert E. Goodin, Philip Pettit and Thomas Pogge, “Introduction,” in Robert E. Goodin, Philip Pettit and Thomas Pogge (eds.) *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*, second edition: Vol. 1 (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), xvii.
 40. St. Augustine, *The City of God and Christian Doctrine*, edited by Philip Schaff (New York: The Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1890), Bk. I, 12. <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf102.html>.

41. Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 3.
42. Ibid., 9.
43. Marshall, *Political Spiritualities*, 93–94.
44. For a brilliant analysis of the historical evolution of *res publica*, see Raymond Geuss, *Public Goods, Private Goods* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).
45. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, second edition, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 7.
46. See Dana Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger: The Fate of the Political* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 4.
47. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 55.
48. Sheldon S. Wolin, *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought*, expanded edition, (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), 9.
49. Marcel Detienne suggests reading *politeia* not simply as “constitution” but also as “a certain way of reacting in the political domain.” “Public Space and Autonomy in Early Greek Cities,” in Marcel Hénaff and Tracy B. Strong (eds.) *Public Space and Democracy* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 49. Thus, since there is no true constitution in Greece, every city is given the benefit of proposing its own way. Contrary to Arendt, Wariboko rejects love and focuses on friendship as the basis of what he calls *altersovereignty*. I am prepared to go out on a limb with such a suggestion because seeing Pentecostalism as simply *politeia* has the advantage of defining Pentecostalism’s political dynamics as they are and as they unfold, rather than with the futuristic bent of Wariboko’s analysis or the outright dismissal, by Marshall, of the possibility of Pentecostalism becoming a political community.
50. Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 4–5. See also Chap. 2.
51. Ibid., 154.
52. Ibid., 152.
53. Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 14.
54. Ibid., 104.
55. Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 155.
56. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated and edited by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 350.
57. V. Y. Mudimbe, *Parables and Fables: Exegesis, Textuality, and Politics in Central Africa* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 3.



Political Ramifications of Some Shifts in Nigeria's Pentecostal Movement

Femi James Kolapo

PENTECOSTAL DEMOCRATIC CREDENTIALS

Many studies have sought to understand the impact of Pentecostalism on its adherents and on society. Recent studies have associated the movement in Africa with ethos, practice, and social structures that are subversive of conservative and traditional structures and ideas. Some of these studies also include, as one of Pentecostalism's acclaimed modernist qualities, a considerable democratizing political characteristic.¹ The latter trend, at least for West Africa, refutes a less popular position that denounces the movement as rather conservative and at best, apolitical or insensitive to the "contemporary socio-political situation," with its impact rather negative. Paul Gifford argues that the new Pentecostal churches manifested very "little political awareness" and that when they "do enter the political arena, although they certainly insist that corruption should cease, they hardly have a conscious social agenda."²

A description of the Pentecostal movement as apolitical can no longer be sustained, nor does any study currently hold that position. This study is no exception. Most literature on Nigeria's Pentecostalism of the 1970s, and to some extent Latin America's early Pentecostalism, have taken this new line, showing that doctrinal changes have generated a stance in which the movement has assumed increasing visibility and vitality in the political dynamic of countries where it has grown. How the movement is related to democracy varies from scholar to scholar, though. A number of elements that are adumbrated in extant studies to reflect how Pentecostalism helps democracy include the instill-

F. J. Kolapo (✉)

History Department, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON, Canada

e-mail: kolapof@uoguelph.ca

© The Author(s) 2018

A. Afolayan et al. (eds.), *Pentecostalism and Politics in Africa*,

African Histories and Modernities,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-74911-2_13

ing of the rule of law and the mitigation of corruption, facilitating volunteerism and a civil society; expanding education among non-elites; and promoting economic development in marginalized groups. Peter Berger, while asserting in 1990 that the growth of the movement in Latin America would lead to “the emergence of a solid bourgeoisie, with virtues conducive to the development of a democratic capitalism,” isolates the associative nature of the movement to be important as a feature that prepares the people for democracy.³ He sees citizens coming together to practice limited self-government in their churches as producing “a free cultural space” where they “acquire the skills of organization, of self-help, of self-expression which make them articulate and self-reliant.”⁴ Discussing the relationship of Evangelicals, among whom he included Pentecostals, to democracy, Timothy Shah rather cautiously argues only for “evangelicalism’s ability to construct a certain kind of democratic citizen, the vigilant dissenter, rather than democratic political institutions *per se*.”⁵

For Nigeria, in a recent synthesis Richard Burgess details the progressive sensitization and engagement of the country’s Pentecostal movement in national politics.⁶ Ogbu Kalu, beyond noticing a transition from apolitical stance to political engagement, argues for the political significance of the fact that Nigerian politicians share a spiritualist understanding of the cosmos, and this helps to mediate and regulate how both parties act towards each other politically.⁷ Another perspective on the political significance of Nigeria’s Pentecostalism is briefly hinted at by Asonze Ukah. He places all the economic activities of Nigeria’s Pentecostal movement, which is dominated by states from the south of the country, in the general context of the country’s volatile regional north–south geopolitical contest. In this understanding, both sides use the lever of fundamentalist religion; the north using Sharia law while the mostly Christian south seeking to use their own Pentecostal “ideology” and network to challenge and chip away at Muslim northern people’s success in dominating the “principal economic formations and practices” via the structures of the Sharia. Ruth Marshall argues that Pentecostalism, by redefining adherent’s subjecthood, especially in relation to authority, thanks to their theology, is able to curtail the totalizing power of the state over itself. An aspect of her argument is similar to those that emphasize Pentecostal churches’ civil society enlarging and democracy-favoring characteristics. She argues that the Nigerian Pentecostal movement strives to establish “material and political autonomy from the state” by creating “alternative networks” in which it has ideological and material dominance.⁸

Kalu Ogbu claims that “the call to social activism, attacking sociopolitical structures,” which he expanded to include “trenchant criticism of the state,”⁹ is at the heart of Nigeria’s Pentecostal political practice. Trying to locate the movement in the democratic project of the country, he goes on to assert that

Pentecostals affirm the rule of the saints as essential for the recovery of the nation. This implies getting entangled in soap-box hustling. ‘Praying brethren into offices’ is now a familiar endeavor because when a ruler is just, the people rejoice.

The first aspect is the trenchant criticism of the state not only in words but in action. City projects, prayer tours, retreats at crucial moments in the life of the nation (so as to confess the sins of the leaders that brought God's anger on the land, the rulers and the people) all constitute strategies of political dissent, an exercise of infrapolitics.¹⁰

Kalu's choice of the concept of infra-politics, borrowed from James Scott as the best description of the political choice of action on the part Nigeria's leading Pentecostal churches,¹¹ is very apt but in a paradoxical way. This is because, from the perspective of this author, it is one of the major features that demonstrate the effete nature of Pentecostal contribution to the democratic process in Nigeria.

The "infra"-nature of this political activism is problematic as the nature of the problem and intended solution is obscured by spiritualization or generalization. While Scott indicates that the voicing of dissent by the oppressed and subordinate group provides liberating moments for them, its disguised nature as a "hidden transcript" removes the action out of the sight and awareness of the power holder, muddling how such activism can effectively instantiate progressive political change.¹² Scott argues that infra-politics "is in large part, and by design, a tactical choice born of a prudent awareness of the balance of power"; it is, therefore, "circumspect struggle." It does have a political import, but it is in that "it generates some pressure from below" especially if it mobilizes the membership around the problem. However, since issues are rhetorically occluded and often couched in religious Pentecostal salvationist language, as a political practice, city tours, prayer walks, and retreats are difficult to assimilate into policy-based actions that could effect democratic reform. No doubt these activities do humanize the people, subjectivate them, and give them a cathartic sense of agency, but their anger, frustration, and their challenge of injustice or unfairness have been safely expressed off stage and the activism is tame. One could theorize that it serves the interest of the state to encourage the creation and preservation of such safe spaces of spiritualized political expression. From either side of the coin, however one looks at it, it undercuts progressive democratic practice.¹³

Studies of Nigeria Pentecostalism agree that the movement disdained politics before the 1970s, as it focused rather on evangelism and the preparation of its adherents for the apocalyptic second coming of Christ and the imminent end of the world. It was rather the mainline missionary church denominations that were engaged in politics and in the provision of social services such as health clinics and hospitals, schools, and leprosariums, shelters, and a host of other voluntary community services that connected them to the mundane physical needs of the people. Recent literature has recorded a shift that sees the Pentecostal churches and the movement in general transform into politically engaged entities. They are now focused as much on this-worldly social and economic concerns as they are on other-worldly ones, perhaps even more so. Some of the leading studies of Nigeria's Pentecostalism go beyond establishing

political engagement as a new focus to attributing significant democracy-building characteristics to the movement. This chapter revisits some of these shifts to highlight aspects in them that do not easily reflect such characterization, and that undercut major claims of the democracy-initiating or enhancing nature of their political influence.

But Nigeria and many other countries have reputedly experienced a third wave of democratization, during which the expansion in the number of non-governmental and civil society organizations (CSOs) and their active efforts in mobilization, advocacy, and protest on behalf of the rule of law and for corruption-free elections were significant in ushering in this new era. The Pentecostal movement has obviously been assimilated into the category of those non-governmental CSO forces that have helped to catalyze and have continued to sustain democratic governance in the country. Hence, a claim to democratic influence for the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria has to be based not only on theoretical possibilities but on actual practice to establish the nature of the links that the movement has, for example, as part of the CSO, forged with the country's democratic institutions. This chapter affirms a shift in different sectors of the movement towards more political engagement in a variety of different ways. Focusing on the most prominent of the urban churches that are the face of the movement, it argues for an interpretation of some of the shifts that undercuts their democracy-building credentials. Some of the shifts in question include doctrines, the relationship between economic activities and material resources, institutional consolidation nationally and internationally, the paradoxical nature of its political engagement that often replicates the conservative hierarchical clientelist pattern in which a charade of periodic electoral ballots only obscures but does not challenge, and the creation of a sphere of political practice which I have termed the Pentecostal religious public, which serves overall to countermand many of the positive ideas about democratic political engagement that the movement has generated for itself.

Scholars of the latest phase of Nigeria's Pentecostalism have documented its initial manifestation in the post-independence era up to the 1970s as a pietist holiness movement with a generally apolitical stance, a feature noted for the movement in its earlier phase in other countries as far afield as in Latin America.¹⁴ In the following ten years or so, it transformed itself into an entirely different movement. Now more generally termed neo-Pentecostalism, its doctrinal axis shifted, its membership structure transformed, and its geographical base migrated into and consolidated in urban centers. Whether the changes, especially the prosperity gospel focus aspect of it, were largely a product of internal dynamics or essentially an import that accompanied the spread of US economic, financial, and political influence globally is still disputed.¹⁵ That some of the leading churches in the movement took their inspiration from the USA is not in dispute, but many scholars have insisted on the significance of the autonomous and local contexts and factors that produced the phenomenon.

This analysis indicates its subject to be Nigeria's Pentecostal movement. However, the chapter only focuses on those Pentecostal churches and church organizations represented by the Health and Wealth Gospel-of-Prosperity (GOSPRO) section of the movement, especially because they are the most nationally and internationally prominent. These churches define their mode of solving life issues in terms of the ready availability of God's power to the faithful so they can receive health, wealth, and blessing.¹⁶ They are the biggest, their leaders the most politically connected, and they generally form the leading edge of the movement. These churches have adopted the corporatist organizational style and cultivate an internationalist and modern cosmopolitan ethos. No study has cataloged the different forms taken by Pentecostal churches in Nigeria and the categorization that claims the name neo-Pentecostalism for all churches that operate in the immanence of God's Holy Spirit is derived from the focus in the literature on these most visible and most media-savvy megachurches and parachurch units of the movement.

However, it is important to insist that there exists a host of other charismatic/Pentecostal churches ranging from those with multiple branches in many states of Nigeria to small single-branch ones that do not consider themselves and do not operate as GOSPRO churches; they continue to associate with pietist or ascetic inclinations. The much more conservative or stricter Deeper Life Bible Church, for instance, continues to maintain this stance and to be the model and template for many of the latter types.¹⁷ Pentecostal churches and parachurch bodies exist that claim to have a mandate for rural evangelism, a calling that seems to naturally tone down every ostentation, display, and promotion of what in poorer rural contexts would easily be called out as objectionable crass materialism. A clear class divide seems to have preserved the older puritan theology for the rural and/or the poor working-class Pentecostals, while the prosperity gospel has been championed by urban-based middle-class Pentecostals.¹⁸ Both strands are united in basing their practice on charismatic pneumatic Christianity. They believe in democratic access to the power of the Spirit of God by each member, but especially by the pastor, to miraculously resolve all material problems and meet all needs. However, the dynamic within which the GOSPRO megachurches operate is different from the former Holiness-informed/small poor and working-class/rural-based types, which have not received systematic research focus. Hence, my observations and conclusions do not apply to them.

My interpretive effort in this chapter identifies the major shifts that extant literature documents as having taken place within the Pentecostal fold in Nigeria since the 1970s. This is supplemented with relevant observations drawn from exploratory research discussions that I had with randomly selected members of 15 randomly selected Pentecostal churches in Abuja in 2010.¹⁹ The discussion was to investigate whether "the Born Again Movement has impacted the political realm of Nigeria, and whether Pentecostal Nigerians view themselves as being a force with the concrete ability to effect change by impacting policies and governance." I also draw on personal knowledge and on

privileged information from several Nigerian Pentecostal pastor acquaintances, all anonymized here. Online Nigerian newspapers are also used. In the remaining part of the chapter, I will reiterate the positive socioeconomic outcome of the doctrinal shift in Nigeria's Pentecostalism and how the movement is said to have become politically engaged. I assess the political implications of the doctrinal and structural changes, focusing on their democracy-generating capacity. The goal is to highlight the changes that undermine their capacity as a viable democracy-building structure.

EVOLVING TENDENCIES

The principal doctrinal change in the evolution of Nigeria's Pentecostal movement that the literature shows to be currently most critical to the movement's identity is the supplementing, substituting, or subordinating of "holiness" for "prosperity" as its core belief and practice. It has repositioned the adherents to a position of easy access to God's empowerment through the Holy Spirit and is manifested in a successful life marked by health, wealth, and blessings for the here and the now. Their identity is centered on the deployment of teachings, rituals, and practices that bring God to earth, into the mundane everyday aspects of human life, and especially into the life of the adherent. As Paul Gifford so aptly puts it, the central tenet of the Prosperity Gospel

is that prosperity of all kinds is the right of every Christian. God wants a Christian to be wealthy. True Christianity necessarily means wealth; it inevitably brings wealth. Conversely, poverty indicates personal sin, or at least a deficient faith or inadequate understanding.²⁰

In implementing their theologies of prosperity, the Pentecostal churches and bodies constituting the movement emerged with a full range of institutional, rhetorical inspirational, organizational, socioeconomic, and national and transnational network resources enabling them to fulfill a broad range of instrumental roles. They came to encompass capacities productive of developmental transformation in the individual and collective lives of their adherents. The Pentecostal practices and discourses give or restore agency to the membership in their economic relationships and engagements, and seek to reposition them as more economically rational actors in a changing neoliberal capitalist world around them. These Pentecostal organizations became veritable training schools that effectively foster norms and behaviors that are in harmony with the unsettling and destabilizing demands of neoliberal globalization. They organize training programs in the principles of economics, in methods and opportunities in financial investment, and in business start-ups and management principles. They thus provide their economically minded membership with an important cross-national support network as well as equipping them for successful business operations. The churches in this category admonish their

members to be confident as “kings and priests” of God, a “special people,” and to be self-asserting. For the general membership, their offer of easy access to everyday miracle of the supernatural presence of God whose whole intent is to prosper them and bless them help to imbue them with the hope that they have the wherewithal to negotiate the future successfully, however bleak and uncertain it may seem. The this-worldliness of its focus speaks to the desires, aspirations, struggles, and dreams of upwardly mobile aspiring elites, educated unemployed and underemployed youth, and lower- and upper-middle-class people that quickly swelled its ranks.²¹ Some of the pastors of these churches espouse sophisticated theories and plans for national development, including those who insist on and model “professional excellence,” as demonstrated in the running of their huge global empires.²²

Many of these characteristics have been established across the board for the movement, not only in Nigeria, but in all of sub-Saharan Africa, and indeed across the global south.²³ Chesnut references cases from Latin America where his research respondents over several years had become “microentrepreneurs, mostly street vendors, at the urging of their prosperity-preaching pastors.”²⁴ Similar developments were reported for China, where “followers of the health and wealth gospel strive to be bosses at their workplaces.”²⁵ The report of a project on South Africa’s Pentecostal movement initiated by the Centre for Development and Enterprise highlights and confirms many of the positive observations of recent scholarship about the positive economic and social impact of the new Pentecostal movement on the individual and on a large section of the society:

8. A vital function of Pentecostalism is that it has provided an avenue for the recognition and integration of marginalised people...
9. ...religion had done far more to improve lives and morale than the political programmes and promises of recent years...
10. Pentecostalism and other denominations have indeed protected the family, the home, and the personal spheres of millions of people...
11. One of the most striking themes emerging from our research is that Pentecostalism encourages a sense of agency in its participants...
12. Of all the denominations, the Pentecostal churches are probably best able to reach out to South Africa’s marginalised communities.²⁶

The doctrines of the movement encourage assertiveness in the business field, and in many instances promote unexamined accumulateness as a necessary province of success. In this way, Pentecostalism came to embrace and even sacralize the economics of capitalist accumulation. Far from being sinful, money-making, accumulation of estates and all sorts of property, profit-making, and grave inequality become ideologically acceptable as natural elements in the success and the special favor to which the “anointed child of God” is entitled and which a successful born-again Christian should display.

This new propensity in the movement was completely divergent from its earlier alternative set of economic practices that approximated to the more traditional, more communalistic practices of the informal economic sector. In that

prior practice, the structural and infrastructural constraints of a moral economy of collective or communal well-being and harmony tempered the principle of competition and excessive surplus/profit generation. Corresponding to the Holiness phase of the Pentecostal movement, social and economic practice was informed by a purposive morality that dictated informality, kinship (fictive or natural), and other reciprocal communalist relationships. The economics of the Holiness phase tempered individuality and consumerism, discouraging and disapproving of lavish flashy displays of opulence by a few rich. In the current prosperity phase, individual accumulation, nepotistic favoritism, unfair advantages, undeclared conflict of interest situations, and on many occasions immoral or sharp and clearly illegal deals become items in the list of the miraculous acts of God on behalf of the Pentecostal adherent. Here again, the break between the past and present or between tradition and the modern is blurred.

The new phase also corresponded with a surge in the movement's urban membership and in its class and status association. It effectively transformed from a movement of rural/working poor to educated urban lower-middle-class and aspiring upper-middle-class people and of professional and corporate leaders. For its new membership, urban life promised better access to economic opportunities that accord with their higher levels of education and better social networking. Urbanity afforded access to global connections and the assumption of layers of identities that transcend the local and national, opening access to opportunities beyond the nation but also guaranteeing that their putative social, if not economic, status within the nation has risen.²⁷

ANTI-DEMOCRATIC ETHOS

Prosperity theology embraces "blessing" and "favor" separately and interchangeably as a sign of God's presence with the Pentecostal individual and as an emblem of success. As a result, this theological principle normally operates "miraculously," overriding normal secular laws and requirements. It is not necessarily conducive towards propagating the principles of democratic practice. An example of how this "blessing" principle operates can be gleaned from the following excerpt from a Daily Devotion book published by the founder of Manna Prayer Mountain (MPM) worldwide Ministry, with a branch in Lagos.

"By STRENGTH shall no man prevail" can also be interpreted to mean, "by BRAIN shall no man prevail." Yes! By HUMAN CONNECTION or effort shall no man prevail. Paul knew this and he boldly declared: I AM WHAT I AM BY THE GRACE OF GOD!

.....

I decree: special GRACE is coming upon you that shall lead to manifestation of all that you have waited for ... Ah! GRACE means FAVOUR Minus LABOUR. GRACE means Promotion without QUALIFICATION. When GRACE speaks, Protocol is suspended. Ask Esther! When GRACE speaks, Laws

are broken. Ask King David! When GRACE speaks, Educational Qualifications are Useless. Oh! Peter will tell you! When GRACE speaks, Connections are needless. Ask Joseph from prison to Prime minister.²⁸

The message is as doctrinal as it is a declarative (prayer). It encloses a theology that invalidates the democratic principles of fairness and equity. Thus, by this theology it should be all right and a divine blessing if a Pentecostal member *wins* a contract outside the regular tender system; or when a Pentecostal student claimed that he did not have time to read and had failed his exams but that he miraculously had his grade turned from fail to pass. The implication is that a philosophy and practice that require the government to be fair, impartial, and efficient is clearly subverted by this Pentecostal “grace” principle.

How the “blessing” or “grace” principle works was narrated to me by a former elder of the New Testament Christian Mission (NTCM), at Ilorin, Nigeria, who had left to establish his own church. When he told me the story, he said he could not remember the last time in the previous five years that he had had to drive with valid vehicle documents (insurance, plate license, etc.) for his car, since he expected never to be challenged by the police. He believed he had the grace to not be pulled over by the police and be asked to produce his documents; and if he was, he expected to be let go. Now, for him to drive his car for many years without being once stopped and asked for his particulars and then receiving either a fine or being asked for a bribe was indeed a miracle on that particular stretch of highway. However, the significant point is that the pastor equated God’s guidance and favor to a liberty to break laws and refuse blatantly to pay dues to the government. Admittedly, Nigeria’s traffic cops are reputedly the ugly and corrupt public face of the police, and it could be argued that the pastor was only trying to avoid paying a bribe. However, well-to-do Pentecostal pastors with exotic cars also have this mindset of impunity that sets them above the law, a mindset they share with other big men—whether local political champions or important civil servants. Anecdotal evidence indicates that similar situations operate in Pentecostal circles in African countries where this movement and the specific theological position are prevalent.²⁹

AN ECONOMIC UNIVERSE AND ITS POLITICAL ORBIT

Asonzeh Ukah is the leading scholar of the economics of Nigerian Pentecostalism. His research has focused on the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) as the exemplar of the development of a matured though evolving market and money theology and practice. Together with others, he has mapped the economic reorientation in these Pentecostal churches and parachurch organizations.³⁰ His research shows that the Pentecostal movement, led by megachurch components such as the RCCG and the Winners Chapel International, have succeeded in constituting themselves into an economic powerhouse. Each of them is a multi-billion-dollar enterprise that depends on the mass consumption of goods and services by people associated with the church. The periodic

meetings of the huge membership of the megachurches at various strategic and centralized camp sites create a dependable and consistent market for religious as well as secular products ranging from food and drinks to transport, banking, housing, health and phone accessories, and everything that is required to sustain life. The churches themselves as corporate bodies and their individual memberships organize businesses to meet these economic needs.

Ukah's study of the RCCG shows how from recruiting among the "upper middle class of the society" the church was able to engage in direct economic partnership with businesses and corporations owned by these converted society elite, managers and corporate heads. These businesses sponsor church events, give donations, and provide the church with the free use of their equipment, resources, and skills. The church provides these companies, including the leading alcohol brewing company, Nigerian Breweries Plc and Unilever, with "PR opportunities as well as product visibility." Ukah lists international corporations among such partners, including "Procter & Gamble, Nestle Foods, Coca-Cola, 7-Up, and many banks, insurance, and cellular telephone companies." The church itself has floated every conceivable type of business venture and, in essence, has tried to replace the state and compete effectively against the regular run of secular companies and businesses in the provision of services. Thus, it owns banks, including a mortgage bank, security services, a used truck importing and servicing company, a university, secondary schools, a business school, a satellite TV broadcast station, printing presses, scores of primary health care centers, a few fully fledged hospitals, and vast overseas properties, including land in the USA—a vast network of businesses, corporations, and services all linked together by the RCCG creed of Pentecostalism.

Almost all the major Pentecostal churches, including traditional ones such as the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), have huge campsites in many states of the nation. The Winner Chapel International works with a highly centralized model that concentrates its activities in only one space, a city. This replicates the economic pattern identified by Ukah. In essence, they have created a web that links the religious and the secular in gargantuan and profitable business arrangements that straddle the terrains within and without the boundaries of the nation.³¹ The impact of this development on non-church corporations and bodies that have had to enter into business with the RCCG has aptly been termed "corporate religiosity" by Ukah. This phenomenon leads to the "changing economic behaviour of big companies," where business entities appropriate "a distinct public religious identity." This includes a naming practice to reflect Faith Gospel beliefs, and the introduction of praying hours into the business day schedule. Its obverse side is what Ukah has termed "religious corporatization," where the churches adopt business strategies, corporate advertising, and strategic business promotion practices.³²

Another significant aspect of the economic sphere that must not be lost sight of includes the mobilization and management of church finances. The doctrinal shift elevated tithing and giving into a divine and unfailing procedure

that is used to access God's financial blessing. It is referred to as the principle of sowing (of money gifts and tithes) and reaping (financial, health, and other life breakthroughs). The resources generated are matched by an organizational and administrative structure that manages the tithes, offerings, loans, and church building or maintenance projects. Ukah documents the powerful example of an RCCG campsite service, showing how its "theology of monetised piety," in other words, its version of the Gospel of Prosperity, operates. It shows God constructed as a deal-maker who participates directly in the money economy in which the GOSPRO Pentecostal participants end up with tremendous "profit"—in health, wealth, and longevity. At this service, the General Overseer (GO) of the church required members to identify with a divine exchange program with specified divine payoffs:

The first group of individuals would be a thousand people who would be willing to fast for 60 days a year for the next 10 years, with half of this fasting period being continuous. For this cohort, their reward would be any gift of the Holy Spirit they should desire, such as the gift of healing, or of working miracles, or of prophecy. Those who wished to belong to this group but could not endure the rigours of fasting were invited to make a payment of 60,000 naira (ca. US\$390.00/€285.00) yearly in exchange. The second group also consisted of 1000 persons who would volunteer to do manual work for 60 days a year for 10 years at the church's Redemption Camp free of charge. As their recompense, God would enable anyone in this group to enjoy divine health for 10 years. Similarly, the third group consisted of 1000 people who would be willing and able to give God one million naira (ca. \$6,500.00/54,700) a year for 10 years. God would reward these generous donors by showing them the true meaning of prosperity. As if one million naira was an insignificant amount in a country where more than 70 per cent of the 160 million people live on less than US\$1 a day, Adeboye's fourth group consisted of 100 people willing and able to give '10 million naira (ca. US\$565,000.00/€47,500.00) each year to the church for the next 10 years. Their reward would be that God would quietly transfer the wealth of nations to them. In addition, all participants in the different groups were guaranteed being alive for the duration of the participation period, regardless of how hard any enemies may try to harm them.³³

The astounding response, according to Ukah, was that people lined up to participate in this transaction. They intended to, and many do, fulfill the obligations they signed up for. While this is particularly high end, it is a scenario that is common to the GOSPRO section of Nigeria's Pentecostal churches, and I have been a witness to many such over the nearly three decades that I have been a member of this body. Most members who make pledges such as those documented by Ukah strive hard to pay their pledges by dint of hard work, assertiveness, creativity, and proactive venturing out as a result of the motivational and empowering messages and challenges that are given to them.

However, such transactions put others under tremendous pressure which lead them into fraud in their workplaces either to meet the expectation they have generated by pledging huge sums or to advertise their special place in the

church as a successful child of God with evidence of God's financial blessing to display. Ukah's study includes documented cases of criminal convictions and jail terms that have been handed down to leading pastors and confidantes of the GO, some of whom he says were champions of its economic theology. Criminal investigations of similar fraudulent activities by other Nigerian, West African, and West African-founded GOSPRO churches outside Nigeria have also been documented. These astounding financial frauds and irregularities, running into the multiple thousands of dollars, by church members and church officials have become a permanent trend that defines the nature of Africa's neo-Pentecostal economic doctrine and practice.³⁴ Such evidence of high-level upper-scale corruption is, of course, antithetical to the maintenance of democracy, however it is defined and whatever aspect of it is emphasized.

EXIT MECHANISM?

Most research on the rise of this movement, especially in the poor countries of the South, has associated it with the economic decline of recent decades that was accompanied by the International Financial Institutions (IFI's) increasing suspicions of the state and in the increase in neoliberal privatization strategies, all culminating in the increasing inability of the states to meet basic needs of the citizens, and their absence from this arena. Some of the documented socioeconomic repercussion of this economic crisis has been that ordinary citizens have resorted to creating substitute networks to meet their needs.³⁵ This is also where one can locate a structural deficit in the democracy-building stock that has been attributed to the Pentecostal movement. In a sense, the description by Azarya and Chazan, regarding how informal and parallel institutions emerge and operate under such dire socioeconomic conditions, seems to apply well to the operation of the economic sphere of the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria. The megachurches of the movement have produced a parallel system, "alternative outlets for needs that remain unfulfilled by official channels, and they reduce dependence on those channels."³⁶ Also applicable is their statement to the effect that

The parallel networks may or may not utilize the state apparatus or draw upon its resources, but basically they override its purposes and skirt its laws: They are attempts to beat the system ... [Such a system] shadows the state structure, yet undermines its vitality and potential.³⁷

The paradox, of course, is that the success of this alternative sphere in modestly meeting the needs of the people further serves to dispense with the influence of the state over aspects of the lives of the members. However, this renders the position of the people as unrelated to the official structure of the state and serves to offset the impact of those demands that the membership would otherwise have made on the state sector. Thus, on the one hand it serves as a successful survival structure and strategy, but on the other it is a withdrawal from the state mechanism that helps to relieve those popular challenges to the power

and policies of the state that are required to motivate reforms in its democratic practices.

Nimi Wariboko distills different theologies of prosperity from the leading members of the Nigerian Pentecostal movement.³⁸ These show how the different economies they propagate and practice turn the gaze away from the state, its official institutions, and from the civil public sector to the self. This turning to the self for help, a focus on individual atomistic opportunity and initiative for the creation of better life in parallel with a disdaining of the state, is powerfully demonstrated by the lead pastor of the Daystar Christian Centre in Lagos in his powerfully motivational book *We are the Government*:

People make the government too powerful in this country. They do not realize that the most powerful form of government is self-government. When God gives you a revelation of who you are, that is where change begins. You stop seeing yourself as a poor and helpless person and you begin to see yourself as a powerful person. That is when transformation happens [...] Some people want to go to London or to New York from the developing parts of the world to change their reality, but Dr. Benson Idahosa once said: "A lizard in Nigeria will not become a crocodile in America". In other words, a change in location will not automatically change your nature. You can create your own world in your heart, and then live out that reality. It happened to me. I was a young unemployed graduate. I was broke and desperately wanted my life to change. Then, one night, I was in deep meditation over a story in the Bible. It was about how God swore that Abraham would be blessed [Genesis 22: 16–18]. My heart burned as I asked for the same oath to be pronounced over my life. I made a commitment to obey God like Abraham did. And I received this powerful message in my heart that nothing I would ever need to fulfill my assignment in life that God would not give me. That moment, I became a new person. The limits were taken off my mind.³⁹

As noted by Chesnut, "studies from China, the Philippines, Nigeria, Brazil, and many other nations reveal a theology that encourages adherents to realize their potential through hard work, entrepreneurship, sobriety, and wise investments."⁴⁰ There is no doubt that Nigeria's Pentecostal movement is an economic powerhouse that generates and organizes power over its individual membership, and over the linked branches of its national and international operations. The body encompasses networks nestled within networks, all linking business, church, and domestic spheres, and they effectively organize the participants in relations of power and influence internally as well as in relation to structures outside itself.

CIVIL SOCIETY

The mainline evangelical Protestants, as well as the Catholic church, have been known to involve themselves in the local community through charitable not-for-profit activities. They have built schools and orphanages, created agricultural co-operatives, and provided low-cost medical services. In many instances,

this was a carryover of the role of the Christian missions during the colonial period. Since then, they have served as a bridge used by these denominations to engage both people and government in the political sphere.⁴¹ Many studies discussing the rise of Pentecostalism argue for its democracy-supporting political contribution by pointing out how Pentecostals contribute to and participate in a vibrant civil society, a feature that is considered critical to any viable democratic culture.

One effect of the shift in doctrinal emphasis from holiness to prosperity, however, is to render the earlier service model employed by mainline evangelical Protestants rather out of date, as Nigerian Pentecostals have taken to participating in local community service via the for-profit economic model, which brings in income to both the individual Pentecostals as well as to their church organization. While these churches build schools and other social institutions that provide social services, adherents involved in them may learn and generate leadership skills in the process, but these activities are not geared towards civic and voluntary engagement in the political sense of the term. Consequently, their for-profit social engagements only serve to confirm the elite leadership of the church in their patron position. Whatever direct political dividends accrue from these activities redound to the top leadership and their immediate coterie. Lende Gina notes that “whereas older religious institutions have a special impetus in providing for the poor, by offering services at low cost, most (neo) Pentecostal educational and health services are expensive and function as competitors to similar secular private institutions.”⁴² Her emphasis is apt; that “the Pentecostal emphasis is not on charity or community service, the traditional domain of religious institutions, but on prosperity.”⁴³ The mega-churches, such as RCCG, Daystar Christian Centre, and Winners Chapel International, are said to have extensive social programmes that include awareness programmes on HIV/AIDS, education, and health. However, this is a recent development, in response to the criticisms that the churches were merely fleecing the people without giving back. It is still scattered, token, and partially embraced only by the megachurch headquarters.⁴⁴

People have wised up to the economic and financial opportunities provided by GOSPRO Pentecostalism’s demography, its gargantuan working- and middle-upper-class consumer client base, national and international networks, and cash/resource flow. Many, therefore, opportunistically join in with the flow purposely to seize on what they correctly see as a vast business opportunity to make money and enhance their lives. The latter group inevitably includes criminals or the criminal minded, backsliding or deconverted elements, and non-Pentecostal non-Christians, a trend that begs for desperate research effort. There are reports of non-Christians founding Pentecostal churches; announcements to keep cellphones and valuables secure because apparently thieves are mingled with saints at church services, conventions, and crusades; church choir members being arrested for pilfering in the church or for armed robbery; and horrifying cases of corruption and malfeasance by Pentecostal members at work. Thus, the assumption of conversion or *rapture*,⁴⁵ which we bring to

examining these churches, needs to be closely questioned as the organization continues to evolve. Paul Gifford is right to warn that “conversion” cannot any more be considered the distinguishing mark of evangelicalism, and very appropriate is his caution against the “danger of placing too much stress on the change of character of those individuals joining such churches—Sometimes it is almost presumed that a total transformation is inevitable. However, all sorts of other things may be going on.”⁴⁶ The feasibility of a Pentecostalist democracy-enhancing plan based on producing progressive-minded change agents to go as reformers into national politics with “kingdom values” of hard work, servant leadership, human rights, and integrity⁴⁷ is clouded by the huge sudden swell in its population. It is clouded over by its acquisition of non-Pentecostal members and those who have neither been ethically Pentecostalized nor ever experienced *rupture*.⁴⁸ Their purpose and perhaps their mode of participation in the movement was not to broaden democracy nor to foster “norms or values, and democratic procedures and institutions ... [and] affirm human equality, and ensure true freedom and justice for all.”⁴⁹

INSTITUTIONAL/ADMINISTRATIVE CONSOLIDATION

Another major shift that cries out for more detailed examination is what seems to be the increasing structural consolidation—centralization and institutionalization—in the leading sector of the movement, especially among the GOSPRO churches. While the development shows the success of these Pentecostal church organizations in transitioning from earlier fragmentation and localism, it nonetheless also encloses a new reproduction of social hierarchy.⁵⁰ The literature indicates that Pentecostal churches were earlier on differentiated from mainline churches by their loose structure, their fierce independence, and their autonomy; their fissiparous and constantly splintering tendency. This was due to their eternal questioning of authority and their assumption of equality of all under the Holy Spirit. This fiercely democratic tendency is also one of the reasons adduced for their liberal, individualistic, and autonomous bent. Having been used to the questioning of authority and to the challenging of traditional structures, and having been given to self-organizing, it is assumed that an ethos that is facilitative of democracy is inherent in the movement. This fissiparous tendency was so severe in Nigeria that mainline churches until very recently used to derisively refer to Pentecostal churches as “mushroom churches,” as they engaged in what Ukah aptly describes as a “dizzying frenzy of divisions and subdivisions.”⁵¹

However, a careful reading of recent research and personal observation indicates that the leading GOSPRO churches of the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria have experienced a parallel trend of consolidation, centralization, and bureaucratization commensurate with their urban and corporate global programs. RCGG and Winners Chapel International seem to have developed entirely as brands or franchises with a wide global reach.⁵² My discussions with a UK-based long-time member of the RCCG implied that some independently

founded Pentecostal organizations have of their own free will applied to be “associated” or to integrate with the RCCG, both within Nigeria and outside, in the manner of a franchise.⁵³ The upshot of this development is the establishment and consolidation of an increasingly large international administration that is organized into many departments along corporate capitalist lines. The hundreds of pastors, assistant pastors, and workers in the churches, training schools, and for-profit social service businesses, including universities, hospitals, and clinics, are organized into an increasingly centralized and formalized administrative institution. As can be expected, their size and activities involve the formal hiring of thousands of workers to fill positions in the areas of administration, human resources, procurement, store management, accounting, information technology, estate management and horticulture, medicine, teaching, and so on. Remunerations, especially at the center, I learnt, are very good, and competitive internationally.

Thus, a new source of hierarchical ordering has begun with these megachurches. This can be seen in the administrative ranking nationally and internationally and the rumors of political jostling for positions as national, regional, and international coordinators and as their assistants, pastors, and assistant pastors.⁵⁴ The expansion of bureaucratic administration goes way beyond McCauley’s idea of the augmentation of the one person rule. It speaks of corporatist organizational structures and its attendant social and political positioning of employees within a local, regional, national, and international network, and between each of the employees and the chief executive officer (CEO) and his/her board of executives. All this would support the critique that regards “the relationship between Pentecostals, their congregations, and their leaders [as that which] mirrors that of the king and his subject, or, to put it differently, that of a master and his subjects.”⁵⁵ All this has produced a modern oligarchic structure on top of which are the leaders and their inner circles first, and the formal skilled regular employees next.

PENTECOSTAL OLIGARCHIC HIERARCHY

In their Pentecostal praxis, Nigeria’s GOSPRO church leaders (among whom are big-time televangelists without fixed church premises) share with the secular leadership the elitist penchant for conferring on each another grand-sounding and pretentious titles, religious and secular, sometimes a string of them after one name.⁵⁶ These titles denote success and high status and the special relationship to God they have.⁵⁷ Furthermore, their legitimacy is anchored on their anointing; that is, their ability to deploy gifts of the Spirit to execute deliverance (exorcism) and impart blessings to members. These establish the pastor-founders with authority and authenticity, and give them the right to obtain support and respect from the membership. But they also affirm a hierarchy within the brotherhood and sisterhood, with the pastor/founder and (usually) his wife being more directly connected to God’s spirit. The leader (usually a man), thereby, generally acquires the right to be informed about or

even intervene in marriage, birth, child-naming, and in the business propositions or politics of the members. However, the membership is also able to contest or compete with this position—at least denting it and putting it into continuous tension, because, being able to seek for, receive, and demonstrate the gift of the Spirit, leading members (especially ambitious ones) are not necessarily eternally beholden to the dictates, prescriptions, and demands of the pastor/founder; though this depends on how charismatic and managerially competent or suave the leader is.

The immense wealth of the leaders of the GOSPRO arm of Nigeria's Pentecostal movement has been documented by *Forbes* magazine, and it is the subject of very lively and passionate online discussion on Nigerian social media.⁵⁸ Indeed, one of the features that define GOSPRO Pentecostalism is the unfathomable gulf in wealth between the leader and the members of the congregation, a gulf that mirrors exactly what obtains in the secular national economy. This also applies to the display of opulence and what many have judged as consumerism that is manifest in these leaders, who, for example, compete to buy private jets.⁵⁹ As Ukah has documented, the leadership of Nigeria's neo-Pentecostal movement, including its GOSPRO section, has resolutely stood against financial accountability, even to the congregations.⁶⁰ In fact, the leaders engage in a financial economy where the wealth of the church is the personal belonging of the leader and his wife, with it perhaps being made accessible to a coterie of top leaders.⁶¹ Where there is the possibility that somebody in the church will challenge this lack of financial probity, the leaders and their spouses are known to have registered separate Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) in their own names, such that some formal legality is brought in to support resource flows into this more personal organization's account rather than to the one under contention or too much church scrutiny.⁶²

Thus, we have a reformed patrimonialism, where free access to the resources of the organization accords the man of God tremendous economic power. In some GOSPRO churches, the lead pastor gives cars to a few lucky church members, who presumably are preselected. Granting of access to part of the resource as elders and in other official capacities could be theorized to have the same effect as in the secular African world. It builds loyalty to the leader, discourages popular participation, and reduces popular control over the authority of the leader; and consequently, for GOSPRO Pentecostals, it earns the leader autocratic or oligarchic powers in an underhand fashion. When sacralized, as is generally the case in Nigerian Pentecostal circles, it acquires divine legitimation in the eyes of most of the loyal members. Charisma, that is, the extent to which the leader demonstrates that he or she is indeed a man of God, a woman of God, or a prophet by manifesting God's anointing through astounding success (demographic and physical enlargement), helps to legitimate their position and decisions. They act on behalf of God and by tradition and custom must not be questioned.⁶³

McCauley thinks that the social, economic, and political ordering and relationship that is developing between the new super-rich super-charismatic leadership of the GOSPRO churches in Ghana approximates to traditional political

clientelist relations, whose reconstitution into the modern African state structure has been blamed for much of the corruption and failure of post-independence Africa.⁶⁴ With the breakdown of traditional support networks on which the traditional patron/client relationship depended, under the assault of urbanization and increasing impoverishment of the state, and its inability to provide social services and meet basic needs of urban migrants, the Pentecostal movement has developed structures that reformulate “big man rule,” slipping easily into the place vacated by traditional patron–client relations.⁶⁵ In this system, payments are immaterial or supernatural in nature, including miracles, healings, and prosperity. The patrons—pastors and (tel)evangelists in particular—draw resources from the congregation and from links forged with allied Pentecostal organizations. The “poorer congregants complete the patronage network by giving what they can in material terms, by demonstrating loyalty to their Pentecostal patron, and by receiving informal welfare benefits, and the hope of miracles, in return.”⁶⁶ Lauterbach accepts McCauley’s idea but varies it a little by focusing on how ambitious young people in Kumasi seize on the opportunity that pastorship over a Pentecostal church produces for them to build social capital and network resources, allowing them to develop and assert the status of a big person. Like McCauley, Lauterbach interprets this development as a modern reconstituting of status and hierarchy around a traditional premodern sensibility.⁶⁷

At any rate, the services and resource that McCauley identifies as items in the exchange between patron and client are in this case a little more difficult to approximate to those that obtain in a traditional political patron–client relationship. This I suppose is because the provision of services by churches in the form of schools, credit, health, and support are not generally confined to the Pentecostal membership, but rather directed towards the large body of the membership of all churches and in many cases to even non-members and non-Christians, who must pay for these services. Nonetheless, I still find McCauley’s model useful as it can be modified to fit Nigeria’s situation. The significant element is the development of a new class and status hierarchy, especially between the immensely wealthy multi-millionaire GOs and their wives on the one hand and the generality of the membership of the churches on the other. An extreme expression of this position is that of K. Olupona, who virtually equates the pastors of the megachurches with their camp cities with the position of traditional sacred (Yoruba) kings ruling over their subjects. Noting Pentecostal opposition to and challenge of the cultural and traditional basis of sacral rulership and their insistence that the kings renounce tradition and convert to Christianity, he wonders if it was not clear to these traditional kings that the megapastors were switching place with them.⁶⁸ The foregoing statements about the reproduction of local hierarchy in the literature emphasize a regressive feature of Pentecostalism that harks back to tradition rather than to democratic modernity. But even when viewed as institutions featuring a significant modern superstructure of contemporary architecture in their buildings, up-to-date media usage, corporatist organization, and economic acu-

men, the relationship of the membership and the leadership to power remains, in the most liberal of circumstances, fraught. As Lehman observed for evangelical churches, including Pentecostal ones,

authority tends to be concentrated in an individual who is not subject even to token participatory decision-making: he, or very occasionally she, is after all a charismatic leader in a strong or at least literal, sense of the word ... The followers pay dues, but they do not form a collegiate body and they do not appoint a pastor.⁶⁹

Lehman goes on to note, in a particularly relevant way, that

although the local basis of loyalty may provide an appearance of democracy, the pastor centralizes both religious and administrative leadership and the all-important financial authority. Pentecostal churches retain control and often ownership of their premises and donations are directly or indirectly personal to them—to pay their salaries.⁷⁰

When it comes to issues of grievance or conflict between followers and leaders, Lehman also notes that great institutions such as the Catholic church “have mechanisms for ensuring a degree of recourse against abuse of power,” that is, within the church, even if “they are not always used appropriately or when necessary.”⁷¹ However, he observes that “in Pentecostal and fundamentalist organizations, Christian or Jewish, avenues of recourse against abuse of power do not exist.”⁷²

While the theology of prosperity has come in for criticism here, other expressions of Pentecostalism, for example as espoused by Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries (MFM), that the Christian’s everyday step in life is dogged about by invidious satanic and demonic machinations, do not fare better with regard to promoting grassroots democracy among its membership. In its blurring of the spiritual and the physical, and its more direct and trenchant focus on associating all personal, national, economic, domestic, policing, retailing realities with a corresponding evil spiritual (satanic) essence that one must identify and exorcize before one can achieve God’s destiny for that aspect of life, it focuses more on spiritual practices and church ritual (prayer) as the means to victory rather than advocating tangible political agency. It does not promote secular democratic ethos at all. In fact, because of the emphasis on the esoteric, the powers of darkness, marine spirits, witches, curses, and ancestors, all intangible spiritual forces that needed to be dealt with by charismata, it inevitably reinstates the gravely unequal hierarchical relationship of those who have the higher charismata and those who do not. This is especially because exorcism, required to banish poverty, the spirit of sickness, or ill health in victims, is a specialized ability that is more variably distributed, establishing some members as dependents and others as the experts. This belief does not in any way subtract from the church subscription, in theory, to the doctrine of priesthood of all believers. Similarly, anointing to break yokes or confer wealth and success on people varies, and there are people who will travel distances to sit

under the anointing of a man of God who is reputed to have the charismata to impart specific blessings or graces or endowment sought. Many religious leaders, not only of the Pentecostal church but traditionally, have promoted such view of themselves. The following by the RCCG GO is an example:

I have said it before and I will say it again and again, if your physical father curses you, it can be cancelled by your spiritual father, if your spiritual father curses you, it can be cancelled by the General Overseer, if your general overseer curses you, you can fast and pray to your father in heaven but if God curses you, where will you go?⁷³

As Karen Lauterbach said, this plays into fields beyond the church and not only resonates with Christian non-members but also with many non-Christians who share the cultural and spiritual worldview, accepting that some people have more ability to interpose between the spiritual world of breakthrough and the physical one of hardship.

Claiming access to the spiritual has a specific meaning not only in the church and among church members. It is also recognized and meaningful within other social fields. The importance of being a mediator between the physical world and the spiritual world is to be understood as part of a cognitive matrix that has a broader resonance in Asante society.⁷⁴

If neopatrimonial culture, “marked by clientelism, access to state resources, centralisation of power, and hybridity of regimes,” is Africa’s major problem as Paul Gifford insists,⁷⁵ then neither in democratic institution building nor in the promotion of norms that support democratic reform does GOSPRO Pentecostalism model democracy to its teeming adherents.

PENTECOSTAL RELIGIOUS PUBLIC

As the doctrinal emphasis of these organizations has changed, their organizational structure and the global reach also evolved in significantly impactful ways. The construction of religious and economic empires that transcend national boundaries, in which the leadership is represented in as many countries of the world as his church has branches, similar to the different embassies of the secular nation and its president, drastically raises the political profile and significance of the GO. The ramifying structures of these Pentecostal organizations; their corporatist and global character, and their financial and economic reach command a structure that is productive of politics. They distribute and allocate resources and apportion and regulate social relations of power within and without the organization; power that has a national and transnational scope and importance.

In the process of their recent development, a pseudo-political sphere parallel to the national sphere of politics has developed. The leaders of the mega-churches effectively assume the same class status as the political and non-church business elite. These top leaders are positioned as leaders in capacity and status

equal to or higher than the traditional political elite and the officers of government. They occupy what I term the Pentecostal religious public.⁷⁶ This is a public that is parallel to the first “civil” public which operates at the level of national politics, and that transcends and seeks to delegitimize the second, “primordial,” public. This allows the leaders of the church prime access to national leaders in the civic public, and, of course, the latter seek ways of coopting or utilizing the GOSPRO megachurch population base for their political purposes.⁷⁷ In this case, its operation undermines the ordinary membership’s effective participation in the first public—the civic public. The organization of the churches, the fellowshiping, the in-church volunteerism, the monetary contribution, the evangelism, and the various ways in which the membership participates in making the churches run, demonstrate its clearly public nature. The morality and ethos that anchor this third public are messianic and redemptionist.

For the members of the Pentecostal movement, though, it means a lot. The GOSPRO citizens of this realm ideologically sacralize their sphere as one that exudes divine manifestation of a better and higher moral power than obtains in the national political sphere—the modern civic public. Members of the Pentecostal movement constantly engage here in the discourse of redemption, righteousness, and the fear of God in governance. This is the sphere of infrapolitics. It is the realm of pulpit denunciation of corruption and ineptitude in government. In their estimation, activities here amount to exercising prophetic oversight of their realm over the civil public. This serves to validate the smug feeling of the members to the effect that what they do involves speaking truth to the powers. However, a lack of political theology and anchoring of this realm of power to institutional structures that could make a programmed demand on the state renders it essentially a sphere of domesticated, latent, and underemployed power.

As noted earlier, the Pentecostal movement has generated an autonomous economic sphere of its own. This sphere produces practices, structures, and resources that constitute the Pentecostal religious public into an effective market, effective provider of social services, and effective user of public media to influence popular opinion—able to compete with and even outcompete the civic public in many areas that affect the lives of many of its ordinary members. The very structures of the new Pentecostal churches, their corporatist and global reach, generate a commensurate institution that produces politics and distributes and regulates power. Moreover, this power, because it is based in the multitudes of the various church and parachurch organizations, spread all over Nigeria, has national scope and importance. However, because it is ideologically or, rather, theologically sacralized and moralized to be better and of a higher order than the power that obtains in the first public, it is largely neutered and domesticated.

This pseudo-political space allows for both the reality and the fiction of devout Pentecostal membership engaging in a sort of political transubstantiation. Pentecostal officials of the GOSPRO megachurches, and significant numbers of ordinary members of middling-sized ones, finding themselves in

possession of financial/economic and social network structures, mobilizing discourse, considerable real estate and other material and ritual resources, sacralized and divinized goals, and, in many instances, putative effectiveness, feel and announce that they are not only in comparable institutional standing or rating with the presidency of nations, but that they are better. Overall, they assess the secular political power structures and practice to be less significant and less compelling than they should have been. For example, in the context of defending the acquisition of a private jet by Pastor Oritsejafor, the then Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) president, one Eghes Eyieyien, who says he knows Oritsejafor “personally,” makes the following claims that compare leaders of the GOSPRO churches to leaders of the world’s nations and to the Catholic pope, to the effect that the GOSPRO leaders “have to travel very frequently around the world ministering [to their] thousands of branches and millions of members on all continents of the world.” He says that the “Pope rarely travels more than thrice internationally in a year. Yet the Pope has a private jet,” and wonders why complainers begrudge these GOSPRO leaders of similar convenience. Eyieyien then goes on to expand on a critical point that reflects the attitude of many in some sectors of the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria, one that I am also familiar with. The idea is that it is bigger, better, you do more good, and it is more rewarding now and eternally to be a wo/man of God than to be a secular political leader. He avers that

In reality, the Church is doing more than any government, international agency or non-governmental organization to fight poverty, illiteracy and diseases in Nigeria today. The Church in Nigeria is much more effective than the government at all levels! [This is not obvious because] It is not just in the habit of churches and Christian ministers to be boasting about their poverty-alleviation programmes and charity works like companies.⁷⁸

The Pentecostal religious public’s self-congratulatory sense of pious antagonism to state corruption or government inefficiency, its social and economic networks that transcend the local national boundaries, and its leadership with a status approximating to that of the presidents of nations and global CEOs of secular corporations, create a sense of sufficiency and achievement. This sense of divine achievement and sufficiency allows many Pentecostal members to condemn the “paltry,” “filthy,” and corrupted politics of the civil public rather than engaging it in terms that directly challenge it. The immense global reach, extensive resources and networks, and the Pentecostal movement’s knowledge of its own participation in a greater global network to some extent diminish the mystique and grandeur of the politics of the civic public in the reckoning of many Pentecostal members. This negative reassessment or recalibration of the importance of the civil public of the nation and its national politics thus feeds into the lack of motivation or compelling reason for the Pentecostal membership of Nigeria to develop an engaging political theology to effectively engage in real politics, thus abdicating from effective action at the local level.

An important Pentecostal discourse in this realm is that the General Overseer (GO) is on an equal footing with the president of the country, and it used to be common to hear some members in some of the Pentecostal church circles that I have engaged with emphatically assert that the role and worth of a pastor (of God) is far higher than that of a state governor. The GO has ambassadors in as many countries as does the regular government, and he and his wife and officials visit their embassies flying in personal or church jets. The camp cities of the megachurches thus equate to and symbolize alternative government and country and the membership finds putative fulfillment in their achievements. These achievements are ranged against the poor performance of public officers of the first public. Indeed, they boast, in the words of a past president of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, that the country and the secular leadership "should learn from us." They establish by their reckoning the superior importance, effectiveness, and fruitfulness of church governance over the secular state governance. By *my* reckoning, the most important political effect of the rise of this alternative public is that it creates a safe haven for the lower-class membership to engage in harmless political release—dealing with church politics as well as engaging in the discourse of national politics, using "born again" religious lingo to create a sense of agency and opposition to the corrupt and inefficient first public, but effectively excusing itself from directly engaging with this realm in competition with secular institutions and bodies organized for that purpose.

CONCLUSION

Nigeria's Pentecostals have achieved a significantly increased political profile. This significance relates to the numerical strength of the organization as an interest group and as a voting bloc. Its significance is also seen in its creation of an alternative political discourse that challenges that of other interest groups and complicates the social and political terrain within which politicians and the government must operate. It also constitutes an alternative public within which this discourse is birthed and the membership empowered to engage in vicarious politics, using church-speak. However, because it is parallel to the civic public, its effect on the secular public sphere with modern structures of political participation is limited. Moreover, within its social and economic world, its potentials for democratic practice and transformation are located in a complicated tangle of progressive and conservative tendencies. The new abilities of Nigeria's Pentecostalism and especially its GOSPRO megachurches, their new structures, their discourse, their new parallel empire with its pomp and pageantry, all put together do not have a reformative democratic impact on governance and policy that sets it apart from other urban movements. Their service in creating a social space that serves as alternative venues to those controlled by the government and that allows for a captive market and audience for its spiritual and economic goods also clearly forecloses their ability to develop effective strategies that directly engage with the constituted structural and institutional parameters within which secular realpolitik is played out.

NOTES

1. D. Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 1990); Timothy Samuel Shah, "The Bible and the Ballot Box: Evangelicals and Democracy in the 'Global South'." *SAIS Review* 24.2: 2004, 117–132; R. Marshal, "Power in the Name of Jesus: Social Transformation and Pentecostalism in Western Nigeria Revisited" in T. Ranger and O. Vaughan, (eds.) *Legitimacy and the state in twentieth century Africa* (London: Macmillan, 1993); David Maxwell, "Durawall of faith—Pentecostal spirituality in neo-liberal Zimbabwe," *Journal of Religion in Africa*. Vol. 35 (Fasc.1): 2005, 4–32. L. Togarasei, "Modern Pentecostalism as an Urban Phenomenon: The Case of the Family of God Church in Zimbabwe," *Exchange* 34.4: 2005, 349–375.
2. Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its public role* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 324, 333–334, 341; Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, (eds.) *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 4–5.
3. Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, ix.
4. *Ibid.*, 108.
5. Shah, "The Bible and the Ballot box", 119.
6. Richard Burgess, "Pentecostals and Politics in Nigeria and Zambia: An Historical Perspective," in Martin Lindhardt, (ed.) *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in Postcolonial Societies* (Leiden: Boston Brill, 2014), 291–321.
7. Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 199–201.
8. Ruth Marshall, *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 187.
9. Ogbu Kalu, *Power, poverty, and prayer: the challenges of poverty and pluralism in African Christianity, 1960–1996* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2006), 164.
10. *Ibid.* I do not see how it goes together with "the trenchant criticism of the state not only in words but in action." And while members of the RCCG, Winner's Chapel International, and so on are members of the Pray For Nigeria Group, these churches tend, as autonomous institutions, to avoid direct political statements that could be interpreted to be partisan, nor do they identify specific political agents, agency, or act to deploy a thought-out set of political policies to effect a clear political goal.
11. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1990).
12. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 19–21, 183.
13. As an example of such infrapolitics, Bishop David Oyedepo of the Winner Chapel International has been reported to have rained curses on evil actors in the Nigerian socio-political state, such as the Boko Haram, Islamic jihadist terrorists of northeast Nigeria, on several occasions, and going as far as declaring that "God should break up Nigeria now if it is His will." Declaring that "God sent me as His apostle of liberation to this continent to stop it from decadence," he declared "every occultic root, every political root of this uprising cursed," to thunderous affirming echoes of Amen. My view is that Oyedepo's declamation against Boko Haram was clearly not offensive to the government, nor indeed to

Muslims, who by then had become the largest victims of Boko Haram. However, the declamation included significant items of discontentment and frustration in the contested fractured geopolitical and ethnoreligious terrain of Nigeria. In the heat of the declaration, he queried "Must the north continue to rule?" and, alluding to the contestation of census population figure between the north and the south around which revenue allocation and other major national political decisions are made by government, he proclaimed, "All those zeros census they are fake. Where are the human beings?" "Where are they? We go around the place." Now these statements are widely publicized and the video, which still remains available on the internet, has circulated widely. The national daily that broke the news, with the social media simply reproducing it, associated it with the Southern Kaduna killing (considered Muslim against Christian), though it was a declaration that had occurred two years earlier in the context of Boko Haram first directing its terror against Christian churches in the north of the country.

Because of the media broadcasting of the news across the country and the specific geopolitical element in the declaration, the social media and news outlets were soon flooded with negative comments about the bishop reportedly fueling the Christian-Muslim fight by asking the Christians to take up arms and fight to kill their attackers. This quickly forced him to make a lengthy statement through the chairman of his church's editorial and media board denying the allegation and misrepresentations in the reporting. The first point is that the church and the movement generally are comfortable engaging in a discussion of generalized issues, especially when they involve Christian-Muslim relations, but strive as much as possible to not be seen as directly confronting the government. Second, the mediatization of the curse message and circulation nationwide indicate the complex relationship of religion and politics. Third, the quick response by the church's official to the media publicity around it to the effect that the media misrepresented the issue and imputed to it what the bishop did not mean, showing how much care they take not to cross any red lines. See, "Oyedepo: I made those remarks in the heat of Boko Haram crisis," TheCable. January 14, 2017. URL: <https://www.thecable.ng/oyedepo-made-remarks-heat-boko-haram-crisis>.

14. A number of excellent studies have outlined the origins of Pentecostalism in Nigeria and of the shifts it has witnessed in doctrine, praxis, and demography, and in the rapid blossoming of the neo-Pentecostal movements. These include Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*; O. Adeboye, "Arrowhead" of Nigerian Pentecostalism: The Redeemed Christian Church of God, (2007), 1952–2005', *Pneuma* vol. 29 (1): 24–58, and Danny McCain "The Metamorphosis of Nigerian Pentecostalism. From Signs and Wonders in the Church to Service and Influence in Society" in Miller, Donald E., Kimon Howland Sargeant, Richard W. Flory, (eds.) *Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 161–182; and Ukah detailing the pietistic strictures of the RCCG before its transformation into a neo-Pentecostal model in "God Unlimited", 182–194. See also Marshall, *Political Spiritualities*, 66–91 for a detailed discussion of the changeover and the leading Pentecostal organizations involved.
15. Paul Gifford, "Prosperity: A New and Foreign Element in African Christianity," *Religion* 20, (1990) 373–388; P. Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role*, (London: Hurst & Co, 1998) 40, 64, 70, 322; Asonzeh Ukah, *African*

- Christianity: Features, Promises and Problems*, Working Papers Nr. 79, Institut für Ethnologie und Afrikastudien, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität, Mainz 2007, p. 13; on one side, and on the other, Kalu, *Power, Poverty, and Prayer*, 134–135; *African Pentecostalism*, 12–17; David Martin, “The Global Expansion of Radical Primitive Christianity,” *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 26, no. 1 (2005), 111–122; Afe Adogame, “Reconfiguring the Global Religious Economy The Role of African Pentecostalism” in Miller, Sargeant and Flory, (eds.) *Spirit and Power*, 186–203.
16. See Paul Gifford, “Unity and Diversity within African Pentecostalism: A Comparison of the Christianities of Daniel Olukoya and David Oyedepo” in Lindhardt, (ed.) *Pentecostalism in Africa*, 115–135.
 17. Musa A. B. Gaiya, *The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria*, Occasional Paper, (Centre of African Studies, University of Copenhagen, July 2002), 17–19.
 18. Isabelle V. Barker, “Charismatic Economies: Pentecostalism, Economic Restructuring, and Social Reproduction” *New Political Science*, Vol. 29 No.4 (December 2007), 416 Footnote 32. The focus in the literature on these big churches has generally served to assimilate the multiple thousands of smaller one-man Pentecostal churches, some starting off with no more than a pastor and his family, into the mould of the visible ultra-rich and media-savvy mega-churches that dominate the brand, probably unfairly. The dynamics of social and economic implications of the relationships and rituals that define these smaller autonomous churches have not been the focus of study, yet much anecdotal evidence constitutes them into more than 50% of the panorama of the neo-Pentecostal movement especially in Nigeria, but also in other African countries. A glimpse of this type of church is provided in Karen Lauterbach’s “Wealth and Worth: Pastorship and Neo-Pentecostalism In Kumasi,” *Ghana Studies* vol. 9 (2006), 91–121.
 19. RCCG (Redeemed Christian Church of God), Family Worship Centre, Latter Rain Bible Church, Christ Redemption (Bible Mission) Church, House on the Rock, The Apostolic Church, NTCM (New Testament Christian Mission), Deeper Life Bible Church, The Church of Christ, Christian Pentecostal Mission, Winner’s Chapel International, Dominion Church, Mountain Movers Fire Ministry, CAC (Christ Apostolic Church), and Christ United Church.
 20. Gifford, “Prosperity. A New Foreign Element,” 20, 373–388. Another popular rendering of the same message is found in Karl Maier’s book, *This House Has Fallen: Nigeria in Crisis* (Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 2000), 264:

Career success, wealth, status in society, good marriages, plentiful children, even “miracle houses” all await those who accept Jesus through the Faith Tabernacle. The message is that the Lord expects his followers to enjoy material prosperity, and those who embrace the church, Oyedepo says, shall rise from “the dunghill to the palace.”
 21. Steven Brouwer, Paul Gifford, and Susan Rose, *Exporting the American Gospel* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 179; Barker, “Charismatic Economies”; Olufunke Adeboye, “Pentecostal Challenges in Africa and Latin America: A Comparative Focus on Nigeria and Brazil,” *Afrika Zamani*, Nos.11 & 12 (2003–2004), 137.
 22. Nimi Wariboko, “Pentecostal Paradigms of National Economic Prosperity in Africa,” in Katherine Attanasi and Amos Yong, eds. *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*:

The Socio-Economics of the Global Charismatic Movement (US: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 43.

23. Martin, *Tongues of Fire*; Julius Gathogo, "The challenge of money and wealth in some East African Pentecostal Churches," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 37. 2 (September 2011), 133–151; R. M. Aboko, "Ask and you shall be given" *Pentecostalism and the Economic Crisis in Cameroon* (African Studies Centre, the Netherlands 2007), 2; R. Andrew Chesnut, "Prosperous Prosperity: Why the Health and Wealth Gospel is Booming across the Globe" in Attanasi and Yong, eds. *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*, 215.
24. Chesnut, "Prosperous Prosperity", 215.
25. Ibid.
26. Reported by Jacques Theron, "Money Matters in Pentecostal Circles," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 37.2 (September 2011), 14.
27. Damaris Seleina Parsitau and Philomena Njeri Mwaura, "God in the city: Pentecostalism as an Urban Phenomenon in Kenya," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 36.2 (October 2010), 95–112.
28. Bishop Dr. Chris E. Kwakpovwe, *Our Daily Manna July–September 2017: A Devotional Book for Champions* (Pronoun, Jun 23, 2017) Entry for Day 17, September 2017. [Accessed by the author on December 1, 2017, via Google Books.]

The phrasing of the messages in the MPM devotion book mirrors the Pentecostal theology of the MFM variety, hence its focus was on Grace helping to "stop" adherents' "battles and EVERY SATANIC EMBARRASSMENT." It thus tempers the operation of this grace with a dual positive/negative conditionality. Other versions that I have seen on the internet, and that have circulated on social media, are shorn of any caveats. Such bare versions are found on the Facebook profile pages of one Rev. Fr Emmanuel Obimma—Ebube Muonso, Spiritual Director, Holy Ghost Adoration Ministry, Anambra State Nigeria at <https://www.facebook.com/Rev-Fr-Emmanuel-Obimma-Ebube-Muonso-1420483874906395/> posted on May 12, 2014 with 16 likes, 22 all-positive comments, and 2 shares; and of Adebayo Adeleke Emmanuel <https://www.facebook.com/adebayoadeleke.emmanuel> dated October 22, 2015 with 11 likes, 2 comments (positive) and 2 shares. It is also found, posted Friday, January 6, 2017, on the blog of one Steve Omodecx, "Founder, the Blessed Family Ministry" Nairobi, Kenya, <http://steveomodecxworld.blogspot.ca/2017/01/when-grace-speaks.html>.

29. Ruy Llera Blanes narrates a case in Angola very similar to this elder's of the contradictory "juxtaposition (and often intermingling) of law-abiding and law-bending strategies" in the relationship between membership of this movement and the rule of law:

A very old man ... the main pastor and leader of the church ... revered by thousands of followers ... is [however] also a terrible driver ... [On one] occasion, he missed the expected left turn in one of Luanda's major arteries, and decided to correct this in the subsequent crossing, ignoring the road sign that forbade the move. And the sign was there for a good reason, since in his attempt to make the left turn, we realized that he did not have enough space to maneuver and needed a long time to remove his car from obstructing the lane, which eventually happened after a storm of honking and screaming all

around us. Unfortunately for him, a transit police officer witnessed the operation and ordered him to stop the car on the side of the road as soon as he got out of the mess. The officer then proceeded to fine the pastor, but the latter protested, explaining that he was also a nurse by profession and that “you never know what can happen tomorrow; today you help me and tomorrow I can help you.” The police officer was unmoved, as if not listening to the pastor at all, and continued to write down the fine. Eventually he gave him the fine, told him to go to a bank to pay it, and left in a hurry. But he kept no receipt of the fine himself and, unlike many transit officers in Luanda, demanded no immediate compensation or *gasosa* (bribe) money. To my knowledge, the fine was never paid.

In Ruy Llera Blanes “Politics of Sovereignty Evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity and Politics in Angola,” in Simon Coleman, (ed.) *The Anthropology of Global Pentecostalism and Evangelicalism* (New York: New York University Press, 2017), 202–203.

30. Asonzeh Ukah “The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Nigeria. Local Identities and Global Processes in African Pentecostalism,” (Ph.D. Dissertation University of Bayreuth, Netherlands 2003); and his, “Those who trade with God never lose. The economics of Pentecostal activism in Nigeria” in Toyin Falola (ed.) *Christianity and social change in Africa: Essays in Honor of J.D.Y. Peel* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2005), 253–274. See also his “God Unlimited: Economic Transformations of Contemporary Nigerian Pentecostalism” in Lionel Obadia and Donald C. Wood, (eds.) *Research in Economic Anthropology Volume 31, The Economics of Religion: Anthropological Approaches* (United Kingdom: Emerald Press, 2011), 187–216.
31. Ukah, “Those Who Trade,” 266.
32. Ibid., 262.
33. Ukah, “God Unlimited,” 200–201.
34. Asonzeh Ukah, “Piety and profit: accounting for money in West African Pentecostalism (Part 1)” DEEL 48 Nommers 3 & 4 (September & December 2007), 626; “God Unlimited,” 202–209; O. Adeboye, “RCCG. Arrowhead,” 43–45; see for example the *Nigerian Monitor* newspaper’s online headline, “EFCC Arrests Abuja Civil Servant Who Paid N60 m Tithe to Redeemed Church” in <http://www.nigerianmonitor.com/efcc>. Accessed October 1, 2017.
35. Barker, “Charismatic Economies,” 408–409.
36. Victor Azarya and Naomi Chazan, “Disengagement from the State in Africa: Reflections on the Experience of Ghana and Guinea,” in Peter Lewis. (ed.) *Africa. Dilemmas of Development and Change* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), 110–136.
37. Ibid., 123.
38. Wariboko, “Pentecostal Paradigms.”
39. Sam Adeyemi, *We are the Government* (Lagos: Pnuema Publishing, 2010), 7–8.
40. Chesnut, “Prosperous Prosperity”, 215.
41. Eric Patterson, “Religious Activity and Political Participation: The Brazilian and Chilean Cases,” *Latin American Politics and Society* 46. 4 (2005), 4–5; Miller and Yamamori, (eds.) *Global Pentecostalism*.

42. Gina Lende, "The rise of Pentecostal Power: Politics and Pentecostal Power in Nigeria and Guatemala," (Ph.D. Thesis Oslo: MF Norwegian School of Theology), 122; Ukah, "Piety and Profit I", 642.
43. Lende, "The rise of Pentecostal Power", 15.
44. Ibid., 122–123; Ukah, "Piety and Profit I", 642; and Danny McCain, "The Metamorphosis of Nigerian Pentecostalism: From Signs and Wonders in the Church to Service and Influence in Society" in Donald E. Miller, Kimon Howland Sargeant, & Richard Flory, (eds.) *Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 161–182.
45. Rupture is:

one of the major analytical concepts used to make sense of an important aspect of the Pentecostal life experience at the global and local levels. It is explained that on conversion to the Pentecostal faith, believers are radically repositioned away from their previous selves by disowning their preconvert ideology, mythology, culture, and tradition. They thus assume new personalities and identities as new creatures, sporting a modernist and go-getter orientation associated with neo-Pentecostal theologies and practice, with positive repercussions on economics and politics.

In Femi J. Kolapo "Appraising the Limits of Pentecostal Political Power in Nigeria," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 46 (2016), 380.
46. Paul Gifford, "Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Africa: A Response," Terence O. Ranger (ed.) *Evangelical Christianity and democracy in the Global South* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 227.
47. Richard Burgess, "Pentecostals and Politics in Nigeria and Zambia An Historical Perspective" in Lindhardt, (ed.) *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact*, 310.
48. For instance, on two occasions within a 30-day period in 2006 when I was traveling between Ibadan and Lagos in an interstate taxi, I was part of a discussion among the passengers regarding the booming business of church in Nigeria when I was shocked by an idea that came up. This was that some rich Muslim clerics, seeing how lucrative it could be to run a church, had taken up proprietorship of churches. A woman fellow passenger in the car, who claimed one of the proprietors as her acquaintance, said that the "Alfa" sought out the young ambitious pastor and provided the fund that got the church ready and both agreed to share whatever proceeds came into the church during its services. The second person stated that he had heard of a business deal in which a rich Muslim person funded such a church and had actually sent a young man to a seminary for the purpose of becoming a certified pastor, even though both knew it was for no other reason than for money-making business. It is possible that this was a trope reflecting the negative view held by some people of the GOSPRO churches. Nonetheless, it speaks to the fact that the assumption is unrealistic that explains the actions, intentions, actions programs, tendencies, and the character of all units and all members of the Pentecostal churches on the basis of a new progressive, ethical, philosophical, or positive moral change emerging from being "born-again."

49. John W. De Gruchy, "Theological Reflections on the Task of the Church In the Democratisation of Africa," Paul Gifford, (Ed.) *The Christian Churches and the Democratisation of Africa* (EJ. Brill: Leiden & New York, 1995), 50, 51.
50. Shah, "The Bible and the Ballot box", 119.
51. Ukah, "God Unlimited", 190.
52. Per my calculation based on information on their RCCG website, its North American parishes now number 874, with 180 of them in Canada. In 2011 there were only 568. It has 863 in the UK, 45 in European countries and Faroe Islands excluding the UK, ten in Australia and four in South Korea. The MFN (Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries) is in 66 countries. Similarly, Living Faith Church Worldwide also currently has branches establishments in 65 countries.
53. I have not been able to confirm this information, and it might be no more than bombast by a member who was trying hard to highlight the achievements of the RCCG.
54. See especially the Comments section of Rev. Dr. Babatomiwa Moses Owojaiye's blog entry, "Problems, Prospects and Effects of Health and Wealth Gospel in Nigeria (Part 1)", Christianity In Africa, entry for January 16, 2010. URL: <https://christianityinafrica.wordpress.com/2010/01/16/problems-prospects-and-effects-of-health-and-wealth-gospel-in-nigeria-part-1/>.
55. Jacob K. Olupona, "A Response to Comments," *Journal of Africana Religions* vol. 2, no. 4 (2014), 507.
56. What I describe for Nigeria, Paul Gifford has highlighted for Ghana; what he calls the "evolution of titles: from pastor, to general overseer, to bishop, even archbishop or even megabishop; from prophet to megaprophet": Gifford, "Evangelical Christianity and Democracy", 227.
57. Femi Aribisala narrates an interesting instance when the gift he sent to a pastor of his first Christian book publication was returned as unacceptable because he had addressed the parcel to "Pastor" rather than "Bishop." After the proper title was affixed to the address and mailed back, the gift was accepted with a written acknowledgment. See Femi Aribisala, "Getting chieftaincy titles in the churches," Article of Faith. *Vanguard* [Newspaper] January 17, 2016.
58. Mfonobong Nsehe, "The Five Richest Pastors In Nigeria," *Forbes*, 6/07/2011 @ 12:22 PM Online URL: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/mfonobongnsehe/2011/06/07/the-five-richest-pastors-in-nigeria/>; see also, Owojaiye, "Problems, Prospects and Effects."
59. See Eghes Eyeyien, "Of Nigerian pastors and private jets" Viewpoint. *Vanguard* November 23, 2012:06 PM. URL: <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2012/11/of-nigerian-pastors-and-private-jets/>; and Nsehe, "Wealthy Nigerians, Pastors Spend \$225 million on Private Jets", *Forbes*, May 17, 2011 @ 12:32 PM. Online URL: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/mfonobongnsehe/2011/05/17/wealthy-nigerians-pastors-spend-225-million-on-private-jets/#7890fbal3b44>.
60. Ukah, "Piety and Profit", 642–643. Not even the branches in Europe and North America are exempt from this lack of accounting to the membership on finances. See for example the case for Canada in, Dele Jemirade, "Reverse Mission and the Establishment of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) in Canada," M.A. Major Research Paper, (University of Guelph, 2012), 16.

61. Owojaiye's blog, among thousands of similar ones, makes very insightful comments and engages in critical informed (academic) discussion on Prosperity Gospel and preachers in Nigeria. One of his blog entries, in two parts, saw him drawing together comments from what seem to be Christian members of Pentecostal churches about their negative assessment of what they characterized as patrimonial lack of distinction between church property and the leader's personal resources, venality, crass materialism, and virtual robbery that some of the Prosperity preachers were perpetrating via their Gospel of Prosperity. See his "Problems, Prospects."
62. This is privileged information from a Pentecostal member who discussed with me his knowledge about this issue regarding the leader of one of the big Nigerian GOSPRO churches.
63. The unyielding vehemence of support for every issue for which the GOSPRO churches are questioned in Nigeria's news and social media is evidence of this.
64. John F. McCauley, "Africa's New Big Man Rule? Pentecostalism and Patronage in Ghana" *African Affairs*, vol.112 Issue 446 (January 2013), 1–21. See also his "Pentecostals and Politics: Redefining Big Man Rule in Africa," in Lindhardt, (ed.) *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact*, 322–344.
65. McCauley, "Africa's New Big Man Rule?" 13.
66. Ibid., 14.
67. Lauterbach's "Wealth and Worth", 97, 107.
68. Olupona "A Response", 507.
69. David Lehmann, "The Miraculous Economics of Religion: An Essay on Social Capital", 2008 Online URL: www.davidlehmann.org/david-docs-pdf/Unpap/mirac-ec-relig.pdf.
70. Ibid., 5.
71. Ibid., 6.
72. Ibid.
73. Nsikak Nseyen, "Adeboye reacts to OAP Freeze's controversy on tithe [VIDEO]" *Daily Post* [Nigeria] November 6, 2017 URL <http://dailypost.ng/2017/11/06/pastor-adeboye-reacts-oap-freezes-controversy-tithe-video/>.
74. Lauterbach's "Wealth and Worth", 95.
75. Gifford, "Evangelical Christianity and Democracy", 225.
76. As a public realm, it has structures that organize the lives of its denizens within a distinct geography and morality of space.
77. Peter Ekeh's classic dual publics theory of postcolonial African societies complicated the regular Western-derived civil/public binary formulation of the political community, introducing the idea of two publics for Africa, one primordial and the other modern. Since then, other studies have come to support the idea of multiple publics in Africa, emphasizing that the political reality of the West cannot fairly be imposed on the terrain in Africa. See his "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (Jan. 1975), 91–112.
78. See Eghes Eyieyien, "Of Nigerian pastors and private jets."



Pentecostalism as an Alternative Social Order in Africa

Samuel Zalanga

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is primarily concerned about interrogating the idea of Pentecostalism as an alternative social order, given that we are living in a modern world. Though Pentecostalism and modernity overlap on the fringes, at their core they have different visions of social order. The main argument of the chapter is that modern society is essentially founded and built on modern rationality, scientific worldview, and epistemology, even if the spread of these is uneven across the world and in various societies. On the other hand, even though African Pentecostals are preeminently concerned with getting rich and doing so fast, their pathway to success in life is not rooted in this modern rational way of thinking. Although they grandiosely use products of modern science and technology, their focus is not about cultivating or deepening the spread of such a worldview. Rather, African Pentecostalism is focused on unlocking kingdom keys to material and financial blessings, by understanding laws in the spiritual realm which supersede natural laws. Lack of success in life for Africa's Pentecostals is a product of spiritual ignorance, disobedience, or lack of deliverance from witchcraft, ancestral curses, and marine spirits.

To explore these contrasting visions of human society, the chapter begins by discussing what social order is, noting that no social scientist today operating strictly in that intellectual tradition assumes that the social order in any society is cosmically determined. Then the chapter discusses the scientific worldview

S. Zalanga (✉)
Bethel University, Arden Hills, MN, USA
e-mail: szalanga@bethel.edu

and epistemology, illustrating how it approaches life in modern society. In the third section, I make the case that Africa's Christianity is an enchanted Christianity because the culture of the continent is still predominantly enchanted. I then discuss two case studies of African Pentecostalism to illustrate this. Given the enchanted nature of traditional African religion, any religion that replaces that will have to have some elements of enchantment, and Pentecostalism is an excellent case in point.

I chose two Pentecostal denominations in Nigeria (Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries, MFM, and Living Faith Church) because they have worldwide operations. Moreover, the two denominations have somewhat contrasting theologies and rhetorical strategies. They have branches not only across Nigeria but across many African countries and in North America and Europe. The founder of Living Faith Church is the richest minister in Africa. The second major part of the chapter draws themes, insights, and lessons from the discussion of the two case studies and interrogates them from the point of view of the vision of modern society. In doing this, I assume that Africans want to create a modern society on the continent, and if this is so it becomes a legitimate issue of concern to ask whether Pentecostalism, given its great success and penetration in African society, is contributing to this project. I recognize that Africans and Pentecostals have the right to revert back to their culture of the past 2000 years, which would therefore make any discussion of modern society and how to make it functional in Africa a waste of time. To such people, I apologize for being presumptuous. But I maintain, however, that modernity, whatever it is, is irreversible today.

In the concluding part of the discussion, I identify several conceptual frameworks that could be used to shed light on Africa's Pentecostal movements in order to get a deeper understand of what is happening in this particular religious tradition. I interrogate the movements in relation to the role of religion in the public sphere. I ask whether African Pentecostalism is helping to create and safeguard a public sphere where people from diverse backgrounds can pursue the common good and through communal solidarity rooted in shared citizenship engage in projects of civil repair. I lament that my conclusion is pessimistic, given the facts. To begin with, I will discuss social order.

WHAT IS SOCIAL ORDER?

Social order is a product of ecological systems, which underlie how macro-social forces operate in society.¹ In order to live a good life, we need to identify these large-scale social, economic, or political forces and comply with their demands, adapting or transforming them as the case may be. Specific events, situations, and happenings within a society are understood and interpreted within the meaning that the system creates. By and large, this way of thinking in modern scholarship is characteristic of how theology, philosophy, psychology, and sociology understand the world. The existence of social problems is considered to be an indication of misalignment in the system or an aberration from the effective functioning of the system, which guarantees social order.²

Most scholars today do not believe that social order in a society is a product of some otherworldly cosmology.³ They see it emerging as a by-product of how human beings try to co-operate to produce and reproduce their material, social, and security needs in physical and social spaces. It is seen as a result of humans co-operating with each other and making meaning out of their existential struggles in the universe. Given the diverse challenges that different groups of human beings face in different physical, social spaces and historical contexts, there are varieties of coping mechanisms that human beings have developed resulting in diverse types of social orders.⁴ As Scheler argues, while discussing the sociology of knowledge and its contribution to understanding worldview and social order:

One of the most reliable insights with which the sociology of knowledge provides us with respect to so-called primitives, the biomorphic world-view of the child, and the whole of Western civilization until the beginning of modern times, and which also is provided by comparing the relative Natural views of the world in the largest cultural units, is the following: there is no one constant natural view of the world belonging to the human being at all; rather, the various images of the world reach down into the categorical structures of the given itself.⁵

If social order was cosmologically determined, then everywhere in the world and in all social spaces and historical contexts, there would be the same social order. But as Berger and Luckman asserted in their book, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, human beings socially construct society by making it an “objective reality” which is then institutionalized and legitimized through various processes.⁶ Following that, individuals through the process of socialization internalize society as a social order and objective reality but in a subjective way depending on their historical context and social location in society. Peter Berger would later develop the concept of *nomos* in his book, *The Sacred Canopy*, which is a system through which people in society order their world and make meaning out of what looks like a chaotic situation.⁷ The advantage of having *nomos* for humans is it helps them avoid or not fall into a state of nihilism. Similarly, on the question of the relative nature of social order, because it is a human and social creation, Blaise Pascal had this to say:

We see neither justice nor injustice which does not change its nature with change in climate. Three degrees of latitude reverse all jurisprudence; a meridian decides the truth. Fundamental laws change after a few years of possession; right has its epochs A strange justice that is bounded by a river! Truth on this side of the Pyrenees, error on the other side.⁸

What both Berger and Pascal are attesting to in different ways is how human beings organize themselves in diverse ways, construct and interpret their social realities in varied and often conflicting ways, resulting in different forms of beliefs, character and conduct among people, in brief, social order. On this basis we can define social order as follows:

Social order, therefore, appears as the way different personalities have accepted and translated the teachings of their culture and have learned to use the group-sanctioned practices of institutional life as their personal design for living. Social order arises, therefore, not from some mysterious cosmic mechanism but from the patterning of human behavior into the conduct approved by the group traditions.⁹

On further clarification on what social order is, Irwin et al.¹⁰ argue that we can only have social order when we have a situation where people privilege collective interests and choices in decision-making over and above individual interests and choices. Often the two types of interests come in conflict with each other, but when such happens, order will be achieved when collective interest is given preeminence. What this means is that co-operation and co-ordination are necessary preconditions for achieving social order. But often co-operative behavior can only succeed when individuals are willing to sacrifice their own personal interests. When a system of co-operative behavior is instituted but some decide to renege from their commitment to it, there is a breakdown in social order.

In the sociological/social science literature in general, there have been several ways in which social order is theorized and how it can be achieved. The first approach is the utilitarian approach, which essentially argues that social order is achieved as individuals pursue their self-interests in a context of the division of labor.¹¹ Where there is mutually beneficial exchange, a social equilibrium is spontaneously created in society as a by-product of social evolution. In brief, it is assumed that humans in pursuit of their enlightened self-interests create social order. Second, the cultural approach to accounting for social order owes very much to Emile Durkheim's theory of society, which conceptualizes social order as rooted in societal consensus in the form of beliefs, mores, and values that are shared by all or the great majority of people in a society. Durkheim is of the view that humans have insatiable desires, and without society restraining the individual in his or her acquisitive tendencies through the process of socialization and the internalization of societal regulatory expectations in the form of shared norms, values, and moral constraints, society will end up in anomie.¹² Societies use different forms of sanctions to restore any kind of disequilibrium to social order brought about by social deviants. Furthermore, he maintains that the kind of social order existing in a society will vary with the level of development of that society.

While Durkheim is confident that shared norms, values, and moral codes when effectively internalized will function in the interest of all in a society by maintaining social order, Marx does not totally agree. Marx perceives Durkheim's proposition as naïve and simplistic, even though he concedes that social order is made possible in society primarily through these shared norms, values, and moral codes.¹³ The key issue of concern for Marx is that although it can be conceded that by and large, all societies have shared norms, values, and moral codes, the ruling classes in every class-structured society have a disproportionate say

and influence in their social construction, and they use their influence in a manner that furthers their own interests at the expense of that of the masses. The ruling classes use ideological mechanisms of persuasion to create hegemony that helps them to control everyone else. Thus, Marx sees ruling class ideology and hegemony resulting in the creation of false consciousness, which is an effective mechanism through which the masses are persuaded to conform to social institutions, structures, moral codes, and values that are detrimental to their objective interests.¹⁴ Consequently, Marx would argue that even when social order exists in a society as Durkheim expects, the fact is that it may not be just and fair.¹⁵ Antonio Gramsci extends Marx's argument on the use of ruling class ideology to control the masses in his theory of hegemony and power.¹⁶

While Marx is primarily concerned with justice and fairness in the nature of the social order that exists in a society, Thomas Hobbes states that the main problem of society is one of social order and how to achieve and maintain it, instead of social justice. He underscores the significance of social order because without it there is no possibility of peaceful commercial exchange or of creating a civilization. But to achieve social order, Hobbes believes there is a need for a "Leviathan," an all-powerful ruler who can check the excesses of individuals who want to defect from the social contract among citizens, which is built on co-operative behavior.¹⁷ Without a Leviathan, there can be a breakdown of law and order and a return to the state of nature, where life is unpredictable, nasty, brutish, and short.¹⁸ Such a situation makes it impossible for any kind of civilization to develop.

On the other hand, Max Weber argues that while there are legitimate forms of authority, ultimately they are all backed by certain forms of political coercion and domination.¹⁹ He identifies three dominant forms of authority systems that are used to maintain social order: traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational. He believes the general trend in the modern world is a shift from traditional forms of authority system to a legal-rational one. Each of these systems is characterized by unique social structures, social processes, and a particular kind of ethic and attitudinal mindset.²⁰ Weber states that the legal-rational authority system, which is characterized by a modern bureaucratic form of domination, is the most efficient for modern capitalist society. In so far as a nation or people are going to actively participate in a modern capitalist society that is competitive, then they need a legal-rational and modern bureaucratic system of government, which is infused with the ethos of rationality.²¹ While Weber insists that the trend towards modern rational and bureaucratic systems of governance in modern society is irreversible, he does not see it as leading to a Garden of Eden or a New Jerusalem, but rather to an iron cage.²² This modern bureaucratic and rationalized system of domination and the maintenance of social order is at its core founded on modern science and a scientific epistemology. What Weber recognizes is what Pentecostals in Africa have out of theological gullibility or naïveté refused to recognize and engage with, serious as it is for all religions in the modern world. The next section examines the fundamental assumptions of the scientific worldview, which is foundational to understanding the social order of modern society.

SCIENTIFIC WORLDVIEW AND EPISTEMOLOGY: FOUNDATION OF MODERN SOCIAL ORDER

Since the seventeenth century, the world had started to slowly but progressively transform into the modern era, which was adumbrated by the scientific revolution in Europe. That in turn led to the agricultural and industrial revolutions and the Enlightenment movement.²³ These social, institutional, and worldview changes had a profound impact on Western civilization. Yet, given how the Western world decided to colonize other regions of the world,²⁴ it is fair to say that from the time Africa was colonized, willy-nilly it was incorporated into the modern world, which became the dominant system in the twentieth century. Unfortunately, Africa and many other colonized regions were not incorporated into the modern system on their own terms.²⁵ The dominant institutions of the modern world are grounded in a modern worldview, even though one might concede that the degree of penetration of the scientific worldview and the associated mindset is uneven.²⁶ It varies between regions of the world, within countries by region, social classes, communities, gender, and age.²⁷ Given that the main thrust of this chapter is to make the case that Pentecostalism in Africa is indeed an alternative social order, since it rejects the modern scientific system of thinking, we need to understand concisely what this scientific worldview is, so that when in the next section the Pentecostal worldview is presented we have a basis for a good contrast.

One of the key anomalies in this discussion is that even though Pentecostals in Africa reject the scientific worldview, and its modes of thinking and explanation, they are very comfortable with grandiosely displaying technological innovations and artifacts in their possession as evidence of God's blessings and a kingdom-guaranteed material prosperity in their lives. Yet modern technology is a product of modern scientific thinking and principles:²⁸ it is part of the modern rationalized worldview. No society has achieved this just by praying the devil out of the universe using glossolalia or through the miracle of saying it and claiming it. More importantly, Pentecostals use the modern technology that is a by-product of modern scientific thinking to facilitate the effectiveness of their evangelistic project.²⁹ This inconsistency suggests a lack of coherent theology.³⁰ This theology seems to be haphazard in many respects, or at least still a project in the making. For how long can Africa continue to tolerate and lament this situation?

The first major assumption of the scientific worldview is that nature is orderly.³¹ This means that there is some regularity in the way nature operates and even the way in which human affairs are conducted. It is true that for the ordinary person social reality or nature manifests itself in a random manner, yet the scientific mindset maintains that there is regularity underlying what we observe to be happening randomly. Even when change is taking place in nature or social reality, the scientific mindset maintains that there is a pattern to that change and discovering this is foundational to control and prediction. Along this same line of reasoning, science does not believe things that are happening

in nature or social reality are taking place because they have been caused by providence or an omnipotent force.³²

This belief is indeed necessary for science, since if everything in the world can simply be accounted for by supernatural or omnipotent forces,³³ then it leads to intellectual laziness: there would be no need to study reality carefully in order to explain it. If previous generations had remained satisfied with explaining everything that happens using providence, or omnipotent spiritual or supernatural forces as the cause, the world would have not made progress in many areas of science, such as the control of disease and crop production.³⁴ It is the assumption of science that through careful observation and study, the laws that govern regularity in nature can be identified, irrespective of one's private religious beliefs. It is attitudes like this that have led to significant progress in science and technology.

Second, the scientific worldview and epistemology also maintains that nature is knowable. What this means is that anyone with sufficient training can understand the laws and regularities that govern nature.³⁵ Indeed, even though human beings are different from animals, the scientific worldview maintains that human behavior is characterized by certain recurring patterns that are governed by underlying regularities; these can be studied if we develop appropriate methods for collecting and analyzing data. So, the scientific method can be used to not only study nature but also to study human behavior. The goal is to apply new, appropriate, and reliable scientific knowledge and insights, in order to improve society and human welfare.

Third, the scientific approach believes that all natural phenomena have natural causes.³⁶ This way of thinking is opposed to miracles as a causal explanation and it is opposed to a fundamentalist approach to religion, with its magical or enchanted worldview. Indeed, science considers such modes of explanation to be a kind of glorified intellectual laziness. Scientists concede that there are times when they cannot provide immediate and comprehensive explanation for what has happened or is happening, but this does not mean that they will abandon the scientific method and resort to supernatural explanation. Science is dynamic, and the lack of valid explanations spurs scientists on to come up with solutions. For instance, before there was a cure for polio, scientists studied the disease until they were able to discover an effective treatment.³⁷ Such progress could not have been realized if people had abandoned scientific research and resorted to supernatural explanation or cure. Along the same lines, when the Ebola epidemic was prevalent in West Africa, lasting from 2014 to 2016, miracle healing and spiritual anointing did nothing to stop the spread of the virus. Only medical treatments and procedures based on scientific knowledge helped to control its spread.³⁸

Fourth, the scientific mode of explanation maintains that claims of knowledge or truth must be objective, value neutral and empirically verifiable.³⁹ They must be made in conformity with the scientific method, which says that knowledge must be derived through the five senses via human perception, experience, and observation. If we want to collect data to justify our claim, the method of data collection and analysis must be systematic, replicable, and verifiable by

anyone with appropriate training, irrespective of the person's religion, race, gender, national origin, or ethnicity. In proving one's claims, subjective beliefs, values, and norms are not allowed to vitiate the criteria for verification or proof, even though scientists concede that we are influenced by our cultural traditions. A good scientist must be reflexive enough to know what his or her biases are and how they can contaminate or distort research findings; and on that basis, procedures must be developed to guard against such contamination or distortion. Furthermore, the scientist who is biased must publicly disclose this in order to alert his or her audience. To have a scientific mindset one must have a reasonable amount of skepticism and a spirit of critical interrogation of oneself and one's work in a social, institutional, and historical context.⁴⁰ As will be demonstrated later, this way of thinking is opposed by Pentecostals in Africa. For instance, Pentecostal churches would not survive to the same degree that they exist today if members of their congregations began to cultivate a reasonable amount of skepticism and the spirit of critical interrogation. Doing so would make them question much of what their ministers tell them. But what Pentecostal pastors say is assumed to be rooted in the spiritual realm, and therefore needs no empirical verification or proof in the natural realm.

Finally, the scientific worldview or mindset maintains that knowledge should be pursued for the sake of eliminating ignorance.⁴¹ But more importantly, the goal of science is also to improve the human condition. Scientists recognize that living in ignorance can sometimes be preferred, because scientific knowledge can produce embarrassing information that threatens a simplistic religious worldview.⁴² Because science is committed to continuing research to deepen and broaden insights, there is no claim of knowledge that is final as such. Knowledge in science is always tentative, because as more research generates deeper and broader insights, society is compelled to abandon what was hitherto treated as the absolute truth. What this means is that claims of truth or knowledge in the scientific mode of thinking are also open-ended and contingent on new evidence and methods. This has deep and serious implications for the Pentecostal vision of social order, given that science does not accept the idea of absolute truths that are impervious to the incorporation of new evidence. Religion in general, and Pentecostalism in particular, is on a direct collision course with science, given that the scientific mindset and culture is infused with the fundamental commitment to engage in persistent inquiry, with a view to acquiring more perfect knowledge and using it to improve the human condition.

The religious person, and the Pentecostal in particular, has already discovered the absolute truth, and if there is any incorporation of new insights it will be from the Scriptures; otherwise it would be perceived as an aberration or a heresy. There is no room for genuine empirical research or breaking new ground that will invalidate previous beliefs, even if they are resting on faulty foundations. A contrast between the two perspectives is highlighted by Royce, who summarizes Weber's analysis of this issue:

The rise to supremacy of empirical science marks a shift from a pre-modern view of the world as enchanted to a modern view of the world as disenchanted. The first conceives the world as consisting of a multitude of magical, spiritual, and supernatural powers, both good and evil. These paranormal forces intervene in the world for their own obscure purposes and—through prayers, potions, incantations, rituals, and the like—are also potentially susceptible to human manipulation. The enchanted world is a meaningful world, filled with purpose, significance, and mystery. Science construes the world differently, perceiving it simply as an object of knowledge, nothing more than a “causal mechanism.” In the passage from the premodern to the modern era, the “world’s processes become disenchanted.”⁴³

By now, the reader must be starting to feel the tension that African countries and Pentecostals face as they transition from a traditional to a modern society, assuming they are making serious progress in this direction. They want to enjoy the products of modernity in their religious practice, but they never reflect deeply on their origins, or on what some might call the crisis of modernity. This surely warrants serious theological reflection, rather than simply basking in the material and financial prosperity of the modern world. Of course, there are no easy answers or fixes to this issue.

In the next section, I examine the history and context of religion in Africa. It was into an enchanted social-cultural setting that Christianity arrived from Europe, shaped by the modern history of that continent. It was out of this encounter that African Pentecostalism emerged as an alternative social order.⁴⁴

ELEMENTS OF ENCHANTED CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA

African traditional religion engages in explanation, prediction, and control, which have equally been the domains of empirical and analytic sciences,⁴⁵ in the Western world since the nineteenth century.⁴⁶ When Christianity arrived in Africa in the late nineteenth century, by and large it restricted itself to focusing on the relationship with God here and now (i.e., this-worldly), and not primarily with the world hereafter (i.e., otherworldly). It was a Christianity that was systematically rational, and therefore persuaded people to abandon their traditional religious beliefs and rituals.⁴⁷ Indeed, even theology in the Western world became systematic. Unfortunately, the African people and their culture had not gone through the profound social structural changes that had been heralded by the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment, as was the case in the Western world. Consequently, Africans felt that this kind of new religion was not fully or adequately replacing their enchanted traditional religion in a holistic way.⁴⁸

Thus, from the beginning of the twentieth century, many Africans started to create independent churches, and a form of Christianity that was enchanted and fitted their unique cultural, social, and historical contexts.⁴⁹ Throughout the twentieth century, but especially after the end of colonial rule, African

countries have gone through many social upheavals, conditioned by their struggle for nation-building and economic development in a global economic system that is unfavorably structured against them.⁵⁰ It was in this context that Pentecostalism emerged, and continues to thrive to this today. There are many examples that buttress the claim that African culture today is enchanted in its various manifestations, and Pentecostalism is just one example of this.⁵¹ I will provide several such examples.

The phenomenon of orphan children in the Democratic Republic of Congo correlates with the emergence of Pentecostal pastors who exorcised these children.⁵² By 2001, there were about 40,000 street children in Kinshasa, with 80% of them having been forced out of their homes because they were considered to be witches. Unfortunately, the stress of conflict in the country made it impossible for extended family members to accommodate such children, who became vagabonds. Some of the children were under ten years old. Pentecostal churches and ministers emerged as a response to this social problem, rescuing the children and many others from the “kingdom of darkness.” Interestingly, the exorcism problem also emerged in the diasporic community churches of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola in Britain.⁵³ This situation compelled the UK government to develop a whole new category of criminal behavior, known as “faith crimes.” The number of African immigrant Pentecostal churches in the United Kingdom increased to 3900 between 2005 and 2010, and by 2012 there were 83 recorded cases of faith crimes related to efforts to exorcise children and others. This is one example of enchanted African Christianity that has gone global.

Second, we can draw an example of enchanted African Christianity from Nigeria. This is the case of Helen Ukpabio, a prophetess who heads a church denomination called Liberty Gospel, which has 150 branches in Nigeria.⁵⁴ As part of her inspiration to minister to people, she produced a documentary film entitled *End of the Wicked*. The film documented a systematic spiritual method for identifying children who are witches and that bring evil events to their families. The film also specifies how to cure such children, which often amounts to child abuse in the name of spiritual redemption and exorcism. The video was widely circulated in Nigeria, causing much fear and heightening the chance that innocent children were stereotyped as witches. Interestingly, as this phenomenon has spread in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, so have the breakdown in law and order, an increase in conflict, and social and institutional dysfunction—as was the case in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The third example of enchanted African Christianity in the form of Pentecostalism is from Zimbabwe.⁵⁵ In 2013, it was reported that a teacher who was a member of a Pentecostal church had the spiritual power to turn two school pupils into baboons. It was widely publicized in the country that members of the Pentecostal church that the teacher attended experienced many miracles because of the miraculous powers of their pastor.⁵⁶ For example, the pastor was said to have enabled members of his church to receive miracle money in their pockets; to experience weight loss miraculously; to regrow

missing teeth; and to regrow hair on bald heads. It was also reported that while conducting church services, gold dust and other precious metals descended from heaven into the church. The claim of miracle money gained political significance at the national level, with a public policy question about whether such officially unaccounted money entering circulation in the Zimbabwean economy could upset official monetary policy. This situation compelled a joint press conference between the governor of the Zimbabwean Reserve Bank and the pastor of the church. During the joint press conference by the governor of the Zimbabwean Reserve Bank, Dr. Gideon Gono, and the pastor of the Pentecostal Church, it was affirmed that such miracle money getting into circulation would not affect official monetary policy of the Zimbabwean government.

Pentecostals in Africa believe in what Weber called the enchanted world, where physical objects and animals are infused with powerful spirits, as are ancestral spirits, which together with subordinate deities govern the affairs of the world under a Supreme Being or creator.⁵⁷ This way of thinking, which is also quintessential to traditional African religions, is essential to understanding African Pentecostalism. Since the spirits operate in hierarchical order and can bless or curse human beings who are lower than them in the creation kingdom, the main thrust of traditional African religions is to identify and plead with these spirits so that they can provide favor in human lives by appealing to and appeasing them. Similarly, the causal explanation for evil and misfortune is sought in the spiritual realm. In this respect, the role of traditional religious leaders is to stand in the gap between ordinary human beings and the different spiritual powers and forces that infuse happenings on earth and in the universe. The physical, social, economic, and political worlds are fused together, and there is no clear separation between these different spheres because they are united in the spiritual realm. Examples of this abound.⁵⁸ In this respect, Pentecostal pastors are a substitute for the leaders in African traditional religions.

Given the limited space available here for discussion and given the variety of Pentecostal experiences and traditions in Africa, I use two modes of Pentecostal religion as espoused by two renowned Nigerian Pentecostal ministers and denominations as case studies. I will lean heavily on Paul Gifford's study of them to make my arguments. The main reason for using these examples is the fact that not only are they the richest Pentecostal ministers in Africa who originate in Nigeria but also that Nigerian Pentecostal churches have more branches in other African countries than churches from any other country in the continent, and they even extend to the Western world, especially to Europe and North America.

ENCHANTED AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY: DR. DANIEL OLUKOYA'S PENTECOSTALISM

For Dr. Daniel Olukoya, the leader of MFM, all Christians have a destiny. This destiny is determined by God. The Christian is guaranteed to succeed in life as a matter of right. The obstacle to the realization of this destiny, however, is spiritual

forces that constitute roadblocks.⁵⁹ Examples of these spiritual forces are witches and other human beings who incarnate evil. When evil people work in cahoots with the devil, they acquire weapons that they can use to harm others. There are several ways in which someone can become a witch, and one can be a witch without being aware of it according to Dr. Olukoya. Some of the ways are inheriting the state from parents, through sexual intercourse with agents of witchcraft, and through rational choice or initiation.⁶⁰

Once a person is bewitched, there are certain consequences and certain negative impacts.⁶¹ Some of these are a lack of social mobility, financial failure in life, which can create disillusionment and shame, spiritual or financial stagnation, or having to work extremely hard to succeed or accomplish one's goals. Other consequences are total business failure, huge debt that is out of proportion to one's income, continuous loss of money, and the feeling of being rejected by many people if not everyone.

Another element of Olukoya's theology is the marine spirit as a destructive agent. This spirit can cause serious problems for humanity. Generally, marine spirits are located in geographical areas that have rivers. People in such locations are generally backward and have elevated sexual desires in addition to being promiscuous. In terms of spiritual force, marine spirits are more powerful than witchcraft and their force is very pervasive. The great majority of evils that affect human societies are caused by these spirits. They have the ability to place items in human bodies such as snakes, fish, and necklaces. Generally, according to Dr. Olukoya, marine spirits are incarnated in extremely beautiful women.⁶² In terms of operation, these spirits have certain areas of jurisdiction. They control commercial activities, the economy, and trading activities. They are in charge of the production of alcohol and cosmetics, and how hair is fashioned and styled. Some women wear sexually seductive dresses, and such dresses are said by Dr. Olukoya to be designed in the marine kingdom.⁶³

People who are captured by marine spirits fall into marine bondage. This is characterized by living in polygamous marriage, having descended from ancestors who were marine agents and fetish priests; and visiting discos places where people dance with women in seductive dresses in a sexually provocative style.⁶⁴ If one is living in spiritual bondage there are certain signs, such as being unable to pray regularly, being unable to find a marriage partner or suitor, having a marriage that is unstable, or having hyper-sexual desires and being unable to make progress in life.⁶⁵ Deliverance is the only solution to all these problems.

Dr. Olukoya asserts that another medium through which African people are trapped spiritually and will remain so unless exorcised is the phenomenon of demon-possessed women. He states that well over 90% of those married in Africa are married to spiritual forces that incarnate in women. According to Dr. Olukoya, "the problem is so pronounced that 90 percent of African women are trapped spiritually."⁶⁶ There are numerous mechanisms through which one can be inducted into this kind of spiritual marriage. It can happen involuntarily through practices that are immoral or by receiving material gifts from a person who has special relations with people operating in the demonic realm. More dangerously, Africans can get into a spiritual marriage by merely participating

in traditional cultural dances that are promoted as entertainment. Family inheritance of traditional roles and women wearing sexually tantalizing dresses can also be the cause. This latter is especially the case if the women wear trousers, or pants in the American lexicon. Other methods of induction include practicing masturbation, using certain types of hairstyles that involve the use of artificial hair, which is sold in markets. Furthermore, a mechanism for induction into spiritual marriage with the devil is through the application of a substance to fabrics that are used to make underwear; this can then become a medium for indirect access to a person's sexual organs.⁶⁷ Sleeping with a prostitute can be a mechanism as well: one is in indirect contact with the spiritual forces that are incarnated in the last seven people who slept with the prostitute.⁶⁸ There are also indicators or consequences of being involved in such demonic spiritual marriages: "marital, social, financial and spiritual emptiness; misfortune; profitless hard work; disharmony in marriage; irregular or painful menstruating."⁶⁹ When one becomes a victim, the only solution is to repent and atone for one's sins, and then commit to live a life that is spiritually consecrated by the blood of Jesus. A Pentecostal minister has to deliver the victim, and the victim has to cast out his or her spouse, then return any spiritually contaminated gifts that have been received.

Another key mechanism through which one can be imprisoned in the demonic and spiritual kingdom is through being cursed. A person or a group of people can be cursed, which can have a devastating effect on their ability to thrive and flourish. Curses can be empirically manifested in several forms, such as experiencing poverty, living a stagnant life, being backward, experiencing defeat or colossal failure, or being oppressed. A major source of curses in the African continent is past ancestors. In particular, Dr. Olukoya asserts that 95% of the problems that contemporary African societies face are rooted in problems associated with their ancestors. According to him, to achieve a meaningful life that will enable them to thrive and flourish, "nine out of ten Africans would need to go through deliverance."⁷⁰

Olukoya's brand of Pentecostalism is only one of many in Africa. There is another one that takes a different approach, even though they marginally overlap.

ENCHANTED AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY: BISHOP OYEDEPO'S PENTECOSTALISM

Living Faith Church, otherwise known as Winners' Chapel, is Bishop Oyedepo's church, which he established in 1983. He holds a doctorate degree in Human Development from Honolulu University in the USA (www.takemetonaija.com/2015/04/bishop-david-oyedepo-full-biographylife.html). The church currently has branches spread all over Nigeria and in different African countries, especially in the national capitals and major cities. Similarly, the church has branches in Europe and North America. Generally, the pastors of his congregations in other African countries are Nigerians, and not nationals of those

countries where the church is located. The pastors who lead the denomination's congregations outside Nigeria are not only personally loyal to Bishop Oyedepo but also promote his books and teachings. They encourage their members who can afford to pay to go on pilgrimage to the spiritual headquarters of the church in Canaanland, Ogun State, Nigeria. The church also has one of the best private universities in Nigeria (Covenant University), which is one of three private universities that the church has established in the country. It must be noted, however, that these universities are very expensive in terms of tuition, just like many other private universities, so they are not affordable to many Nigerian youths. This situation is part of a much larger problem surrounding corporate universities that came into existence in Africa after neoliberal reforms in higher education.⁷¹

An essential component of Winners' Chapel's teachings is about this-worldly victory in the form of success and material prosperity. From the perspective of the church, anyone who is born again in Christ and anointed by his blood and spirit is destined for victory and success in any legitimate calling. Indeed, victory for such Christians is an entitlement, which means that failure is a personal indictment of one's character and a sign of deficiency. The paramount challenge from this perspective is to identify the spiritual obstacles and forces that interfere with Christians' destined victory.⁷²

A second component of the teaching of Winners' Chapel can be characterized as success in a world without the need to take into account situations and institutional constraints, because one's success in strict spiritual terms is a product of self-fulfilling spiritual prophecy. By this it is meant that if a believer thinks positively, talks positively, and thinks the best for himself or herself and acts accordingly, then the grace of God will guarantee him or her abundant success. It has been observed that Bishop Oyedepo's theology has shifted from its initial emphasis on the word of faith to prophetic teaching on material blessings.⁷³ Looking at the situation in Nigeria at the time he established his church, this shift can be deemed to have been necessary because many people have suffered status erosion over the past two or three decades while "word of faith" preachers have penetrated the culture. This is true also in many other African countries, where people have suffered downward social mobility under economic structural adjustment programs that have been implemented by governments under the supervision of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, starting in the mid-1980s.⁷⁴ For many ordinary African people since that time, the continent has not fully recovered in terms of optimal human development, in spite of the low level of development to begin with. Under such desperate and deteriorating life situations for many citizens, the "word of faith" message alone, which emphasizes instantaneous results, would not be enough to calm down the anxieties of many church members because their concrete and empirical conditions seem to be either stagnating or worsening. The shift to a "prophetic" message is a sort of effort to persuade church members that by and by their situation will improve, which can make a huge difference as a coping strategy on a day-to-day basis.

The main inspiration for the vision and ministry of Bishop Oyedepo came from the “word of faith” preachers in the USA’s Bible Belt. In particular, the leading figures that inspired him were Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland. In particular, he received anointment by sleeping on a bed in which Copeland had slept. Furthermore, the specific calling and vision bestowed on him after he received anointing and inspiration during his encounter with Copeland in 1987 was “Get down home quick and make my people rich.”⁷⁵ In Bishop Oyedepo’s words, “the contact turned my financial status around, all because I had the correct sense to recognize my superior.”⁷⁶

Third, an important component of Winners’ Chapel’s theology as espoused by the founder is a selective emphasis and reading of the Bible that focuses on victory, success, and getting blessed or rich, which is often conceived in financial and material terms. Closely related to this is the use of text proofing to make a persuasive case about the key focus on material/financial blessings and success.⁷⁷ The issue of concern here is the hermeneutical recklessness in terms of having no respect or regard for the proper role of context, history, and meaning when interpreting biblical texts. Yet there is no doubt that Bishop Oyedepo is one of the richest ministers in Africa, if not the richest.⁷⁸ Winners’ Chapel has a vision of full human dignity that can only be reached through Christcentric righteousness, as defined by the church leader. If one is not born again, based on the church’s criteria, then one is living in spiritual darkness with great negative consequences on one’s chances for material success and prosperity. Being a person or child of darkness in this tradition of theological thinking is not a humanizing or neutral categorization. It has many negative connotations, which take away some key elements of a person’s human dignity. One of these essential elements is knowledge and ignorance. People who are not born again, or are born again but lack knowledge and are ignorant, cannot marshal their human, economic, cultural, and social capital to succeed, based on divine guidance.

In contrast, however, the knowledge that the born again person has allows his or her purpose in life to be dominion, in this case based on divine blessings that are waiting to be claimed. Indeed, Bishop Oyedepo’s theology here is nuanced and in a systematic way at loggerheads with that of Dr. Olukoya, whose brand of Pentecostalism blames failure in life on witches and demonic forces. For Bishop Oyedepo, who seems to be in a hurry to get people rich, ignorance and lack of knowledge are more dangerous than witchcraft or witch doctors in terms of preventing people from achieving their kingdom blessings. So Oyedepo elevates and prioritizes strategic and “mental warfare,” compared with Dr. Olukoya who elevates “spiritual warfare.”

Bishop Oyedepo maintains that God has encoded his wisdom in the Bible. For every problem or concern a human being has, there are words of wisdom in the Bible that directly tackles it, and what matters is how to figure it out. Once one does so, the strategic step that follows is the need for obedience to the word. One example of obedience that leads to kingdom blessings in abundance is tithing and offering. This is the critical pathway to getting rich finan-

cially. If one obeys this law of giving, according to Bishop Oyedepo, “The Abrahamic covenant of blessings grants you access to an unlimited supply of money until you become the envy of your generation.” He further adds that “when you agree with the Almighty, you will lay up gold as dust.”⁷⁹ Refusal to comply means a person will end up in poverty and misery, and when this happens there is implicitly little or no mercy because it is caused by voluntary ignorance and disobedience. For Bishop Oyedepo, spiritual laws supersede natural laws. The spiritual laws are not only preeminent, but they can never be undermined by natural laws.

In justifying his prosperity gospel, which elevates wealth accumulation to the redemptive privilege of kingdom children who are living in light and not darkness, Bishop Oyedepo has made the life of Jesus Christ bourgeois, thereby transforming the primary desire to pursue comfort in life through wealth accumulation into a kingdom privilege. I believe that Bishop Oyedepo deliberately imposes a bourgeois Christian interpretation of Jesus’ life and work, by for instance arguing that the idea that Jesus was poor or did not pursue or like comfort is false, and that such a view is aimed at keeping people in poverty. His reasons for taking this theological position are several.

First, Bishop Oyedepo argues that Jesus was so concerned about pecuniary issues that he appointed a treasurer to keep and manage the money he accumulated during his ministry.

Second, he asserts that Jesus had either a first-class cabin or comfortable sleeping arrangements when he was traveling on a ship: at one time when there was bad weather in the sea of Galilee, his disciples had to go to his special room to wake him up. By implication, Jesus would only fly first class today if he was traveling by airplane. This is something he would deserve, given his status.⁸⁰

Third, the bishop argues that when Jesus went for a feast in Jerusalem, he did not go for regular or standard hotel accommodation. He was a person of class and taste, and therefore he rented the “Upper Room.” Jesus presumably did not like mediocre hotel accommodation. The Upper Room, according to Bishop Oyedepo, was the functional equivalent of an executive hotel apartment in an upscale part of today’s city center.

Fourth, Bishop Oyedepo maintains that Jesus preferred to wear what would today be called a designer suit or coat that would be the envy of anybody around him. The evidence for this is that when Christ was crucified, Roman military officers ferociously contested to own his coat, indicating that it was of high value even for Roman military officers.

Fifth, in today’s world and based on Bishop Oyedepo’s interpretation, Jesus would eat in a restaurant of his choice and choose his meal without looking at the right-hand side of the menu to see what the price is.⁸¹ This is unlike working-class people or blue collar workers who cannot afford to eat what they want, but rather eat what they can afford to buy based on their limited resources. In describing the classy lifestyle of Christ, Oyedepo asserts: “He (Jesus) ate whatever He wanted and whenever He desired it. He lived in a place that commanded envy, because John’s disciples who went to see him where He lived

never returned to their master. The upper room for the Passover feast is what is called the Penthouse in today's language. He was traveling by sea in Mark 11, and had a convoy of other ships with him."⁸² This is a deliberately constructed grandiose image of Christ, reflecting upper-class taste and consumption.

This particular way of reading Christ means that Christians who have been born again and redeemed have no apology to make if they pursue wealth accumulation and have expensive tastes. Doing anything less in the name of humility or moderation would be equivalent to condoning mediocrity. Bishop Oyedepo bourgeoisified Christ as a way of legitimizing his extremely wealthy status in a country, and continent, that has one of the highest concentrations of poverty in the world. In popular parlance this can be characterized as the disease of "affluenza," which is essentially the dogged pursuit of more, with all the socially undesirable consequences on a person and society at large that this entails. For instance, Bishop Oyedepo owns four private jets and is worth \$150 million.⁸³ He has asserted that he does not see any reason for or context in which a member of his congregation should be richer and wealthier than him, given that this would undermine the moral lesson from the historical fact that Jesus was never below his disciples in status: "I have not found any reason why anybody in the church I pastor should be richer than me because it was Jesus who rode on the colt. The disciples were following him on foot."⁸⁴ There is no room or provision for any rational discourse or dialogue if this attitude is taken. Solid justification is derived from Christ's life and time to rationalize pastors' aspirations to be wealthier than their members, and of course keep their congregationally extracted wealth in a country where taxes are negligible among the rich, because of tax evasion, corruption, and poor state capacity.

We can also draw an important conclusion with regard to citizenship responsibility, the pathway to becoming prosperous, and the logic underpinning this. Bishop Oyedepo argues that a primary responsibility of born again and redeemed Christians is to give money to the church, and not to the local government council or by implication the state or federal government.⁸⁵ Indeed, their primary responsibility in giving is not to their blood relatives but to the church. His rationale for this is that kingdom blessings come by giving to the church instead of to the government or one's brothers and sisters. For Bishop Oyedepo, one cannot harvest without sowing seeds, and giving to the church is equivalent to sowing seeds. He has used two examples to illustrate this channel of blessing. The first is the amount of money that King David gave for the building of the temple, for which God richly blessed and prospered him in return. The second is the case of King Solomon, who ended up becoming the wealthiest man in the world by arranging the largest offering of sacrifice to God in human history. He did not build a house for himself until after the completion of God's house (the temple), which means that the decision to give to God and the church had priority over and above his personal needs. To earn wealth effortlessly and abundantly, the key secret is sowing seeds through giving to the church. In spite of this, though, the nation that is producing the

highest number of millionaires yearly is China, a high majority Buddhist country where many remain atheists.⁸⁶

Another aspect of Winners' Chapel's teachings revolves around the use of anointing oil. This can result in the following:

give a man or any object on which it is poured, immunity against any form of evil ... it is able to raise up any dying business, resurrect any collapsing career, and reverse any ancestral family curse. It makes a way for the plan of God for your life to find fulfillment.⁸⁷

Anointing with oil is in everyday terms the equivalent of a shopping mall encounter with God, since it provides a single place where you can get everything you want. Anointing oil can be used to solve diverse problems:

1. Using it can enable a person to earn honor and respect where he or she was hitherto denied.
2. It can eliminate any kind of uneasiness, fears and apprehension that a person entertains in life.
3. It can cure any affliction that a person experiences in his or her body.
4. It can transform a fibroid in a woman's womb into a healthy baby.
5. It can be used to increase the customer-base of a business by just anointing the signboard of the business.
6. It can be used to solve marital problems between couples by anointing their bed.
7. It can be used to reverse appointment termination by an employer when the employee uses it appropriately. Indeed, the employer not just reverses the termination but apologizes and promotes the victim.⁸⁸

This review of two different approaches to Pentecostal Christianity in Africa highlights the fact that Pentecostalism is essentially rooted in a different kind of social order and worldview than the modern world, which is built on a scientific worldview/epistemology, modern technology, and the Enlightenment. This is despite the fact that African Pentecostals consume products of modern science and technology with an exaggerated sense of grandeur. However, modern social order is not fundamentally established on how many products of modern science and technology a society consumes per se, especially when the society is ignorant of or lacks the capacity to create the appropriate and conducive institutions and social and political environment that can enable it to, with relative autonomy, produce the products that it consumes. Unfortunately, Africa fits the kind of society just described.

CONCLUSION

In the concluding section of this chapter, I want to use some conceptual tools and frameworks to shed light on Pentecostalism as an alternative social order, hopefully inspiring others to pursue research that can tell us more about

Pentecostalism as a religious tradition. First, from the perspective of intellectual history, which is primarily concerned with how people make meaning and interpret their social reality, there are several conceptual issues that can be raised. Pentecostalism can be significantly understood by examining the books or texts published, and the ideas espoused by the leaders of Pentecostal movements in Africa. Much of what has been discussed in this chapter has been drawn from texts and sermons that were either published or disseminated by Bishop Oyedepo and Dr. Olukoya, among others. These texts provide an enduring and reliable context for interrogating the coherence, scope of vision, shifting concerns, organizational strategies, and agendas of Pentecostalism over time. Doing so enables us to explain their conception of what it means to be human and what humans owe each other for merely being human, as they struggle to make meaning out of their existential struggles in the twenty-first century.

Along the same lines, Africa's Pentecostalism can also be understood through research that is oriented to deciphering the key factors and experiences that have shaped the personal identities of the leaders of denominations and their followers. In this case, we treat these personal identities as products of specific social, cultural, and historical constructions, thereby dismissing the claim that their spiritual messages are untouchable because they have descended from the otherworldly realm and are therefore beyond human interrogation. There is indeed something unique about the personalities who lead Pentecostal religious movements, and this accounts for the specific spiritual messages and insights that they have received at specific times from God. For instance, none of them has received a message from God that focuses on the redistribution of wealth and the creation of a more just and fair society, as the prophet Amos and prophet Jeremiah received in the Old Testament of the Bible. In this respect, it is pertinent to note that God revealed to Dr. Olukoya that the key problem with Africa's underdevelopment is the ancestral curse. And as for Bishop Oyedepo, despite the wide range of social and political problems that Africa faces, the message God gave him was to return to Nigeria from the USA and to make God's people rich. These "God's people" are not all the people of Africa. It is impossible to fully appreciate why these two leaders received the messages that they received without knowing something about their unique personal identities and aspirations in life, and how these factors intersected with the spiritual messages and callings they received. The interaction of many factors explains the course of religious beliefs, their evolution, and their relevance.⁸⁹

A third line of research, from the perspective of intellectual history, might employ the sociology of knowledge as an interpretive framework to explain what has been discussed here. In this case, the relationship between beliefs (religious in this context) and ideas on the one hand and the social structure that conditioned them on the other hand can be explored. This research tradition focuses on the social, cultural, and historical contexts that produced particular cultural values, beliefs, and ideas, or what in general might be described as the dominant cultural mentality. As Karl Mannheim notes, there is no human being that:

confronts the world, and, in striving for truth, constructs a world view out of the data of his experience ... It is more correct that knowledge is from the very beginning a cooperative process of group life, in which everyone unfolds his knowledge within a framework of a common activity, and the overcoming of common difficulties.⁹⁰

What Mannheim is saying here is that knowledge is determined and shaped by people's existential experiences and struggles as part of a group or community (i.e., collectivity). Indeed, he asserts that even people's conception of truth is influenced and shaped by their social and historical context and their social location in the social structure. What this means is that in order for us to understand Pentecostal beliefs and the ideas that the believers espouse, we need to situate them within the social structure and historical and cultural processes that constitute fertile ground for the emergence, thriving, and flourishing of such beliefs and ideas. The relationship between ideas and beliefs on the one hand and social structures and historical contexts on the other is not a random event as it may initially seem. How does this relate to an analysis of Pentecostalism as an alternative social order?

From the perspective of this research tradition, both Bishop Oyedepo's and Dr. Olukoya's teachings and visions of Christianity and truth cannot be understood on their own terms and in isolation from the social, historical, and cultural context of postcolonial Africa. Postcolonial African countries were forcibly integrated into the modern world, with all the benefits, challenges, and downsides that this entailed. Key elements and products of modernity, if they exist in Africa today, are not a result of the internal and autonomous evolution of African societies. Furthermore, in the postcolonial period, African countries and people have not successfully institutionalized the key essences or foundational elements of modernity, or if they have done so it was in a haphazard manner. Africans have the right to come up with a brand of modernity that is uniquely African, but there is no serious evidence that supports this strategy of development. Thus, Africans live in a culture and context where their old ways of doing things have been destabilized, if not destroyed, while new and effective ones have not been developed, let alone effectively institutionalized. The societies are in a state of what I will describe as social and cultural "wobble." It is hard for a society and people that have not gone through a scientific and Enlightenment revolution in thinking to have a religion that is not enchanted. For as long as the social conditions of anomie exist, Pentecostalism will thrive in Africa. In this respect, Pentecostalism and its leaders are just a reflection of the deeper crises in postcolonial African social structures and cultures. Africa has imported modern institutions and modes of consumption from the West, but at its core the nature and mode of thinking among many people in the continent has not gone through the kind of revolution in thinking that preceded such social transformation in the West.

One last research focus from the tradition of intellectual history that can shed light on this subject is systematic documentation of how Pentecostal ideas, and cultural and religious beliefs and traditions have been disseminated

throughout African societies and over a long period of time, irrespective of the veracity of their claims. This surely would be a fascinating research agenda. For instance, this chapter has demonstrated how, as African societies have changed, they have developed strategies to cope with their crises and challenges. In doing so, the leaders of Pentecostal movements in a free market of competitive “religious firms” have changed or become more innovative and entrepreneurial, creating and supplying new spiritual products that will address the new spiritual taste of religious consumers, the number of whom has increased because of Africa’s social crises and the sense of relative hopelessness. Of course the spiritual taste of the religious consumers changes as social forces have impact on them, leading them to desire new social and spiritual products. Taking this rational choice perspective to the study of religion,⁹¹ it is clear that the Pentecostal denominations that are most successful are those that have learned best to adapt and recalibrate their spiritual products to the demands in the spiritual marketplace, and on that basis add value to the lives of religious consumers in their struggle for meaning and social standing in society.

In another respect, from the point of view of the theory of socialization, one might raise a legitimate question about how Pentecostalism affects the cognitive development of its followers. Piaget, for instance, identified several stages in human cognitive development: semimotor stage, preoperational stage (i.e., egocentric stage), concrete operational state, and finally formal operational stage. According to Piaget, not everyone can reach the formal operational stage, where people are expected to think universally, abstractly, and deductively, and transcend egocentrism.⁹² Achieving this requires a great amount of high-quality education that promotes critical and logical thinking. But, as demonstrated in this chapter, Pentecostals in African churches are trained, based on religious commitment and the theological orthodoxy of their tradition, to think about and explain all social reality using a spiritual conceptual framework, which relies on divine power and intervention as key explanatory factors. This mode of thinking is built on the realization of absolute truth, which does not require further investigation of the real world using scientific methods. It is as though they are at the end of history; that they have discovered the whole and final truth.

Furthermore, to the extent that they believe their truth is absolute and exclusive, they can develop an egocentric worldview. This can hinder the cultivation of an inclusive public sphere, as they only wish to colonize the public sphere with their exclusive and particular version of spiritual truth. Related to this, such an egocentric worldview undermines the possibility of broadly creating social capital,⁹³ which is necessary for nation-building and national development in a multi-religious and multi-cultural society.

In a society that is ethnically and religiously diverse, there is a need to create social platforms that can generate, nurture, and cultivate social capital, bringing together people from diverse social, religious, and ethnic backgrounds in pursuit of the common good. The moral universe of Pentecostalism in Africa creates concentric circles for being human and being a citizen. Christcentric

righteousness as defined by Pentecostal churches is the key criterion for genuine citizenship and for achieving the status of being fully human with complete dignity. Given that there are many other religious traditions and people outside Pentecostal movements in Africa that operate with a similarly egocentric worldview, such religion is a kind of organized violence that legitimizes and sanctions the treatment of someone outside one's own faith tradition as less than fully human. Indeed, the "other" is seen as only relevant as part of the religious project of evangelism or conversion, because he or she is lost and living in darkness.

If this kind of religious practice and social imaginary continues, we should not be surprised if Pentecostalism in general continues to thrive and flourish in Africa, while the continent's countries continue to degenerate in terms of their inability to create broad and thick social capital that can constitute the platform for the creation of progressive civil society organizations. Such progressive civil society organizations would be committed to projects of civil repair in the public square, and the unapologetic pursuit of the common good based on a sincere and genuine commitment to the shared vision of common humanity.

NOTES

1. Lawrence K. Frank (1944), "What Is Social Order?" *American Journal of Sociology* 49, no. 5: 470–477.
2. John J. Macionis (2010), *Social problems* (Boston: Prentice Hall).
3. Charles Tilly (1990), *Coercion, capital, and European states, AD 990–1990* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell); Theda Skocpol (1979), *States and social revolutions: a comparative analysis of France, Russia, and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); Barrington Moore (1967), *Social origins of dictatorship: lord and peasant in the making of the modern world* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press).
4. Paul L. Knox and Sallie A. Marston (2014), *Human geography places and regions in global context* (Essex: Pearson Education Limited).
5. Max Scheler and Kenneth W. Stikkers (1980), *Problems of a sociology of knowledge* (London: Routledge & K. Paul), 74–75.
6. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1967), *The social construction of reality: a treatise in the sociology of knowledge* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday).
7. Peter L. Berger (1967), *The sacred canopy; elements of a sociological theory of religion* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday).
8. Blaise Pascal (1952), *Great books of the western world: Pensées*, trans. W. F. Trotter (Chicago: W. Benton), 225.
9. Frank, "What Is Social Order?" 474.
10. Kyle Irwin, Tucker McGrimmon, and Brent Simpson (2008), "Sympathy and Social Order," *Social Psychology Quarterly* 71, no. 4: 379–397.
11. John Stuart Mill (1957), *Utilitarianism*, edited by Oskar Piest (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill); Karen Lebacqz (1986), *Six theories of justice: perspectives from philosophical and theological ethics* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House); Jeremy Bentham (1948), *An introduction to the principles of morals and legislation*, edited by Laurence J. Lafleur (New York: Hafner Pub. Co.).

12. Émile Durkheim (1951), *Suicide, a study in sociology* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press).
13. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1978), *The German ideology*, edited by C. J. Arthur (New York: International Publishers).
14. Ibid., 4.
15. Karl Marx (1964), *Karl Marx: selected writings in sociology & philosophy*, edited by Maximilien Rubel and T. B. Bottomore. (New York: McGraw-Hill).
16. Antonio Gramsci (2001), *Prison Notebooks*, edited by Joseph A. Buttigieg, and Antonio Callari (New York: Columbia University Press).
17. Thomas Hobbes (1986) *Leviathan*, edited by C. B. Macpherson (Harmondsworth: Penguin).
18. Tom Campbell (1981), *Seven theories of human society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 70–91.
19. Lewis A. Coser (1977), *Masters of sociological thought; ideas in historical and social context* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich).
20. Max Weber (1958), *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism* (New York: Scribner).
21. Max Weber (1946), *From Max Weber: Essays in sociology*, edited by Hans Gerth, and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press).
22. When Weber examines the future of modern society, he observes that we are in trouble not because capitalism will collapse but because it will be so successful. He thought the process of rationalization (i.e., continued application of science, reason, rationality, and technology in solving human or social problems) will make life increasingly based on calculability, predictability, and the pursuit of efficiency. Moreover, life will increasingly become “disenchanted.” Science and rationality will increasingly chase away reliance on miracle or spiritual solutions. Here is how he describes the future that he saw coming in Western, modern civilization: “Imagine the consequences of that comprehensive bureaucratization and rationalization which already today we see approaching. Already now ... in all economic enterprises run on modern lines, rational calculation is manifest in every state. By it, the performance of each individual worker is mathematically measured, each man becomes a little cog in the machine and, aware of this, his one preoccupation is whether he can become a bigger cog ... It is apparent that today we are proceeding toward an evolution which resembles (the ancient kingdom of Egypt) in every detail, except that it is built on other foundations, on technically more perfect, more rationalized and therefore much more mechanized foundations. The problem which besets us now is not: how can this evolution be changed?—for that is impossible, but: what will come of it?” (Coser 1977: 231–232).
23. Donald Kagan, Steven E. Ozment, and Frank M. Turner (2010), *The Western heritage* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall); Stuart D. Jordan (2012), *The Enlightenment vision: science, reason, and the promise of a better future* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books).
24. David B. Abernethy (2000), *The dynamics of global dominance: European overseas empires, 1415–1980* (New Haven: Yale University Press).
25. James M. Blaut (1993), *The colonizer’s model of the world: geographical diffusionism and Eurocentric history* (New York: Guilford Press).
26. Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein (2000), *The essential Wallerstein* (New York: New Press).

27. Edward W. Said (1979), *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books); Ivar Oxaal, Tony Barnett, and David Booth (1975), *Beyond the sociology of development: economy and society in Latin America and Africa* (London: Routledge & Paul); Andre Gunder Frank (1967), *Capitalism and underdevelopment in Latin America; historical studies of Chile and Brazil* (New York: Monthly Review Press).
28. Ruid Volti (2014), *Society and Technological Change*, 7th ed. (New York, New York: Worth Publishers).
29. Birgit Mayer (2012), "Going and Making Public: Pentecostalism as Public Religion in Ghana," in Harri Englund (ed.), *Christianity and Public Culture in Africa*, 149–166. (Cambridge Center for African Studies. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press).
30. Paul Gifford (1998), *African Christianity: its public role* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).
31. Chava Frankfort-Nachmias and David Nachmias (2000), *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, 6th ed. (New York: Worth Publishers), 2–14.
32. Ibid.
33. M. A. Fitzsimons (1973), "The Role of Providence in History," *The Review of Politics* 35, no. 3: 386. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0034670500022841>.
34. Michael Kennedy (2004), *A brief history of disease, science, and medicine: from the Ice Age to the Genome Project* (Cranston, RI: Writers' Collective); Arden B. Andersen (2000), *Science in agriculture: advanced methods for sustainable farming*. Austin, TX: Acres).
35. Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, 2–14.
36. Ibid.
37. Mary Dobson (2007), *Disease: The extraordinary stories behind history's deadliest killers*. London, United Kingdom: Quercus, 2007; Omar Bagasra (1999), *HIV and molecular immunity: prospects for the AIDS vaccine* (Cambridge, MA: BioTechniques Books).
38. *Nova: Surviving Ebola*. Performed by American Public Television. <http://www.shoppbs.org/product/index.jsp?productId=50636676&cp=&sr=1&kw=ebola&origkw=ebola&parentPage=search>. (2014), Accessed January 26, 2017. <http://www.shoppbs.org/product/index.jsp?productId=50636676&cp=&sr=1&kw=ebola&origkw=ebola&parentPage=search>.
39. Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, 2–14.
40. Jordan, *The Enlightenment vision: science, reason, and the promise of a better future*.
41. Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, 2–14.
42. Alan Aldridge (2000), *Religion in the contemporary world: a sociological introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
43. Edward Cary Royce (2015), *Classical social theory and modern society: Marx, Durkheim, Weber* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield), 118.
44. Emmanuel K. Twesigye (1987), *Common ground: Christianity, African religion, and philosophy* (New York: P. Lang); Robin Horton (1971), "African Conversion," *Africa* 41, no. 2: 85–108. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1159421>.
45. Twesigye, *Common ground: Christianity, African religion, and philosophy*.

46. Donald Kagan, Steven E. Ozment, and Frank M. Turner, *The Western heritage*.
47. Lamin O. Sanneh (1983), *West African Christianity: the religious impact* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books).
48. M. L. Daneel (1987), *Quest for belonging: introduction to a study of African independent churches* (Gweru: Mambo Press).
49. Horton, "African Conversion."
50. Patrick Bond (2006), *Looting Africa: the economics of exploitation* (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press); Basil Davidson (1992), *The Black man's burden: Africa and the curse of the nation-state* (New York: Times Books); Peter Schwab (2001), *Africa, a continent self-destructs* (New York: Palgrave for St. Martin's Press).
51. Katrien Pye (2012), *The making of the Pentecostal melodrama: religion, media and gender in Kinshasa* (New York: Berghahn Books).
52. Paul Gifford (2016), *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press), 18; Pye, *The making of the Pentecostal melodrama*.
53. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*, 18.
54. Dispatches: Return to Africa's Witch Children. The documentary film on this subject is available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbGzFN_NaII. Accessed January 28th, 2017.
55. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*, 19.
56. Ibid.
57. Max Weber (1968), *Economy and society; an outline of interpretive sociology* (New York: Bedminster Press).
58. Stephen Ellis (1999), *The mask of anarchy: the destruction of Liberia and the religious dimension of an African civil war* (New York: New York University Press).
59. David K. Olukoya (2012), *Power to achieve success* (Lagos: Battle Cry), 22.
60. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*, 20.
61. David K. Olukoya (1999), *Power against marine spirits* (Lagos: Battle Cry).
62. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*, 24.
63. Ibid., 22.
64. Ibid., 23.
65. Ibid., 23–24.
66. Ibid., 22.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid., 22–23.
69. Ibid., 24.
70. Ibid., 22–23.
71. Jennifer Washburn (2005), *University, Inc.: the corporate corruption of American higher education* (New York: Basic Books).
72. Paul Gifford (2004), *Ghana's new Christianity: Pentecostalism in a globalizing African economy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press), 51–61; Paul Gifford (2009), *Christianity, Politics and Public Life in Kenya* (London: Hurst & Co.), 121–15, 185–188.
73. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*, 30–34.
74. John Mihevc (1995), *The market tells them so: the World Bank and economic fundamentalism in Africa* (London: Zed Books).
75. Ibid., 32.

76. Ibid., 31.
77. Ibid., 31–32.
78. Samuel Zalanga (2014), “Christianity in Africa: Pentecostalism and Sociocultural Change in the Context of Neoliberal Globalization,” *The Changing World Religion Map*, in Stanley D. Brunn (ed.), *The Changing World Religion Map: Sacred Places, Identities, Practices and Politics* (Dordrecht: Springer), 1827–1862.
79. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*, 33.
80. Ibid., 30–38.
81. Ibid., 33–34.
82. Ibid., 34.
83. Zalanga, “Christianity in Africa.”
84. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*, 37.
85. Ibid., 33–34.
86. Justin Yifu Lin, Fang Cai and Zhou Li (1996). *The China miracle: development strategy and economic reform* (Sha Tin, Hong Kong: Published for the Hong Kong Centre for Economic Research and the International Center for Economic Growth by the Chinese University Press).
87. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*, 39.
88. Ibid., 39–40.
89. Susan Kwirecki (1999), *Becoming religious: understanding devotion to the unseen* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press).
90. Karl Mannheim (1936), *Ideology and Utopia. An introduction to the sociology of knowledge*, translated by L. Wirth and Edward Shils. London: Kegan Paul & Co.), 26.
91. Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge (1996), *A theory of religion* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press).
92. Jean Piaget (1969), *The psychology of the child*, translated by B. Inhelder. (New York: Basic Books).
93. Robert Putnam (1994), *Making democracy work: civic traditions in modern Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press).



Pentecostals, Conflict, and Peace in Africa

Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso and Rachael O. Iyanda

INTRODUCTION

One of the most persistent features of postcolonial Africa is conflict, international and intra-state, and the recurrence and transformation of these conflicts into new kinds of wars in some cases, or the creation of new democratic orders in others. This chapter explores the question of the location, role, and dynamics of Pentecostalism in the complicated context of postcolonial Africa's many conflicts and peace initiatives. Our approach is manifold, simultaneously covering movements located at global, international, regional, national, and individual levels of analysis to paint a holistic picture of the paths and possibilities of Pentecostal engagement in matters of peace and conflict. This chapter pulls together the international and global forces that shape conflict in postcolonial Africa, proposing a schema for organizing the data. Based on two case studies, the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda and a Pentecostal pastor in South Africa, we proceed to analyze the national context for Pentecostal involvement in causing and prolonging conflict, as well as how the national context intersects with individual factors in shaping Pentecostal involvement in peace initiatives. These cases are illustrative, and certainly not prototypical, but they provide promise for advancing current debates concerning the role of religion in African conflicts.

Perhaps more than at any other time in human history, religion is today one of the most implicated factors in international and intra-state conflict, terrorism, and violence. From Afghanistan and Egypt to France and Nigeria, there is an explosion in the numbers of deaths caused by religious violence that is unprecedented, at least in modern times. History is of course replete with episodes and even epochs during which religion was the primary element that

O. Yacob-Haliso (✉) • R. O. Iyanda
Babcock University, Ilisan-Remo, Nigeria

drove politics and wars—especially in Europe and the Middle East: the politicization of religion and religious mobilization for political objectives is nothing new. Religion, however, has the proclivity in various contexts not just to provoke or cause conflict and to fuel it, but also to douse and even transform it; this depends on various factors, including the structural and agency conditions present at the time. In the words of the authors of the *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics*, “religion may be intimately connected [...] both to international conflicts and their prolongation and to attempts at reconciliation of such conflicts. In other words, in relation to many international conflicts, religion can play a significant, even a fundamental role, contributing to conflicts in various ways, including how they are intensified, channelled or reconciled.”¹

Indeed, peace can be located as central to the tenets of many of the world’s religions.² Texts and practices establishing peaceful relations among human beings can be found among religions including Baha’i, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and so-called traditional or indigenous religions in various regions of the world. Africa plays host to some of the major religions of the world, and “with Islam dominating the north and practiced in the east, Christianity commanding central and southern regions, and with animist beliefs found throughout the continent, postcolonial Africa was and remains a devoutly religious part of the world.”³

Within Christendom, Pentecostalism has emerged as a diverse but rapidly growing movement energizing millions across the globe, and even more so in Africa where Ogbu Kalu says the growth in absolute (and relative) perspective is indeed large: “statistical estimates are that in 2000, about 20 percent of the population in Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Malawi were Pentecostal; 14 percent in Kenya; 11 percent in Nigeria; 10 percent in Ghana and Zambia; 8 percent in Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Africa; and 4 percent in Uganda.”⁴ With this impressive and growing profile, Pentecostalism is strategically positioned to become directly or indirectly entangled in the continent’s litany of problems of social and political instability. The role of Pentecostals and Pentecostalism in Africa’s political conflicts will be the subject of this chapter, analyzed using frames from the study of Pentecostalism and from the field of international relations (IR).

It is necessary to note a couple of caveats before proceeding. First, in this chapter we will ignore the conceptual distinctions in the literature between Pentecostals, charismatics, and independent churches, and treat their varied expressions of spirit-driven worship as Pentecostal.⁵ In other words, all forms of African expressions of Christianity outside the mainstream and evangelical churches will be treated as forming part of the Pentecostal movement for the purposes of this chapter. Second, Pentecostalism and its varied expressions are not treated here as mere products of the political and social contexts explored; rather we treat Pentecostalism as a phenomenon whose movements and cadences have internal validity and historical explanations outside the political events that it is enmeshed in. We concur with Ellis and Ter Haar that whereas it is true that “the new patterns of religion and politics discernible in Africa and

other places are of course affected by phenomena such as state failure, globalisation and economic crises [...] but that is not the heart of the matter.”⁶ These authors argue for an African epistemology of religion and politics that does not subsume religion—and by extension Pentecostalism—under politics, but as a realm and subject deserving full explication and investigation without apologetic explanations.

More broadly, though, this chapter makes a contribution to the extensive literature on the role of religion, or more specifically Christianity, in both conflict and peace, and shows how religion can be an especially salient cleavage that informs conflict, peace processes, and their outcomes, as well as the options available for peacebuilding in Africa especially.

EXPLAINING PENTECOSTAL INVOLVEMENT IN CONFLICT AND PEACE IN AFRICA

The literature on Pentecostalism in Africa is constantly seeking explanations for the involvement or non-involvement of Pentecostals in social and political agendas of their time. In other contexts, Pentecostals have been known to either support war or peace by publicly responding to the exigencies of their time. For instance, Tackett studied the attitudes of Pentecostal leaders in the USA to that country’s involvement in World War I.⁷ Whereas most Pentecostal leaders asserted Pentecostalism’s historical pacifist position as well as their right to non-participation and conscientious objection,⁸ some voiced the need for American Pentecostals to back their government and show patriotism in difficult times, by supporting the war effort and taking up arms alongside other Americans if needed.⁹ There were also shifts in these positions within the same groups over time. To employ one case in point, Paul Alexander traces the major shift of the Assemblies of God Church from pacifism in the World War I era to an endorsement of war as a legitimate weapon of international dispute settlement by 1967, the Vietnam War era.¹⁰ Authors such as Paul Gifford have also noted the dominant tendency of most (though not all) Christian churches in Africa to remain apolitical,¹¹ but they also indicate a significant difference between the attitudes of mainstream churches on the one hand and Pentecostal and charismatic churches on the other. The latter tend to provide elements of community that serve as alternatives to the state, and therefore may lend them to political organization, similar to that evident in Islamic societies that have seen political mobilization by religious groups, such as the Islamic Brotherhood in Egypt.¹²

In the context of the external pressures imposed by conflicts and postcolonial failures in post-independence Africa outlined above, there is debate concerning the right interpretations of Pentecostalism’s relationship to these pressures. Ogbu Kalu notes an instrumentalist and functionalist perspective to what he calls “Pentecostal political theology.”¹³ As in the US example given above, Kalu confirms that “it used to be confidently affirmed that Pentecostalism is apolitical,”¹⁴ focusing on the salvation and eternal destiny of the soul and eschewing the need for addressing material conditions in the here and now—interpreted essentially

as a Western conservative agenda for African Pentecostalism. The opposite school of thought is one which sees African Pentecostalism as a device for renegotiating political, economic, and traditional disadvantages in Africa. To summarize,

Both of these assertions constitute the heart of the instrumentalist discourse, a discourse that explores how religion serves as an instrument to achieve other goals that provides political, economic, and psychological adjustments to new realities by vested interests. This discourse is prominently functionalist in its interpretation of the role of religion in the public space [...] The instrumentalist discourse tends to emphasize only the external contributions to African Pentecostalism, questioning the creativity of Africans in the Pentecostal explosion.¹⁵

Applying these approaches to the involvement of African Pentecostals in issues of war and peace, in light of Kalu's critique above, may seem like a colonial project. We argue instead, though, that the discourse may be reclaimed to foreground African initiative and agency in the narratives, and to chart alternative patterns for the engagement of African Pentecostals in the political questions that rend the societies in which they live.

A Levels of Analysis Approach

The subject matter of the study of IR is so broad and widely differing that it encompasses various fields of human endeavor and involves expertise relating to multiple academic disciplines, including politics, economics, philosophy, sociology, medical and health sciences, anthropology, geography, demography, engineering, technology, and other arts and sciences. The density of the subject has necessitated scholars within the discipline to propose and adopt several schemas for organizing the phenomena under study, and for developing conceptual and theoretical explanations.¹⁶ The levels of analysis approach has long been basic to this enterprise, as it highlights both the challenges of classifying and organizing data, and advances the prospects of developing a holistic scheme for a rounded understanding of IR.

Levels of analysis in IR denotes the units of information that we choose to focus upon whenever we approach an understanding of IR phenomena, whatever the specific subject might be. These units may also be considered perspectives from which analysts "untangle the intricacies" of the study of foreign policy, international law, and other complex subjects of IR.¹⁷ Most scholars recognize three broad levels of analysis: the individual, the state/national/societal level, and the international/interstate/global level.¹⁸ At the individual level of analysis, IR scholars are interested in the individuals involved in decision-making in international affairs—their personalities, motivations, ideologies, social and political background, organizational contexts, cognitive and psychological processes, and related factors. At the state or national level of analysis, the analyst becomes interested in probing dynamics including the type

of government, geography, natural resources, social configurations, group relations, ideology, social cleavages including ethnicity, religion, and class politics, and so on. The international level of analysis is sometimes bifurcated to separate interstate matters, as in bilateral, regional and multilateral factors from global dynamics such as globalization, interdependence, international law and global norms amongst others. The level of analysis approach thus makes it possible for students of IR to develop a high degree of analytical sophistication by nuancing description and explanation in such a way that linear and deterministic explanations are eschewed in favor of in-depth cross-factor analysis which elucidates the subject.

Employing this approach in this chapter therefore allows us to conceive of Pentecostalism on the one hand and conflict and peace in Africa on the other as dynamic phenomena which have individual formal/informal aspects, as well as international dimensions which create patterns that cannot be ignored. In other words, Pentecostalism's role in conflict and peace is both a local experience where it is found, as well as being embedded in international processes and trajectories which enlighten and complicate our analysis. Following from this, the chapter proceeds from the international level of analysis to the state level and then on to individual level analysis, with recourse to a couple of case studies. We consider first the specific African context for conflict and peace in the post-colonial era, charting continental patterns manifested as state level deformities to be found mirrored in similar African cases. The global forces of colonialism and decolonization, the Cold War and its end, market liberalization, and the resultant economic crises are explored as forming intimate narratives within the consideration of explanations for the explosion of conflicts across Africa in the postcolonial period. Exploring this level of analysis leads us to develop an organizing schema for African conflicts in the period. At the same time as these global movements, state/national-level leadership crises, societal cleavages, institutional weaknesses, and peculiar social configurations become implicated in the analysis of the (mis)use of Pentecostalism in the specific Ugandan conflict investigated. Eventually, we arrive at the individual level of analysis by which we explore an individual's narrative of involvement in the transformation of social conflict, occasioned by the racial politics of apartheid which permeated South Africa's Pentecostal movement, into peaceful alternatives. The chapter concludes by drawing together the themes that are evident in the discourse on Pentecostalism's role in conflict and peace on the African continent.

POSTCOLONIAL AFRICA IN CRISIS: THE CONTEXT AND TAXONOMIES OF CONFLICT

When the states of Africa burst onto the world stage in the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s, they bristled and brimmed with much hope that their newly achieved sovereign status would be engaged in determining a bright destiny for their peoples. Independence had been fought for on the platform of achieving self-rule, which was to be a basis for democracy, which in turn would

lead to development and the good life for every African. The “founding fathers” of the various African states rode to political power on the wings of these expectations, as the continent held its breath, waiting to exhale in satisfaction when the promises and dividends of independence began to accrue.¹⁹

But this was not to be. Long before independence, the stresses and tensions that would truncate these aspirations were already apparent in many African nations. These internal stresses were embedded by the twin facts of their ancient precolonial existences and by the arbitrariness and violence of the “colonial situation,” to use Georges Balandier’s term for the complex of relationships between the colonizers and the colonized.²⁰ The states that were created by the invading colonialists were not designed to advance democracy and development; rather they had been designed for colonial administrative convenience, to stifle dissent, and to evacuate productive goods, not domesticate their benefits. Previously autonomous groups were thrown together into single state units, while previously unitary systems were splintered and scattered across state lines. The people who were affected by this arbitrariness were neither consulted nor given a choice about their ultimate fate and destinations.

Furthermore, the apparatus of the modern European state had been superimposed on ancient societies,²¹ old societies, new states, as famously captioned by Clifford Geertz,²² that operated a different logic, creating fundamental disjunctures that could not be reconciled in the short term. Ekeh theorizes that it was the “colonial ideologies of legitimation” that resulted in a bifurcation of legitimating authority in society, creating two realms of society, the civic and the primordial, which began to operate different moralities.²³ The important implication of this dynamic was that “citizenship [in postcolonial African states] has acquired a variety of meanings, which depend on whether it is conceived in terms of the primordial public or the civic public.”²⁴ Therefore, the relationship of the citizen to the state in Africa was deeply flawed from the very beginning, leading to a subversion of the ideal-typical state–society relationship proposed by the theories of social contract which had been relevant in providing philosophical justification for various forms of rule in seventeenth- to nineteenth-century Europe and America.

The African state for its part played out this dynamic in specific ways. Soon after independence, many African heads of states reneged on the promise of democracy: they averred that African states needed to pursue their own trajectories for achieving development; that unity against external interference was critical for this purpose; and that the one-party state would be the most appropriate vehicle for this.²⁵ Powerful leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah, Sekou Toure, and Julius Nyerere lined up behind these tenets and attempted to mobilize national momentum in support of them. Inevitably, these leaders who had witnessed and condemned the violent, divide-and-rule, and exploitative modus operandi of the colonial state themselves soon began to replicate its violent methods and paternalistic ideology.

The result was catastrophic across the African continent. Indeed, the descent into chaos was spectacular, signaled most especially by widespread political

instability occasioned by disputed elections, coups and countercoups, internal and internecine wars, the breakdown of state authority everywhere, and the death and impoverishment of African peoples. Three broad time periods are obvious in the examination of African political conflicts, depicting what we may call “generations” of wars based on the major differences in the rationales for them. First, there were the liberation wars and decolonization struggles against external or externally imposed colonial authorities, fought from the early 1950s until the 1990s, or well into the present if one counts the continuing struggles of Western Sahara for emancipation from Morocco. Second, there were the post-independence wars beginning with the Congo rebellions from 1963, undergirded by challenges to the authority of states and by state failures—wars also stretching well into the 1990s. However, the rationale and nature of warfare changed across Africa from about 1990 to the present, in the third generation of wars: this was the age of intense internal conflict, fought for a variety of local objectives, and producing the highest civilian bombardment and casualty rates ever. In between these periods, we may further nuance the nature of these wars. Crawford Young proposes that before the 1990s there were three time phases of African conflicts, and within each of these three a further bifurcation may be perceived such that (a) liberation struggles are of two types, those against the European colonialists, and those resisting attachment to existing states after colonization, for example Western Sahara (Morocco) and Eritrea (Ethiopia); (b) wars of “failed independence” as in Angola and the Congo, and separatist wars resisting exclusion within failed constitutional arrangements, as in southern Sudan and Biafra (Nigeria); and (c) “reform insurgencies,”²⁶ calling for “remaking of the state” such as in Uganda, and of the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) in Mozambique.²⁷ However, beginning with the Liberian insurgency that started on Christmas Day of 1989, Africa entered a new phase of internal, non-ideological, gruesomely violent conflicts, unprecedented in many ways. Table 15.1 summarizes the taxonomy derived from the discussion above.

For the sake of analytical clarity as we proceed with the rest of this chapter, we will focus mainly on internal conflicts, excluding those conflicts that were interstate wars or wars fought between the national armies of two countries.²⁸ A survey of conflicts across post-independence Africa therefore informs the following. In North Africa, war began in Sudan as early as 1955, a few months before independence, and in Algeria in 1991. In the Horn of Africa, Eritrea fought from 1972 and Djibouti from 1991. In the Great Lakes region, Burundi had its first named genocide in 1972, followed by a civil war that began in 1993, Rwanda in 1990, the Uganda insurgency in 1980, and Kenya’s Shifta War in 1963, followed more recently by the election crisis of 2007. The Central African region saw the wars of the former Belgian Congo begin in 1960, just a month after independence, of the Republic of Congo from 1997, the Central African Republic from 2003, and Chad in 1965. West Africa’s conflicts included Ghana’s first coup of 1966, Nigeria’s coup of the same year followed by the civil war from 1967, Mauritania and Western Sahara from 1970, Mali from 1962, Liberia from 1989, Niger from 1990, Sierra Leone from 1991, Côte

Table 15.1 Taxonomy of generations of African conflicts, 1950s–2010s

<i>Generations</i>	<i>Types^a</i>	<i>Sub-types^a</i>	<i>Examples^b</i>
First	Liberation/ decolonization wars	Wars for decolonization from European powers Wars of resistance to African colonial powers	Algerian war, 1954–1962; Kenya's MauMau war, 1952–1960 Western Sahara/Morocco, 1970–present; Eritrea/ Ethiopia, 1961–1991
Second	Post-independence/ wars of state failure	Wars of failed independence Separatist wars Reform insurgencies	Angola, 1975–2002; Chad, 1966–2002 Biafra/Nigeria, 1967–1970 Uganda, 1973–1986 Liberia, 1989–2003
Third	Post 1989 conflicts		

^aTypes are not used here in the Weberian sense of ideal-type constructs, but rather simply as classes or categories in the taxonomy

^bThe dates provided in this column are not given as an endorsement of any conflict party's claim to dates of relevance, and are merely indicative of the dates generally agreed in the literature and by the international community as either starting or ending the wars. These dates also ignore the resurgence and current continuation of some of the conflicts or where the parties to the conflict in a particular instance have changed

d'Ivoire from 2002, Guinea's 2013 clashes, and the Gambia's recent (2016) election crisis. Southern Africa saw Zimbabwe's war from 1964, Mozambique's civil war from 1971, Angola's from 1974, and Namibia's Caprivi war of 1994.²⁹ But of equal analytical importance are the rebel insurgencies of groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army of Uganda and Nigeria's Boko Haram, which emerged with mixed and only partially political objectives, defying quick resolution as a result.

Unquestionably so, the massive cost of these wars in human lives, reversal of infrastructural and socioeconomic development, stagnation of growth, and weakening of democratic political institutions and processes can neither be quantified nor qualified. It was not only political, ethnic, and racial differences that created these conflicts; research has shown that the economic collapse of the 1970s onwards and the structural adjustment policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank from the 1980s contributed in no small measure to the unrest across much of Africa in the decades after independence.³⁰ Additionally, the power play of global powers during the Cold War fueled many of the conflicts listed above, most signally the Congo War, which posed the first threat to the decolonization process in Africa and tested the solidarity of the Western powers. Just as equally, the end of the Cold War escalated many internal divisions within African states, divisions which also splintered into various crises and wars, and the withdrawal of Cold War support in this period produced violently contested resource conflicts, amongst other variables.

Still, we note that at the same time that these dynamics were unfolding on political and social fronts across the continent, Pentecostal movements were also growing according to certain underlying forces, shaped by internal and

external factors that created the conditions for the spread and vibrancy of the movement. In the succeeding sections we explore state level interactions between Pentecostals and political conflict via the particular case of Uganda; and then proceed to the individual level of analysis by exploring individual Pentecostals attenuating political conflict in South Africa.

PENTECOSTALS IN CONFLICT AND PEACE: CASES FROM UGANDA AND SOUTH AFRICA

When Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Army (NRA) seized power in Uganda in 1986, it was the culmination of several years of fractional rebel fighting to oust the brutal and grossly incoherent successive regimes of Idi Amin Dada, Milton Obote, and Tito Okello. Influenced by the revolutionary ideas of Walter Rodney and Franz Fanon especially,³¹ and inspired by his participant observation of the revolutionary movement in northern Mozambique, Museveni was archetypal of the emerging category of African "reform rebels" mentioned above,³² who sought to contest the tyrannical states that had developed under the nationalist class that ousted the colonialists in previous decades. Their struggles, referred to as Africa's "second liberation" wars,³³ were framed as necessary to liberate their peoples from indigenous "colonialism" and gross misrule by authoritarian rulers, who had neglected the material conditions of their citizens to the detriment of state and national development.

But this is not the only story of that period in Uganda's history. As Museveni's NRA fought its way from its original base in the Buganda region towards the national capital of Kampala, a spirit-medium named Alice Auma (also known as Alice Lakwena in the literature) also emerged with a specific and very different ilk of insurgents. To put this insurgent group in historical context, the Acholi region in northern Uganda had been disadvantaged in Ugandan politics and had suffered targeted political violence that bequeathed an acute sense of persecution and marginalization, which fueled the role of the Acholi people in the insurgencies of the time.³⁴ After Museveni's ascendancy to power in 1986, several Acholi combatants remained active, retreated to Acholi land, and continued to challenge the authority of that government. Several of these groups based in the north eventually formed the Uganda People's Defense Army. However, the return of these combatants to the north created internal conflict as the elders considered them as bearing the revengeful spirits, or *cen*,³⁵ of the people these soldiers had killed in their recent wars.³⁶ In addition, these returning soldiers became notorious for rampaging, looting, and for spreading terror among the local people. Coupled with the documented widespread human rights abuses of the victorious NRA, including targeted rapes of both men and women, the extra-judicial killing of captured rebels, and even the burying of civilians alive,³⁷ the Acholi came to frame their woes as being internal to them and emanating from the gross violation and uncleanness of their land. This cosmology emanated from their long-held traditional ritual and reli-

gious beliefs that attributed good and bad luck to the activities of the spirits in their quotidian lives. This was the fertile soil in which Alice Auma's (and later Joseph Kony's) army must be seen as germinating.

As Heike Behrend has observed, when Alice Auma invited the wandering young soldiers of the Acholi regions to join her organization, she was making a distinct contribution to the Acholi moral and spiritual confusions of the time.³⁸ Alice was possessed by a supposedly Christian spirit, *Lakwena*, which instructed her to purify the land and to form an army for this purpose. Whereas previous Acholi tradition focused on the cleansing of individuals who had killed or committed other grievous harm, Alice's approach of cleansing the land holistically was new and indeed was welcomed by the elders and the people. Many disaffected soldiers joined the Holy Spirit Movement (HSM), with its combat arm the Holy Spirit Mobile Force (HSMF) (both of which she founded), partly because they found meaning in her message but even more pragmatically because they had nothing better to do and the HSMF gave them something to occupy themselves with.³⁹ From Heike Behrend's signal work on the HSM, we learn that the objectives of Alice Auma's HSM were to "remove Museveni's government, to remove all wrong elements from society, and to proclaim the word of the Holy Spirit."⁴⁰

Under the possession and direction of *Lakwena* and other spirits that possessed Alice, she instituted elaborate rituals of cleansing and preparation for war in which all fighters were made to participate. Their combat preparation and field methods reportedly included the singing of hymns, marching in cross formations, and using sanctified stones as bullets. Emphasis was placed on the personal purity of each fighter, and a fighter could only be killed if his soul was not pure.⁴¹ With such teachings as these, and the charismatic leadership of Alice Lakwena, the HSM gained momentum and in the early days recorded significant victories against the government forces. Increasingly, however, the HSM lost massive numbers of soldiers to the fighting, and were eventually routed, having marched to within 50 kilometers of the capital, Kampala.

The residual fighters from the group scattered and joined several other rebel groups, including another HSM founded by Alice's father, Severino Lukoya, one founded by Philip Ojuk, and yet another formed by a relative of Alice's, Joseph Kony. The other movements did not last the onslaught by the government and the internal faultlines that plagued them. However, one group, Joseph Kony's movement which he renamed the Uganda Peoples' Democratic Christian Army (UPDCA), quickly became filled with hardened and disillusioned Acholi former fighters who began to shape the character and objectives of the group in addition to the spiritual elements that had informed the founding of the movement.⁴² Joseph Kony had initially sought to fight the Ugandan government in a bid to establish a government based on the biblical Ten Commandments, and was also known to have elaborate initiation and cleansing rituals that appear to have been effective in the recruitment and retention of fighters. Eventually, the UPDCA was rechristened the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), and this emerged as the remaining formidable fighting opposi-

tion to the NRA, which itself was later renamed the Uganda People's Defence Force under the 1995 constitution. The objectives of the LRA are not very clear, though it has been argued that they are certainly political:

[The LRA] has changed its political goals over time, obfuscated those it has hinted at, and, in general, rarely communicated with the outside world in any way whatsoever. However, we can at least assume that opposition to the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government and a generally negative impact on the government are long-term goals. This is illustrated by the fact that the LRA formed immediately after the NRM takeover, it attacks government troops and strongholds (when possible), and the rare reported comments by Kony and other high-ranking LRA members say as much.⁴³

The government from the beginning employed a heavy-handed approach to the northern Uganda conflict, and this, coupled with the entrenched suspicion of government by the people there, meant the conflict there was prolonged. Very soon, though, the LRA gradually lost the support of the Acholi people as the group turned against its own people and began to loot, rape, kill, and abduct them, especially children and teenagers.

The conflict in northern Uganda between the LRA and the Ugandan government has been cast as one of Africa's forgotten conflicts, but has over the years attracted periodic media attention as well as significant scholarship. This has focused largely on investigating the spiritual, cultural, traditional, and anthropological aspects of the war. The war has claimed thousands of lives, decimated the cattle economy which was foundational to Acholi society, and displaced over a million people as the marauding rebels and the government's scorched earth policy of moving the civilian population into displaced persons camps drove the local population off their ancestral land.⁴⁴ The war also cost the country economically, as it has had to devote huge portions of the national budget to the military operations in northern Uganda over the course of more than two decades.

Several peace initiatives were attempted, including one prominent effort by the Christian leaders of the country. This effort failed, not least because of the government's suspicion of, and lack of support for, the initiative. Other significant internal and external efforts at mediating the conflict and bringing the humanitarian consequences and political situation to an end did not yield much success. Joseph Kony consistently refused to meet mediators directly, and the LRA consistently continued its campaign of calumny and to violate the various ceasefires called by the government. The Ugandan government's decision to submit Joseph Kony to the International Criminal Court in 2005 did nothing to resolve the issues. Complicating matters was the regional nature that the conflict exhibited. From the beginning of the conflict in the late 1980s, the LRA had found a ready ally in the government of Sudan, which had cause to support Museveni's enemies because he had in turn been giving support to the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in southern Sudan.⁴⁵ Unsurprisingly, then, the LRA had solid bases across the border in southern Sudan, this being

allowed by the Sudanese government, which also gave other varied support to the group. After extensive interventions, though, in 2006, the governments of both Sudan and Uganda finally agreed to stop supporting each other's rebel groups. But this did not end the LRA conflict. Rather, the group dispersed and seemed to metastasize; it carried out attacks until very recently in Sudan and in the neighboring countries of Central African Republic, the Republic of Congo, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

It is indeed very tough to cast the long drawn-out insurgency of the LRA as a "Christian war," but the engagement of Christian cosmology, symbols, and rituals makes this case relevant for investigating the potentials of African societies that are rent apart by various other factors—political, economic, ethnic, historical—to utilize religion for political and other mobilization. At times, the result of such mobilization is the conflagration of overt conflict as seen in the northern Uganda case discussed here; at other times, the influence of religion and religious groups is more subtle, both in fueling conflict, and in mediating peace.

Pentecostals and other Christians have been a part of Africa's conflict landscape sometimes as individuals or as groups, organizations, or churches. Individuals certainly demonstrate by their actions either agency or victimhood in their responses to social and political conflict in their countries. We take as a study here the specific case of Johan Mostert, who in the *Canadian Journal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity* tells his moving experience as a natal Afrikaner and church leader in apartheid South Africa.⁴⁶ He narrates how these positions shaped his perception of his country's politics and how he and other church leaders were on the one hand implicated in, and contributory to, apartheid politics, and by extension the violence experienced by black South Africans—including even by known fellow black church leaders and members; and on the other hand how they became agents for conflict transformation, healing and reconciliation for the Apostolic Faith Mission, the largest Pentecostal church in South Africa,⁴⁷ using their positions of privilege and office to effect needed change. Working from the church's Department of Welfare Services, Mostert took the bold step of tendering the first known public apology to the black church for the treatment meted out to them by the white church, and then progressively took steps to bridge the gap between the white and black churches.⁴⁸ Analyzing his trajectory using Leon Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory,⁴⁹ and Sue and Sue's framework,⁵⁰ Mostert shows how this was a profoundly painful personal and psychological journey for him, and it had its attendant social costs too. It is important to note, though, that Mostert's journey was greatly facilitated by the tectonic shifts that were taking place in the national sociopolitical arena. It was the snowballing of apartheid police brutality and township violence in the late 1970s, all across the country that first amplified for him the illegitimacy of the system. Then later, as Nelson Mandela was released from prison and democratic change was effected at the turn of the 1990s, the necessary space was created for the conversation of white church leaders with black church leaders, and the changes that he was able to participate in creating, together with them.

This important personal narrative from South Africa brings into relief two compulsory ingredients needed for Pentecostals' involvement in conflict transformation and societal change: individual willingness and readiness to reconsider the positions ascribed to the self and to the other, and to see these positions not as given, but as malleable and changeable; and second, a suitably enabling environment external to the self—organizational, social, and political—to enable progress, and for personal efforts to appropriately yield expected dividends.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has stated the fact that from antiquity religion has been one of the most implicated factors in international and intra-state conflicts, terrorism, and violence around the world. There has been considerable interaction between politics and religion since the sixteenth century, when religion played a prominent role in the political domain and displayed the capacity to douse war, transform it, provoke conflict, and fuel it, depending on how agency and structural conditions manifested themselves at the time. The chapter has considered Pentecostalism's relationship to conflict and peace as a tree with two branches, pacifist and endorser roles; that is, having the legitimate potential either to mediate or to support war. Uniquely, we have aimed to present the Pentecostal movement as not merely a product of the contexts explored, but as a phenomenon with its own movements, rhythms, and cadences outside the contexts. Furthermore, whereas African Pentecostalism has been perceived as a colonial project, we have argued that African Pentecostalism plays a major role in charting the society in which Africans live today. The levels of analysis approach employed draws attention to the fact that activities of Pentecostals in conflict and peace cannot be well articulated within one level without consideration of the others, framing Pentecostalism in this mould as a dynamic phenomenon with individual-formal/informal aspects, as well as international dimensions, which create patterns which cannot be ignored.

The cases explored give us certain perspectives that may enrich our analysis and theorizing about the role of Pentecostalism and of religion more broadly in conflict and peace on the African continent. In the Ugandan case, as in much of Africa, Pentecostalism emerges as a really complex and troubling label for the philosophy of the LRA, because we find that it is mixed with charisma, traditional rituals, and politics into a deadly cocktail that has defied solutions for decades and destroyed the lives and livelihoods of millions of people in the region. The lessons for scholarship are therefore that even in more subtle cases we must be alert to the ways in which Pentecostalism presents itself as a much more complex reality than the textbook definitions attributed to it. Many cases on the African continent challenge the boundaries of what is Pentecostalism, and what is otherwise. Ultimately, however, our analysis shows that when individuals exercise agency within this vibrant and complex context to produce positive outcomes, Pentecostalism is truest to its name and to Christian ideals.

NOTES

1. Jeffrey Haynes, ed. *The Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 5, emphasis added.
2. Mark Gopin, "Religion, Violence and Conflict Resolution" *Peace and Change*, 22 no 1 (1997): 1–31; John D. Brewer, Gareth I. Higgins and Francis Teeney, "Religion and Peacemaking: A Conceptualization" *Sociology*, 44 no 6 (2010): 1019–1037; Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*. (Cambridge: Polity, 2005); Mary Ann Cejka and Thomas Bamat. Eds. *Artisans of Peace: Grassroots Peacemaking Among Christian Communities* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003); Jeffrey Haynes, "Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building: The Role of Religion in Mozambique, Nigeria and Cambodia," *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 47 no 1 (2009): 52–75, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14662040802659033>.
3. Alex Thomson, *An Introduction to African Politics*. 3rd edn (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 65.
4. Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).
5. Allan Anderson similarly groups classical Pentecostals together with African Independent Churches (AICs). See Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 103–104.
6. Stephen Ellis and Gerrie Ter Haar, "Taking African Epistemologies Seriously," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 45 no 3, September (2007): 385–401, 390; cf Ruth Marshall, *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 17–19.
7. Zachary Michael Tackett, "As Citizens of Heaven: Peace, War and Patriotism among Pentecostals in the United States During World War I," *Canadian Journal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity*, 4 (2013): 27–43.
8. See Jay Beaman, *Pentecostal Pacifism: The Origin, Development, and Rejection of Pacific Belief among the Pentecostals* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009). Paul Alexander, *Peace to War: Shifting Allegiances in the Assemblies of God* (Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing House, 2009).
9. Tackett, *As Citizens of Heaven*, 27.
10. Tackett, *As Citizens of Heaven*, 31; Paul Alexander, *Peace to War*.
11. Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998).
12. Lawrence Cline, "Spirits and the Cross: Religiously Based Violent Movements in Uganda," *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 14 no 2 (2003): 113–130, 114–115. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592310412331300706>; See especially Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role*; Jeff Haynes, *Religion and Politics in Africa* (London: Zed Books, 1996).
13. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 187.
14. Kalu, 187.
15. Kalu, 188.
16. Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *International Relations*, 9th edn (New York: Pearson Longman, 2010).
17. John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, 12th edn (New York: McGrawHill, 2008).

18. See J. David Singer, "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations," *The International System: Theoretical Essays*, Klaus Knorr and Sidney Verba, eds, 77–92 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961).
19. It is pertinent to note here that states such as Ethiopia and Liberia, which were not formally colonized by the Europeans in the first half of the twentieth century, did not escape any of the dynamics discussed in this section, as they equally had to grapple with similar problems and exhibited similar features to the rest of the continent.
20. Georges Balandier, "La Situation Coloniale: Approche Theorique" *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie*, 11 (1951): 44–79.
21. See also Jean-Francois Bayart, "Finishing with the Idea of the Third World: The Concept of the Political Trajectory," in *Rethinking Third World Politics*, ed. J. Manor, 51–71. London: Longman, 1991.
22. Clifford Geertz, ed. *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*, New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963.
23. Peter P. Ekeh, "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement" *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 17 no 1 (1975): 91–112, 96, 100.
24. Ekeh, Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa, 106.
25. Crawford Young, "The Third Wave of Democratisation in Africa: Ambiguities and Contradictions," In *State, Conflict and Democracy in Africa*, edited by Richard Joseph, 15–38 (Boulder and London: Lynne Reinner, 1999). See also Adebayo Olukoshi, *Democratic Governance and Accountability in Africa: In Search of a Workable Framework*, Discussion Paper 64 (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2011).
26. A term seemingly originating with Christopher Clapham; see Christopher Clapham, "Introduction: Analysing African Insurgencies," in *African Guerillas*, ed. Christopher Clapham, 1–18 (Oxford: James Currey, 1998); also used by Crawford Young, see note 27.
27. Crawford Young, *The Postcolonial State in Africa: Fifty Years of Independence, 1960–2010*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012, 228–244.
28. Classic interstate wars have been rare in Africa, relative to the proliferate intra-state wars outlined in this chapter. William Reno provides a summary of these in one short table. See William Reno, *Warfare in Independent Africa*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011, 23.
29. List of wars in Africa compiled from numerous sources.
30. See Crawford Young, "The Third Wave of Democratisation in Africa"; Olukoshi, *Democratic Governance and Accountability in Africa*.
31. Yoweri Museveni, *Sowing the Mustard Seed* (London: Macmillan, 1997); Yoweri Museveni, "Fanon's Theory on Violence: Its Verification in Liberated Mozambique," in *Essays on the Liberation of Southern Africa*, ed. Nathan Shamuyarira (Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1971), 1–24; Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963).
32. William Reno, *Warfare in Independent Africa*, 7.
33. Larry Diamond, "The Second Liberation," *Africa Report*, 37 no 6 (1992): 38–41; Reno, *ibid.*, 119.
34. See Amii Omara-Otunnu, "The Struggle for Democracy in Uganda," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 30 no 3 (1992): 443–463; Robert Gersony, "The Anguish of Northern Uganda: Results of a Field- Based Assessment of the Civil

- Conflicts in Northern Uganda,” Kampala: Report Submitted to the United States Embassy and USAID Mission, Kampala, 1997.
35. Finnstrom explicates *cen* thus: “*Cen*, for example, is the spiritual power of people who have died violently. p’Bitek translates *cen* as ‘vengeance ghost’ or sometimes ‘ghostly vengeance’ ... Odoki uses the term ‘troublesome spirit’ ... and Behrend describes it as spirits of people who ‘had died by violence or abroad and received no decent burial and thus, thirsting for vengeance, sought to afflict their relatives with disease and misfortune.’” Sverker Finnstrom, “Wars of the Past and War in the Present: The Lord’s Resistance Movement/Army in Uganda,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 76, no 2 (2006): 200–220, 204; cf. Okot p’Bitek, *Religion of the Central Luo*. (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1971); Sabino Ocan Odoki, *Death Rituals among the Lwos: Their Significance for the Theology of Death* (Gulu: Gulu Catholic Press, 1997); Heike Behrend, *Alice Lakwena and the Holy Spirits: War in Northern Uganda 1986–1997* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1999).
 36. Kevin C. Dunn, “The Lord’s Resistance Army and African International Relations,” *African Security*, 3 no 1 (2010): 46–63.
 37. See Amnesty International, *Uganda: the Failure to Safeguard Human Rights* (London: Amnesty International, 1992); Ogenga Otunnu, “Causes and Consequences of the War in Acholiland,” Conciliation Resources, London, available at: <http://www.c-r.org/accord-article/causes-and-consequences-war-acholiland-2002>, accessed 17-05-2017.
 38. Behrend, *Alice Lakwena and the Holy Spirits*.
 39. Finnstrom, Wars of the Past and War of the Present, 205.
 40. Behrend, 3; In the words of Lawrence Cline, “Spirits and the Cross: Religiously Based Violent Movements in Uganda,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 14 no 2 (2003): 113–130, 117.
 41. These were referred to as “Holy Spirit Tactics.” See Heike Behrend, “War in Northern Uganda: The Holy Spirit Movements of Alice Lakwena, Severino Lukoya, and Joseph Kony (1986–1997),” in *African Guerrillas*, ed. Christopher Clapham (Oxford: James Currey, 1998).
 42. Anthony Vinci, “The Strategic Use of Fear by the Lord’s Resistance Army,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 16 no 3 (2005): 360–381, 363–364; Frank Van Acker, “Uganda and the Lord’s Resistance Army: the New Order No One Ordered,” *African Affairs* 103 (2004): 348.
 43. Anthony Vinci, The Strategic Use of Fear.
 44. Kevin C. Dunn, The Lord’s Resistance Army and African International Relations.
 45. Kevin Ward, “‘The Armies of the Lord’: Christianity, Rebels and the State in Northern Uganda, 1986–1999,” *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 31 no 2 (2001): 187–221, 190, 193.
 46. Johan Mostert, “White Cultural Identity Development in Post-Apartheid South Africa: A Personal Narrative,” *Canadian Journal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity*, 4 (2013): 44–60.
 47. Mostert, 45.
 48. A public apology is an important part of the toolkit of transitional justice mechanisms. It is usually coupled with compensations, truth commissions, and reparations when offered by the state to victims of widespread human rights abuses, and can constitute the difference between the satisfaction of victims and the

- prolonging of their psychological suffering. See: Megan Bradley, "The Conditions of Just Return: State Responsibility and Restitution for Refugees," *Refugee Studies Centre Working Paper No 21*, Oxford: Refugee Studies Centre, 2005; Pablo de Greiff, "The Role of Apologies in National Reconciliation Processes" in *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past*, eds Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassman, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007; Mark S. Ellis and Elizabeth Hutton, "Policy Implications of World War II Reparations and Restitution as applied to Former Yugoslavia," *Berkeley Journal of International Law*, 20 no 1 (2002): 342–354; Megan Hirst, "An Unfinished Truth: An Analysis of the Commission of Truth and Friendship's Final Report on the 1999 atrocities in East Timor," *International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) Occasional Paper Series*. New York: ICTJ/Komnas Perempuan/KKPK, 2009; Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso, "Presidential Apologies, Truth Commissions and Post War Reparations as Tools of Transitional Justice in Liberia," In *Critical Perspectives on Peace, Conflict and Warfare in Africa: Festschrift in Honour of Siyan Oyeweso*, Eds. Olutayo Adesina, Olukoya Ogen, Noah E. Attah. (Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press, 2012), 353–370.
49. Leon Festinger, *When Prophecy Fails: A Social and Psychological Study of a Modern Group that Predicted the Destruction of the World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956).
 50. Derald Wing Sue and David Sue, *Counselling the Culturally Diverse: Theory & Practice*, 6th edn (New York: John Wiley Publishers, 2013).



Leadership and Power in the Pentecostal Movement: Selected Case Studies

Afolarin Olutunde Ojewole and Efe Monday Ehioghbae

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of Pentecostalism may be conceived to have an eclectic origin. Pentecostal historian Augustus Cerillo argues that any serious attempt to understand the origin of the Pentecostal movement must be approached from at least four perspectives. First, there is what he describes as *providential*: a belief that the movement came “from heaven” through the unexpected, simultaneous, and spontaneous manifestation of the Holy Spirit, reminiscent of the Pentecostal experience in Acts 2 and referred to as the “latter rain” experience. Second is the *historical* view, which posits that the movement is a continuity of nineteenth-century revivalist Christianity, characterized by the Methodist and Holiness movements. The third strand proposes a *multicultural* approach, which sees Pentecostalism as originating in multiple cultural and religious factors. Fourth, the *functional* or *sociological* approach looks at the function of Pentecostalism in a given social milieu as a means to understanding its emergence.¹

Corroborating the view that the emergence of Pentecostalism was occasioned by providence, Kay points out that “it is impossible to write Pentecostal history without reference to providence.”² This position may, however, be criticized for its assertiveness and its tendency to discount or ignore sociological causes for its origin, which could equally, at least partially, explain Pentecostalism’s emergence. The Azusa Street experience, a watershed for modern Pentecostalism, lends credence to the belief that its beginnings have a

A. O. Ojewole (✉) • E. M. Ehioghbae
Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Nigeria

sociological slant. It has been rightly observed that North American Pentecostalism, typified by the Azusa Street outpouring of the Holy Spirit, was a revolutionary movement where the marginalized, the dispossessed, and social outcasts were brought together on the same spiritual platform of equality without allowing race, gender, or class to play a divisive role.³ The sociological or functional dimension to the burgeoning of the Pentecostal movement is also identifiable in continents, such as Africa, where poverty and its attendant social dislocations are rampant.⁴

Quite significant is the view that African religious leaders are intensely interested in charismatic power, particularly as demonstrated by prophets and priests as well as the Apostles, in Biblical narratives.⁵ Instructively, Thornton mentions some of the religious movements/figures who perhaps found inspiration from these Biblical narratives and whose *modus operandi* bore the charismatic imprimatur. They include a priestly figure such as Beatriz in Angola, and Nxele and Ntsikana among the Xhosa. Other leaders such as Wade Harris, Garrick Braide, and examples from West Africa claimed to be endowed with prophetic powers to heal and perform miracles.⁶ Many of these charismatic leaders still litter the religious landscape of Africa, particularly Nigeria, steering mammoth ecclesiastical organizations with strong leadership and power structures. This may explain their increasing visibility in the political space and sometimes the subtle but salient roles they play in the political life of a nation.

Whereas Pentecostalism is a global phenomenon, the focus of this inquiry is on its dominant manifestation on the African continent, using selected churches as case studies. The churches, namely the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Winners' Chapel (aka, Living Faith Church Worldwide), and the Synagogue Church of all Nations (SCOAN), have been selected because of their high visibility in both the Nigerian and African religious landscape and their transnational influence. Particular consideration will be given to the leadership and power structures of the churches to be examined. The phenomenal growth of Pentecostalism in Africa is a subject that elicits the interest of missionaries, social scientists, and political pundits. What could account for the explosive growth of Pentecostalism, particularly in Nigeria? It would be interesting to know whether the huge increase in membership could be attributed solely to leaders' charisma or some other factors such as political connections. Is there a nexus between religion and politics that could have served as an impetus? Other critical areas of interrogation in this chapter will include the type of powers exercised by Pentecostal leaders and their position (ecclesiastical, personal or political, or a hybrid).

The plethora of definitions of leadership make it difficult to have a unified view on the concept. Stogdill avers that there are as many definitions of leadership as those who have attempted to define it. Even though definitions of leadership appear to be illusive, effective leadership is intuitively easily recognized when manifested, partly as a result of experience and learning.⁷ The view that leaders are born is based on the trait theory of leadership, which emphasizes the personality of the individual.⁸ However, the idea that leaders are born

is enmeshed in controversy. Of course, some individuals may have leadership traits but it is increasingly being recognized that leadership is a learned process. Some leadership experts theorize leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of persons to achieve a common goal.⁹ The key words are “influence” and “persuasion,” which cause others to respond in a shared direction.¹⁰ Leaders have been described as action oriented and achievement oriented toward the good of the organization.¹¹ However, this is not always the case, since some leaders are self-serving; this is in line with the agency theory of leadership.¹² Leaders who focus on the good of employees and the organization are regarded as stewards.¹³ It is expected that church leaders should be stewards and not agents.

Power and leadership are interrelated but are not the same. Power may be conceived as influence; that is, the capacity or potential to bring about desired outcomes by harnessing the efforts of others. Among the different kinds of power that may be identified, position and personal powers are considered here. Position power is associated with the power given by holding a particular office, position, or rank in an organization.¹⁴ The organization may be ecclesiastical or otherwise. Conversely, personal power is derived from interpersonal relationships, specifically between the leader and the followers.¹⁵ Power is a two-edged sword: it can be used altruistically for the benefit of the organization or selfishly for personal aggrandizement. Church leaders are perceived to have a large dose of both position and personal powers, which can be used either way—beneficially or egoistically.

PREVIEW OF PENTECOSTALISM IN AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

The emergence of Pentecostalism in African Christianity represents a tectonic shift from the spiritualities of the so-called early missionary churches, giving them new identities and approaches to mission. It has, to a large extent, changed the religious landscape of the continent, leading some religious prognosticators to speculate that Pentecostalism will be the future of the Christian church in Africa and elsewhere. The phenomenal impact of Pentecostalism on African Christianity underscores its potential to provide the primary texture for the church globally. Sociologists and missionaries claim that Pentecostals only represented 6% of all Christians in the 1980s.¹⁶ Today, however, that number has rocketed to 26%. Given the accessions to Pentecostalism globally as reported by the Pulitzer Center, which estimates that 35,000 people join Pentecostal churches every day, it is easy to agree with some researchers who predict that there will be 1 billion Pentecostals in the world by 2025.¹⁷ All this clearly shows that Pentecostals are by no means on the fringes of society. On the contrary, they wield enormous influence in the ecclesiastical world as well as in the world of politics; they are no longer the flotsam and jetsam of society.

Perhaps there is no other continent where Pentecostalism has experienced effervescent growth and expansion as in Africa. Indeed, Nigeria may be regarded as a microcosm of Pentecostal renaissance: it is a melting pot where

the movement has received great impetus through charismatic leaders who wield huge ecclesiastical and political influence. What seems to be self-evident in the Pentecostal movement is the defining and definitive role that many of their leaders play. A cursory look at African Pentecostalism will immediately reveal an array of such leaders who are regarded by their acolytes with reverential awe (which sometimes borders on deification).

The reason for this may not be difficult to find. As pointed out by researchers, Pentecostal leaders often evince strong spiritual authority that emanates from the perception that an individual who dons the toga of ecclesiastical leadership must be extraordinary, superhuman or supernatural.¹⁸ Such powers or qualities are not accessible to the ordinary person because they are seen as of divine origin.

It may be a fruitless effort to mention all the denominations with Pentecostal identities. Whereas Pentecostal churches (such as Assemblies of God originating from the USA) that may be labeled classical or mission-related have gained much prominence in the continent of Africa, even more impactful are the African-initiated ones.¹⁹ There is a litany of blossoming Pentecostals under this category. A few examples include the huge independent New Pentecostal Churches such as Mensa Otabil's International Central Gospel Church in Ghana, David Oyedepo's Word of Faith Mission International, or "Winners' Chapel of Nigeria and Andrew Wutawanashe's Family of God in Zimbabwe.

Other Pentecostal churches with Nigerian roots bear mentioning because of their popularity. These include RCCG and SCOAN, under the leadership of Pastor Enoch Adeboye and Prophet Temitope B. Joshua respectively. Nigerian pastor Matthew Ashimolowo's Kingsway International Christian Center in London has been credited as the largest Christian congregation in Western Europe.²⁰

It is commonplace in African countries such as Ghana, Zambia, and Nigeria for politicians to court the friendship of popular charismatic leaders to achieve their political agendas. In Ghana, for example, Bishop Duncan-Williams was not only a close associate of Rawlings but was virtually chaplain to his government.²¹ Frederick Chiluba's declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation when he took office in 1991 has more to it than meets the eye, particularly in a secular, democratic setting. Even as President of Zambia, Chiluba seemed to have a fondness for putting in appearances at Pentecostal crusades and retreats. These spiritual leaders are not infrequently taken by political leaders as key stakeholders in the running of their governments.

POLITICAL BAGGAGE OF NIGERIAN PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES

Pentecostal political theology has morphed through several stages; from redefining the unsavory self-perception of the individual to opening new vistas of hope and confidence, to providing the template to gather the rich promises of the Gospel, and finally empowering it to reclaim, redeem, and liberate the

land.²² Two leaders of mega-Pentecostal Churches, namely Pastor Tunde Bakare of Latter Rain Ministries and Pastor Chris Okotie of Household of God Church International Ministries, contested for the office of president or vice-president of Nigeria in recent history.

Pentecostal churches have changed what Rudolf Otto referred to as “a one-sidedly intellectualistic approach” of orthodox Christianity, which was cerebral.²³ Pentecostals have given Christianity a new identity that recovers the experiential aspects of faith and helps the typical African believer to deal with the existential problems of ill-luck, superstition, witchcraft, demon-possession, and so on, which are part and parcel of the African philosophical worldview. But it may also be argued that the uncritical domestication or contextualization of Christianity to meet the peculiar religious situation of African believers could expose them to syncretistic practices.

Pentecostalism is often associated with the “wealth and health” gospel. Politicians with a penchant for holding on to power seem to recognize the divine mystique often associated with the charismatic Pentecostal leaders and want to exploit it by seeking divine favors through them. This is why the roles played by some of these Pentecostal/charismatic churches in the political arena is both functional and dysfunctional, in the sense that while prayer for political leaders takes place in tandem with biblical injunctions to pray for leaders, it could easily serve as a ruse to aid corrupt politicians.

Significantly, the Nigerian-born Pastor Sunday Adelaja, the founder of Embassy of God Church, Kiev, Ukraine, the largest Pentecostal church in Europe, finds a nexus between political corruption and the wrong concepts that churches in Nigeria are promoting.²⁴ He is adamant that “the church is the major problem with the nation’s stunted growth [...] In some cases, church practices are worse than what the politicians do.”²⁵ As pointed out by Kun, the rot in the church as a result of false teachings and practices might be pushing the weak in faith into atheism. Even though the picture painted by Kun could be over-generalized, it may reflect the unsavory state of some Pentecostal congregations.²⁶

LEADERSHIP AND POWER IN SELECTED PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN NIGERIA

Among the plethora of Pentecostal churches that have hitherto been mentioned there are three that have been identified for inquiry, namely RCCG, Winners’ Chapel (aka Living Faith Church Worldwide), and SCOAN, under the leadership of Pastor Enoch Adeboye, Bishop David Oyedepo, and Prophet T. B. Joshua respectively. They all have leadership, power structures, and influence that go beyond their denominational confines, exhibiting political sinews that may be beneficial or deleterious to society.

The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG)

The origin of the RCCG is as fascinating as it is intriguing. Perhaps for many non-members of the mega-Pentecostal church the founder is none other than Pastor Enoch Adeboye. His larger than life stature within the denominational confines may have obscured Reverend Josiah Olufemi Akindayomi as the real founder of the church. After Akindayomi, who had been a member of the Cherubim and Seraphim, left the church in 1952, he had a vision from which “The Redeemed Christian Church of God” emanated as the church’s official name.²⁷

It was in 1981 that Pastor Adeboye took over the leadership of the church as the General Overseer (GO), with just 40 parishes. Under Pastor Adeboye’s leadership the church has experienced phenomenal growth. Today, RCCG is believed to be the fastest growing Pentecostal church in the world, with well over 6267 parishes and a presence in over 100 countries, established in two decades.²⁸ This extraordinary expansion is probably not unconnected with the leadership of the church.

Leadership and Power Structures of RCCG

The structural configuration of RCCG is complex. But at the apex of the leadership and power structures is the GO, Pastor Enoch Adeboye, who is greatly revered as one who is divinely anointed by God. The church has many administrative units with varying concentrations of power, both in its national and international offices. Next to the GO’s office is the Governing Council, consisting of the seven most senior pastors. This plays an “advisory role, particularly in matters relating to doctrine, discipline, acquisition of property and senior appointments.”²⁹

Significantly, Adeboye as the leader of RCCG is generally believed to have a humble mien, which has endeared him to his parishioners as one they can trust. He is also perceived to be a sincere man of God, who is not self-seeking.³⁰ Having taken a decision early in his ministry to shun self-aggrandizement, he discarded his academic title of “Doctor” in addition to the religious title of “Reverend” with which many of his fellow ecclesiastics adorn their names; thus many see him as truly a humble “servant of God.”³¹ Adeboye has been able to attract social capital to himself through the favorable public image he has cultivated.

In addition, the divine mystique which Adeboye presents allows his followers to implicitly believe that he is in direct touch with God. He seems to have reinforced this perception by the phrases that are common in his sermons and books, such as “God told me,” “My father says,” and “The Lord instructed me.” Indeed, there are those among his parishioners who believe that God speaks to him in plain language, unlike others whom God may choose to communicate with through dreams and visions.³² There are equally many others who perceive him as a miracle worker, believing that whatever he touches

ceases to be ordinary. Ter Haar posits that in African Christianity the prophet–healer–miracle worker is strongly appealing.³³ Adeboye fits this image.

The authority that is ascribed to Adeboye by some of his ardent followers is questionable because it may be construed as appropriating divine prerogatives. His authority is regarded as “supreme, his orders final, and his power and supremacy considered next to Christ.”³⁴ One of his Assistant General Overseers has said, “Adeboye is the God we now see in human flesh; what he tells us we take as coming from God directly. We do not argue with it.”³⁵ Such statements may be identified with the cult of hero-worship.

Another aspect of the leadership and power structures of RCCG is the role assigned to women. As in other Pentecostal churches, in RCCG women play active roles and are accorded equal status with their male counterparts in ministry. There are ordained female pastors who function without discrimination, just like the men.³⁶ In fact, women are permitted to serve as assistant pastors, parish pastors, area pastors, church planters, heads of units, and so on. The wife of the GO, Pastor (Mrs.) Tolu Adeboye (also referred to as Mother-in-Israel), heads the hierarchical structure of female leaders in the church. She may also be considered as the de facto leader of the church, after the GO, because of the responsibilities vested in her that no other person except the GO can perform. Pastor Adeboye and his wife are respectively called “Daddy GO” and “Mummy GO.”³⁷

Below the top hierarchy of the leadership and administration of the church, occupied by Adeboye and his wife, the power grid includes six assistant GOs (AGOs) who co-ordinate different aspects of church life.³⁸ Their wives are known as “mummy AGOs,” and they co-ordinate women’s activities in the church. The lower parts of the leadership pyramid are made up of regional co-ordinators, national elders, provincial co-ordinators/directors, provincial pastors/zonal pastors/area pastors, and pastors/assistant pastors and deacons/deaconesses.³⁹ Despite this complexity in the leadership and power structures of the church everyone seems to know their roles, thus preventing and crisis in leadership. This, of course, is a tacit proof of the administrative and leadership acumen of Pastor Adeboye.

RCCG Impact on Religion and Politics

In the late 1970s, RCCG was among the vociferous voices that condemned the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo, the then military head of state of Nigeria, for hosting FESTAC ’77 (an acronym for the Second World African Festival of Arts and Culture held in 1977), which they considered to be demonic.⁴⁰ However, today, RCCG’s critical voice is no longer ringing so loud, neither is it openly antagonistic of any ruling government. Sometime later, Adeboye famously declared that “God is not a democrat,” meaning democracy as a system may not necessarily be God’s preferred method of governance.⁴¹ In other words, it meets the fallen state of humans but falls short of the original divine blueprint. RCCG has become more politically savvy, politically correct, and religiously pragmatic, so as not to affect the church’s material fortunes.⁴²

There was a well-publicized occasion when President Goodluck Jonathan publicly knelt before Pastor Adeboye to receive some ecclesiastical blessings. The gesture evoked mixed reactions, as there were those who perceived the action of the President as demeaning to his office.⁴³ The year 2015 may be regarded as a watershed for Pentecostals in Nigeria as one of their own, Yemi Osibajo, a pastor of RCCG, was elected as the vice-president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria under the All Progressives Congress (APC) political party. In the present political dispensation, he represents the face of Pentecostalism in national politics.

It has been observed that RCCG is a striking microcosm of the global spread of Pentecostalism in the recent past.⁴⁴ As Ukah rightly notes, there is perhaps no other denomination that illustrates the phenomenon of religious rebranding so well as RCCG, in line with its globalized and transnational agenda.⁴⁵ Soon after Adeboye took over the leadership of the denomination he introduced prosperity teachings and new “model parishes,” as well as replacing Yoruba with English as a language for communicating the gospel.⁴⁶ These initiatives were to have a dramatic transformation on the perception of the church as being parochial, as well as being a masterstroke that attracted the elites and the middle class in academics, business, and politics.⁴⁷

Another area where RCCG has made its presence felt across national boundaries is the deployment of communication technology to disseminate the gospel. It is not surprising that RCCG has become the most popular Nigerian Pentecostal church, with branches spread over 100 countries.⁴⁸ Through the Redeemed Christian Fellowship, an elite group and often for the university educated, RCCG has been able to achieve transnational expansion to the global community in Africa, the UK, the USA, and other places.⁴⁹ RCCG ambitiously aims to cover the world, planting parishes at no more than five minutes’ walking or driving distance from each other.⁵⁰ With the impact of RCCG on religion through its national and transnational agenda, there is little doubt that it has contributed significantly to the perception that “in Nigeria, religion is arguably the country’s second most successful global export after oil.”⁵¹

Living Faith Church Worldwide: History and Leadership

The Living Faith Church Worldwide, also called Winners’ Chapel, was founded by Bishop David Oyedepo after an 18-hour divine vision he had in May 1981 when God called him to liberate the world from oppression through faith preaching. What began in 1983 with four members in Kaduna has spiraled into a Pentecostal neo-charismatic megachurch, a movement with a global network of 5000 congregations located in over 300 cities, in all states of Nigeria, plus 1000 more in 63 other countries across five continents, including Dubai, the UK, and the USA.⁵²

Its international headquarters is called the Faith Tabernacle. It covers about 70 acres (280,000 m²) within an over 10,500-acre (42 km²) church complex called Canaanland in Ota, Ogun State. The structure was finished, totally debt

free, in 1999. Its 50,400 seating capacity and an outside overflow capacity of over 250,000 earned it a place in the *Guinness Book of Records* between 1999 and 2008 as the largest church building in the world.⁵³

As the GO and joint founders, Bishop David Oyedepo and his wife, Pastor Mrs. Florence Abiola Oyedepo (née Akano), were ordained together into gospel ministry by Pastor Dr. Enoch Adeboye, the General Overseer of Redeemed Christian Church of God in 1983. They both have a firm grip on the leadership of their church and its investments. Two of their sons were ordained into gospel ministry by Pastor Dr. Kenneth Copeland, and they are in the leadership and succession plans of this family conglomerate, which has been christened David Oyedepo Ministries International (DOMI).⁵⁴

Oyedepo, a native of Omu-Aran, Kwara State, Nigeria, is the president of DOMI, the umbrella organization comprising Living Faith Church Worldwide; World Mission Agency—the global missionary arm of the church's operations; the Social Development Missions projects (made up of hospitals, maternity homes, schools, etc.); and also the Dominion Publishing House (DPH), founded on December 5, 1992, which has published over 70 books, as well as periodicals, mostly authored by Oyedepo, its chairman/publisher. DPH has more than 4 million books in circulation to date. Also part of DOMI are the Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State; Landmark University, Omu-Aran, Kwara State; and the proposed Crown University, Calabar, Cross Rivers—with Oyedepo as their chancellor/founder. Oyedepo, with a Ph.D. in Human Development from Honolulu University, Hawaii, USA, is also the founder/proprietor of Faith Academy and Kingdom Heritage Schools as well as a ministry training college called The Word of Faith Bible Institute.⁵⁵

These educational outfits influence over 14,000 young people at any given time, providing leadership for tomorrow.⁵⁶ The church also owns and operates a bakery, bottled water processing plant, petrol station, various restaurants and shopping stores, residential houses, guesthouses, housing estate, and a community and micro-finance bank. As a major economic player, the church provides employment for over 20,000 persons. As a leader raising leaders, Oyedepo has influenced the Covenant University Alumni Association, who set up the David Oyedepo Day of Service to promote his contribution and value-adding lifestyle. Yearly, on Oyedepo's September 27 birthday, partners are expected to show an act of contribution to individuals, organizations, or society at large.⁵⁷

Oyedepo, though a qualified architect, has become one of the most renowned figures in the Christian charismatic movement in Africa. During the first week in December of every year, the church headquarters hosts a global event called Shiloh, which is based on Joshua 18:1 and 1 Samuel 1:3. Millions attend yearly, physically, via satellite transmission, and on the church's website, which enjoys its heaviest patronage at that time. This is a tremendous global influence. No wonder Bishop Oyedepo was named in 2011 by *Forbes* magazine as the wealthiest preacher in Nigeria, with a net worth of over \$150 million. He also owns four private jets and several buildings around the world, including in London and the USA.⁵⁸

THE POLITICAL INFLUENCE OF BISHOP OYEDEPO AND LIVING FAITH CHURCH WORLDWIDE

Taking into account the sheer number of his adherents, members, and admirers, no Nigerian government or political leader can reasonably ignore the influence of Bishop David Oyedepo and his Winners' Chapel in the Nigerian religious and political landscape. He is also a leading voice in the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN). Oyedepo is an indefatigable and invincible influencer.

This multi-millionaire cleric comments frequently about political leadership in Nigeria. He has diagnosed the lack of accountability and lack of integrity as the "cancer of our leadership." He recommends leadership by the example of hard work, of heart and conscience, as the greatest need of our time. Bishop Oyedepo's political affiliation is hardly in doubt; he has unabashedly cultivated the friendship of those in the political class.⁵⁹ "Papa Oyedepo, as he is fondly addressed, is the ultimate icon of pulpitarian glamour. The pastorpreneur of pastorpreneurs. The captain of 'churchindustry,' the preacher which other preachers wish to be like and even more. The alpha-priest with an uncanny anointing 'extort-ordinaire.'"⁶⁰

At the height of the sickness of the late Nigerian president, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, in 2010, while his family prevented most of his associates from seeing him, including his vice-president, Goodluck Jonathan, they specifically requested four pastors to come to pray fervently for him at the Presidential Aso Rock. This was three weeks before he died. One of those ministers was Bishop Oyedepo, invited because of the miracles attending his ministry.⁶¹ Oyedepo was also one of the "big" men of God who were called upon to lead the Nigeria National Fasting and Prayer Day in 2013 at the Liberty Stadium, Ibadan, with President Goodluck Jonathan and Senate President David Mark in attendance, praying that Nigeria would experience greater peace, unity, and prosperity.⁶²

In 2014, Bishop Oyedepo furiously told his congregation to kill insurgents, calling them "Islamic demons" who were creating chaos in the northeast of Nigeria, if they saw any of them in the church. He declared: "God has anointed me to lead a revolution against Islamic jihadists ... If you catch anyone that looks like them—kill him! Kill him and pull out his neck. I will spill his blood on the ground. What nonsense!"⁶³ He continued: "If Nigeria waits for the church to rise, Nigeria will disappear as a nation. You mean government cannot protect people? What a mess ... Must the North continue to rule? What devils!"⁶⁴ Furthermore: "All the Northern forces that are sponsoring these uprisings and killings—I decree the curse of God upon them. Lord, if it is Your will to break up Nigeria—break it now!"⁶⁵

When Oyedepo turned 60 on September 27, 2014, the then Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan, congratulated him, thanking him for his contribution to Nigerian education. Former president Olusegun Obasanjo, and the military dictator Yakubu Gowon attended the festivities. "You can see that

everything this man touches turns to gold,” commented Nigeria’s then agriculture minister, Akinwumi Adesina, during the event.⁶⁶

Bishop Oyedepo instructed the delegation of the Lagos chapter of PFN on Tuesday, August 19, 2014 to mobilize their constituencies to register to vote in order to ensure that credible people were elected in public offices. “The church is a strong body in Lagos and across the country ... We need to harness our human resources to create a platform for the church to have a voice,” Oyedepo said.⁶⁷ He added: “We are not going to vote for nonsense this time around. There is no political party in this world that will see the population of the church and ignore it [...] It’s time for the good people to come out and participate in the political process.”⁶⁸

Bishop Oyedepo provided tacit and seemingly open support for the second term bid of President Goodluck Jonathan. When President Jonathan visited Ota Winners Chapel Ministry on January 25, 2015 to seek his support, Oyedepo said: “We will open the gate of hell on those who oppose you.” This was generally interpreted to include all those supporting Jonathan’s opponents at the poll, among others. According to Akinshilo, this comment earned him the title: “Chief Security Officer of the Hell’s Gate.”⁶⁹ Akinshilo recalls the allegation of Pastor Bakare during the 2011 elections that “most of his colleagues sold their conscience.”⁷⁰ “President Jonathan was said to have held a meeting in Abuja with a number of Pentecostal pastors led by Bishop David Oyedepo of Winners Chapel, where he reportedly confessed that “Osinbajo is my problem.”⁷¹

Ewubare alleged that Bishop Oyedepo is “the bishop of politicians.”⁷² He contended that Bishop Oyedepo allowed Goodluck Jonathan to campaign for votes during that visit. Oyedepo prayed and prophesied for the success of Jonathan’s reelection bid. Oyedepo, along with some other Christian religious leaders in CAN and PFN who endorsed Jonathan as their preferred candidate for the 2015 presidential election, purportedly held a meeting at the Redemption Camp of the RCCG in a bid to garner votes for him. However, these endorsements and prophecies failed.⁷³

Bishop Oyedepo instructed his members to bring their permanent voters cards to a Sunday service at the church’s Ota headquarters so that they could be prayed upon ahead of the February 2015 general elections. Church members prayed against violence before, during, and after the elections.⁷⁴ It was reported that on Sunday January 18, 2015, Bishop Oyedepo said in prayer that an Islamist would not become the President of Nigeria in the 2015 polls. He was suggesting indirectly that Muhammadu Buhari, who was the main contender against the incumbent president in the 2015 elections, was a Muslim fundamentalist.⁷⁵

In February 2015, Bishop Oyedepo convened a meeting of Nigerian Christian leaders, but intentionally left out Pastor Yemi Osinbajo. It was alleged that the bishop used the gathering to advocate support for President Jonathan, sometimes expressing vehement anger and outright disrespect for the opposing

views of the other pastors. It was reported that attempts to preach a neutral non-partisan political stance were unpopular in the meeting.⁷⁶

Sometime in February 2015, it was reported that President Goodluck Jonathan met and sought help from a group of Pentecostal pastors led by Bishop David Oyedepo so as to neutralize the effect of the vice-presidential candidate of the APC, Prof Yemi Osinbajo, who was also a leading Pastor of the RCCG and a close confidant of the GO of the church, Pastor E. A. Adeboye. Tactically avoiding a mention of the current national problems, Oyedepo prevailed on his colleagues to encourage and strengthen the president ahead of the elections, while promising to use every device at his disposal including the pulpit to campaign in his support and against the Buhari-Osinbajo ticket.⁷⁷

During the thanksgiving service on February 3, 2016, to celebrate the Supreme Court's validation of the election of the governor of Akwa Ibom state, Udom Emmanuel, Bishop Oyedepo was present with People's Democratic Party (PDP) political bigwigs. Oyedepo boldly declared this validation as the triumph of "light over darkness;" interpreted by pundits as a subtle label: "the PDP administration is the light and the APC administration, the darkness."⁷⁸ He continues to be accused for "his penchant for using his pulpit as an avenue to fraternize with politicians."⁷⁹ He has now challenged the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari to proffer solutions to the socioeconomic challenges facing Nigeria, and to stop blaming the ousted PDP government or any individual.⁸⁰

THE SYNAGOGUE CHURCH OF ALL NATIONS (SCOAN): BACKGROUND

SCOAN was started by Prophet T. B. Joshua, with eight members. They met in a humble shelter in a squalid, swampy jungle, in Agodo-Egbe in Lagos, Nigeria. He claims to perform miracles and makes prophetic pronouncements, claiming to be a divine agent for the healing of HIV/AIDS, cancer, paralysis, dog bites, burns, ulcers, paralysis, physical disability, deafness, blindness, Ebola, and many other sicknesses and diseases—and indeed just about anything. These "miracles" occur every week in the services that are held in the cathedral, which is always filled to capacity with worshippers from across Nigeria and the world and is broadcast live to millions around the globe through Emmanuel TV, owned by the church.⁸¹

T. B. Joshua may well be Nigeria's most controversial clergyman. He was born in the village of Arigidi-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria on June 12, 1963, having reportedly stayed in his mother's womb for 15 months, and was raised in abject poverty.⁸² When he was three days old, it is said that a large boulder crashed through the roof of his house, missing him narrowly.⁸³ He says that his divine call and gospel commission happened during a trance that lasted for three consecutive days, in which he saw himself amidst the apostles and prophets and Jesus Christ. Recounting this experience, he said: "I saw a hand that pointed a Bible to my heart and the Bible entered my heart and my former heart seemed to immerse with the Bible immediately."⁸⁴

*Political Influence of T. B. Joshua's Miracle, Healing,
and Prophetic Ministry*

T. B. Joshua's healing ministry and prophetic declarations, which are believed to come to pass, are the reasons for his national and international publicity and popularity. He made headlines with his claim that his "Anointing Water" cured the deadly disease Ebola: 4000 bottles of the water plus a \$50,000 cash gift were acknowledged by a Sierra Leonean politician as having helped to stop the spread of the disease and cured several Ebola victims.⁸⁵

Nigeria's former President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, personally visited SCOAN in September 2014, in the period leading up to the general election. His wife, First Lady Patience Jonathan, is also among the political heavyweights who have patronized SCOAN. During the "crossover service" on December 31, 2015, President Jonathan asked for prayer and support for President Muhammadu Buhari, commending the president's good intentions to lead Nigeria out of the valley.⁸⁶ Ambassador Raphael Horsfall, an ambassador for peace and conflict management for the United Nations at the Aso Rock in Abuja and later, as senior special assistant to the political advisor of the former President of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, frequented SCOAN for advice and prayers from 2009 to 2015. In 2009, during the high increase in Niger Delta civil unrest and militancy, T. B. Joshua was believed to have provided solutions and spiritual guidance that brought peace to the region throughout the administration.⁸⁷ Horsfall also sought God's opinion and direction during the political tension in the run-up to the presidential election of 2015. T. B. Joshua clearly stated that the election had been lost and that Horsfall and his party members should concede defeat graciously. Again, Horsfall claimed that this was the reason why, upon defeat at the polls, former President Jonathan did not fight back or annul the election even though he had the power to do so. On a personal note, Ambassador and Mrs. Horsfall heard their prayers made in SCOAN that resulted in their conceiving and bearing a child.⁸⁸

T. B. Joshua has romanced the high and mighty and numerous famous friends across the globe. These include Zimbabwean Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, South-Africa's Economic Freedom Fighters leader Julius Malema, Malawian presidents Joyce Banda and Bingu wa Mutharika, South African African National Congress stalwart Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, the Zulu king Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu, as well as celebrity South African rugby players Jaco van der Westhuyzen, Ruben Kruger, and Wium Basson.⁸⁹ He had connections with the late Ghanaian president John Evans Atta Mills and the late Zambian president Frederick Chiluba.

The Tanzanian politician, later president, John Magufuli visited SCOAN in 2011, and when T. B. Joshua visited him in November 2015 he was received at the airport with much media attention. T. B. Joshua also met former Tanzanian president Jakaya Kikwete and the opposition leader Edward Lowassa. Notable Ghanaian human rights lawyer Kwabla Senanu, veteran Nigerian Nollywood actress Camilla Mberekpe, and popular Nollywood actor Jim Iyke are his frequent guests and admirers.⁹⁰ He is mentor to World Boxing

Organization international light middleweight champion King Davidson Emenogu. T. B. Joshua was involved in the family of the late president of Liberia, Samuel Doe, meeting the former warlord Prince Yormie Johnson who was responsible for Doe's death; Doe's family publicly forgave Johnson.⁹¹

His popularity and political connections earned him various accolades and awards, including the Officer of the Order of the Federal Republic by the Nigerian government in 2008 and being voted the Yoruba Man of the Decade by Pan-Yoruba media outlet Irohin-Odua.⁹² He was recognized as one of Africa's 50 most influential people by Pan-African magazine *The Africa Report* and *New African Magazine*.⁹³ He received a letter of appreciation from the United Nations.⁹⁴ The Arewa Youth Forum, a predominantly Muslim organization, in appreciation of his humanitarian endeavors honored him as an Ambassador of Peace.⁹⁵

His healing and prophetic ministry has earned him larger than life status across Africa. He has more than 2 million fans on Facebook and remains the most subscribed Christian ministry channel on YouTube, with over 120 million views. His television station, Emmanuel TV, broadcasts 24/7, including a live broadcast of its Sunday services. His programs also air weekly on a number of local television stations across Africa, DSTv, GOtv, and Stratums. The BBC described Joshua as "Nigeria's best known televangelist."⁹⁶

In 2011, *Forbes* rated T. B. Joshua as Nigeria's third-richest pastor with personal net worth estimated between \$10 million and \$15 million.⁹⁷ While refuting this, he redirected attention to his tens of millions of dollars humanitarian and philanthropic donations to help orphans and the destitute, educational scholarships, a rehabilitation program for militants from Nigeria's volatile Niger Delta region, and assistance to victims of international disasters.⁹⁸ As part of his efforts to help the youth, he established a football club in 2009, and this has produced national and international players.

SCOAN has become Nigeria's biggest religious tourist attraction, with about 2 million local and international tourists annually, and it is "the most visited destination by religious tourists in West Africa." The Nigerian Immigration Service has indicated that six out of every ten foreign travelers coming into Nigeria are bound for SCOAN.⁹⁹ The church's popularity led to an increase in flight routes to Lagos from several African countries in 2013.¹⁰⁰

SCOAN claims that T. B. Joshua has successfully predicted individual lives as well as worldwide events. He allegedly predicted the rise of the current ruling party in Nigeria, the APC. On April 18 and 25, 2010, January 19, 2013, and February 16, 2014, he prophesied that a new political party would be formed that will challenge the existing ruling one and win, bringing it to its knees. The 2015 elections proved this.¹⁰¹ He also proclaimed the outcome of two African Cup of Nations finals matches, which were won by Zambia and Nigeria respectively.¹⁰² He prophesied music icon Michael Jackson's death on January 4 and February 22, 2009 and it occurred on Thursday, June 25, 2009.¹⁰³ He foresaw the death of an African president in 2012, Bingu wa Mutharika of Malawi.

T. B. Joshua allegedly predicted the Boston bombing attacks in America and the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines MH370. He predicted the Islamic militants' November 2015 Paris attacks, Garissa University College attack in Kenya, the Ouagadougou hotel siege in Burkina Faso, and the 2016 Brussels bombings. On December 25, 2011, T. B. Joshua predicted that countries would leave the European Union. The Brexit vote of July 2016 confirmed this.¹⁰⁴ He also predicted an Indian train derailment on May 3, 2015. Soon afterwards, two trains on top of a river derailed.¹⁰⁵ But he has been severely criticized as a "charlatan," a "fake," and an "evangelical con artist" for failing to predict the collapse of a building on the sprawling premises of his church in Lagos, leading to the tragic and untimely death of several hundred devotees.¹⁰⁶

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Pentecostal churches have increased the political relevance and influence of the Christian church in Africa, especially in Nigeria. They have succeeded in speaking to political leaders and have ensured that the church is not marginalized or the country Islamicized. It is also commendable that the Pentecostal church remains officially non-partisan in matters of political affiliation, while allowing members to exercise the liberty to actively participate in politics. There is, however, a fatal price to pay if church and politics are no longer distinguishable; it could mean the church loses its prophetic voice in condemning evil. It is still debatable whether active participation of the church in national politics will mute its voice as the conscience of the society. The debate may not abate in the near future.

The proliferation of Pentecostal churches has not had an appreciable impact in dousing the tension generated by roiling religious violence across the country. The news about the gruesome murder of two Pentecostals, Pastor Eunice Elisha (RCCG) and Bridget Agbaheme (a Deeper Life Church member), on separate occasions by some Muslim fanatics made the Nigerian headlines in 2016.¹⁰⁷ The church should do more to engender religious understanding of others rather than enacting violent retaliations.

It is doubtful if the culprits responsible for these dastardly acts will ever be apprehended, notwithstanding the fact that Yemi Osibajo, the second in command in the Presidency is also an RCCG pastor. An increase in political connections or positions is perhaps not the best way to change the world with the gospel of Christ. More spiritual and lifestyle influence would yield better results.

Moreover, even though the number of churches has increased, as has Christians' participation in politics, corruption has overtaken the land. There is a general consensus that corruption is the nemesis of Nigeria's developmental initiatives. The churches must ensure that their messages and practices are not encouraging or rewarding corruption directly or indirectly. The church leaders should demonstrate the humility and simplicity of Christ and his gospel in their lifestyle.

Pentecostalism has grown rapidly in the poverty and problem-stricken developing world because of its promise of financial, material, and health prosperity as a manifestation of God's approval. This theological distortion, asserting that poverty and lack should be alien to God's people, commoditizes religion and takes advantage of the underprivileged. Consequently, Pentecostal pastors have filled their coffers with money from some of the world's poorest faithful who are in search of a "breakthrough."¹⁰⁸

True biblical breakthrough must be taught and embraced. Breakthrough means "breaking forth," just as underground water breaks forth into springs or streams. Such a body of water has been locked underground for a very long time before its sudden breakthrough. Similarly, biblical breakthroughs result from invincible hard work, preparations, sacrifices, and a series of decisions over time. Any emphasis on prayer-induced breakthroughs that downplays hard work and long-term preparation is another root of corruption. Such fallacious frivolity, which promotes greed and lust, is alien to biblical prosperity, which is akin to the culture of hard work before profit. "If you don't work for wealth even if you get that wealth through your parents, relatives or spouse, you are still a thief (Prov 28:24). You are robbing the people who gave you that wealth."¹⁰⁹

Faithfulness in returning tithes and offerings is encouraged. However, this is not a foolproof way of getting wealth, but rather for opening heaven to you and preventing curses from falling upon you, your household, and your resources. Faith giving should be encouraged, but not a docile stewardship devoid of hard work. To create wealth, you should work and get involved in the process of production. God does not do for human beings what they can do for themselves. God has established laws, principles, and order in nature to govern life on earth. God does not perform miracles in every situation in order to suspend these rules for his children just because they have prayed and claimed.¹¹⁰

Miracles are "not the order of the day. It is only two percent of our daily life that should depend on miracles from God. The order of life is the observation of God's laws and order. Obedience to the laws of God and the society brings wealth and blessings."¹¹¹ "Most of our prayers in Nigeria maybe about 80 percent are a waste of time. This is because we ask God to do for us what he has asked us to do for ourselves or we ask God to do for us what he has already done."¹¹²

The Pentecostal churches must seek more power with God so that they can point people more to Christ and the Scriptures rather than to their flamboyant material displays. God's kingdom is still, by and large, not of this world. Earthly comfort is no evidence of heaven's approval. Every political influence must be used to direct hearts toward heavenly kingdom and eternal salvation.

NOTES

1. Augustus Cerillo, "Interpretative Approaches to the History of American Pentecostal Origins," *Pneuma* 19 (1997): 1, 29–49.
2. William K. Kay, "Three Generations On: The Methodology of Pentecostal History," *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* XI (1992): 1–2, 58.
3. Walter J. Hollenweger, "The Black Roots of Pentecostalism," in *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, ed. Allan Anderson & Walter J. Hollenweger (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999).
4. Lovemore Togarasei, "The Pentecostal Gospel of Prosperity in African Contexts of Poverty: An Appraisal," *Exchange* 40, no. 4 (2011): 336–350.
5. Ogbu O. Kalu, "A Discursive Interpretation of African Pentecostalism," accessed July 15, 2016, <https://www.calvin.edu/nagel/resources/files/KaluASCH2007.pdf>.
6. John K. Thornton, *The Congolese Saint Anthony: Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita and the Anthonia Movement, 1684–1706* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
7. R. M. Stogdill, *Handbook of Leadership: A Survey of Theory and Research* (New York: Free Press, 1974).
8. Gary A. Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations*, 6th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2006).
9. G. Northouse, *Leadership Theory and Practice*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oak, London: Sage Publications, 2007); Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations*.
10. A. J. DuBrin, *10-minute Guide to Effective Leadership* (New York: Macmillan Spectrum/Alpha Books, 1997).
11. P. R. Harris, *High Performance Leadership: Strategies for Maximum Productivity* (Glenview, IL: Foresman, 1989); B. Nanus, *The Leader's Edge: The Seven Keys to Leadership in a Turbulent World* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1989); P. Sadler, *Leadership* (London: Kogan Page in association with Coopers & Lybrand, 1997).
12. L. Donaldson and J. H. Davis, "Stewardship Theory or Agency Theory: CEO Governance and Shareholder Returns," *Australian Journal of Management* 16, no. 1 (1991): 49–64.
13. J. H. Davis, F. D. Schoorman, and L. Donaldson, "Toward a Stewardship Theory of Management," *Academy of Management Review* 22, no. 1 (1997): 20–47.
14. R. L. Daft, *The Leadership Experience*, 3rd ed. (Mason, OH: Thomson, South-Western, 2005).
15. Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations*.
16. Lee J. Grady, "10 Top Misconceptions about Pentecostal Christians," http://theanvilnewsletter.blogspot.com.ng/2014_10_01_archive, accessed February 22, 2016.
17. Ibid.
18. Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: The Free Press, 1947).

19. J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "African Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity: An Overview," <http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles-php/464/08-2006>, accessed July 8, 2016.
20. J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "Pentecostalism and the Transformation of the African Christian Landscape," in *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in Postcolonial Societies*, ed. Martin Lindhardt (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2015), 100–114.
21. Harvey G. Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century* (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1996).
22. Kalu, 2007.
23. Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational* (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), 3.
24. Sunday Oguntola, "Nigerian Church Leaders are as Corrupt as Politicians—Pastor Sunday Adelaja," *Transforming Nigeria Together*, *Naija247News* 2016.
25. Ibid.
26. Pastor Kun, "Similarities between Nigerian Pastors and Politicians," July 8, 2012, <http://www.nairaland.com/984907/similarities-between-nigerian-pastors-politicians>, assessed February 27, 2016.
27. Asonzeh F. Ukah, "The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Nigeria: Local Identities and Global Processes in African Pentecostalism," Dissertation zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades an der Kulturwissenschaftlich Fakultät der Universität Bayreuth, 2003.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid., 118.
30. Enoch A. Adeboye, "The Almighty Formula," Sermon preached at the HGS, Redemption Camp, December 7, 2001.
31. Ibid.
32. Enoch A. Adeboye, *As Pure as Light* (Lagos, Nigeria: CRM Book Ministry, 1999).
33. Gerrie Ter Haar, "A Wondrous God: Miracles in Contemporary Africa," *African Affairs* 102 (2003): 409–428.
34. Enoch A. Adeboye, *How to Turn your Austerity to Prosperity* (Lagos, Nigeria: The CRM Book Ministry, 1989), 283.
35. Ukah, 2003, 116.
36. S. Fatokun, "Women and leadership in Nigerian Pentecostal Churches," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* XXXII, no. 3 (2006): 1–14.
37. Adeboye 1989, 23.
38. Ukah, 2003.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. Enoch A. Adeboye, *Child of Destiny* (Lagos, Nigeria: The CRM Book Ministry, 1992), 23.
42. Ukah, 2003.
43. Hakeem Onapajo, "Politics for God: Religion, Politics and Conflict in Democratic Nigeria," *The Journal of Pan-African Studies* 4, no. 9 (2014): 56.
44. Simon Coleman, "Only (Dis-)Connect: Pentecostal Global Networking as Revelation and Concealment," *Religion* 4 (2013): 367–390.

45. Asonzeh Ukah, "Reverse Mission or Asylum Christianity: A Nigerian Church in Europe," in *Africans and the Politics of Popular Cultures*, ed. Toyin Falola and Augustine Agwuele (Rochester NY: University of Rochester Press, 2009), 104–132.
46. Adeboye, 2001.
47. Ukah, 2003.
48. Ukah, 2009.
49. Afe Adogame, "Contesting the Ambivalence of Modernity in a Global Context: The Redeemed Christian Church of God, North America," *Studies in World Christianity* 10, no. 2 (2004): 25–48.
50. Katrin D. Maier, "Redeeming London: Gender, Self and Mobility among Nigerian Pentecostals," (DPhil. Thesis, Brighton, England: University of Sussex, September 2011).
51. Asonzeh Ukah, "Mobilities, Migration and Multiplication: The Expansion of the Religious Field of the Redeemed Christian Church of God," in *Religion in the Context of African Migration*, ed. Afe Adogame and Cordula Weissköppl, Bayreuth African Studies 75 (Bayreuth, Germany: Bayreuth University, 2005), 317–341 (esp. 338).
52. Femi Adelegan, *Nigeria's Leading Lights of the Gospel* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2013).
53. Richard Onobumeh Abu, "Faith Tabernacle Makes Guinness Book of Records," *The Guardian*, February 4, 2008, <http://odili.net/news/source/2008/feb/4/14.html>, assessed July 9, 2016; Barnaby Phillips, "Church of the 50,000 faithful," *BBC News*, November 30, 1999, assessed August 8, 2016.
54. Mfonobong Nsehe, "The Five Richest Pastors in Nigeria," *Forbes* 7 June 2011, assessed September 11, 2016.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid.
58. Mfonobong Nsehe, "Wealthy Nigerians, Pastors Spend \$225 million on Private Jets," *Forbes* May 11, 2011, assessed September 12, 2016.
59. Kess Ewubare, "Wrong Prophecies: Is Bishop Oyedepo now a Prophet of Baal?" <https://www.naij.com/728131/2016>.
60. Bamidele Olowosagba, "Oyedepo, the Icon of Pulpitarian Glamour," <https://www.naij.com/287021/2015-winners-chapel-nigeria.html>.
61. Sam Eyoboka, "Onaiyekan, Oyedepo, 2 Others meet Yar'Adua," <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2010/04/>, April 6, 2010.
62. Comrade Godwin Ameh, "Adeboye, Oyedepo, Jonathan, Others to attend National Fasting and Prayer Day in Ibadan," <http://dailypost.ng/2012/09/11/>, September 11, 2012.
63. Beth Hart, "Bishop Oyedepo Tells Congregation to Kill Insurgents," <https://www.naij.com/353187/2015>, p. 1.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. Tim Cocks, "Insight: The Mega Business of Nigeria's 3 Richest Pastors," www.thenewsnigeria.com.ng/2014/10/, October 12, 2014.
67. Olowosagba.
68. Ibid.

69. Ayomide Akinshilo, "Oyedepo and His Promise of Hellfire," <https://www.naij.com/375828/2015>.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid.
72. Ewubare, "Wrong Prophecies," 2016.
73. Kess Ewubare, "With 10 Days to Election Jonathan Splits Nigerian Pastors," <https://www.naij.com/379526/2015>.
74. Nkem Ikeke, "What Bishop Oyedepo did with Members' PVC on Sunday," <https://www.naij.com/366075-2015.html>, assessed August 17, 2016.
75. Ibid.
76. Nkem Ikeke, 2015. "GEJ Meets Secretly with Prominent Pastors Over Osinbajo," <https://www.naij.com/366157-gej-meets-secretly-with-prominent-pastors-over-osinbajo.html>.
77. Ikeke, "GEJ Meets Secretly with Prominent Pastors Over Osinbajo," 2015.
78. Ewubare, "Wrong Prophecies," 2016.
79. Ewubare, "With 10 Days to Election Jonathan Splits Nigerian Pastors."
80. Kess Ewubare, "Stop casting blames—Oyedepo tells Buhari," <https://www.naij.com/773677/2016>.
81. www.SCOAN.org.
82. Sarah Adoyo, "T. B. Joshua's mother carried him in her womb for 15 months," Tuko (Kenya), March 3, 2016.
83. www.SCOAN.org.
84. Ibid.
85. Abigail Tracy, "This Guy Sent Sierra Leone 4000 Bottles of Holy Water to Cure Ebola," *Vocativ* August 15, 2014; Andrew Griffin, "Millionaire Preacher Sends 4000 Bottles of Holy Water as Ebola Cure," *The Independent* (UK), August 17, 2014; Danielle Ogbeche, T. B. Joshua's "Anointing Water" Reportedly Curing Ebola in Sierra Leone, *Daily Post* (Nigeria), November 3, 2015; "T. B. Joshua Heals Everything Including Aids," <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News>, September 17, 2014.
86. Clement Ejiofor, "T. B. Joshua Makes Stunning Prophecies for Africa and Nigeria," <https://www.naij.com/683393-2015>, assessed December 31, 2016.
87. Mzaca, Vladimir Mzaca, "Politicians swear by Prophet T. B. Joshua," <http://www.timeslive.co.za/sundaytimes/2011/08/07>, August 7, 2011.
88. Abiodun Alade, "I Told Jonathan He Will Lose—T. B. Joshua," *Vanguard* (Nigeria), April 6, 2015; Danielle Ogbeche, "How T. B. Joshua's Message to Jonathan Saved Nigeria After 2015 Election—Ambassador Raphael Horsfall," *Daily Post* (Nigeria) February 29, 2016.
89. "Tsvangirai Turns to TB Joshua," *The Herald* (Zimbabwe), October 7, 2013.
90. Ernest Dela Aglanu, "Jim Iyke Delivered from 'Demonic' Possession at T. B. Joshua's Church," *My Joy Online* (Ghana), September 29, 2013.
91. Feyi Afisunlu, "Pastor T. B. Joshua Delivers Nollywood Actress from Witchcraft," *Daily Post* (Nigeria), April 29, 2013; "Son Forgives Man Who Butchered President Doe," <http://www.iol.co.za/news/africa--Independent> OnLine, November, 22, 2000.
92. James Umem, "Adeboye, T. B. Joshua Absent at National Awards," *Vanguard* December 23, 2008.
93. www.SCOAN.org.

94. Akan Ido, "T. B. Joshua Receives Peace Award from Arewa Youth Forum," Naija, August 4, 2013.
95. Sam Makaka, "Prophet T. B. Joshua Gets UN Recognition," Nyasa Times (Malawi) January 30, 2014.
96. Tomi Oladipo, "T. B. Joshua: Nigeria's Best-known Televangelist," BBC September 17, 2014; Maurice Nkawihe, "T. B. Joshua's Emmanuel TV Goes on DStv and GOTv," Nyasa Times (Malawi) November 14, 2015; Chima Akwaja, "Startimes Unveils Extra Special Offer for Subscribers," All Africa, February 6, 2016.
97. Nsehe, "The Five Richest Pastors in Nigeria."
98. Isaac Ametepe, "Passion for Needy registers 120 less privileged persons under NHIS," The Ghanaian Rector, April 29, 2011.
99. Sola Ojewusi, "T. B. Joshua and the Synagogue Tragedy, Another Perspective," The Authority (Nigeria), March 26, 2016; "Nigeria: Tourism Expert Calls for Restoration of Tourism Ministry," This Day (Nigeria), March 4, 2016.
100. Lungile Tshuma, "Churches Urged to Promote Religious Tourism," Sunday News (Zimbabwe), November 15, 2015; The Herald (Zimbabwe), 2013; "T. B. Joshua Ranked Among Most Famous Prophets in History," African Travel Times, March 22, 2016.
101. Ogbeche, 2016.
102. Makweembo Manasa, "T. B. Joshua Prophesied Zambia's Historic AFCON Victory," Zim Eye (Zimbabwe), February 14, 2012.
103. Ihechukwu Njoku, *Prophet T. B. Joshua Predicted the Death of Michael Jackson*, Nigeria World, June 29, 2009.
104. Dorcas Efe-Mensah, "T. B. Joshua Prophesied About Boston Bombings in January," My Joy Online (Ghana), April 16, 2013; Simi John, "Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370: Clip of Nigerian Preacher 'Predicting Disappearance' Goes Viral [VIDEO]," International Business Times (UK), March 13, 2014; Trudi Makhaya, "Malaysian Flight MH370: Prophecy Video Emerges Dated July 28," ENCA (South Africa), September 17, 2014; Mark Yapching, "Church Claims T. B. Joshua Predicted Kenya Terror Attack in 2012," Christian Today (UK), April 8, 2015; "How T. B. Joshua Prophesied Burkina Faso Terrorists Siege," Citi FM (Ghana), January 16, 2016.
105. www.SCOAN.org.
106. Leo Igwe, "T. B. Joshua: The Collapse of a Charlatan," Saharareporters.com, September 25, 2014, accessed September 26, 2016.
107. A. Amzat, "How the Nigerian State Fails her Citizens," *The Guardian*, July 15, 2016.
108. Samuel Oakford, "Pentecostal Pastors in Nigeria Are Rolling in Money and Political Power," <https://news.vice.com/article/2014>.
109. Oguntola.
110. Ibid.
111. Ibid.
112. Ibid.



African Pentecostalism and Modernity: Critical Reflections on Tensions and Social Concerns

Samuel Zalanga

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I want to focus my attention and analysis on the set of challenges that Africa faces. Pentecostalism is the most rapidly spreading form of Christianity, and yet it is an alternate social order that thrives by taking advantage of the products of modern science and technology, while teaching Christians not just to ignore, but also to reject and in some cases ridicule the modern scientific worldview and epistemology. For the Pentecostalists, science has little to contribute, owing to their belief that scientific reasoning is not as adequate as using divine power and spiritual anointing to answer serious questions about social reality. But the modern world we live in is built on modern scientific epistemology and technology, and one of the major reasons for the backwardness of Africa is the lack of penetration of the modern scientific worldview,¹ which in turn can be explained by, among other factors, a lack of leadership with the appropriate mindset and a lack of appropriate institutions that can promote science and technology for the benefit of ordinary citizens. Indeed, Nkrumah is quoted as stressing the fact that Africa cannot be decolonized without the mastery of modern science and technology.² Nkrumah is not saying that Africa's decolonization is only dependent on the mastery of modern science and technology, but he saw it as one of the key issues that have to be addressed.

I begin by examining the discourse and rhetorical framing strategies that are used by leaders of Pentecostal denominations and how these shed light on the

S. Zalanga (✉)
Bethel University, Arden Hills, MN, USA
e-mail: szalanga@bethel.edu

social characteristics of their followers. I subsequently analyze the following themes: competing visions of social order between African Pentecostalism and modernity, and the relationship between Pentecostalism, the Protestant ethic, and the institutionalization of free market capitalism in Africa. I then examine the relationship between Pentecostalism and the crisis of modernity in Africa, with particular reference to living in plural societies and the need to maintain a public sphere for the sake of social inclusion; this is followed by an analysis of the role that Pentecostalism is playing in the struggle for social justice, and a focus on what it is able to do with the perennial problem of widening social inequality across Africa. Lastly, before the conclusion, the chapter reflects on whether Pentecostalism in Africa is a victim of seductive consumerism, which has become a way of life under neoliberal globalization. But to begin with, what sort of rhetorical framing strategies and discourses do Pentecostal denominational leaders use in Africa and what does that tell us about their followers? This is the issue addressed in the next section.

DISCOURSE AND RHETORICAL FRAMING STRATEGY AS A REFLECTION OF SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PENTECOSTAL DENOMINATIONS' ADHERENTS

Looking at the diverse literature on Pentecostal Christianity in Africa, one can draw meaningful conclusions about how the discourse and rhetorical framing strategy used by leaders of Pentecostal denominations is not a random event. There is an elective affinity between the discourse and rhetorical framing strategy used by the leader of the denomination and the kind of audience or adherents that he or she attracts. To illustrate and support this conceptual observation, I will use examples from two of Nigeria's Pentecostal denominational leaders: Bishop David Oyedepo, who is the founder of Living Faith Church, otherwise known as Winners' Chapel, and Dr. Daniel Olukoya, who is the founder of Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries. The differences between the two in terms of their rhetorical strategy reminds one of the observation made by Thomas Hobbes that one of the problems with religious debates, which makes them inexhaustible, is that even when people believe in the same God they may not agree on the best way to worship and honor him.³ In effect, the difference in how to worship and honor God, even when there is agreement on his nature and existence, can lead to serious conflict. The difference between Bishop Oyedepo and Dr. Olukoya in terms of discourse framing and rhetorical strategy can best be accounted for by what J.M. Blaut calls "[the ethnography of ideas]."⁴ The ethnography of ideas is not primarily concerned with the veracity of claims made by the proponents of certain ideas (religious or secular); rather, it is the study of the context of people's beliefs: why do certain people espouse certain ideas at a particular place and in a unique historical and social context? Why do people believe what they believe, and how do they do so? What are the consequences of their beliefs on their community, society, institutions, and the struggle for a more just and fair society through inclusive development, among other concerns?

Assessing the two Pentecostal leaders, one can conclude that the audiences of Dr. Olukoya and Bishop Oyedepo, even if they marginally overlap, are significantly different, and their two personalities are also different, if their rhetorical strategies are anything to go by. Both of them believe that the key to the success and prosperity of Africa's people in the twenty-first century is in the spiritual realm. Yet, while Bishop Oyedepo believes the main obstacle to the success of Africa's people is spiritual ignorance and disobedience to God's revelation through him or bishops like him, for Dr. Olukoya the main problem or obstacle is spiritual warfare, owing to the formidable presence of witchcraft, ancestral curses, and marine spirits.⁵ Dr. Olukoya's audience tends to be less educated or at least more gullible and willing to tolerate an essential criticism of Africa as a continent whose backwardness is caused by the high level of witches, chronic ancestral curses, and marine spirits. This situation is presumably either because of Africa's geopolitical location in which demonic spirits can live and flourish without disturbance or because of curses that are congenitally built into African culture, which can only be eradicated through spiritual deliverance.

Furthermore, for Dr. Olukoya, women are central to the mechanism and process through which demonic spirits are produced, transmitted, and perpetuated, and therefore keep Africa backward and underdeveloped. This kind of message suggests that either members of Dr. Olukoya's audience have on average a relatively low level of education or they have a high level of theological gullibility, which prevents them from asking critical questions about global and anthropological understanding of human evolution and the role that institutions play in the process (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012). This observation also says something about the nature and quality of education he has received, given that Dr. Olukoya, according to reliable sources, received a Ph.D. in Molecular Genetics through a Commonwealth scholarship at Reading University in the UK.⁶ It is hard to believe that someone with the high level of education he has received still believes what he preaches. But this is presumably accounted for by his spiritual anointing, which is an inscrutable mystery from the perspective of his church members. On the other hand, the people of Africa have experienced great upheavals, where old ways of doing things have been undermined while new ones have still not been firmly established.⁷ The continent and the people are going through a transition, and during such chaotic, anomic conditions and situations, new religious teachings emerge and thrive because the people are desperate and looking for messianic solutions.⁸ Unfortunately, Africa's postcolonial ruling elites in many countries are not helping to stabilize the situation, and so the continent has remained in constant transition, often complicated by external forces.

For Bishop Oyedepo, one immediately senses in his tone an African who is very confident in himself and the future of Africa's people, if they can just remove the veil of spiritual ignorance, be obedient to God, and acquire kingdom blessings.⁹ Witchcraft and demonic forces do exist and operate, but they are not the real obstacles to the success and prosperity of a Christian in his

framework of theological discourse. The real problem is the veil of spiritual ignorance and disobedience. Bishop Oyedepo also comes across as someone who is cosmopolitan in his outlook and thinking, with an audience that is relatively more educated, professional, and upwardly mobile.¹⁰ He focuses more on empowering his followers by educating them in the certain and well-established formulas for success contained in the Scriptures: if they can just listen carefully and obey the instructions, their opportunities for success and exploits will be unlimited. Interestingly, he is the richest minister in Africa and owns four private jets.¹¹ But as with Dr. Olukoya, the key secrets for success are in the spiritual realm, not the natural realm, and he or the people he empowers are the mediums through which such spiritual keys to success and prosperity can be unlocked, so that believers can enjoy dominion over others in this world. For these two charismatic church leaders and other African Pentecostals, this is essentially the blueprint for Africa's future transformation. In the next section, I want to highlight some conceptual tensions between Africa's Pentecostalism and modernity as competing visions of social order in the twenty-first century.

COMPETING VISIONS OF SOCIAL ORDER: AFRICAN PENTECOSTALISM AND MODERNITY

Using the teachings of Bishop Oyedepo and Dr. Olukoya again, and the conceptual themes, insights, problems, and challenges contained in Africa's Pentecostalism, one can see that it is as an alternate form of social order vis-à-vis the vision of a modern African society. To begin with, all forms of social orders implicitly or explicitly make certain assumptions about a human being at the ontological level with regard to the nature of his or her existence. The scientific or modern worldview assumes that human beings are rational and that there are natural laws and processes, which rational human beings with appropriate training can discover and harness for the benefit of humanity, especially when these discoveries and the knowledge gained are infused with a desirable moral and ethical compass.¹² On the other hand, Africa's Pentecostals make assumptions about human beings that suggest they are not rational; even if they are, and if they use such rationality to discover natural laws and principles underlying social processes that can be harnessed for the benefit of humankind, doing so is a waste of time. This is because the keys to human progress and success are in unlocking spiritual laws, which have priority over natural laws.

In this context, even when Pentecostals are highly educated in the sciences, they may out of religious commitment consider such knowledge to be of subsidiary importance, given that the key to human progress in their theological reasoning is unlocking divine kingdom blessings through spiritual means (Maxwell 2006). Such believers can become a problem to society if they are in charge of modern public institutions whose effective functioning presupposes the sincere and faithful application of universal rational principles, and a scientific worldview and epistemology. Owing to the fact that such leaders believe

that spiritual laws as they define them have priority over natural laws, they will be ambivalent in terms of how they lead and manage modern public institutions, which should be operated based on inclusive and rational principles. They might manage these public institutions by relying on prayers and revelations from spiritually charismatic persons or a small group within their churches. In the latter case, such an act would amount to the colonization of the public sphere by a particular group's private agenda, which is exclusive and particularistic. This would lead to a war of attrition among the different religious groups. The beliefs of African Pentecostalism also have implications for the debate on the institutionalization of free market capitalism as part of the modern world.

PENTECOSTALISM: THE PROTESTANT ETHIC AND THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF FREE MARKET CAPITALISM

In so far as postcolonial African countries want to modernize and be effective players in the modern world, the Pentecostal vision of humanity can become a limitation. I am aware that there are scholars, such as Peter Berger and David Martin,¹³ who make a strong case for the existence of a positive relationship between Pentecostalism and modernity, as Pentecostalism contributes to the laying of the foundations for effective free market capitalism. The main thrust of Berger's argument is that Pentecostalism promotes the Protestant ethic in the tradition of the thesis put forward by Max Weber in the *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.¹⁴ David Martin argues that "Pentecostalism in Africa is a collective raft pointed with determination towards modernity."¹⁵ Similarly in South Africa, under the influence of Berger's line of reasoning on the relationship between Pentecostalism and the promotion of the Protestant ethic based on the Guatemalan experience, in 2008, the Center for Development and Enterprise produced an assessment of Pentecostalism in the country, titled "[*Under the Radar*]." The main thrust of the report is the highlighting of the public and social consequences and effects of Pentecostalism on society, a subject that is well-studied in the sociology of religion and the sociology of development. The report asserts: "that Pentecostalism has a special affinity with market-based development, and a kinship with what historians call the 'Protestant Ethic'; a cluster of beliefs, attitudes and habits that underpinned the spectacular economic growth of north-west Europe during the industrial revolution."¹⁶

There are, however, conceptual problems with this line of reasoning. First, as Inkeles and Smith argued, modernity for developing countries is not just about importing certain Western-type modern institutional structures and technological equipment, but rather it is also a state of mind and entails a new and unique socio-psychological approach to life, which thus requires a reconfiguration of culture and worldview.¹⁷ Indeed, in a situation where developing countries import Western-type modern institutions and technological equipment haphazardly, and do so without commensurate and deep transformation in their

state of mind and socio-psychological attitudes, this can lead to a society with an over-developed superstructure but without a solid cultural foundation to support it. The conceptual challenge here is whether teaching people to think in the spiritual realm, while ridiculing the scientific worldview and epistemology, is a viable strategy for creating a modern African society. Africans have to think about how they are going to resolve this. There is a warning that is relevant to the preceding concern which was highlighted in the work of the British poet Alexander Pope, who reflected on the role of learning in modern Europe. He observes the following about learning:

A little learning is a dangerous thing;
 Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian Spring:
 There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
 And drinking largely sobers us again.¹⁸

Often the haphazard process of modernization in developing countries is similar to “little learning,” which is caused by, among other factors, a failure to appreciate that the complex elements of a modern system are an integrated whole. Therefore, an uneven adoption of Western-type institutional structures and technological equipment can lead to poor performance and cultural disorientation owing to social and institutional disequilibrium and misalignment, an issue that is underscored in William Ogburn’s cultural lag theory.¹⁹

But more importantly, if Peter Berger and David Martin set out to broadly and rigorously explore pathways to modernity, there is no reason why Pentecostalism should attract such special interest given what we already know exists in the development literature from the middle of the twentieth century, when economic anthropologists extensively explored through empirical research the relative strengths and contributions of the modernization literature on economic development and cultural change in the developing world. The following quote buttresses my skepticism about the special premium that Berger and Martin are attributing to the unique role of Pentecostalism in promoting free market capitalism, as if that is the original claim and purpose of Pentecostalism:

Following Weber’s lead, several studies have been conducted in non-Western countries to identify whether or not there exist similar sorts of incentive deriving from religious beliefs. There is for example, an impressive body of literature that documents the significance of various ascetic religious sects and their role in economic development both in Islam and Hinduism. In his account of the religious doctrine of Sikhism, Pieris suggests that, like Puritanism, it had a direct effect on Sikh daily life.²⁰ It broke free from Hindu caste restrictions, and enabled Sikhs to engage in every kind of occupation, excepting only that of begging. And it stressed the values of hard work combined with an austere style of living. The lives of Sikhs illustrated the confluence of worldliness and other-worldliness, which expressed itself most strikingly in their positive attitude towards entrepreneurship and their willingness to move into new types of occupations ... Kennedy’s

study of Parsis isolates five values to be found in Zoroastrianism which appear to have guided their conduct: the two acquisitive rationalities, representing the desire to maximize one's material prosperity; financial rationality, expressed in rational accounting procedures; the rationality of work which involves the belief that material work is intrinsically good; and lastly, scientific rationality, which assumes an underlying order in nature and the belief in a sensate standard of verification. Kennedy then produces evidence to demonstrate the effect of these values on Parsi economic and social activity.²¹

What the preceding quote strongly suggests is that there are indeed other ways to promote free market capitalism and the Western-type modern worldview that are in substance and essence consistent with Weber's claim in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. The so-called Protestant ethic does not only exist in or is unique to Protestantism or Christianity, according to researchers in economic anthropology. If all that was said about Pentecostalism in Africa is to be taken seriously, and it has been the most popular brand of Christianity in the continent for several decades now, a crucial and relevant question needs to be asked. The question is: why is Pentecostal Christianity, in spite of its deep penetration of African societies and consciousness, and the glowing panegyrics in praise of it with regard to its effective contribution to the promotion of free market capitalism, not transforming Africa? Africa is still woefully lagging behind all other regions (e.g., East Asia and Southeast Asia) that are not Christian in the successful institutionalization of the new incarnation of modern capitalism.²² This line of reasoning has been entertained all along because of the simplistic monistic-disciplinary logic of thinking that privileges a particular religion, embraced by Berger and Martin regarding the relationship between Pentecostal Christianity and free market capitalism. While the examples cited in the quote above are all from East and Southeast Asian religions, there are also similar examples from the Islamic religious tradition; I will cite just one quote in this respect:

Another example outside the Christian tradition of the association of asceticism with entrepreneurship is that analyzed by Geertz in his study of traders in Modjokuto, Java ... A major finding of his study is the predominant part played by a group of reformist Moslems who practice an ascetic religious ethic similar to that of the Christian Protestant Europe. Islamic reformism, which spread through the urban trading classes in Java between 1912 and 1920, emphasized the purification of Indonesian Islam of Hinduist and animist elements, and focused on questions of dogma and morality ... For the reformist it was a source of pride to work hard, to dress and eat simply, and to avoid large ceremonial expenditures; and strong value was placed upon individual effort. According to Geertz, the ethic had '[in abundance the classic free enterprise virtue of the rational pursuit of self-interest]'.²³

What Norman Long is drawing our attention to here is the need to be extremely careful about monistic-disciplinary reasoning because of the complex relationship between religion and society. Often people draw causal links

between religion and other variables in a local context without being aware that the same causal relationship they observed has been produced elsewhere by another religious tradition, thereby deflating any special claim of one religion to causally and exclusively producing a particular result. What this means is the need for humility in making exclusive and particularistic religious causal claims. The same religion, depending on context and situations can lead to different kinds of beliefs, character, choices, behavior, and aspirations among people. In the same vein, different religious traditions can lead to similar beliefs, character, choices, behavior, and aspirations depending on contexts and situations. Without a nuanced analysis, the kind of argument that Berger and Martin are making cannot be taken too seriously, because they are weak on strict methodological grounds owing to the monistic focus in their line of reasoning. The preceding point is articulated below:

Geertz's study, then, emphasizes the difficulty of isolating particular variables and treating them as prerequisites. It also warns against assuming a one-to-one relationship between a particular form of religious ideology and the propensity to engage in entrepreneurial activity ... Clearly a wide range of socio-cultural factors, including religious disposition, may facilitate development in specific contexts, but one should not preempt analysis by assuming that certain value orientations constitute necessary preconditions. Thus, as Gerschenkron (1962) argues, we should guard against converting historical facts (e.g. the role of Calvinism) into the status of logical prerequisites since this implies the untenable notion of historical necessity. Gerschenkron also suggests that we should acknowledge the possibility of the same functions being performed by different institutions ... Bellah's study of *Tokugawa Religion* (1957) argues that whereas industrialization in the West was the product of a slow process of accumulation, industrialization in the East was government-controlled and sponsored because only government was able to marshal the necessary capital: and because of this he finds that religious values in Japan were not so positively correlated with the growth of private capitalism as to justify an interpretation of Japanese economic history in neo-Weberian terms ... Hence in Bellah's view, we find a correlation between religion and bureaucracy in Japanese history; and this questions the universal validity of the view that a Protestant-ethic type of value change is necessary for the development of modern industrial capitalism.²⁴

From the foregoing, it is obvious that once the relationship between Pentecostalism and its conduciveness for promoting social values and attributes that are favorable for the expansion of modern free market capitalism are broadened and globalized, the discussion and analysis becomes more complicated, to the point where a concern about the future of Africa's modernity in the form of modern capitalism can no longer be simplistically tied to a brand of religion that deeply promotes antirationality and antiscientific epistemology. It is true that one can argue about the bounded nature of rationality and substantive rationality, but Africans have to make up their mind about what kind of rationality they need to cultivate in order to become active players in the mod-

ern world. So far, their substantive rationality does not seem to be giving them headway in the global economy as most people would want. It is definitely not possible, based on historical records for Africa, to become an active and effective player in the modern world by explaining everything under the sun through witchcraft, ancestral curses, marine spirits, the veil of spiritual ignorance, and unlocking the keys to abundant blessings and prosperity in the spiritual or divine realm. When one looks at the variety of countries that have become viable and relatively successful modern capitalist societies, it is hard to explain their success by focusing on their distinctive religious beliefs. Norman Long makes this point:

It is equally important to recognize that in certain micro-contexts, religious asceticism does appear to be associated with entrepreneurship and indirectly functions, along with other factors, to stimulate economic endeavor. The reasons for this are complex and will vary somewhat from situation to situation, depending on the interlay of socio-cultural factors and on the types of resources available to, and the life-experiences encountered by the members of the religious group. To explain this phenomenon primarily by reference to ideological components and to make assumptions concerning necessary value incentives, is to shy away from the interesting complexities presented by each case. A key analytical problem posed is why members of such a group are apparently more strategically placed than others for mobilizing resources and making a success of new economic opportunities. This question cannot adequately be answered by recourse to an analysis of moral and religious precepts, since it raises problems concerning social organization and resource management. Another dimension concerns the degree of flexibility of interpretation tolerated by the belief system and by the religious authorities, as this will affect the adaptability of the ethic in the face of changing circumstances ... Hence, an ideology, which during the earlier phases of development actively encourages capital accumulation and investment in profitable enterprises, may later discourage the re-organization of businesses along lines that would improve performance and lead to further growth.²⁵

In this respect, Long is counseling us to look for the intersection of factors, situations, and complementarities of variables, which can be wide ranging and sometimes unique, in different contexts that work together to account for the success or failure of efforts aimed at creating a modern society or a successful capitalist economy. For this reason, in my assessment, the explanatory approach adopted by Berger and Martin with regard to the positive relationship between Pentecostalism and modernity or modern capitalism is too narrow and simplistic. It is not a methodologically rigorous explanatory framework. On a critical note, such an approach should be allowed to rest in peace because in strict religious terms, one can describe the strategies for successful capitalist development as characterized by methodological atheism, to the extent that the success of capitalist development strategies are not tied to any religious confession when one looks at the empirical evidence across the globe. Indeed, the elements of the Washington Consensus,²⁶ aimed at institutionalizing free market

capitalism after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, never required religious confession from the countries that implemented the neoliberal reform project.

A legitimate case can be made that the kind of social transformation that institutionalizing modernity requires in Africa would be painful to people in the region.²⁷ Some might indeed call such a project cultural imperialism. Such a criticism is well-taken, and one way to respond it is for Africans, and Pentecostals, to engage in creating a unique African modernity that is viable, competitive, and sustainable. By and large, East Asian countries and China have accomplished much by creating relatively viable free market capitalist economies but in their own way. The Chinese model of economic development which is contrasted with the Washington Consensus is known as the Beijing Consensus.²⁸ The success and accomplishments of East Asian, Southeast Asian countries, and China have been acknowledged even by Western nations that hitherto thought they alone had figured out the best methods for promoting economic development. But achieving such a goal entails an extremely high level of commitment, vision, persistent discipline, and struggle. The preceding qualities and ideals are in my view not treated as serious concerns for the great majority of African ruling elites, African universities, the African bourgeoisie, and religious leaders. The great majority of the elites broadly conceptualized are complacent and, as Frantz Fanon said, the post-colonial African bourgeoisie lack the intellectual curiosity to ask how the imported Western products they consume have been produced, so as to start producing them through what some call “[reversed engineering].”²⁹ Rather, the postcolonial bourgeoisie, like other African elites including Pentecostal leaders, are satisfied to buy, spiritually consecrate, and consume Western or East Asian products as a mark of their economic success or God’s blessings in their lives as the case may be, but never feel compelled to endogenously develop effective institutions and conducive environments that will promote the human creativity and innovative culture in a modern context for struggling postcolonial African societies.³⁰

A major challenge that African societies, including Pentecostal churches, face is the crisis of modernity. By this I mean a situation where Africa’s old ways of doing things have been destroyed, undermined, or subverted by the invasion of Western modernity; yet new and effective ways of doing things that are integral to the modern vision of human beings and society have not yet been solidly established in the continent. Africa is thus in a state of long transition, the future course of which no one can exactly predict. It is an open-ended experiment, especially given that many of the forces that affect African societies have foreign entanglements in addition to domestic intricacies. This issue is analyzed in the next section.

PENTECOSTALISM AND THE CRISIS OF MODERNITY: PLURALISM AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Another theme that one can highlight has to do with the antirational and anti-scientific worldview and mindset that the Pentecostal churches promote.³¹ This is a serious concern because many Pentecostal believers in Africa, and there are

many of them, listen and comply more with what their ministers tell them to do than what is required of them by the civil authorities and institutions of their countries. There may be good and legitimate reasons for this, but this does not preclude the negative consequences on postcolonial Africa's development in the modern world. The vision that Africans are building a modern society, but one where there will be no room for rational public discourse on issues of public concern because the problem can only be understood in the spiritual realm through revelation to a charismatic church leader, suggests a lack of appreciation for how modern society with its pluralism came into existence and how it should optimally operate. This issue is also of additional concern because it has implications for the question of whether Pentecostalism is compatible with liberal democracy and a pluralistic society. For instance, Jürgen Habermas argues that even with the acknowledged shortcomings of modernity and modern society, if rational discourse is used as a basis for dialogue, humanity can benefit much more from it.³² In pursuance of this goal, Habermas provides certain conditions that need to be satisfied for rational discourse to take place. While these conditions can be debated in the wider society as to whether they can be fully fulfilled, Pentecostal leaders make no room for such consideration, let alone the thought of fulfilling them.

Habermas, for instance, identifies the following conditions for rational discourse, which in my assessment the teachings of Pentecostal churches do not take seriously at all, let alone prioritize:

1. The context of communication must be egalitarian to the extent that participants should have equal right and opportunity to participate in the discussion. All participants have the right to ask and to be asked question and to express themselves. In effect, this is the symmetry condition for effective rational dialogue.
2. All participants in the public discussion must mean what they say. This means all participants must be sincere and not be deceptive. When people participate in a public discourse but there is no veracity to their claims and they are deceptive, that is not going to lead to any meaningful progress in resolving public issues in a plural society. In brief, people must truly mean what they say. This is a call for authenticity.
3. There is also a moral condition for public discourse. All participants in a discourse must be sincerely committed to the idea of using the discourse to bring about what is ethically right in a plural society i.e. promoting the common good. This means that any public discourse that is not infused with a moral and ethical compass geared towards the common good will not help in the effective running of a modern pluralistic society.³³

No society can fully satisfy all the conditions for rational discourse. Habermas recognizes this, but the ideal should always be on the table if the world decides to live in a plural liberal democratic society. The question and concern here is whether the kind of communication that takes place within Pentecostal

churches, between Pentecostals and other social groups in the civil societies of Africa, between Pentecostals and other religious groups in the continent, and various governments observes these tenets.

It can be conceded that science in and of itself is not a panacea to human problems, especially when it is not infused with certain moral and ethical compass,³⁴ which under ideal conditions religion should help to construct. But this is true of Pentecostalism too, and indeed any religious tradition for that matter, given that the charismatic leaders of such churches can use their charisma and power for personal and selfish gains, and yet use scripture to justify their actions before their audiences who are, by and large, theologically gullible by virtue of their social contexts, conditions, and state of mind.³⁵ This notwithstanding, for a society that wants to be modern, the scientific method provides a more open and reliable method and strategy for societal development, especially because with appropriate training it is embracing of all, irrespective of religion, gender, ethnicity, and nationality.³⁶ By demeaning and ridiculing the scientific method and epistemology among large portions of the African population, Pentecostalism is stunting the development and social transformation of Africa.

A good example of this is in the area of creating fear among African people in thinking for themselves; as Immanuel Kant asserted, “[*Sapere Audere!* Have the courage to use your intelligence!]”³⁷ By encouraging people to seek the causes and explanation for all social problems in the spiritual realm and through spiritual deliverance, it is encouraging otherwise very informed and intelligent Africans to become intellectual cowards or intellectually timid about asking relevant but difficult and critical questions that are central to human progress and the flourishing of African people. What makes this somewhat duplicitous is that African Pentecostals are comfortable with grandiosely consuming material products that come out of the successful application of modern scientific methods and epistemology for production in other parts of the world. If this is not intellectual hypocrisy, then it represents African Pentecostals as having a myopic and limited understanding of what the modern world is, which they have either embraced quietly or remained agnostic about. Either way, there are a huge number of duplicitous claims. This is indeed dangerous for the future of Africa. A related issue with regard to living in the modern world is that it is made up of cosmopolitan people who differ in many respects but still share common citizenship. A relevant question is how Pentecostals fit into this modern agenda of nation-building in Africa or what sort of contribution they are making towards the realization of that agenda.

PENTECOSTALISM AND NATION-BUILDING IN POSTCOLONIAL AFRICA

Another challenge or limitation I see in the teachings of African Pentecostals is their negative contribution to nation-building and economic development in multi-religious and plural societies, which many African countries have been since colonial rule. For the great majority of Pentecostals in Africa, Christocentric righteousness is the main and only criterion for progress and the experiencing

of prosperity and material blessings. Christocentric righteousness for many Pentecostals has priority over citizenship and the pursuit of the common good in a liberal democracy. In contrast, many people and experts from different religious faiths and traditions or no religious background at all are working hard to create a more just, fair, and inclusive society for all, where the commitment is to the welfare and human development of all people irrespective of their religious beliefs, ethnicity, and nationality.³⁸ But Pentecostal discourses often suggest that the pathway to prosperity and genuine human development is only through their criterion of Christocentric righteousness. All persons outside their spiritual umbrella are left to their own devices and assured that they will languish in underdevelopment, poverty, and backwardness because they lack the keys to unlock God's spiritual blessings.

There are of course Pentecostal denominations that are involved in community development projects, but often such projects are for church members, and if they involve persons who are not Christians, the main motivation for such project involvement is not the human development of the people *per se*, based on their standing as human beings with dignity.³⁹ Rather, the people are treated simply as an evangelical project of saving souls. What this means is that in terms of Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development, many African Pentecostals are operating at stage two or the intermediate level. Stage one of moral development in his theory is where human behavior is not based on any commitment to certain moral principles but rather cost-benefit analysis; that is, behavior is motivated by what one can get and the cost of that, rather than what is right or wrong as a matter of moral principle and commitment. Behavior at this stage is also motivated by the desire to avoid punishment. In my assessment, the intermediate stage, where African Pentecostals are situated based on their teachings and social engagements, is the stage where what is moral and ethical is whatever one's social group or community says is moral and ethical—in this case, one's religious group or community. The problem with this kind of moral and ethical reasoning is that it encourages one as a matter of moral and ethical commitment to ignore other persons that are outside one's religious community even though they are human beings with dignity. And in multi-religious and plural societies, this kind of behavior can undermine any effort by civic authorities to promote the ethic of a shared sense of humanity, the common good, shared communal solidarity, and citizenship in a socially and religiously diverse society, which is necessary for nation-building and solving development problems and challenges.

One would hope ideally that people with a deep understanding of God and faith to be at stage three of Kohlberg's theory of moral development, where one's sense of morality and ethics is not limited to what applies to one's religious community or group as right or good (whatever the group), but to all humanity irrespective of the faith or religious background of others. This is Kant's moral universalism in concrete application. But, as Froese and Bader warned us, the greatest war is not between atheists and theists, but among people who believe in God, but mean different things when they say God.⁴⁰ People's understanding

of God and the nature of their commitment never takes place in a social, cultural, or historical vacuum, and this is true even for evangelical Christians in Africa.⁴¹ Thus, to understand what kind of God one believes in and how that shapes one's relationship with the "other," one needs to know the believer's motivation, social history, and the religious practicing community that nurtured the believer, as well as the relevant historical and cultural contexts.⁴² Another dimension to the issue of creating an inclusive society in the modern world is the status of religion, especially in a diverse society. Royce provides the challenge that modern societies face in this respect while paraphrasing Weber's argument:

The process of intellectualization and disenchantment relegates religion to the realm of the subjective and the irrational and, by transforming the world into a neutral object of empirical science, it divests it of any cosmic significance. But while science dethrones religion, it cannot perform the same function the latter once served: it cannot give meaning to the world or to people's lives. Nor can scientists legitimately adopt the role of secular prophets or priests. "[The fate of an epoch which has eaten of the tree of knowledge is that it must know that we cannot learn the meaning of the world from the results of its analysis, be it ever so perfect]" ... This is the existential predicament of the modern individual: those who aspire to a meaningful life must somehow create it themselves.⁴³

The key issue raised in the preceding quote is that African societies and Pentecostal denominations take capitalism for granted in the sense that there is no attempt to think of any alternative system or interrogate the contemporary capitalist system with a view to making it work better and more fairly for all. But more importantly, the quote indicates that even if Pentecostalism contributes to the emergence and institutionalization of a successful modern capitalist economy, the modern culture that such an economy creates leads to the crisis of meaning, which Weber identified as a major problem of rationalization inherent in capitalism. So in this case what are the options for African societies and Pentecostal believers? This issue requires deep thinking, and cannot be discarded by anyone who understands the complexity of the situation. Should Africans and Pentecostals go back to their traditional cultures in order to avoid the crisis of meaning and morality that Weber saw as a by-product of capitalist rationalization? Indeed, such consequences of capitalist rationalization have invaded the inner sanctum of the church. If it is not an option for African societies and Pentecostals in Africa to go back to their traditional ways of doing things, what are they doing in terms of promoting a kind of capitalist development that will either avoid or mitigate the crisis of meaning and morality? And for Pentecostals, it is unfortunate that there is no theological concern about this conundrum that is built into the nature of modern capitalist society. They just want to experience prosperity, often defined in material terms, ignoring the forces that produced the material aspects of prosperity, that is, scientific reasoning and modern technology.

In the process of nation-building in countries that are plural/multi-religious, where each religious group adopts a particularistic and exclusive truth approach to its teachings in relation to other religious traditions, such religious groups

can be a threat and obstacle to genuine nation building as they express their exclusive religious commitment in a prosaic manner. They try to colonize the public sphere. This of course generates concern about the possibility of achieving social justice in postcolonial African societies and the contribution that Pentecostals can make towards that.

PENTECOSTALISM AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Related to the preceding point is the fact that Pentecostal theology in Africa is in essence an individualistic approach to faith and development. This of course is a wider concern that applies to mainstream evangelical Christianity in general.⁴⁴ In many respects, Pentecostalism is like John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, where the journey to the celestial city is based on individual decision and determination, and therefore one prepares oneself to pass through every challenge and obstacle as an individual.⁴⁵ In this context, when one fails in the journey, it is one's own personal responsibility and therefore one deserves to suffer the consequences. This fits well with Horatio Alger's discourse in the USA, which states that through personal effort, hard work, and determination one can rise from grass to grace.⁴⁶ African Pentecostals are immensely influenced by Pentecostal churches and leaders in the US Bible Belt.⁴⁷

While the great majority of Pentecostal believers in Africa are no doubt well-intentioned, the conundrum around their individualistic theology is similar to the case with many evangelical Christians in the USA, where failure in life in their individualistic model of theological reasoning is considered to be a question of personal responsibility in the form of a lack of Christocentric righteousness, appropriate motivation, and discipline. The implication is that there is little commitment or desire on the part of such Christians, including African Pentecostals, to support public policies that provide public goods and help the poor or socially marginalized groups in society to empower themselves. Indeed, when one examines the wide range of theological books published by Dr. Olukoya and Bishop Oyedepo espousing their God-inspired insights for humanity, there is a lack of any theological inspiration or commitment to promote social justice and the struggle for a more just and fair society for all.

In this respect, Miguel De La Torre's *Reading the Bible from the Margins* provides insights that can be used as a systematic critique of Africa's Pentecostalism with regard to its nonchalant neglect of biblical discourses that could be appropriated to draw inspiration and inform the struggle for social justice, and a more just and fair society for all. De La Torre provides the following as the objectives of reading the Bible from the margins:

1. To read the Bible from the perspective of those suffering from race, class, and gender oppression.
2. To investigate biblical protest narratives to reveal models of resistance and struggle against race, class and gender domination.
3. To examine various biblical interpretations that are used as a source for liberation for overcoming dominant religious power structures.⁴⁸

With regard to the preceding manner of theological thinking and teaching as it applies to African Pentecostals, there is either the lack of willingness or a trained incapacity to understand the role of social institutions and social structures in both the promotion of a more just and fair society and the perpetuation and legitimation of social injustice and oppression, as De La Torre highlights.

In terms of the widespread literature on the negative impact and consequences of neoliberal globalization and market fundamentalism on a large portion of the African population,⁴⁹ Pentecostals are at best agnostic and at worse cultural collaborators. Large proportions of African people have become victims of neoliberal globalization. They have been rendered as “surplus people,” as they are of little or no relevance to the system in terms of having or possessing appropriate, marketable human capital in a network society based on information economy. This pathetic situation is worsened by the fact that such surplus people produce little or nothing of value in the global marketplace and also lack any effective purchasing power in the global marketplace. It is these empirical realities that led Castells to predict that if this trend persists, Africa will become a Fourth World region later in the twenty-first century.⁵⁰ To illustrate the lack of concern for social justice or the struggle for a more just and fair society among Africa’s Pentecostals, here are the cardinal beliefs, ideals, and values that define the Living Faith Church, one of the leading Pentecostal denominations in Africa:

“The Church is founded upon twelve core emphases as follows:

1. Faith (1 John 5:4; Eph. 6:16)
2. The Word (John 1:1–12; Heb. 1:3)
3. Sings and Wonders (Ps. 82:5–7; John 3:8)
4. The Holy Spirit (Acts 1:1–8; Isaiah 10:27)
5. Prosperity (3 John 2; Ps. 35:27; Zech. 1:17)
6. Prayer (1 John 5:14)
7. Healing (Isaiah 53:3–4; Jer. 8:22; Matt. 8:17)
8. Wisdom (Prov. 24:3–4, Isaiah 33:6)
9. Success (Joshua 1:8–10)
10. Vision (Prov. 29:18, Jer. 29:11)
11. Consecration (Hebrews 12:14; 2Tim. 2:19)
12. Praise (2 Chro. 20:20–22; Ps. 67:1–7; 149:1–9)”⁵¹

Looking at these founding beliefs and emphases, there is no concern, interest, or focus on social justice as an issue of biblical concern. Yet church members presumably take the Bible seriously in its totality. But any reading of the Book of Amos (among others) will conclude that the struggle for social justice and the liberation of the oppressed are biblical issues of concern, and ignoring them will have serious and undesirable consequences.⁵² The prophet Amos was not just concerned about the spiritual lives and flamboyant religious rituals of the people of Israel but also the ethical and moral consequences of the behavior of worshipers at Bethel sanctuary on the social and material lives of the poor in Israel, who he said were trampled upon by the rich like a pair of sandals. Here is a commentary on the Book of Amos from the “Peoples’ Bible”:

Despite the noble ideal of ancient Israel—that the land is a gift of God’s grace, that all have a right to own land, and that the wealthy will share their bounty with the poor—there were abuses of power. Amos denounced those newly rich Israelites who flouted this ideal in their rampant greed, saying that they “trample the head of the poor” and would not hesitate to sell some poor debtor into slavery for the mere price of a pair of sandals. In those days small landowners were vulnerable to famines or bad decisions and could be forced to sell themselves into slavery because of insurmountable debts. The powerful were eager to grab more land for themselves, but even with more land their interest was not in producing staples for the poor. For Amos this pattern is against the command of God to help the poor and needy in their distress. This pattern of greed by society’s powerful is against the common good and the basic understanding of community, which seeks the best interest of all persons in society, rich or poor. Amos condemned this social injustice—and he sees looming on the eastern horizon the coming end of this unjust system in the specter of an advancing Assyrian army.⁵³

The biblical struggle for social justice as the prophet Amos defined it is never a fundamental focus or defining concern of Pentecostal churches in Africa. The primary concern of a typical Pentecostal is that through the spiritual unlocking of kingdom blessings using Christocentric righteousness, all social structures, social institutions, and natural laws can be by-passed to transform society, so that those people under the church’s spiritual umbrella can live a life of abundance. Pentecostals in Africa cannot claim that there is no biblical foundation and expressed concern for the struggle for social justice, which includes transforming unjust social institutions and structures. They have rather decided to cherry pick what narrowly fits their social and material interests (material and financial prosperity), which are presumably the key indicators of God’s blessings in a person’s life as a recognition of his or her piety. Ultimately, this inadvertently leads to secularization from within a religious tradition, as the preoccupation of the religion becomes predominantly this-worldly. Arguing from a rational choice theory perspective, Iannaccone asserts that “in a highly competitive environment, religions have little choice but to abandon inefficient modes of production and unpopular products in favor of more attractive and profitable alternatives.”⁵⁴ The more profitable alternatives are often this-worldly in the context of Africa’s Pentecostalism.

On a critical note, the simplicity and naïveté of the Pentecostal way of thinking in Africa is the conundrum that the country that has made the greatest progress in getting people out of poverty from the late twentieth century to date is China,⁵⁵ a nation that even though it has citizens who are Christian believers, is either an atheist or a high majority Buddhist population. This brings to mind the constructively critical mindset of Jansenist theologians in France.⁵⁶ The Jansenists were Catholic theologians but through diligent and careful observation of what was going on in the real world, they raised empirical questions and concerns about one key element of Saint Augustine’s teaching. Saint Augustine asserted that the only way one can bear good spiritual fruits (charitable acts) through works or behavior is if one is a Christian and has

received God's grace, which empowers the person to do good things. The concern that the Jansenists raised was that they observed some people who were not Christians but whose behavior manifested good spiritual fruits and elements of good character that were associated only with those who were saved and had received God's grace, as stated in traditional Augustinian theology.⁵⁷ They concluded that given their empirical observations, there must be other reasons, apart from received grace, that inspire and encourage people to have good character. No one can deny that China has made phenomenal progress in promoting human development,⁵⁸ even though it is not a country of people with Christocentric righteousness. On another note, while China has made progress in drastically reducing poverty, inequality has widened in the country. Africa's situation is worse because it suffers, in various countries, from high levels of poverty and widening inequality. It is fair and relevant to ask what role Africa's Pentecostalism is playing in relation to this problem.

PENTECOSTALISM AND WIDENING SOCIAL INEQUALITY AS A SOCIAL PROBLEM IN AFRICA

Pentecostal theology and teaching in Africa can also on close examination be accused of creating a negative climate for public policy formulation and implementation geared towards institutionalizing a more level-playing field and inclusive society. To clarify the point being made here, one needs to mention Thomas Piketty's explanation for the prosperity that was experienced in Western nations in the postwar period.⁵⁹ The key factors were public investment in infrastructure, public education, and public health or health care. In effect, what this means is investment in public goods. But these investments were made possible by the high rate of taxation and revenue collection from citizens. The revenues collected provided public goods and created opportunities for all to thrive and flourish, thereby reducing the possibility of widening inequality. More importantly, these public policies were made possible by mass social movements that were committed to creating a more just and fair society for all, irrespective of religious beliefs or ethnic differences. Ironically, in some parts of the world (e.g., the USA), some of the social movements committed to creating an inclusive society were opposed by Christians, such as the Moral Majority movement.⁶⁰ Pentecostal denominations in the USA supported the Moral Majority movement.

Unfortunately, African Pentecostals do not even encourage their members to support their brothers and sisters financially, but rather to see giving to God and to the church as their primary responsibility and as the assured spiritual strategy for unlocking God's abundant blessings, which will make the church members the envy of people in their generation because of the prosperity they will realize in life.⁶¹ Pentecostals are not taught to support local, state, and federal government to efficiently collect revenue and effectively invest it in providing public goods, which are constructive in creating a more equal and

level-playing field in society.⁶² African countries have a very poor record of tax and revenue collection.⁶³ On the contrary, the main agenda is generating more money or material resources and giving it to God, which means the church. In principle, there is nothing wrong with giving to the church, or any civil society organization for that matter, that one believes in, but we must note that giving to the church does not necessarily translate into public goods, which can be accessed by all citizens. Many Pentecostal church leaders and founders treat the church and its assets as personal fiefdom. No wonder, Pentecostal denominational leaders are extremely rich by African standards.

What this means is that unlike Catholic social teaching,⁶⁴ Pentecostal theology and teachings in Africa care less about creating a conducive environment for efficient and effective policy formulation and implementation that will enable a more just and fair society by means of inclusive growth and development through the provision of public goods,⁶⁵ among other positive strategies such as promoting interreligious dialogue. True Pentecostal believers are expected to receive special favor from God even if the ship of the nation is sinking. In the Western world, and even in Africa, the Catholic Church has played a unique role in this respect by using its legitimate civil society status as an organization to push for civil repair, by urging governments to do the right thing or hold them accountable, in addition to directly engaging in providing social services to all people based on their human dignity and needs.⁶⁶ Here is a quote from a 1988 encyclical by Pope John Paul II, titled "The Social Concerns of the Church," which illustrates the sense of deeper reflection on issues of social justice and inequality within the Catholic Church compared to Pentecostal Churches:

One must denounce the existence of economic, financial, and social mechanism which, although they are manipulated by people, often function almost automatically, thus accentuating the situation of wealth for some and poverty for the rest. These mechanisms, which are maneuvered directly or indirectly by the more developed countries, by their very functioning, favor the interest of the people manipulating them. But in the end they suffocate the economies of the less developed countries.⁶⁷

It is obvious from this that the Pope and his church are profoundly aware that the macro-relationships between nations in the world can be characterized by injustice, and that the injustice and inequality existing at the international level is reproduced internally within developing countries, such as in Africa. The result is a situation where the private pleasure of the privileged classes in developed and developing countries works against the interests of the disadvantaged classes in the developing and developed world, resulting in private pleasure for some and public plight for the great majority. But one will not find this kind of systematically well-thought-out teaching among African Pentecostals; they do not address the relationship between global and domestic inequality, and how such a situation socially disenfranchises so many people who attend Pentecostal churches and in the society in general. And yet the Pope's critique is made

within the framework of the social teachings of the church, and is not a propaganda project calling for Marxist or socialist revolution.

What all this means is that Pentecostals in Africa do little to systematically and institutionally address the problem of widening inequality and systematically structured injustice in society. They remain agnostic about it or condone the status quo by default. There are of course cases where Pentecostals help disadvantaged people, but often such ministries are designed to help church members or are conceived as evangelistic strategies for converting people to a particular denomination.⁶⁸ For instance, when one examines the cost of attending universities established by Pentecostal denominations in Africa, it is very expensive and unaffordable for the masses, notwithstanding any scholarships that the universities provide. If the only universities operating in African countries were those established by Pentecostal denominations or private interests, then in just a few decades, Africa would end up with a new social aristocracy created through unequal access to private corporate higher education and the opportunities this provides for social mobility. What then are the social and cultural consequences of a church's theological teachings and social engagements when the long-term results of such engagements and teachings are helping to create a social aristocracy? As social inequality widens, an area this situation is manifested in is in the realm of consumption. To what extent, then, is African Pentecostalism containing the temptation of consumerism as a source of meaning in life in the era of neoliberal globalization?

PENTECOSTALISM AND THE SEDUCTIVE CULTURE OF CONSUMERISM

Pentecostal theology in Africa can be legitimately accused of creating a culture of excess in consumption, giving it elective affinity with neoliberal consumerism. The similarity between the two approaches in promoting excess consumption and consumerism is through the logic of reasoning that drives them. In the era of neoliberal globalization, if you make money by complying with the rules of the game or the market (whether the rules are ethical or not), in so far as they are legal and one has paid one's taxes appropriately, one can spend the money on any kind of material consumption as a demonstration of one's economic success.⁶⁹ It is assumed that such ostentatious display of wealth or consumerism will inspire others to work harder in order to earn more money and spend it; and this will, in turn, increase productivity and heighten economic growth. Interestingly, in contrast to this line of reasoning, Catholic social teaching insists that the principles of social justice do not just apply to the just acquisition of wealth but also entail the application of just moral and ethical considerations in how the wealth acquired is used, because there is a social mortgage on it owing to the need to promote the common good and a humane society.⁷⁰

But consistent with the neoliberal line of thinking, yet in a slightly different way, Pentecostals in Africa believe that if a person obeys spiritual laws, God rewards him or her by giving the person dominion and power to possess anything he or she sets foot on. When this happens, it is the person's right and privilege as the child of God to enjoy the wealth he or she has acquired even if it means being the envy of his or her generation. A believer has every right to have high taste and avoid anything mediocre in the kingdom of abundant blessings, just as Jesus did during his lifetime, according to Bishop Oyedepo.⁷¹ The assumption is that as people unlock the kingdom blessings and prosper beyond what they ever expected in life, this will inspire other Christians to heighten their level of spiritual dedication in order to unlock their own kingdom blessings. Because this material blessing is divinely given, the believer can use it to buy anything she or he wants that is legal and legitimate. Whether such purchase is moral and ethical is a matter of private interpretation of the believer according to his or her church's doctrine. Thus Bishop Oyedepo owns four private jets.⁷² Using this model of theological reasoning, Pentecostals become immersed in pursuing material prosperity as a mark of God's presence in their lives and therefore the reward they deserve. This of course is a good setting for creating a culture of excess consumption, narcissism, and reducing the essence of the Christian faith to the realization of material and financial blessings. At this point the church of Christ is afflicted with the social disease of "affluenza"—an incessant demand for more and more material and financial success as a source of meaning in life. Again, as highlighted earlier, this leads to the secularization of religion from within the tradition of the church.

On a reflective note, no one will deny that Pentecostals are a great force in African Christianity. Their leaders command the ears and attention of millions of citizens, often more than the national governments of their countries. It is, however, obvious that in the hands of these church and spiritual entrepreneurs whatever Jesus said or did during his lifetime has become open-ended and malleable as they reinterpret and recalibrate the meaning of the scriptures to suit their taste and that of their audience, with reckless neglect of their social and historical contexts. What this seems to mean is that Jesus suffered and died on the cross but he has now lost the monopoly over defining and interpreting the true meaning of what he did and his purpose and intentions. Spiritual entrepreneurs in a liberal democratic society and neoliberal economy can assign their own meanings and interpretations, and get away with it: they are thriving and flourishing. The implication is that the church of Christ has in this respect been transformed into something like a joint stock company, with the millions of shareholders having more say in what the company's vision and goals are all about, rather than applying what Jesus, the founder of the "company," truly intended as his goals and vision.

It is fair to say that African Pentecostal ministers have embraced the modern world and enjoy basking in its material possessions, but they care less about the intellectual and institutional foundations of such modernity. It is up to Africans to decide if they want to become active, effective, and productive players in the

modern world and global economy, notwithstanding its internal contradictions. As Weber notes, whether good or bad, modernity, science, and the process of rationalization as integral elements of the modern world are irreversible. Africans might well be satisfied, given their low level of expectations so far, in remaining as consumers of products created outside the continent, and conceding Africa to be the dumping ground for consumer products from the Western world and Asia. But if they want to be active, effective, and productive players, then I wish to warn them that a modern society has certain minimum prerequisites in terms of institutions, infrastructure, inclusive citizenship, a scientific mindset, and an epistemology, among others. No nation in history has successfully created these prerequisites just by praying and unlocking the success that is embedded in spiritual laws, and this will not happen in Africa. If Pentecostalism is to help in creating a social order in Africa that is rooted in the foundations of modern society, there must be clear evidence that shows the pathway forward for all Africans, including believers of other religions or non-believers. So far, there is none. Of course, Africans can legitimately decide to create a unique African modernity, but that, while highly desirable, will pose even more formidable challenges and the need for a higher level of discipline and commitment than if contemporary modern institutions are adopted and adapted, notwithstanding their limitations.

Whatever African Pentecostals decide to do henceforth is their choice. Time will tell, but history shows there are no shortcuts to modernity.⁷³ But what complicates all this is the crisis I see ahead, and I am despondent because African theologians and Pentecostal church leaders are not taking the challenge of modernity seriously. The conundrum here is that while it is obvious that modernity is irreversible, it is not leading us to a Garden of Eden or New Jerusalem. One can cite an advanced warning for African Pentecostals from Weber as paraphrased by Royce:

The rise of science and the marginalization of religion leave a world bereft of meaning. The resulting vacuum is filled by a multitude of competing worldviews. The monotheism of the past gives way to the "[absolute polytheism]" of the present. The culture of the modern era, as a result, becomes increasingly differentiated and fragmented, with conflict arising not only "[between 'class interests' but between general views on life and the universe as well]." With a unitary culture no longer possible, the modern world is an irrevocably divided world, as "[irreconcilably antagonistic]" political ideologies, ethical doctrines, and attitudes towards life enter into constant conflict with one another. In this context, the individual cannot help but "[feel himself subject to the struggle between multiple sets of values.]" He is forced "[to choose which of these gods he will and should serve, or when he should serve the one and when the other.]" But "[at all times, "Weber states, "he will find himself engaged in a fight against one or another of the gods of this world]."⁷⁴

The foregoing discussion, if nothing else, suggests the urgent need for Pentecostal ministers and scholars in Africa to see the need to dedicate themselves to deep theological reflection on how they can manage the future of their

faith, assuming they are successful and all their members are able to unlock the divine keys for abundant material and financial blessings owing to obedience to laws in the spiritual realm. I am making this observation because throughout the Old Testament there is a record of how material blessings led to the people of Israel to go astray by turning their backs to Yahweh. Obviously, the problem is not unique to the Hebrew people but applies to all human societies. Even if one concedes to African Pentecostals that their members can achieve abundant material and financial blessings that would make them the envy of their generation, one cannot agree, based on existing evidence, that they will be totally unaffected by the crisis of modernity. The crisis of modernity we see in the West is not created by some inherent weakness in people living in the region or the Anglo-Saxon race as a whole.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis, it is obvious that African Pentecostals take the fruits of modern capitalism and society for granted, or at least they remain agnostic about them. But this chapter has documented evidence that if Pentecostalism contributes to institutionalizing free market capitalism in Africa, as Berger and Martin envisaged, the believers should not assume that their faith and society will not become a victim of such a dynamic modern economy and society. There is no religion in the world that has come into contact with the full force of modern capitalism and society and remained the same or intact. Often it is religion that becomes the casualty. King David was intoxicated by power to the point of taking the wife (Bathsheba) of one of his soldiers (Uriah), and ordered the strategic command to position Uriah in the battlefield, resulting in his death, after which King David took over Uriah's wife—a clear abuse of power and privilege. In the case of Solomon, he was materially blessed and ended up marrying hundreds of wives. There is much to reflect on this issue theologically, over and above any social scientific analysis. But where are the Pentecostal theologians in Africa who are determined and committed to directly confront what is indeed an open-ended and unfolding crisis of modernity on the continent, assuming modern capitalism succeeds and becomes dynamic? There is no reason to assume that African Pentecostals have the spiritual immunity to resist this crisis of modernity.

For Pentecostal theologians and ministers who are honestly and sincerely wrestling with the issues and challenges addressed in this chapter, I commend, admire, and affirm them. Their work will have lasting consequences on the future of Africa's modern and plural societies. Faith matters, but Africa will always be plural and multi-religious. Even if free market capitalism succeeds and Pentecostalism contributes to such success, Africa cannot escape the well-documented problems of the consequences of capitalism for humanity and religion in particular, which have been highlighted in this chapter. And for Pentecostal leaders to address this challenge, they will have to engage in interdisciplinary studies. They cannot get to the bottom of the problem by just narrowly focusing on theology.

NOTES

1. Mark Zachary Taylor (2016), *The politics of innovation: why some countries are better than others at science and technology* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press).
2. Bea Lundt and Christoph Marx (2016), *Kwame Nkrumah 1909–1972 A Controversial African Visionary* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag).
3. Thomas Hobbes (1986), *Leviathan*, edited by C. B. Macpherson (Harmondsworth: Penguin); See also Campbell, Tom (1981), *Seven theories of human society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 70–91.
4. James M. Blaut (1993), *The colonizer's model of the world: geographical diffusionism and Eurocentric history* (New York: Guilford Press).
5. Paul Gifford (2016), *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press), 18–28.
6. About MFM <http://www.mountainoffire.org/about/dr-daniel-and-sis-shade-olukoya>. Accessed January 27th, 2017.
7. Göran Hydén (1983), *No shortcuts to progress: African development management in perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press).
8. Keith A. Roberts and David Yamane (2016), *Religion in sociological perspective*, 6th ed. (Los Angeles, CA: Sage), 157–186.
9. David O. Oyedepo (2003), *Success strategies* (Lagos: Dominion), 81–102.
10. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*, 29–34.
11. Samuel Zalanga (2014), “Christianity in Africa: Pentecostalism and Sociocultural Change in the Context of Neoliberal Globalization,” in Stanley D. Brunn (ed.), *The Changing World Religion Map: Sacred Places, Identities, Practices and Politics* (Dordrecht: Springer), 1827–1862.
12. Karen Lebacqz (1986), *Six theories of justice: perspectives from philosophical and theological ethics* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House); Lawrence Kohlberg (1984), *The psychology of moral development: the nature and validity of moral stages* (San Francisco: Harper & Row); Carol Gilligan (1984), *In a different voice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University).
13. Peter L. Berger (2010), “Max Weber Is Alive and Well, and Living in Guatemala: The Protestant Ethic Today,” *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* 8, no. 4: 3–9. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15570274.2010.528964>.
14. Max Weber (1958), *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism* (New York: Scribner).
15. David Martin (2002), *Pentecostalism: the world their parish* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers), 152.
16. *Under the Radar: Pentecostalism in South Africa and its Potential Social and Economic Role*. Johannesburg: Center for Development and Enterprise, CDE In Depth no 7, 2008, 9.
17. Alex Inkeles and David Horton Smith (1974), *Becoming modern: individual change in six developing countries* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
18. Alexander Pope, “An Essay on Criticism.” <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/41709-a-little-learning-is-a-dangerous-thing-drink-deep-or>. Accessed on January 27th, 2017.
19. Steven Vago (2004), *Social change*, 5th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall), 69–70.

20. Ralph Pieris (1969), *Studies in the sociology of development* (Rotterdam: Rotterdam University Press), 155.
21. Norman Long (1977), *An introduction to the sociology of rural development* (London: Tavistock), 61–62.
22. Robert Wade (1990), *Governing the market: economic theory and the role of government in East Asian industrialization* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press); Alice H. Amsden (1989), *Asia's next giant: South Korea and late industrialization* (New York: Oxford University Press).
23. Long, *An introduction to the sociology of rural development*, 64–65.
24. Ibid., 66–67.
25. Ibid., 68–69.
26. Dani Rodrik (1996), “Understanding economic policy reform,” *Journal of Economic Literature* 34, no. 17: 9–41.
27. Hydén, *No shortcuts to progress: African development management in perspective*.
28. Stefan A. Halper (2012), *The Beijing consensus: legitimizing authoritarianism in our time* (New York, NY: Basic Books).
29. Frantz Fanon (1965), *The wretched of the earth*, translate by Constance Farrington. (New York: Grove Press, Inc.).
30. Taylor, *The politics of innovation: why some countries are better than others at science and technology*.
31. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*, 13–68.
32. Jürgen Habermas (1989), *The structural transformation of the public sphere an inquiry into a category of Bourgeois society*, translated by Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).
33. Jürgen Habermas (1984), *The theory of communicative action* (Boston: Beacon Press).
34. Max Horkheimer (1947), *Eclipse of reason* (New York: Oxford University Press); Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer (1979), *Dialectic of enlightenment*, translated by John Cumming. (London: Verso Editions).
35. Roberts and Yamane, *Religion in sociological perspective*.
36. Inkeles and Smith, *Becoming modern: individual change in six developing countries*.
37. David Ashley and David Michael Orenstein (2005), *Sociological theory: classical statements*, 6th ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon), 9.
38. Joseph E. Stiglitz (2012), *The price of inequality* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co.); Jeffrey Sachs (2005), *The end of poverty: economic possibilities for our time* (New York: Penguin Press).
39. Zalanga, “Christianity in Africa”; Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori (2007), *Global Pentecostalism: the new face of Christian social engagement* (Berkeley: University of California Press).
40. Paul Froese and Christopher Bader (2010), *America's four gods: what we say about God—And what that says about us* (New York: Oxford University Press).
41. Aída Besançon Spencer and William David Spencer (1998), *The global God: multicultural Evangelical views of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books).
42. Susan Kwilecki (1999), *Becoming religious: understanding devotion to the unseen* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press), 35–56.
43. Edward Cary Royce (2015), *Classical social theory and modern society: Marx, Durkheim, Weber* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield), 119.

44. Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith (2000), *Divided by faith: evangelical religion and the problem of race in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
45. John Bunyan (1960), *The pilgrim's progress from this world to that which is to come*, edited by James Blanton Wharey. (Oxford: Clarendon Press).
46. Horatio Alger (1985), *Ragged Dick* (New York: Penguin Books).
47. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*; David Maxwell (2006), *African gifts of the spirit: Pentecostalism and the rise of a Zimbabwean transnational religious movement* (Oxford: James Currey); Steve Brouwer, Paul Gifford and Susan D. Rose (1996), *Exporting the American gospel: global Christian fundamentalism* (New York: Routledge), 151–178.
48. Miguel A. De La Torre (2002), *Reading the Bible from the margins* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books), 11.
49. John Mihevc (1995), *The market tells them so: the World Bank and economic fundamentalism in Africa* (London: Zed Books).
50. Manuel Castells (1996), *The rise of the network society* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers).
51. <http://yourlivingbread.blogspot.com/2012/03/12-pillars-of-commission-winners-chapel.html>. Accessed April 15, 2017.
52. Page H. Kelley (1972), *Amos, prophet of social justice* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House); Craig M. Gay (1991), *With liberty and justice for whom? The recent evangelical debate over capitalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.), 22–63; 116–160.
53. Curtiss Paul DeYoung (2009), *The peoples' Bible: new revised standard version with the Apocrypha* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress), 1054.
54. Alan Aldridge (2000), *Religion in the contemporary world: a sociological introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press), 75.
55. Justin Yifu Lin, Fang Cai and Zhou Li (1996), *The China miracle: development strategy and economic reform* (Sha Tin, Hong Kong: Published for the Hong Kong Centre for Economic Research and the International Center for Economic Growth by the Chinese University Press).
56. Yuen Yuen Ang (2016), *How China escaped the poverty trap* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).
57. Jerry Z. Muller (2008), *Thinking about capitalism, Vol. Part 1: The Great Courses* (Chantilly, Virginia: The Teaching Company), 14.
58. Ang, *How China escaped the poverty trap*.
59. Thomas Piketty (2014), *Capital in the twenty-first century*, translated by Arthur Goldhammer. (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press), 39–109.
60. William C. Martin (1996), *With God on our side: the rise of the religious right in America* (New York: Broadway Books).
61. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*, 33–37.
62. Piketty, *Capital in the twenty-first century*, 39–109; John E. Roemer (1998), *Equality of opportunity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
63. Piketty, *Capital in the twenty-first century*, 471–492.
64. Lebacqz, *Six theories of justice*, 66–82.
65. Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson (2012), *Why nations fail: the origins of power, prosperity, and poverty* (New York: Crown Publishers), 72–83.
66. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*, 85–106.

67. Michael P. Todaro and Stephen C. Smith (2012), *Economic development*, 12th ed. (Boston, MA: Addison-Wesley), 123–124.
68. Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*.
69. Eric J. Evans (2004), *Thatcher and Thatcherism* (London: Routledge).
70. Lebacqz, *Six theories of justice*, 66–82.
71. Gifford, *Christianity, development and modernity in Africa*, 34.
72. Mfonobong Nsehe, “Wealthy Nigerians, Pastors Spend \$225 million on Private Jets.” <http://www.forbes.com/sites/mfonobongnsehe/2011/05/17/wealthy-nigerians-pastors-spend-225-million-on-private-jets/#5134e683a2a3> Accessed January 27, 2017.
73. Hydén, *No shortcuts to progress: African development management in perspective*.
74. Royce, *Classical social theory and modern society*, 121.



Pentecostalism, Power, and Politics in Nigeria

Kelvin Onongha

INTRODUCTION

Within the past two decades Nigerian Pentecostalism has morphed from a priestly to a prime ministerial role in the political affairs of the largest nation in the continent of Africa. Once regarded as apolitical, only interested in the conversion of its members, the Pentecostal movement is no longer content with simply having a back seat in the governance of the nation. It has demonstrated its interest in becoming not only a power broker, but also in having firm control of the highest offices in the land. Evidence of this can be seen in the emergence of a Pentecostal minister as the vice-president of the federal republic.

In this chapter the factors that have led to this evolution within Nigerian Pentecostalism are considered. Also examined are the implications of this new amalgam—namely, the politico-prophetic functions of this growing phenomenon within the mainstream of the nation's public domain.

PENTECOSTALISM IN NIGERIA

Nigerian Pentecostalism is a phenomenon truly worthy of study. As the late Nigerian religious scholar Ogbu Kalu declared, “the rise of Pentecostalism in Africa has more political import than has been typically realized.”¹ It has emerged from obscurity in less than four decades to become the fastest growing movement in the entire continent and Nigeria has become African Pentecostalism's true theatre of operation. Worthy of note is the fact that the largest churches in Eastern, Western, and Southern Africa are operated or owned by Nigerian pastors. In addition, the largest churches in the UK and in

K. Onongha (✉)
Adventist University of Africa, Nairobi, Kenya
e-mail: ononghak@aua.ac.ke

Eastern Europe are Nigerian-operated. Apparently, something vibrant, vivifying, and vital about this genre of Pentecostalism autochthonous to the region is responsible for its allure. Its attraction, closely connected with its keen perception and assimilation of local worldviews, is examined later in this chapter. Scholars, however, admit that Pentecostalism is far from monolithic; rather, there are various nuances in this religious spectrum that sometimes make it difficult to classify.

The roots of classical Pentecostalism in Nigeria can be traced to the pioneer African Independent Churches (AIC) such as the *Aladura* churches which emerged upon the scene from around 1918. (There are some, however, who only see a Western origin for this great movement, tracing it back to the Azusa Street revival in America.) These *Aladura* churches surfaced soon after the worldwide influenza outbreak following World War II, when pioneer prophets received instructions that the remedy to this plague was not to be found in Western medicines, but through prayer.² As a result this movement, whose influence stretched all over West Africa, and among Nigerians in the Western diaspora, in Europe and America, became known as “the praying people” (*Aladura*).

The origin of the neo-Pentecostal movement in Nigeria is traced to the 1970s when revivals flourished on university campuses around the country, resulting in the birth of the Deeper Life Bible Church. Prior to this, Archbishop Benson Idahosa, a pioneer of neo-Pentecostalism in Nigeria with connections to churches in the USA, had established the Church of God Mission International, which blazed the trail for the innovative trends Pentecostalism introduced into the Nigerian religious landscape. The 1980s and 1990s brought a further explosion of Pentecostal churches across the country, bringing these once disdained churches from the margins to the median of religious life, and from the fringes to the fore of power issues in the nation.

To the *Aladura*, and to many Nigerian Pentecostals, prayer is a major source of power, and the solution to every challenge and need in life. The degree to which people are successful in life’s pursuits is believed to be directly proportional to the frequency and fervency of that person’s prayer life. For many Pentecostals power is the goal, and prayer the means to this objective. Power is sought to bring under control all of life’s circumstances in favor of the petitioner. Because life is full of unexpected twists and turns, it is imperative that one be frequent in prayer in order to overcome life’s endeavors.

PENTECOSTALISM AND THE AFRICAN WORLDVIEW

Pentecostalism is undoubtedly the fastest growing strand of Christianity in Nigeria, and across the entire African continent. One prominent explanation for this can be found in an understanding of the African worldview. Certain aspects of this, which have contributed greatly to the phenomenal spread of this religion around the country and continent, include cosmos, causation, control, and comfort.³ These shall be briefly discussed.

Cosmos

To Africans generally, and Nigerians specifically, the cosmos is populated by myriad malevolent spirits capable of wreaking havoc and causing great misfortune to people. Other spiritual agents within the African cosmos that can also bring disaster and misfortune include ancestors, witches, sorcerers, and enemies. A recognition of the existence and powers of these agencies in the African cosmos prevailed in the early Pentecostal churches, although the early mission churches either ignored or disregarded this dimension of the African worldview. As a result, many Nigerians, and Africans, were more comfortable in Pentecostal churches, while many others who remained in mission churches during times of personal crises often sneaked off on occasion to these Pentecostal churches that seemed to understand and have remedies for issues regarding the spirit world. Pentecostalism demonstrated not only an understanding of the African cosmos, but also provided a haven for those with peculiarly African spiritual problems. Mission churches focused basically on the otherworldly needs of their parishioners, while Pentecostal churches emphasized their existential concerns.

Pentecostal theology and methodology acknowledges and describes a well-delineated cosmos composed of the marine, terrestrial, and celestial worlds. In each of these realms spirits abound and operate with reckless abandon, unless checked by agents of power. Pentecostal churches are extremely successful because to many Nigerians the spirit world is more real than the natural world; consequently, assisting people with an unfriendly and complex cosmos is most important, and extremely relevant to the Nigerian context.

Causation

Another important dimension of the African worldview that Pentecostalism embraced and responded to is the concept of mystical causation; that is, the belief that nothing happens without a cause, usually a spiritual one. For the African, the underlying reason that explains the origin of misfortune, suffering, sickness, loss, failure, shame, pain, and death is a person or spirit. Discovering who is behind a crisis or predicament is crucial in order to remedy the situation and to prevent future recurrence. Pentecostal churches not only provide explanations for who was the cause of suffering, but they also prescribe “assignments” that will bring about complete reversals of the unwanted conditions. In most cases the exact spiritual cause is supposedly identified and named. There is often a spirit cause for even illnesses—the spirit of diabetes, malaria, arthritis, and so on. For most Pentecostals the germ theory—that is, the belief that germs or microorganism were the causative agents for illness—is insufficient to explain the etiology of sickness. For them, sickness is exclusively the preserve of spirits. Even the well-traveled and educated founder and overseer of one of the most populous congregations in Africa, Bishop David Oyedipo, subscribes to such a mystical causation.⁴ Pentecostalism promises and provides power to break the spiritual cause for sickness and misfortune. This constitutes another reason for its rapid and widespread expansion.

Control

Since many Africans consider the cosmos to be populated by myriad malevolent spirits, one of their unceasing dispositions is to manipulate and gain control over the powers that prevail in the universe. Bolaji Idowu, the renowned Nigerian scholar, states that among the core beliefs of Africans is the belief in magic.⁵ Magic, he explains, is motivated by the desire to be in control of one's destiny. The goal of magic is "my will be done," while the goal of Christianity is "Thy will be done." In order to avoid being victims or pawns of diverse spiritual forces or powers, Africans traditionally resort to magic. However, through Pentecostalism the average Nigerian can still bring his or her universe under control by taking charge and demanding that God and his angels accede to their wills, passions, and desires. All things are possible to the Pentecostal who learns how. Among the favorite methods, control over one's destiny is possible through intense seasons of prayer and fasting. A person can even reject and reverse an unwanted destiny. In cases where it is discovered that there are persons or forces that seek to ascribe an undesired future or condition to a Pentecostal believer, it is possible to "return to sender" such an outcome or situation.

Associated with the Pentecostal predilection for control over their lives and destiny is what is referred to as dominion theology, deriving from Gen 1:28–29. Since God at creation gave dominion to the first humans, Adam and Eve, and because Christ died on the cross to restore the effects of sin and the lost dominion, Pentecostals are no longer subject to lives of mediocrity or meaninglessness (Eph 1:19–23). They are born to be the head and not the tail, first and not the last, victors and not victims (Deut 28:13, 44). In addition, many of the sermons preached in many Pentecostal Churches fall into the realm of motivational messages aimed at inspiring members to take control of their lives, businesses, future, and the world.

Two other focal programs evident in Pentecostalism center around power and leadership. About a decade ago, and sometimes even up to the present day, Pentecostals advertised their programs by qualifying them with the expression of "power," such as "Power Crusade/Evangelism," "Power Ministration," and "Power Healing." The other focal area is in leadership seminars, conferences, and programs. The touchstone of these is teaching their members how they can become leaders, and the principles they can apply to get ahead of the pack in their spheres of endeavor.

Comfort

Scholars of African religion acknowledge that for Africans the goal of religion is a life of comfort. In other words, religion is not merely about the spiritual dimensions of life alone but should entail a better quality of life materially. Pentecostals have elevated the teaching of material prosperity to the status of a core doctrine, which eclipses almost all other teachings. Financial prosperity is

a part of the leadership mandate that believers are to have, and is a sign of favor with God. Pentecostal preachers advertise their churches and themselves through their display of opulence and success, and encourage members to strive for this.

PENTECOSTALISM AND POLITICS

From its genesis the AICs, which were the precursors of Nigerian Pentecostalism, found themselves embroiled in the matrix of politics. Among the reasons that led to the breaking away from old mission churches and the establishment of independent churches were political factors, such as the perceived disenfranchisement of local clergy who were allowed only highly restricted ecclesiastical roles, and were often denied ordination until they were very old; the non-inclusion of local instruments such as drums in worship; and the denigration by missionaries of local customs and practices. These precursors of local Pentecostalism were powerful advocates of God being worshiped in locally identifiable forms if indeed he was to be accepted as their God.

In its early days, though, neo-Pentecostalism shunned political involvement in the affairs of the country, leaving clear a field that was already controlled by mainline mission churches. These mainline churches, led by Catholic and Anglican leaders, were vocal in criticizing government and in protesting against human rights abuses, corruption, and the plight of the oppressed in society. Pentecostal churches seemed content in merely seeking the conversion of their members. However, as their numbers surged and their influence grew, Nigerian Pentecostalism evolved, becoming more involved and influential in national and local politics. Factors that contributed to this transformation can be found in the socio-economic contexts within the nation, especially during the period of civil rule when democracy became established.

Although ontologically ecclesial, Nigerian Pentecostalism has obvious political leanings, demonstrated in its capacity to mobilize, empower, and harness the yearnings of people for a better society. Politicians have come to recognize the significant role that religion plays not only in the affairs of Nigerians, but also in the lives and affairs of citizens as a whole. Consequently, a symbiotic relationship has developed between politicians and Pentecostals. Politicians court the support and blessings of Pentecostal clergy, while Pentecostals see an unparalleled opportunity to have the state agency on their side to run their programs, and further enlarge their domain and power.

Ogbu opines that Pentecostalism engages in Nigerian politics in overt forms, such as have been cited, but also through covert methods, such as through the formation of prayer intercession networks, which respond to the spiritual power bases in the worldview of the people.⁶ Paul Gifford, in his study of one of the fastest growing and influential Pentecostal churches in Nigeria, Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries, explains the widely held belief among many Pentecostals that the nation is controlled by witchcraft and its travails are caused by malevolent spirits.⁷ This notion, referred to by Gifford as an

“enchanted worldview,”⁸ explains the Pentecostal rationale for spiritual intervention in national politics; hence Wilhelmina Kalu’s assertion that intercession plays a vital role as “a form of political praxis” by Pentecostal leaders.⁹ Affirming this viewpoint, Richard Burgess observes that permission for members to seek political office, as well as intercession against the strongholds of evil forces, are part of current Nigerian Pentecostal political theology.¹⁰

Kalu, astutely captures Pentecostal political practice in the four following forms¹¹:

1. Rebuilding the individual, thus bestowing the power to be truly human,
2. A covert form of social activities that attack socio-political and moral structures,
3. Increasing assertion for the rule of saints and a politics of engagement,
4. Building a new Israel by empowering communities to participate in the foretaste of God’s reign.

PENTECOSTALS AND POWER

Pentecostal clergy are men of power. The field is predominantly male; although a few women, usually the spouses of church leaders, also exercise authority. They lay claim to divine power, which they contend is attested to through the miracles and healing evidenced in their ministries. Their perceived intimacy with God has produced an aura of reverential awe around them. Considered to be God’s representatives on earth, Pentecostal preachers have often exploited such notions for personal gain. Their word is law, unchallenged and unquestioned. Since it is believed that God speaks through them, the only logical response from the believers, therefore, is obedience.

It needs to be said, though, that perhaps no religious organization has surpassed Pentecostal churches in conducting empowerment programs for the benefit of their congregations. These include wealth empowerment, success seminars, entrepreneurial programs, motivational workshops, and specific singles and married ministries. Pentecostalism has indeed empowered many unemployed youths and filled their lives with meaning, purpose, ambition, and the determination to excel. Pentecostalism has also provided an arena for the boundless talents of youth to be showcased and celebrated, in sharp contrast to many mainline churches where age and experience are the prerequisites for service and church leadership. Pentecostalism has proved to be a haven and a refuge for the youth and by so doing has obtained their loyalty, allegiance, and commitment. Through their association with these congregations, hitherto jobless but educated youths have obtained jobs or received loans to set up their own businesses. Having invested in the lives of these congregants and assured their future success, Pentecostalism as a result has gained people power.

Another avenue by which Pentecostalism has waxed strong and increased its power base has been through its associations. The Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) in 1988 was incorporated into the Christian Association of

Nigeria (CAN).¹² Since then, its voice and influence have grown, to the point where recently a Pentecostal leader, Reverend Ayo Oritsejafor, was elected as CAN's president, a body whose leadership had previously been the sole preserve of Catholics and Anglicans. Pentecostal preachers have even run for the office of president of the nation (e.g., Chris Okotie) or have been considered as vice-presidential candidates (e.g., Tunde Bakare). Presently, the vice-president of the federation is none other than a professing Pentecostal pastor, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo.

Besides this, in recent years, Pastor Enoch Adeboye, overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, one of the largest and most influential Pentecostal churches in Nigeria with several branches across the world, has played host to successive presidents of the nation, including Olusegun Obasanjo and Goodluck Jonathan. Jonathan, during a surprise visit to the Redeemed Christian Church of God headquarters, knelt before Adeboye for a special prayer just before the impending 2015 elections; he still lost.

PENTECOSTAL POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Pentecostal participation in politics and its quest for power is premised on theological foundations. Kalu's contention that Pentecostalism "exudes a proactive social consciousness and political theology" holds credence,¹³ and this theological undergirding shall be explored forthwith. Besides the dominion theology mentioned earlier, a number of scriptural passages showcase the perception that since Pentecostals are "born again," are righteous, and possess a special relationship with Christ, in addition to other acquired skills and education, they are born to lead.¹⁴ A scriptural passage employed by Pastor Paul Adefarasin that illustrates this is Psalm 125:3, "For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity." In other words, born-again believers have a divine mandate to lead, not to be led. Similarly, Prov. 29:2 states, "When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice," while Prov. 14:34 asserts that "Righteousness exalts a nation."

The PFN has since its inception served to foster unity and cohesion among Pentecostal churches, while equally enunciating a Pentecostal political theology. The premier president of PFN, Pastor Enoch Adeboye, reportedly stated,

Brethren, may I tell you that the strategy we are going to use to win Nigeria has to be the strategy of an invading army. When an army wants to take over a nation, they have certain characteristics, they don't make noise, like so many of us are doing. Look at those who are really doing substantial work in Nigeria today. They have started building churches, house fellowships are spreading, they are winning people all over the place ... people who are working while others are sleeping and they take essential things, they just don't go and kidnap the president. They take over the media, the radio, the television stations, they convince the rich people, businessmen, they get the students, they get backings, because when they take

over it is the market women and the students they will tell “come and demonstrate if you are in support.” If you want to take over Nigeria you better win the students, win the market women, the media, the broadcasters, the rich, the poor and the press. Glory be to God, I am sure they are here today. By the time they leave, they will be born-again.¹⁵

Likewise, Tunde Bakare, preacher and politician, stated in an interview conducted a few years ago: “We are about to see the imagined new wine skins, that will take the gospel to all the mountains of culture that influence society. You are going to see a church in action in education, in music, in dance, in entertainment, in healthcare delivery, health departments, in economy, and in politics. Because Christ is Lord over all. Not just the church. Over all things.”¹⁶

CONTEXT AND POLITICS

A critical factor that has conditioned and colored Pentecostal engagement in local and national politics has been the Nigerian context. As mentioned above, worldview factors such as mystical causality, a spiritually saturated cosmos, and the desire for a better life have all shaped Pentecostal responses to the needs and fears of the people. In addition to these, sociologists have observed how socio-economic factors such as the inability of government to provide security of life and property, adequate health facilities, employment, and other basic services have contributed to the alluring appeal of a new community created by Pentecostalism.¹⁷

Another observed factor is the religious influence of militant Islam. During military regimes, when Muslim-led governments flirted with the idea of declaring Nigeria an Islamic state, the reaction of Pentecostals was more strident and belligerent than some of the mainline churches. In some instances after the burning of churches in the northern Muslim-dominated states of the country and the killing of some pastors, certain Pentecostal preachers advocated a change of stance towards Muslims, even calling on Christians to retaliate and take up arms to protect themselves. Olufunke Adeboye notes that the recent participation of Pentecostals in Nigerian politics has taken place because of a “reaction to the Muslim agenda, or to the Pentecostal perception of what the agenda is.”¹⁸ While the Islamic agenda is to make Nigeria an Islamic nation, the Pentecostal agenda is similar—winning every soul for Christ. Whether it is the Pentecostal mode of aggressive evangelization that has resulted in a Muslim fundamental response or it is the Pentecostals reacting to militant Islam in the country in the form of Boko Haram depends on perspectives, and hence becomes a subject for debate. What is clear is that Nigeria has become a crucible of religious fundamentalism—whether Islamic or Pentecostal—with both parties standing their ground. Both parties seem intent on a theocratic system of government for Nigeria. The question is whether the theocratic rule be a rule of the spirit or Sharia.

CURRENTS AND CAUTIONS

Nigerian Pentecostal preachers presently walk the corridors of power, locally and even internationally. The controversial prophet of the Synagogue Church of All Nations, T. B. Joshua, has been a personal friend of African leaders such as the late Ghanaian president, John Atta Mills, the late president Nelson Mandela's former wife, Winnie Mandela, and Zimbabwe's opposition leader, Morgan Tsvangirai.¹⁹ For Pentecostals, no lines seem to separate church from the state, and if they do exist they are hazy. Pentecostals seem bent on a mission to reestablish theocracy as a political form of government. They believe the time has come for them to reign, and they unabashedly seek political power and positions.

With its size, influence, and grassroots presence Nigerian Pentecostalism has indeed begun flexing its muscles. What does this current trend hold for the nation? What cautions need to be considered in this new dispensation? Asamoah-Gyadu notes that this movement has played both "functional and dysfunctional roles" within the polity by providing supernatural powers to establish politicians in power, and even endorsing those known to be corrupt.²⁰ Richard Burgess illustrates this assertion by citing the examples of how Adeboye and Oyedepo supported the presidency of Obasanjo against allegations of corruption and political manipulation. Obasanjo's third term bid, Burgess claims, almost destroyed the alliance of Nigeria's Pentecostal ministers.²¹

It is also instructive that in several instances when politicians have claimed to be born again, and thereby possess a divine mandate, their administrations have often been riddled with corruption, dictatorship, and even plain ineptitude.²² Although Pentecostalism promises to bring a spiritual revolution in Nigeria, one wonders whether it has the capacity to truly make a difference in the face of a culture of abuse of power that is prevalent among the country's political leadership.²³ This is so because even in Pentecostal leadership a paternalistic concept of the "big man" is evident.²⁴ This system of patronage is believed to be responsible for the high levels of corruption in government and society. Furthermore, prominent Pentecostal leaders, such as Adeboye, clearly do not really believe in democracy, as is revealed in an address given at an early PFN meeting:

Everybody must take orders from the commander-in-chief. No arguments, no debates. I told you last time you came, I don't want it to become a social club. I want to see a PFN by the grace of God that when the devil hears "P" he will begin to shake. That cannot happen if we go about it democratically. Because when God has spoken and we say this is the way we shall go, someone will say, let us vote for the devil.²⁵

What this implies is that because they believe that they are led by the Spirit of God, Pentecostal leaders could very easily become dictatorial and intolerant of the viewpoints of others. Any detractor or opposition is of the enemy, Satan.

What is more, the track record of so-called born again politicians have not been stellar. In certain cases, they appear worse than those who did not campaign under the auspices of religion. It would appear then that the farther Pentecostals go from the murky, complex waters of Nigerian politics, the better for the movement. Unfortunately, their successes in business and the church tend to leave them bristling with over-confidence, so they believe they can also lead in politics without becoming tainted.

As Pentecostals engage in partisan political activities in the Nigerian context, which are highly tribal, they quickly lose their moral standing that allows them to fulfill a prophetic role in society. Congregations have been split over which political candidate to support, especially if they belong to the same denomination. Moreover, because Pentecostalism is far from being monolithic, with every preacher claiming to have been spoken to by God directly, internal cohesion is largely lacking. Ayo Oritsejafor, former PFN president and a prominent leader in CAN, attested to this in an interview²⁶:

We are almost an uncontrollable group of people and the way it is, is because we have had an experience which is called the Holy Spirit experience; which is good. The problem that has come out of that is that when people cough, they say it's the Holy Spirit. They talk nonsense, they say it's the Holy Spirit. How to challenge a man who says he's motivated by the Holy Spirit? This is what we have done to the Pentecostal Movement and it is very painful. (*Vanguard*, November 11, 2012)

Thus, Pentecostals themselves realize the challenge they have with discipline among members. This absence of internal self-regulation could prove a major setback for the movement.

Another pivotal dimension in politics that could become the bane of the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria is inequity in the distribution of resources. Although a cardinal doctrine of contemporary Pentecostalism is the prosperity gospel, on one hand a great percentage of worshippers are struggling to eke out a living, while on the other hand its clergy are wealthy jetsetters—with a few now in the exclusive club of private jet owners. Pentecostal preachers openly flaunt the wealth derived from struggling masses in their faces, all the while claiming that their God is not a poor God. As a result of the fortunes they command, schisms and rancor are common among Pentecostal preachers. With this as the present situation in the churches, some wonder what could occur when such people come into governmental positions, and command far greater resources.

CONCLUSION

Pentecostalism, as vilified as it has become, is still a force that cannot be ignored in the Nigerian polity. What Pentecostalism has is a powerful popular appeal that resonates emphatically with all classes and genre of people. What it does

lack, however, is a strong moral core. While claiming a divine mandate, it is sometimes as culpable of the societal malaise it seeks to transform. Pentecostals need to determine the framework for their participation in Nigerian politics, to choose whether to simply endorse political candidates they feel would uphold values they support or whether to enroll actively in the grimy and dissolute arena of Nigerian politics.

In these times of economic meltdown, when many industries are shutting down and societal conditions are tough, one enterprise that has continued to thrive and prosper is Pentecostalism. Indeed, the harder the economy becomes, the more people turn to the church. In imagining a new destiny for the most populous country in the continent, it becomes obvious that the influence of the Pentecostal movement cannot be disregarded. If Pentecostal leaders can only lay aside personal ambitions for glory and affluence and seek national greatness, this could be attained. Perhaps no agency better than Pentecostalism can help overcome the failure in Nigeria, and other African states, to overcome the tribal divisions and strife present since colonial times to build nation-states with strong ethical and moral foundations.²⁷ Pentecostalism has the power—political and pneumatological—to produce a revolution in Nigeria, not merely in the spiritual realm, but also in the secular, to generate a new community and birth a new nation.

NOTES

1. Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 222.
2. Asonzeh Ukah, "African Christianities: Features, Promises and Problems," Institut für Ethnologie und Afrikastudien, Johannes Gutenberg Universität, Mainz, Germany, 2007, 7.
3. See also Kelvin O. Onongha, *Pentecostalism in Nigeria: Phenomenon, Prospects and Problems to Mainline Churches* (Ilishan Remo, Nigeria: Babcock Consulting, 2011), 67–84.
4. David O. Oyedepo, *The Healing Balm* (Lagos, Nigeria: Dominion Publishing House, 1996), 40–41.
5. Bolaji E. Idowu, *African Traditional Religion* (London: SCM Press, 1973), 139.
6. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 197.
7. Paul Gifford, "Evil, Witchcraft, and Deliverance in the African Pentecostal Worldview," in *Pentecostal Theology of Africa*, ed. Clifton R. Clarke (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 129. [112–131].
8. *Ibid.*, 123.
9. Wilhelmina Kalu, Nimi Wariboko, and Toyin Falola, *Christian Missions in Africa Vol 2: Success, Ferment, and Trauma: The Collected Essays of Ogbu Uke Kalu* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2010), 378.
10. Richard Burgess, *Nigeria's Christian Revolution: The Civil War Revival and its Pentecostal Progeny: 1967–2006* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2008), 286.
11. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 213.

12. Pew Research Center, "Historical Overview of Pentecostalism in Nigeria," October 5, 2006, <http://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-nigeria/> (accessed October 24, 2016).
13. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 212.
14. Gina Lende, "The Rise of Pentecostal Power: Exploring the Politics of Pentecostal Growth in Nigeria and Guatemala," PhD dissertation, Norwegian School of Theology, 2014, 139–140.
15. Ruth Marshall, *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 202.
16. Lende, "Rise of Pentecostal Power," 115.
17. Onongha, *Pentecostalism in Nigeria*, 31.
18. Olufunke Adeboye, "Pentecostal Challenges in Africa and Latin America: A Comparative Focus on Nigeria and Brazil," *Afrika Zamani* 11/12: 2003–2004; 150 [136–159].
19. "Pentecostalism in Africa: Of Prophets and Profits," *The Economist* October 4, 2014, 15–16.
20. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "African Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity: An Overview," *Lausanne World Pulse Archives* 08: 2006, <http://www.ausan-newworldpulse.com/themedarticles-php/464/08-2006> (accessed August 23, 2016).
21. Richard Burgess, "Pentecostals and Political Culture in Sub Saharan Africa: Nigeria, Zambia, and Kenya as Case Studies," in *Global Pentecostal Movements: Migration, Mission and Public Religion* ed. Michael Wilkinson (Leiden, Netherlands: BRILL, 2012), 23.
22. Birgit Meyer, "Christianity in Africa: From African Independent to Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33: 2004, 460.
23. Lende, "Rise of Pentecostalism," 144.
24. John F. Macauley, "Africa's New Big Man Rule? Pentecostalism and Patronage in Ghana," *African Affairs*, 112: 446; 2012, 1.
25. Ruth Marshall, "'God is not a Democrat': Pentecostalism and Democratisation in Nigeria." In *The Christian Churches and the Democratisation of Africa* ed. Paul Gifford (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1995), 257.
26. See Lende, "Rise of Pentecostalism," 104.
27. Meyer, "Christianity in Africa," 466.

PART IV

Conclusion



African Pentecostal Political Philosophy: New Directions in the Study of Pentecostalism and Politics

Nimi Wariboko

INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a critical response to the chapters gathered in this book. The roots of my response lie in a construct of African Pentecostal political philosophy. I hope that this way of embarking on my assigned task—crafting a theoretical construct and using it as a lens to assess the contributions of each of the previous chapters toward our understanding of Pentecostalism and politics in Africa—will on its own make substantive contributions to the value and goal of this book.

There are two books—*Political Spiritualities* and *Nigerian Pentecostalism*—that have effectively framed scholarly consideration of the political philosophical or political theoretical potentialities of African Pentecostalism.¹ Their authors, Ruth Marshall and myself, Nimi Wariboko, have brought into focus some of the perennial themes of political philosophy as they are emerging, being worked out in concrete, empirical social lives, or even fundamentally reconceptualized and reimagined in Pentecostalism in Africa. When I attribute a quality of path-breaking or agenda-setting to these two authors, I do not mean that other scholars have not analyzed the political life of African Pentecostals. Many have done so, and admirably, but none before or after these two scholars—Canadian and Nigerian—have so consciously and deliberately embarked on a political philosophical analysis that uses empirical data, experiences, and histories of a variant of global Pentecostalism to engage with, using

N. Wariboko (✉)

Boston University School of Theology, Boston, MA, USA

necessary rigor and subtlety, the debates, ideas, and notions of (and in) political philosophy, critical theory, and the broader continental philosophy. Yet the books of Marshall and Wariboko are not works that study the political philosophy of African Pentecostalism *per se*. They have certainly enabled us to see the potential for such a worthy project through the sophisticated philosophical analyses they offer, but they are not it. Indeed, their scholarship has raised several vexing questions. What is African Pentecostal political philosophy, not as a lived experience but as a theoretical construct? If the books of Marshall and Wariboko are not it, then how should the political philosophy of African Pentecostalism be approached? How should a constructive paradigm of African Pentecostal political philosophy be constructed so that it can offer us concepts, tools, and propositions to relate the deeds, words, and ways of thinking of Pentecostals to politics and society as well as to offer some guidance for thoughts on political theology?

This chapter aims to provide different points of access into appropriate responses to these questions, suggesting research approaches to formulating and setting forth the political philosophy of African Pentecostalism. Five main points of departure are considered for such research—each of them valid in its own right, each complementary to the others, and each suitably rooted in African Pentecostal sensibility—only to argue that they should all be gathered together as a rhizomatic template for constructing African Pentecostal political philosophy. This template (also a methodology) suggests that, as the sixth point of access, the network not only accounts philosophically for each of the others, but also provides them with a broader basis for their fitness within a radical African Pentecostal political philosophy. While each point of access is true in and of itself, the rhizomatic sixth gives each point of access its truer meaning. Such a template—though drawing from the rootedness of these contributing points of access in African Pentecostalism—will serve the needs of global Pentecostalism for a theoretically astute political philosophy that is at the same time grounded in scripture. The points of access hold together within a comprehensive vision of the way, truth, and life of Christian living. Hopefully, after this exercise, if I am successful, I will have generated new conceptual tools, insights, and sensibilities that construct a political philosophy of African Pentecostalism. This chapter will conclude with an evaluation and response to the previous chapters in the light of my theoretical construct of African Pentecostal political philosophy.

PENTECOSTALISM AND FREEDOM

Contemporary interests in political freedom, pluralism, tolerance, and inclusivism strongly suggest that a good place to start a discussion of the political philosophy of African Pentecostalism is Pentecostals' attitude toward non-Christians and even other Christian sects in their midst. Based on this, many scholars have noted that the instincts of Pentecostals are not democratic. For instance, in support of authoritarian leadership a famous Pentecostal leader has

declared that “God is not a democrat.” Political liberalism appears not to be the forte of African Pentecostalism. Pentecostals, basing their reasoning on the words of John 14:6 (NKIV), “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me,’” reject any religious pluralism. Indeed, African Pentecostals are not noted for the promotion of active engagement with plurality or the fundamental ethos of pluralism. They demonize adherents of African traditional religions (ATR) and Muslims.

On another score, African Pentecostalism has been lauded for its promotion of gender equality or the empowerment of women—relatively speaking. Just as William Seymour of Azusa Street fame and his early Pentecostals in America were noted for promoting racial reconciliation, African Pentecostals, especially in the cities, have been relatively successful in bringing people of different “races” together, though many denominations are still bedeviled by ethnicity and ethnic politics. They promote authentic human individuality, political autonomy, certain forms of Weberian Protestant ethics, neoliberal market policies, and the decentralization of state powers. Indeed, African Pentecostalism both embraces and excludes some aspects of the clusters of freedoms that constitute political liberalism and free market capitalism.

There is no pure space in which to stand and speak about the democratic potentialities of African Pentecostalism. Its comparatively limited historical tradition is a mixed bag, an ongoing argument about which “goods” to retain and which “bads” to exclude. All this raises a very serious theoretical question. What is the best way to evaluate the democratic potentials of *any* religion, not just Pentecostalism? A considered response to this is important if we are to craft a political philosophy for African Pentecostalism, insofar as we expect Pentecostals to live and work in modern democracies. One of its tasks is to present a cogent argument about the goods that should constitute the Pentecostal tradition. Such an argument will respond to questions such as how such a philosophy can engage Pentecostals’ thinking process and help them to deliberate on what needs to be done to ensure religious freedom, not only for Christians but also for non-Christians in pluralistic societies. How should African Pentecostals offer the Christian tradition as the best guarantor (facilitator) of religious freedom, human dignity, and human flourishing all over the world? How do we create practices and excellence in these practices that will resist the “repressive” or non-democratic, non-love-thy-neighbor tendencies that some of the movement’s critics have highlighted?

Liberal scholars have argued that one of the best ways in which to assess the potential for democratic politics in a religion is to examine its tradition, its long trajectory of past events and stories that support liberal ideology. Thus, they maintain that you cannot really learn anything useful about Islam’s or Christianity’s deep orientation towards freedom and democracy from Islamic or Christian radicals/terrorists. This selective approach to evaluating a faith’s deep commitment to democracy and freedom (pluralism) ignores current history, ongoing events and stories, and the immediacy of current violence or conflicts between adherents of the various religions.

Conservative scholars resist this dominant methodology without necessarily rejecting liberalism or pluralism.² For instance, the book *Christianity and Freedom*, edited by Allen D. Hertzke and Timothy Samuel Shah, demonstrates an alternative methodology through which to evaluate the democratic claims of any religion. Its method is to focus on a religion's *contemporary* dealings with minorities in spaces and cultures where its adherents are in majority and in power. The democratic potentials of Christianity, Islam, or Hinduism, or any religion for that matter, cannot be best understood by a mere appeal to isolated historical events or right-sounding philosophical arguments from the deep past, but by what the governments and people inspired by it are doing to religious minorities in their midst.

There are no recent studies of this issue in relation to African Pentecostals, but given the way in which they—without a well-articulated political philosophy (theology) of interreligious dialogue—have poorly treated adherents of ATR or religious Others, current scholarly evaluations are not favorable to them. One cannot over-emphasize the importance of a well-crafted Pentecostal political philosophy. Pentecostalism has become a mighty presence on the continent, and whether it will be a force for good or evil in terms of democracy remains to be seen. The task of crafting African Pentecostalism's political philosophy is too important to be left to the Pentecostals or Pentecostal scholars alone. I invite other scholars to engage with this subject, to clarify political thoughts around it. There are many sources both within Pentecostalism itself and its African milieu to inform such an undertaking.

POWER OF EXISTENCE: A SOURCE OF PENTECOSTAL POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

In African Pentecostalism, the basic acts of religion and of politics are irreducibly connected.³ Prayer and politics are a form of speaking to God or a praxis of God's subject intending the divine to correct the fundamental disagreement of society or existence. Prayer is the pulse of the wound of existence. In existence, there is always a chasm between *what is* and *what is yet to be*, a gap between the past and the future amid the unique specificity of the present. Prayer is humanity's consciousness of this chasm expressed as an address to God, a dialogue of humans with the divine. Politics is the quest to address the fundamental wounds of existence. Addressing these wounds is the point of connection between politics and prayer in African Pentecostal political philosophy. Of course, there are other dimensions of prayer and politics, but the demand for democratic access to the positions and resources of society—human flourishing—always belong to their conditions of possibility. Is the truth of African Pentecostalism and its prayer—usually with utmost rectitude in “fervor of affection, collectedness of thoughts, surety of expectation”—that of an agonistic and transforming combat and struggle of powers of being?⁴

Prayer is that mode and mood of engagement with God (or spiritual presences) that is calculated to initiate the new, usher in freedom, and promote

human flourishing. African Pentecostal prayer—often in the form of spiritual warfare—is a way of discerning and critically reflecting, contesting, and resisting the play of powers in the ontological conditioning of being, the forces weighing down on current life, and the tensions that drag us towards death by excluding life-enhancing support. Indeed, prayer as a fundamental spiritual act is part of what I have elsewhere called *political spirituality*, which is conceptualized as the quest for (harmony between) power and meaning in the political, the common coexistence where *being* and *being with* are always at stake.⁵ Politics is ultimately about living well, men and women living well in the *commons*. The political is “the site where being in common is at stake,” and “having access to what is proper to existence, and therefore, of course, to the proper of one’s own existence.”⁶ Thus, all political actions (words and deeds) are really about our being-in-common; and what is always at stake in this *in-between* where we are *exposed* to one another is the character of life possibilities. Always, and above all, this boils down to the actualization of potentialities of both individuals and community. And the moral vision that undergirds this is simply to live best in accordance with the best of ourselves, as Aristotle once said. For African Pentecostals, politics is a mode of power of being. Politics is marked by agonistic strivings and tensions for power, entitative and non-entitative powers. The theme of political philosophy is how the ontological and existential elements of political life should be organized and directed toward the actualization of good life or good society—human flourishing?

In Africa, politics is a process of power exchange. It is akin to warfare with clear, concrete definitions of friends and enemies. The political is the militant site of the agonistic transfer and control of power. The possession and deployment of this power is the key to extracting and allocating the resources from the commons that are needed to live a full human life. Both process and site are presumed to be pervaded by spiritual presences. Politics is a spiritual warfare: a struggle of one power of being against another that determines the “who” of the contestants’ humanity. The spiritual is the inner dynamics of politics in all spheres of society and public life.⁷

In this context of simple, fundamental acts of prayer and politics, existence both as a spiritual and a political project is about initiating something new amid ongoing social reality or processes. These acts concern the ways in which we grasp and grapple with existence and its wounds, and what we aspire to. For Africans, Pentecostalism is not just a garb of spirituality that they don or a system of beliefs they assent to. It is a mode of existence that the born-again believer assumes in order to access truth, strive for the new, and actualize her destiny or potential. This form of existing is always existence in the gap: there is always a space in which the unexpected can happen. African Pentecostals believe that there are always cuts in the fabric of reality: there are ruptures in preexisting temporal conditions that take place not in a mythic world, but in contemporary social orders, and they are created and sustained by a certain kind of agent in every generation. Put differently, Pentecostals believe that there are *time gaps* in temporality; gaps that mean there is always a new tempo-

rality in the flux of the past, present, and future by which human beings (prayerful and spirit-filled believers) can insert themselves between the infinite past and the infinite future, thereby exercising their uniquely and supremely human capacity to begin something new and display the distinctiveness of each individual or her destiny.

The purpose of this insertion into temporality or living in the gap is to establish justice as a state of the world, not as a virtue. It is existence as such. African Pentecostals' idea of actualizing their destiny or potential is not founded on needs or on the order of possession, but on the justice of the believer's existence as a child of God with a particular destiny. It is necessary to make this fine distinction if we are to fully grasp the fervency with which African Pentecostals pursue what they think is their God-given destiny. With this orientation towards time gaps and the attendant view of justice, I will say, following Giorgio Agamben, that there is "a striking contraction of ethics and ontology, justice is presented not as a virtue but as a 'state of the world,' as the ethical category that corresponds not to having-to-be but to existence as such."⁸ This is not about the right of possession, but the right of existence itself, the right of actualization of destiny. And it is akin to how Walter Benjamin understands justice:

Justice does not appear to refer to the good will of the subject, but, instead, constitutes a state of the world. Justice designates the ethical category of the existent, virtue the ethical category of the demanded. Virtue can be demanded; justice in the final analysis can only be as a state of the world or as a state of God.⁹

This way of perceiving prayer and politics as tools of engaging with existence and its production of wounds suggests a certain understanding or notion of the sacred. This notion is a powerfully integrating and structuring force for ideas about politics, prayer, financial prosperity, and human flourishing, as well as being their "ground." For Pentecostals the sacred is always at hand, and it is primarily conceived in terms of possibilities and potentialities. Some of these preexist their manifestations and others happen without a place in any preexisting set, only retroactively creating their conditions of possibility. In every society there are three sets of possibilities: one that is open to all individuals, another that is available to only a few and that the rest of society is excluded from, and the universe of possibilities which are yet to be fulfilled or are not yet available to all persons and institutions. This last is actually the *horizon of unfulfilled possibilities*. The sacred is the embodiment of unfulfilled possibilities.¹⁰ The belief in this kind of sacred is a belief in transcending limits, and the appeal to sacred is an appeal to fulfill not-yet-realized possibilities, even to actualize impossible possibility. All this suggests that the sacred plays a very important role in the social existence of African Pentecostals. Its invention, discovery, or imposition serves to oversee their aspirations, hopes, and expectations. It encourages the search for alternative possibilities as well as allowing them to believe in converting impossibilities into possibilities through sleights of spiritual hand, instead of engaging the political system to enact social transformation.

This notion of the sacred has a lot to do with how a society's political system is also approached as an instrument to satisfy the desire to flourish. Arguably, political spirituality as a way of claiming a stake in a hostile world—imposing one's "acquired" sovereignty (from Jesus, the *superpower*) on daily events—is a way in which to defend one's turf in the power exchanges that take place in order to safeguard one's *being* and to significantly and meaningfully elevate one's level of flourishing. It is a form of warfare waged in the spiritual realm.

Given all this, will any serious scholar say that there is no basis for African Pentecostal political philosophy? Does anyone still consider it a travesty of *intellectus* to consider Pentecostal spirituality as a possible source or site of political philosophical ideas? I think the proper question to ask about the kind of political philosophy can we extract from the intersection of politics and prayer (spirituality) in African Pentecostalism. In the next section, I will attempt to respond to this.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION AS POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

African Pentecostalism is "philosophical" in its thought and practice. Why do I place "philosophical" in quotation marks? I want to recognize the philosophical mode in an activity, a social practice that is not philosophical as such, to enact the necessary distance between philosophy and religion, and to draw the reader's attention to the nature of this chapter as creating philosophy out of everyday religiosity.¹¹ Where does this philosophy come from? African Pentecostals in their daily religious practices do not "create concepts or adduce arguments, but [they fold] questions of a philosophical type into the church-society, self-community models that they received and revised."¹² Indeed, they do not consciously create concepts or put forth ironclad arguments about their politics (countries, nations); nonetheless, in their engagement with their politics there is a passage from mundane experience to underlying truths, an intentional consciousness to evoke the truth of their given political situations. Pentecostals do not just view the political, their politics as an object to be described, as an appearance, but theorize about the conditions necessary for the political to be perceived, and ruminate on why the political do not necessarily give itself in its reality, but only as a phenomenon (appearance). That which gives itself to their bodies (senses) as an appearance is an integral part of their existence, summoning, invoking, and addressing them. The political as that part of their living where their existence, their being is at stake, solicits their gaze and compels their attention. To hear what the political might be saying requires a capacity for attentive listening: *interlaced listening eyes and seeing ears*. This is about spiritual sensibility.

In African Pentecostal everyday thought there is a spiritual consciousness (a sensibility, orientation) over here, and over there is the political. And the task of everyday Pentecostal political thought (philosophy) is to bring the political fully immanent to spirituality (spiritual consciousness) as much as possible. The exercise of bringing the political to be present in spiritual consciousness takes

two distinct but related forms: the political must be transparent to spiritual thought (thinking, consciousness), and the spiritual must fully understand the nature, logics, and dynamics of the political so as to explain, predict, and control it for the kingdom of God. What these suggest is that Pentecostals want their act of thinking (their spiritual way of seeing or interpreting the political) to be the exact equivalent of its object; that is, that which takes place in the political and the *logos* of the political to arise from or to be rooted in their thought (their intuition about the political system). The two forms suggest how Pentecostal spiritual consciousness constitutes the political as a phenomenon or object.

How do Pentecostals deal with what appears to them philosophically? It is not by taking leave of their spiritual attitude, resorting to doubting the existence of the political, or merely condemning it as evil (demonic). One of the ways they deal with the political is by *describing* it as it shows itself in immediate experience, and deciphering both its essential structures and meanings. In this chapter, I want to propose that we study how African Pentecostals describe “what” the political is, how it is present to them in “flesh and blood,” without going into how they *judge its existence* or making explicit the presuppositions of their description of the political. Put differently, we want to understand how the act of spiritual consciousness is directed toward the experience of the political. There is no shortage of African Pentecostals, pastors and laypersons, who are describing what appears to them as the political, how it appears, and how they are interpreting its meaning. A phenomenological analysis of their descriptions of the political and how it shows itself to them in immediate experience can lead us to African Pentecostal political philosophy. Owing to our limited purposes for this chapter, I will not go into the issue of phenomenology of political consciousness.

THE EXPERIENCE OF DUAL IDENTITY: INTERNAL TENSIONS OF PENTECOSTAL POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Any attempt to understand the act of Pentecostal spiritual consciousness as directed toward the experience of the political must reckon with the dual, split identity that traverses Pentecostal consciousness. The identity generates a tension, which in a certain sense mediates Pentecostals’ interactions with the political system.¹³ This tension—as a reflection of experiences of life as black and as Christian in one totality—presents another viable angle by which to enter the study of Pentecostal political philosophy. Pentecostals possess a dual, split identity. In their external objective identity as African blacks they are a part of humanity that is marked by an excess weight of social suffering, despised and marginalized in global politics, *the part of no part* in world affairs. They as blacks really do not have a voice, no part in the act of governing the global commons. As Christians—born again, saved, and sanctified—they consider themselves chosen and noble. African Pentecostals—especially the Nigerians

among them—are claiming that they have been specially chosen by God to lead the final evangelization of the world before the second coming of Jesus Christ, and to draw the black race into global economic and technological supremacy. Their understanding of chosenness is not just limited to the view that God has cut a special deal with them in order to establish his kingdom in the foreseeable future, but that he has also opened up the structure of hope and expectation for the future to the black race as a whole.¹⁴ This is their internal-subjective identity. African Pentecostals hold within themselves two identities: a new internal-subjective identity of noble, chosen God's children, a divinely selected squad, with the old external-objective identity of *part of no part*.¹⁵

The dual identity of African Pentecostals refers to them as privileged persons, masters, and yet “degraded” human beings, the servant class. All this brings to mind Nietzsche's theory of how different classes (slaves and masters) value life differently, generating different forms of morality in the same society.¹⁶ According to Nietzsche, the religion of the nobles is that of feelings of gratitude, affirmation of life, satisfaction before the gods, whereas the essence of the religion of the rabble is feelings of fear (and hope). One group feels satisfied with life, nature, and society as given and enjoys them; the other is resentful of the same.

The problem with African Pentecostalism is that these two feelings coexist in the same persons and in the same group of believers. Two agencies are joined in one human body. It is no surprise that preachers such as Bishop David Oyedepo of Winners' Chapel, Nigeria, boldly affirm life in their prosperity gospel even as they argue that God has called them to deliver black Africans from slavery and a colonial mentality. In fact, they often boost their prosperity gospel by exploiting the fears and hopes of black Africans who as citizens of economically backward countries are longing for financial uplift. The aristocratic class of African Pentecostals—or those who have adopted the noble mode of evaluating life—in their words and deeds let the rest of their communities know that the values of good and bad are deemed to arise from reference to them. Is anyone surprised that socioeconomic positions or statuses denoting wealth (political) superiority are considered as denoting superiority (purity) of soul?

What kind of political philosophy is working itself out amid a people whose faith demands that they hold in an unsynthetic unity the moralities of the “noble” and the “slave”? Will African Pentecostals turn to embrace the “slave morality” that demands they work to transform the external socioeconomic conditions that mark their external-objective identity as *part of no part* rather than accepting the narrative of “noble morality” that seems to deny their real suffering, their existential conditions as blacks, the wretched of the earth? Or will the “noble morality” permanently conceal the “slave morality”?

In the future, the tensions of identity might play out differently in terms of the overall orientation of African Pentecostalism to state and society. There are likely to be three divergent paths. First, a possible logical outcome of the “noble morality” is that Pentecostalism will likely become the religion of the

community and the state; that is, co-opted to become part of the ruling establishment. With this will come an extensive rationalism of the priesthood. Second, there will be a vigorous prophetic strand as a possible development of the “slave morality,” just as in ancient Judaism, that will critique state and society in the name of social justice and emancipatory economic development. This strand will try to avoid becoming part of the ruling elites, but will seek the social transformation of society. Finally, there will be a revivalist movement that will tend to recapture something of the nature, innocence, and accent on holiness of the movement in the 1970s and early 1980s. But this movement is likely to turn away from engaging with society.

All three, with different ideas about political sociology, the social organization of power in societies, are likely to develop unique political philosophies to suit their visions of church and society, Christ and culture. The best option lies in the combination of insights from two or three paradigms of church–society relations. A well-crafted political philosophy might nudge African Pentecostals to seek a viable fruitful combination of the second and third options. It is high time that they embraced the fact that their faith is fundamentally political. Let us not forget that Pentecostalism as a mission-oriented religion is always imbricated in politics. I interpret mission as the dynamic partnership of *evangelism* (personal conversion), *reconciliation* between human beings and between humanity and God, and *social transformation* for human flourishing. Considered in this way, the Pentecostal mission is always imbricated in the political processes within any society, the social basis of political competition, and the political engagement of religions. Indeed, mission in its most radical and broadest interpretation both conceptualizes and performatively enacts the processes that free people (at least “the least of these”) from their assigned places and functions.¹⁷ Thus, mission-oriented Pentecostalism is encouraged to recognize, appreciate, or evaluate its nature as a theory of political life, how people (believers and non-believers) collectively live together in the light of certain normative assumptions founded on Christian scripture, thought, and traditions.

In view of this, Pentecostal scholars need to develop methodologies to enable their deft examination of the impact of Pentecostalism-Islam/ATR relations on state formation, on the creation and sustenance of rapacious state institutions in postcolonial Africa. What is the character of the relationship when we explore the forces of multiple religions interacting together in one common field of state/society formation over a long period of time? The state in Africa is not only a strategic site for conflicts and collaborations between religions (Christianity and Islam, for instance), but also co-opts them to steadily attack its citizens. The significant role of religions in the functioning and dysfunctioning of the state, which is antagonistic to its citizenry, provides a lens through which to ethically examine the political theology of state and society that conditions Pentecostalism-Islam/ATR relations in postcolonial Africa. Thus, one of the basic questions our researchers need to ask and answer is how the Pentecostalism-Islam/ATR relations in Africa shape state formation and

statecraft and in turn feed from the same. These considerations should be directed toward unpacking the “missiological” implications of the logics of Pentecostalism as they intersect and intertwine in state formation with other religions/faiths, and the impact of these logics on political philosophy.

DWELLING IN A TIME GAP: POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AT THE INTERSECTION OF TWO ARROWS OF TIME

We have just related that the fundamental experience of Pentecostal morality is bifurcated. The same is true for Pentecostals’ experience of time, but in this case the experience arises from a gap—a tiny unbridgeable space—between two “arrows” of time. The Pentecostal subject is never thrown into the full enjoyment of the present moment (though the noble morality that affirms life would like this to happen), nor fully inclined to an escape from earthly time (though the slave morality that resents its given situation might like to do so). These two extremes are kept from crashing into each other by the expectation of *novum*, which is undergirded by what I have elsewhere called the *Pentecostal Principle*.¹⁸ Borrowing the words of Stéphane Mosès in his description of Jewish messianism, I will characterize Pentecostal experience of time in this way: in African Pentecostal religious consciousness there is “a very strange experience of time: it is lived, in its very nature, in the mode of *expectation*; neither the pagan joy of the present moment, nor a spiritual escape beyond time, but an always renewed aspiration for the emergence, in the very heart of time, of the brand new.”¹⁹

The brand new, the *novum*, never emerges from a pure state. It always has to struggle against, contend with, the preexisting history, structure, or order. There is always the tension of being and becoming, the expected and the unexpected. Two models of spiritual orientation, two models of explanation, prediction, and control of history, life, or social totalities appear to compete in the time gap, in the experience of time. One model holds that every existent has a destiny and whatever is happening to that being is in harmony with its destiny as divinely determined. The divine destiny, which is primordially good, is only marred by sin, disobedience to God. The work or adventure of a believer is to follow the fixed divine plan, making repairs when it is broken. The other model maintains that the divine plan for an entity or a person is evolving, becoming, changing as it is concretely realized. Mosès in his study of Jewish messianism describes these two models in this way:

The first model is *archaeological*: the world is the expression of a divine plan, and from the beginning of things, this is inherent in the secret structure of Being. The harmony of this plan was destroyed by a primordial catastrophe (which can be reproduced in some form, throughout history). The human adventure, then, will consist of repairing what was broken, that is, always recovering anew the original landscape of truth. For this truth exists, it was set from the beginning, and it remains unmoving even when it seems to evade us. The other model is *eschatological*:

logical: truth is in becoming; it is constituted day after day, as the invention of the new goes along. Even in this eschatological model, there is certainly an original structure of truth; but it is only a purely abstract form, without an identifiable semantic content. Symbolized by the Tetragrammaton, this may be said to resemble a mathematical formula; to be filled with a meaning accessible to man, it must be embodied in our empirical world, that is, unfolding in time, a source of infinite renewal, in which it reassumes ever-changing forms. It is at the ideal end of this process, when it will have known all its possible incarnations, that truth will appear in all its universality but also in all its concrete abundance.²⁰

We should bear in mind that these models are operating at the same time, in a time gap between pagan enjoyment of the present and spiritual escapism that aspires to jump into “beyond time.” The two models are indicative of the relation and tension between being and becoming that is shot through with a break in time. This is the break in time continuum (to be exact, the break in the perception of homogeneous flows of instants of time) that engenders the new, which must struggle through the birth canal of the given to actualize itself. The new is seen as an interruption, a discontinuity of evolution, an explosion of the continuum of history. “‘While the idea of continuity crushes and levels everything in its path,’ wrote Benjamin, ‘the idea of discontinuity is the foundation of authentic tradition.’ It is not from the endless flow of instants that the new can reappear, but from stopping time, a break, beyond which life begins again in a form that constantly eludes all prediction.”²¹

The reader who is not conversant with African history might conclude that my excavation of the deep time structure in the religious consciousness of African Pentecostals is only the fruit of philosophical training. Alas, my analyses are rooted in history, in our experiences of the failure of economic development colliding with an exploding devotion to an expectation of the miraculous in everyday life in Africa. This peculiar encounter of economic dynamics and religious consciousness has on the one hand stretched time and on the other intensely condensed it. National life, social life, and personal life can now only strive in the warped space left by these two altered times. The separate stories of Franz Kafka and Jorge Luis Borges appear to capture the simultaneous experiences of endless extension of time and extreme condensation of time.²²

In a remarkable reversal of the biblical story of the building of the tower of Babel, Kafka’s story of “The City Coat of Arms” tells of the non-construction of the tower. The story in Genesis tells us that the people were in a hurry to build the tower to reach heaven and for it to serve as a symbol of their unity. In Kafka’s narrative, they are plagued with hesitation and endless postponement. “At first all the arrangements for the building of the Tower of Babel were characterized by fairly good order ... as if there were centuries before one to do the work. In fact, the general opinion at that time was that one simply could not build too slowly.”²³ This failure to build, this erasure of purpose is akin to African projects of economic development. Economic development evokes notions and memories of non-development and underdevelopment. African

states could not develop their economies too slowly. African states and their leaders, unlike the residents of biblical Babel, could not be accused of impatience. God could not be alarmed by how fast they were building anything; rather, the powers of heaven would accuse them of the sin of non-construction and the embodiment of hesitation. Kafka's description of the history of the non-construction of the tower is remarkably prescient about the "non-construction" of viable economies in African countries, where their leaders maintain that economic development is the most primary, urgent, and essential task before all citizens of their nations. Kafka writes:

People argued in this way: The essential thing in the whole business is the idea of building a tower that will reach to heaven. In comparison with that idea everything else is secondary. The idea, once seized in its magnitude, can never vanish again; so long as there are men on earth there will also be the irresistible desire to complete the building. That being so, however, one need have no anxiety about the future ... So why exert oneself to the extreme limit of one's present power? ... Such thoughts paralyzed people's power, and so they troubled less about the tower ... In this fashion the age of the first generation went past, but none of the succeeding ones showed any difference; except that technical skills increased and with it occasion for conflict. To this must be added that the second or third generation had already recognized the senselessness of building a heaven-reaching tower; but by that time everybody was too deeply involved to leave the city.²⁴

What is most important about this narrative for our interest in orientation to time and time gaps is that the people thought time was unlimited; they were living in a "space" of endless extension of time. This orientation is basically linked to the awareness that nothing of importance is ever going to happen; nothing is going to change. We observe this kind of resignation to economic underdevelopment by the masses in Africa; there is massive disenchantment with government and its capacity to deliver economic development or public services. The link with the future is broken, hopes are frustrated, and time is an empty form that can be indefinitely extended. There is a complementary aspect to this disenchantment. "When the social compact no longer rests on anything but the disenchanted awareness that nothing essential will ever change, that is, on the frustration of all hopes, the [former energy and expectation for economic development in the early years of independence] that henceforth [have] no object will be invested completely—as if in compensation—in eschatological [miraculous] daydreams," in expectation of relief from poverty and the daily trauma of postcoloniality.²⁵

While the failure of economic development has delivered Africans to the experience of living in an endless extension of time, the rise of Pentecostalism has delivered millions of them to its opposite form: the experience of extreme condensation, concentration of time. Social life appears to be functioning in a tiny space between these two extremes.

To tell the story of Pentecostals' imbrication in the extreme condensation of time that is also inimical to the socioeconomic development of African nations,

let me turn to the tale of another writer, Jorge Luis Borges. In his novella, "The Secret Miracle," Borges tells the story of Jaromir Hladik, a Jewish writer in Prague sentenced to death by the occupying Nazi forces in 1939. He is to be executed on March 29, 1939, and in the ten days leading up to this Hladik's most important preoccupation is to finish a three-act tragedy he was working on before his arrest. "He had already completed the first act and a scene or two of the third. The metrical nature of the work allowed him to go over it continually, rectifying the hexameters, without recourse to the manuscript. He thought of the two acts still to do, and of his coming death."²⁶ He prays to God in the night before his scheduled execution to grant him just one more year to finish the drama, which he hopes will bring glory to God, who owns all centuries and all time, and to himself. Then comes the morning of the day of execution and at 9:00 Hladik stands before the firing squad, expecting an answer to his prayer.

The firing squad fell in and was brought to attention. Hladik, standing against the barracks wall, waited for the volley ... A heavy drop of rain grazed one of Hladik's temples and slowly rolled down his cheek. The sergeant barked the final command.

The physical universe stood still.

The rifles converged upon on Hladik, but the men assigned to pull the triggers were immobile ... Hladik began a shriek ... Not a sound reached him from the stricken world.

He thought: I am in hell, I am dead.

He thought: *I've gone mad.*

He thought: *Time has come to a halt.*

Then he reflected that in that case, his thought, too, would have come to a halt After an indeterminate length of time he fell asleep. On waking he found the world still motionless ... The drop of water still clung to his cheek ... Another "day" passed before Hladik understood.

He had asked God for an entire year in which to finish his work: His omnipotence had granted him the time. For his sake, God projected a secret miracle: German lead would kill him, at the determined hour, but in his mind a year would elapse between the command to fire and its execution...

He worked the third act over twice ... He omitted, condensed, amplified ... He found it: the drop of water slid down his cheek. He began a wild cry, moved his face aside. A quadruple blast brought him down.

Jaromir Hladik died on March 29, at 9:02 in the morning.²⁷

Hladik thinks he has a miracle. God has stopped time for him, giving him a whole year to finish his drama. He thinks he finished his tragedy, but for the living posterity he leaves behind an incomplete literary work. In the interval of seconds between when the sergeant gave the order to shoot and the time he falls dead, time, it appears, condenses into one infinite segment, and he is working, writing at incredible superhuman speed. But all this is in his mind; objec-

tive time does not change for him. His experience of time as condensed is only subjective, a mental one. His “mind was cut off for a moment from external reality and the instruments that measure it and withdraws completely into itself: a suspension of physical time whose counterpart is an extraordinary intensification of mental time. To speak here of a contraction of physical time or an extension of mental time amounts to the same thing. For the few seconds that separate the order to fire and the arrival of the discharge, Hladik’s consciousness is exacerbated to the point of accomplishing in a few brief moments the work of an entire year. But in this mind, it is the lived content of an entire year that is condensed in the lightning speed of a moment. ‘For his sake, God projected a secret miracle.’”²⁸

What is important for us here is not whether miracles occur or not, but the effect of religious consciousness of extreme condensation of time on social-political consciousness. Reframing the two types of time orientation in a different register, I venture to say that Pentecostals appear caught in the rotary drive of Schelling’s two forces of contraction and expansion. It seems they are stuck in the movement between necessity and natality, between the “infinity of a point” and the “infinity of line.” They appear caught in some contracted reality and thus in a privative relationship to the public square. The positive will (expansion) cannot overcome the antagonism of the negative (contraction), and in this fundamental tension, deadlock, the two wills frustratingly move in rotary form; the positive will not be able to break out. African Pentecostalism cannot withdraw completely into itself or open itself up, to admit Otherness. But there is a potential for creativity, for breaking the rotating drive and initiating something new, as the Schellingian God who had the two forces within him was able to do.²⁹

More importantly, we need to focus on the effect on the social psychology of Pentecostal citizenry of the resignation, the disenchanting awareness that substantive economic development will not come with its resultant endless extension of time, and the concentration of time, the impression/illusion of contraction of physical time owing to the widespread inordinate interest in the miraculous. African Pentecostals now live between the endless time of the corrupt political leaders and the condensed time of thaumaturgical preachers. This in-between is what I have named a time gap. The task of an authentic or radical African Pentecostal political philosophy is how to think of this time gap as a “space” that interrupts history, as the juncture where emancipatory politics burst forth into the African political scene. Otherwise, the time gap in which African Pentecostals dwell will become the valley of the shadow of death of social transformation, economic development, and human flourishing in the continent—with no exit and *novum*.

METAPHORICS OF PENTECOSTAL POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Here I want us to consider the five approaches that we have discussed as a network of methods and concepts that can be keyed and united around the exegetical metaphors of John 14:6—the way, truth, and life. I examine this verse

from the existential standpoint of African Pentecostals living in modern democracies and seek its fulfillment as a political philosophy. I want to make the argument that this controversial verse can be interpreted to ground an *inclusive*, Pentecostal political philosophy that accents radical Christian love. My focus on the way, life, and truth as a figuration of the Pentecostal political philosophy was inspired by Franz Rosenzweig's *Star of Redemption*.³⁰ In this work, the Jewish philosopher used the metaphors of life, way, and truth to describe the relation of Jews and Christians to the divine plan and history of nations. I will convert and adapt his metaphors to my own material.

In Rosenzweig's analysis, "life" is the figure of Jews, because being Jewish is about being in a community of blood kinship; life and belonging to a community is naturally transmitted from one generation to another.³¹ Jews are a people who live out the life of Otherness. Unlike a Christian, for a Jew there is a certitude of being a Jew. As physical descendants of Abraham, God's covenant with them gives the Jews surety of faith and assurance of immortality. Rosenzweig admits, indeed, that no one can reach God the Father save through the Son, but this requirement does not apply to those who do not need to reach the Father because he is already with them.

While a Jew is born a Jew, no one is born a Christian. She is born and set on her way to become a Christian, to become a descendant of Abraham in spirit through Christ's blood and baptism. Hence the Christian is figured by the "way." The "way" also stands as a metaphor for Christian missionary expansion through the message of expansive divine love. The goal of this mission is to bring the Gentiles, Others, closer to God.

"Truth" for Rosenzweig is the converging of the way and the life in the (Jewish and Christian) styles of conquering time. Christianity and Judaism have different ways of dealing with eternity, that is, the immobilization of time: "two manners of eternalizing concrete experience."³² Judaism maintains itself in the universal flow of history by keeping its process of regeneration of identity that is lived and experienced as a people, by subtraction from the history of nations, and concentration on its election or status as the "remnant" of Israel. Jewish life does not ground its permanence on external means, but gathers the full weight of its will to be a people into an essential and vital point, into the community of blood, even as it anticipates eternity.³³ On the other hand, expansion of peoples and territories is the manner of Christianity and its attempt to take the path of immobilizing time does not work through the people as a collective, but as individuals. This is how Mosès, the astute interpreter of Rosenzweig's thought, puts it:

In the Christian universe, the soul truly regenerates itself only in the community with the Mystery of the Cross. By identifying with the Passion, the Christian participates in the eternal cycle of pains and joys common to all men.

But even in this form, the most universal one, the Redemption that Christianity brings is that of the individual. Christian faith, an eminently personal experience, does lead to the salvation of the soul; but at the same time, peoples and societies

remain under the sway of the law of time, that is, of the unavoidable alternation of life and death. This is where the Jewish people's function in the general economy of the Redemption appears most clearly. Outside history, within the already acquired eternity of its own fulfillment, the Jewish people offers to all peoples and to all societies the model of a collective life always identical to itself and ceaselessly renewed, of an existence that has already been wrested away from the vicissitudes of historical time.³⁴

"Truth" in Rosenzweig's philosophical-theological framing is the convergence of these two complementary approaches of the eternal life (Jewish "life covenant") and the eternal way (Christian "way covenant"), which are paradigmatic of the multiplicity of truth, the conjoined universality and concreteness of truth. Life covenant and way covenant are parts of the same task set before two collaborators, Jews and Christians, by God; the same truth about God's love and salvific plan for humanity is distributed differently, and each laborer complements the other before God. Rosenzweig implies that the multiplicity of truth means that even the group you consider your enemy may hold part of God's truth, which was given to it by God himself, and in this way you interweave your path with theirs. This is certainly true for Jews and Christians.³⁵ Judaism or Christianity is fulfilling the role God has given it in the divine plan of salvation. He says:

To us [Jews] he gave eternal life by kindling the fire of the Star of his truth in our hearts. Them [the Christians] he set on the eternal way by causing them to pursue the rays of that Star of his truth for all time unto the eternal end ... The truth, the whole truth, thus belongs neither to them nor to us ... And thus we both have but a part of the whole truth. But we know that it is in the nature of truth to be im-parted, and that a truth in which no one had a part would be no truth. The "whole" truth, too is truth only because it is God's part. Thus it does not detract from the truth, nor from us, that it is only partially ours. A direct view of the whole truth is granted only to him who sees it in God.³⁶

The truth that is *im-parted* ("to share a part, take part in") impacts us (strikes against us, drives into us) as a work of art does to those who receive it, to use one of Rosenzweig's categories. The reception of a work of art in some sense calls into being the individual or community that accepts it, and it is through the act of reception that the art finds its fulfillment or completion. This reception and completion, according to Rosenzweig, is not a function of the working out or revelation of the inner logic of the art, the actualization of what is already in the art.³⁷ Every reception is a rupture of the order of the work and signifies fidelity to the void (rather, the non-symbolizable surplus) opened in the life of the work. It seems the work of art suddenly "breaks" into *studium* and *punctum*—to use the terminology of Roland Barthes—before the individual or community, and a surplus of being (the *punctum*) rises to their consciousness. It seems an immanent remainder: *something* "jumps" out from an otherwise intelligent reality of the art (the *studium*), a gap opens up in the

series of identifications, predicates that constitute the work of art, and summons their enthusiastic commitment.³⁸ The *something* “signifies the *part that is no part* (of a whole), a nonrelational excess that is out of joint with respect to the generality of any classification or identification.”³⁹ This is how Eric Santner explains the Rosenzweigian theory of reception of a work of art: “The act of reception, this *completion* of the work of art, represents a rupture in the life of the work ... performed by one who feels singled out, addressed by it. By way of such an appropriation of the work in response to its singular mode of address, a work is endowed with a life beyond the order of knowledge, beyond a merely additive history of tastes and styles.”⁴⁰

The Life

Now let us turn to the job of converting and bending Rosenzweig’s metaphors to our own material that is geared toward the construction of an African Pentecostal political philosophy. We begin by offering a summation of our findings. On the whole, the life, way, and truth in Rosenzweig’s *Star of Redemption* denote a religious existence (an assurance that you are accepted and loved by God) that is committed to the mission of transforming the world (enacting reconciliation) in the name of God, in the name of the messianic *kingdom* of love. It is about living a life that is answerable and responsive to the Other, to God’s face (visage, figure, countenance) manifested in the stranger who is also a neighbor. This means we are to walk, according to Rosenzweig, in “the light of the divine countenance,” which is “granted only to him who follows the words of the divine mouth. For—‘he has told thee, oh man, what is good, and what does the Lord thy God require of thee but to do justice and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God.’”⁴¹ In a sense this is what the teaching of Jesus is about, and if anyone is in Christ, follows this Jesus who embodied this wisdom and taught it, he or she is already in God, has come to God. If a person does not walk in this light of the divine, messianic countenance, he or she cannot come to the Father.

The summation of our findings will be incomplete if we do not mention this next point. Running through the totality of Rosenzweig’s theorization of the “life, way, and truth” is the operative principle of initiating something new, an implied natality, especially when we consider his treatment of Christianity. For in Rosenzweig’s thought as expressed in *The Star of Redemption* we find Schelling’s notion of two forces within God’s primordial nature: potencies of contracting and expansion (the forces of creativity and becoming). In Rosenzweig’s adaptation of Schelling’s thought, Judaism’s “life covenant” stands in for the contracting force, the rising and falling of life, the Jewish “eternal life” seeking concentration into a remnant. Christianity, which represents the “eternal way,” is charged with expansion, perpetually experiencing itself to be on the way.

We have arrived at the point where we can translate John 14:6 (NIV)—“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’”—into an African Pentecostal political philosophy.

Based on the insights from Rosenzweig's thought and Pentecostal theology we can translate life to mean an existence that affirms you are already with God and you love God. Life in this Rosenzweigian sense is a religious existence in which the community and individual experience God as eternally present, already and always present with them beyond the demands of historical changes, and they are striving to achieve a society free of what he calls "pagan culture"; that is, free from conflict between faith and ethnicity/race/color/class, between devotion to the universal loving God and devotion to particular blood and soil.

There are two key theological points to highlight here. First, this religious life (existence) finds its fulfillment through the love of God as manifested in the love of neighbor. This reduction of the dual commandment to love God and love one's neighbor into love of one's neighbor is how Paul succinctly presents the teaching of Jesus in Romans 13:8–14. Even Jesus summed up the whole scripture or biblical ethics in terms of how we treat the Other in his teaching on the "golden rule" (Matthew 7:7–12).⁴² Second, Rosenzweig argues that Christianity stands in continuous danger of falling into pagan cultures from where its converts came, risks from its members emphasizing different "blood and soil," national cultures and boundaries, and insisting on a God (Jesus, savior) that must look like them.⁴³ This danger is more real today than ever before, but a counterimpulse is also on the rise and I have named it elsewhere as "the Charismatic City."⁴⁴ This problem of Christianity falling back into paganism, the accenting of blood and soil instead of worldwide commons, is so real that even when in the 1960s liberal theologians celebrated the "secular city" as a worldwide transformative, liberatory force of the church, they did not realize that their notion does not address the dangers that agitated the perspicacious mind of Rosenzweig.⁴⁵ The era of the secular city is marked by nationalism and denominationalism, and when compared with today's globalization (*mondialisation*) its notion of cosmopolitanism is restrictive. Though the secular city argument acknowledges divine presence in the cities, it presumes the dispersed presence or *mana* to be condoned in protected preserves. It could not really work out as a non-national, rhizomatic, or networked framework of the divine presence. The secular city as it is tied to and located in the nation-state is marked by territorial allegiance and cultural identity. While divine power/presence, as Harvey Cox argues in his book *The Secular City*, is dispersed (rather than absent) in the secular city, "disciplinary power proceeds primarily through the organization, enclosure, and control of individuals in [national] space."⁴⁶

In contradistinction to the secular city theology, my book *The Charismatic City* provides an examination of the global city as a site of intense human encounter with God and a metaphor for the new thing that God is doing in history. It is a discourse of charismatic spirituality as the dispersal of divine presence into the interstices and connections of the global city, and as an emerging disruptive cosmopolitan ethos. The book goes further to conceive the charismatic city not as a physical domain or a territorialized continuity, but as the universal body of Christ, which is interpreted as a world fabric of connectedness

and relationality grounded in and animated by the unlimitable Spirit of God. The universal body of Christ is deterritorialized, with rhizomatic relations of believers across spheres of society and across space and time zones. The Charismatic City is the proleptic synaxistic concretization of the body of Christ.

The Way

What does the “way” mean in our schema of translation? This is about missions, and as we discussed earlier it involves evangelism, reconciliation, and social transformation. Mission in its most radical and broadest interpretation—which is the sense we are holding in this chapter—both conceptualizes and performatively enacts the processes that free people (at least “the least of these”) from their assigned places and functions. What does mission as the work of *missio Dei* mean in African societies where the logic and character of state–society relations is at stake or needs to be re/fashioned? Pentecostal mission must actively embrace what I will call the *care of the soul*, which is different from soulcraft (focus on personal holiness, virtues as solution to societal problems) or statecraft (public policy orientation to societal problems).⁴⁷

African Pentecostal churches must develop a radical imagining that sutures the public and the private, transgressing the lines that separate statecraft and soulcraft in order to create a distinct kind of theopolitical practice. This radical imagining, the *care of the soul*, is a third way.

The care of the soul is not just equivalent to soulcraft or statecraft, but it may be considered as one viable way of integrating their strategies. Care of the soul acknowledges that the work of human flourishing must connect the transformative work of public policy and liberatory praxis. Human flourishing must pass, as it were, through the realm of the state. On the other hand, we understand also that human flourishing must move through the subject, the foundations of the person. The paradigm of the care of the soul holds that the step to subjectivation, inner self-presence, is a step toward human sociality, if only to accede beyond to liberating freedom.⁴⁸

To be crystal clear, by care of the soul I am not talking about the pastoral technique of preparing the soul to ascend to heaven, preparing the self for an elsewhere. I am interested in the political act of preparing Africans for the coming event, for political transformation as an infrastructure of economic development. The care of the soul, as the micro-politics of freedom, precedes any order or being, always searching for the crack or line of flight to explode any socioeconomic order that resists human flourishing. Care of the soul in this sense is the praxis of taking on one’s own existence always as potentiality, as an unfinished and incomplete project.

Before we proceed to the third issue of truth in the triad of John 14:6, let us summarize the key thoughts we have formulated concerning “life” and “way.” Life is about the ethic of answering the claims of the Other, the neighbor-stranger, on the Christian believer. The Pentecostal must undertake a task as difficult as loving the Other or the neighbor. For those who have experienced

the calling of the Messiah to a new community, those who now recognize that while they were still sinners God demonstrated his love toward them and the Messiah died for them, the weak, the ungodly, and enemies (Romans 5:5–11), and are aware of their embodiment of God's tender care for all humanity, are (should be) moved to the love of the neighbor irrespective of ethnicity, class, color, or nationality. The "way" is about a form of the work of *missio Dei*, about social and spiritual processes that free people (at least "the least of these") from their assigned places and functions. This is Christian love set in the "broad place where there is no cramping (Job 36:16)," ⁴⁹ where we experience the love of God shed abroad in our hearts as creating wide, free space to do justice, to love mercy, and to make common cause with the *part of no part* in our socio-political systems.

The Truth

"Truth" translates into the politics of enacting fundamental disagreement, which the reception of and commitment to the "life" and "way" by Pentecostals demand of them. Rosenzweig argues that truth is the convergence of the Jewish eternal life and Christian eternal way, the dimensions of what he calls redemption. He then correlates redemption with the reception of the work of art, which is a matter of rupture in the life of the work of art. Similarly, we believe that convergence of the "life" and "way" constitute the meaning of "truth" in John 14:6: the core ethics of loving one another, caring for the *least of these*, fulfills the life, the mission, and the unveiling (unconcealment) of Jesus in the world. This is the act of reception of John 14:6, this *completion* of the wisdom of Jesus, "represents a rupture in the life of the [verse] ... performed by one who feels singled out, addressed by it." ⁵⁰

The truth of the rupture here is at two levels. First, it is about politics. According to Jacques Rancière, "politics" is about how a society counts the parts of its community and allocates places and shares of the commons. ⁵¹ There are two logics of being together in any society ("police" and "politics") and they are always in conflict, in fundamental disagreement. Human societies are counted in wholes, which are divisible into parts and functions. There is always a *part of no part*. There is a conflict between the parts that count in the social body and the part that does not, and this latter part unsettles the whole because of the universal principle of equality, the equality of all speaking beings. Rancière calls the first part that counts and has entitlements *police* and the second, the part of those without part, *politics*. Once the count is made and places allocated, there is a policing to determine what is proper and improper.

I do not ... identify the police with what is termed the "state apparatus." The notion of a state apparatus is in fact bound up with the presupposition of an opposition between State and society in which the state is portrayed as a machine, a "cold monster" imposing its rigid order on the life of society. This representation already presupposes a certain "political philosophy," that is, a certain confu-

sion of politics and the police. The distribution of places and roles that defines a police regime stems as much from the assumed spontaneity of social relations as from the rigidity of state functions. The police is essentially, the law, generally implicit, that defines a party's share or lack of it ... The police is thus first an order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying, and sees those bodies are assigned by the name to a particular place and task; it is an order of the visible and the sayable that sees that a particular activity is visible and another is not, that this speech is understood as discourse and another as noise. It is police law, for example, that traditionally turns the workplace into a private space not regulated by the ways of seeing and saying proper to what is called the public domain, where the worker's *having a part* is strictly defined by the remuneration of his work. Policing is not so much the "disciplining" of bodies as a rule governing their appearing, a configuration of *occupations* and the properties of the spaces where these occupations are distributed.⁵²

According to Rancière, politics starts when those not counted try to establish equality of all speaking beings, when they subjectivize the wrong. It starts when they realize the sheer contingency of any social order, the absence of any foundation for the counting parts in any community, and the "least of these," without power, wealth, and status, *see themselves as the community as a whole*. "The demos attributes to itself as its proper lot the equality that belongs to all citizens. In so doing, this party that is not one identifies its improper property with the exclusive principle of the community and identifies its name—the name of the indistinct mass of men of no position—with the name of the community itself."⁵³

The recognition of the gap between the *part of no part* and those that *police* the political system, economy, and church for their benefits and corrupt enrichment is the necessary truth that the convergence of "life" and "way" forces (or should force) on the conscience, consciousness, and praxis of African Pentecostals. More importantly, the claim of the *part of no part* to being the community as a whole, and not understanding itself as a mere cultural unit or not claiming particular, parochial identity but as the *singular universal*, is instructive of how Pentecostals can avoid the Rosenzweigian dangers of "paganism" in their national polity. A new identity (more accurately the authentic identity) of African Pentecostalism could emerge when Pentecostals, who in many cases are among the *part of no part*, posit themselves as the "name of the community itself," as the *singular universal* in their countries. African Pentecostalism, with the bulk of its members in the *part of no part* in their nations, already embodies, in other words, "a certain refusal to accept the social body divided into parts, this partition of the perceptible, *as being all*."⁵⁴ In addition, the logic and sensibility of the "life" and the "way" already cultivated within Pentecostalism points to or calls for a commitment to the "truth."

This brings us to the second sense of truth. Alain Badiou argues that an event and its truth are capable of producing subjects—persons who recognize a happening as an event and are faithful to it, to its truth. Badiou also believes that the militant subjectivity such as that of Saint Paul is constituted by fidelity

to a rupture, the emergence of a void in the social system. How do we recognize the rupture? How do we prepare citizens or believers to become subjects? Here is where African Pentecostals who are committed to transforming their nations can take on the task of care of the soul and begin to prepare believer-citizens for emancipatory Pentecostal politics in Africa. This call is for those who are committed to transforming their communities and are not waiting for a miracle; hence they are willing to prepare for it today. Badiou informs us:

“To be prepared for an event” means being subjectively disposed to recognizing new possibilities. Since the event is necessarily unforeseeable given that it doesn’t fall under the law of prevailing possibilities, preparing for the event consists in being disposed to welcome it. It’s being convinced that the state of things does not set down the most important possibilities, those that open onto the construction of new truths. Being prepared for an event consists in being in a state of mind where one is aware that the order of the world or the prevailing powers don’t have absolute control of the possibilities.⁵⁵

Let me now bring this part of the chapter to a conclusion by revealing the inner kernel of the African Pentecostal political philosophy we have constructed. The inner core of our ideas may be named the *Pentecostal Principle*, the capacity to begin, to initiate something new amid ongoing social processes.⁵⁶ Elsewhere I have philosophically constructed and defended this principle and it need not delay us here. For now, I want to ground it in a common liturgical day or practice. I want to key it to Sunday, the Christian Sabbath placed as the first day of the recurrent liturgical week. Rosenzweig teaches us that the Christian Sabbath, which comes at the beginning of the week and not at the end, symbolizes new beginning; Christianity is always at the beginning of its historical work and looking forward to redemption of the world with the second coming of Jesus Christ.⁵⁷ A Christian, according to him, is shot through with new beginnings: “‘a Christian is made, not born.’ This beginning of his having become a Christian, whence originate ever new beginnings, a whole chain of beginnings, this he carries with him, but otherwise nothing.”⁵⁸ In another place, he writes, “The Christian is the eternal beginner; completion is not for him: all’s well that’s well begun. That is the eternal youth of the Christian; every Christian lives his Christianity every day as though it were the first.”⁵⁹ Indeed, any Pentecostal political philosophy that wants to advance African societies toward new ways of seeing and shaping life in the *commons*, opening their histories to new possibilities, creativity, and freedom, to resisting obstacles to social justice, and to promoting human flourishing must embody the *Pentecostal Principle*. Pentecostalism already embodies it as its operative principle.

CRITICAL RESPONSE TO THE EARLIER CHAPTERS

We have come to the last of the jobs at hand; that is, evaluating the chapters in this volume in the light of the Pentecostal political philosophy we have crafted in this chapter. This book not only investigates Pentecostalism and politics in Africa as conditioned by the ethos of postcoloniality, existential conditions of fragile economies, and processes of state formation, but it is also a political theorization of Pentecostalism. This theorization takes place on two different fronts. On one hand, the collection can be read as offering “an understanding of political things which is natural to pre-philosophic political life” of African Pentecostals.⁶⁰ On the other, it attempts to (implicitly) direct our thoughts to the issue of (search for) the best sociopolitical order and attendant virtues, social practices that can sustain human flourishing and human excellence—and nudges us to assess whether or not African Pentecostalism is a bane or boost to this fundamental human quest. Besides, the methodologies, contents, and arguments of the various chapters serve notice to scholars that the political, social, and economic institutions in which Pentecostals are embodied and which they in turn influence need to be continually studied afresh if we are to understand the ongoing differential articulations of power by Pentecostalism and its societies in Africa.

Such studies need to have a baseline of history to offer guidance on how the Pentecostal movement has evolved on the continent. Chapter 2 by Olufunke Adebayo provides such guidance. Marinus Iwuchukwu’s work in Chap. 3 on religious fundamentalism identifies Pentecostal Christians and “fundamental Islamists” as inimical to the ethos of interreligious dialogue crucial for the survival of pluralistic democracy in Africa. Marleen de Witte in Chap. 4 makes the important point that Pentecostalism is a strong voice offering a religious formulation of visions of Africa’s future. These are visions that accent religious answers to basic problems of society and have often made common cause with the type of neoliberal capitalism that is blind to the suffering of the masses. These kinds of visions have serious implications not only for the organization of stability of the public dialogue space, but also the social ethos of giving and receiving of reasons for public policies and actions.

Along this line of the ethos of public square and importance of pluralism, tolerance, and freedom for religiously diverse democracies of Africa, Naar M’fundisi-Holloway (in Chap. 5) and Abimbola Adelakun (in Chap. 6) raise the question of Pentecostals’ relations with the religious other (ATR) or neighbor. Pentecostalism views ATR as a dangerous matter to eject from the body politic of Africa. “Love thy neighbor as thyself” is one of Jesus’ lessons African Pentecostals have yet to take to heart. There is also no lovefest between Pentecostal churches and other denominations in the ecumenical dialogue. Ernst M. Conradie in Chap. 7 examines the tensions between the Pentecostal movement and the ecumenical movement, commenting where appropriate on the political dimensions of such tensions. The tensions are not only related to differences in theology and hermeneutics, but also to political constellations of

power. In sum, to put matters politely, let me say African Pentecostals are still working out their subjective openness to the inevitable differences that exist in and constitute modern pluralistic societies.

While these six chapters have provided evidence, data, and arguments as they relate to Pentecostalism and freedom/pluralism, one of the six pillars of our political philosophical framework, most of their arguments are not consciously set within any of the current political theoretical or political philosophical debates. Adelakun's chapter is an exception in this regard. Using the Foucauldian concept of panopticism, she analyzes Pentecostal understanding of the procedures of power in contemporary African societies. Pentecostal Christians believing themselves to have supernatural panoptical ability, which is rooted in the all-seeing and omniscient God, not only aspire to "denude" religious Others and monstrous neighbors of their spiritual covering so as to know their "secrets," but are obsessive with exorcizing themselves of demons of the Others and the neighbors who are purveyors of "wounds of existence." Pentecostals see their neighbors, especially adherents of ATR, as grave threats to their God-given destiny, and therefore they must engage in "spiritual warfare" with them to take charge of the future of the continent and the black race.

These analyses confirm what we stated earlier. In the African Pentecostal mindset, politics is a process of power exchange. It is akin to warfare with clear, concrete definitions of friends and enemies. The possession and deployment of power is the key to extracting and allocating resources from the commons that are needed to live a full human life. Both process and site are presumed to be pervaded by spiritual presences. Politics is a spiritual warfare; a struggle between one power of being against another.

The next set of eight (8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, and 18) chapters—by Samson Ijaola; Damaris Parsatau; Fidelis Nkomazana; Azonzeh Ukah; Femi Kolapo; Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso and Rachael O. Iyanda; Afolarin Olutunde Ojewole and Efe Monday Ehioghæ; and Kelvin Onongha, respectively—raise the philosophical question of the nature of the political order that Pentecostalism envisages for Africa or is helping to mold. Is this order the best or most just for all African citizens or is it conducive for the kind of socioeconomic development that can sustain human flourishing? Ojewole and Ehioghæ in their evaluation of Pentecostalism and politics argue that the vision of Pentecostal leaders to increase political connections and positions for Pentecostals in their nations' political system is not effective for transforming societies and promoting social justice. So far Pentecostal leaders of Africa and their counterparts in the statist political systems have not embraced zero tolerance of corruption and a rational approach to national wealth creation. In summary, the authors in this cluster, measuring the social order by standards of rationality, critical thinking, equality, prophetic critique, peacebuilding, social transformation, and freedom, reject the order being gradually forged by African Pentecostalism in cahoots with dysfunctional postcolonial governance and prebendalism.

While the interpretations of these eight chapters are valid in their own right, one wonders if their authors fully grasp how the Pentecostals understand their own thoughts and actions (speech and deeds). There is always the danger in evaluating a group's political viewpoint, stance, or philosophy for the interpreters to be convinced of the superiority of their own points of view and to admit to not learning anything useful, novel, or profound from those whose thoughts, speech, and actions they are assessing. In these chapters, the reader does not often hear Pentecostals (scholars and non-scholars alike) directly speaking for themselves or being directly questioned about their political thoughts.

Having said this, I want to point our attention to a profound interpreter's insight in Ukah's chapter (Chap. 11), "Neither Jew nor Greek? Class, Ethnicity, and Race in the Pentecostal Movement." He makes the point that in Africa Pentecostalism is ethnicized and racialized, and ethnicity and race are Pentecostalized. His point is that Pentecostals' rhetoric and patterns of behavior strongly indicate that they are drawn to racial identity, to the belief in divinely assigned purpose for race or ethnicity, and to bio-piety. He argues that the mobilization of racial and ethnic identities and valorization of privileges of being black in the unfolding salvific history of the world run against the universal mission and message of the catholic body of Christ in general and of Pentecostalism in particular. In terms of the politics of *parts of no part*, African Pentecostals cannot claim the status of the *singular universal* in their countries or posit themselves as the *name of the community of Christ itself*. In the language of Rosenzweigian philosophical-theology, African Pentecostalism, Ukah believes, has already fallen into "paganism," the valorization and accenting of different "blood and soil" in the universal body of Christ. If Ukah is correct, then it raises the question whether African Pentecostalism is a crypto-pagan pretender of Christianity. Let us be clear, we are not talking about the worship of idols/nature or the offering of blood sacrifices to some deities. (Paganism as used here is not at all pejorative.) Paganism, according to Rosenzweig, is the dissolving of human individuality, faith, and Christian identity in ethnicity, race, or nationhood. So that we are not misunderstood, Rosenzweig is clear that European forms of Christianity face the same problem. Ukah's scrutiny of African Pentecostalism appears to make paganism an Africa-only affair. Paganism is deeply rooted in the political life of Christianity as it is expressed in denominations, national churches, national cultures, religious nationalism, racial congregations, idealization of state, death in war as an offering to the state, and so on.⁶¹

All this does not mean that the chapters gathered in this volume are not well situated in the tradition of thinking concerning political life and political philosophy. To fully grasp how they perceptibly deal with the question of Pentecostalism and politics in Africa, the reader must, among other things, keep in mind the perspicacious understanding of political life and political philosophy offered by Leo Strauss.

In brief, the root of classical political philosophy was the fact that political life is characterized by controversies between groups struggling for power within the political community. Its purpose was to settle those political controversies which are of a fundamental and typical character in the spirit not of the partisan but of the good citizen, and with a view to such an order as would be most in accordance with the requirements of human excellence.⁶²

Now let us turn to the remaining three chapters: to Adeshina Afolayan who wrote Chap. 12 and Samuel Zalanga who wrote Chaps. 15 and 18. I will assess their work in the light of the description of political philosophy as given by Strauss. These two scholars show a genuine awareness of the fundamentals of the problems posed by Pentecostalism to the social or political order of African communities. They made excellent efforts to evaluate what they think are the reasoned views of African Pentecostals concerning political matters and the right social order. The orientation of their scholarships is nothing but political philosophy as such.

Afolayan directs his intellectual energies to the basic controversies surrounding the nature of roguish sovereign states in Africa that brutally dominate their traumatized citizenry, and to the question of the possibility of founding stable forms of responsive sovereignty and political community. Given this as a background to thought, he stages a normative inquiry into the possibility of installing good government if we take seriously the Pentecostal social imaginary and the sense of a distinct moral-spiritual dynamics that Pentecostalism wields in the polities of Africa. His conclusion is that Pentecostalism in Africa as presently organized cannot enable the constitution of the best form of government that will instigate spiritual, physical, and material well-being. This conclusion is based on three analytical observations. In the first place, Pentecostalism has not shown a genuine capacity to transform itself into a viable political community that can normatively challenge the rogue African state. Second, Pentecostalism has a certain way of reacting in the African political domain that makes it into a pseudo-sovereign that is indistinctly caught between being and becoming political; but some of its internal dynamics prevent it from becoming a political community or regime. One of these internal constraints is its penchant for spiritual knowledge, the predominant mode of cognition, which is not the form of knowledge acceptable in the public square. Third, there is the “complicity and conviviality,” that is, the imbrication of Pentecostal leadership in the corruption of the postcolonial state, and how the political state modifies and modulates Pentecostal spirituality.

All this is very suggestive of an African Pentecostal political philosophy, but Afolayan does not offer any such construct. He stops at the level of critique of views on political things and best social order. Next, it is difficult for this reader to clearly discern, from the kernel and trajectory of his thought, African Pentecostalism’s possible contribution to the African Pentecostal political philosophy. Besides, for Afolayan, African Pentecostals’ relationship to academically respectable or viable political philosophy is a relationship constituted by

events in the past and the present. While for me—as I have demonstrated in the foregoing sections of this chapter and in my 2014 book *Nigerian Pentecostalism*—the relationship is future oriented. It seems that like other political theorists working on African Pentecostalism he has adopted a “hermeneutical approach that suggests that the present is but the present and nothing more.”⁶³ Finally, his potential philosophic model as I envisage it from his arguments does not deal with the charged issue of democratically relating to the Pentecostal *Other*. I hope our earlier task of constructing a political philosophy, which has multiple access points and which can be networked into models of how different social groups should relate in a pluralistic public square, complements Afolayan’s brilliant incipient template and offers plural paths of thoughts on possible forms of African Pentecostal political philosophy.

Samuel Zalanga presents the Pentecostal mindset or social imagination not as a virtue or possession, but as a state of the world, existence as such. The destiny that such a state of the world portends for Africa in his evaluation is not very promising. Enchanted Pentecostalism, he maintains, is constructing an alternate, archaic, prerational social order, which is not conducive for good governance and is corrosive of the development of the viable commons. This alternate social order contests another emerging social order with a vision of creating a modern African society. As a “modernist” indictment of Pentecostals, his analysis avers that the Pentecostal worldview, which conflates metaphysics, ethics, and sociology, hurts the capacity of all Africans (including the Pentecostals themselves) to actualize their potentials, to advance levels of human flourishing on the continent.

While I have no disagreement with Zalanga’s analysis in large part, I wonder whether, in his wholesale dismissive portrayal of African Pentecostals as persons hopelessly lost in some prescientific world, we can find one rational person among them.⁶⁴ I wonder if scholars who share his kind of views think of Pentecostals as coeval with modern scientific-oriented scholars. Following Johannes Fabian, let me ask whether African Pentecostals and modern scholars are living or existing in the same timeframe.⁶⁵ African Pentecostals appear to have become the *Other* of the modern scholar, almost temporally and spatially different. The question then arises whether Pentecostals can be partners in dialogues about the public square, be partners in deliberations about economic development, be participants in the crafting of political philosophy for modern African polities; or whether they are condemned to be religious devotees whom scholars observe and write about. What is the “politics of time” that both Pentecostals and “modern” scholars need to acknowledge and work through to make room for the politics of governing the commons for the common good? Perhaps some of these questions about time and coevalness can be raised through my earlier analysis of Pentecostals living in two types of time: endless extension and infinite concentration.

No doubt, Zalanga has raised a very difficult subject for all those who want to craft an African Pentecostal political philosophy. If modern political philosophy assumes rationality and deliberation, the giving and receiving of reasons,

and the deployment of publicly accessible knowledges for public policies, then some of the issues he has raised fundamentally question the whole exercise of crafting political philosophy in the God-intoxicated African societies. But then, is it not the function of philosophy in situations like this to struggle against mythical thought, to clarify concepts and secure rational thought, to elevate the level of public discourse, to subject mere opinions to scrutiny, and thus found them on knowledge? Will it be considered outside the bounds of the practice of philosophy to ferret out what is salvageable in everyday Pentecostal thought and social experience and raise and stage such as philosophy? African Pentecostalism is too important a contemporary phenomenon to leave to the Pentecostals alone. Many more scholars like Zalanga and Afolayan need to critically engage it.

Zalanga's chapter here may even constitute a source of or point of access to African Pentecostal political philosophy. The very problems (such as fear, desire for property, selfish passion, and elementary urges) of African Pentecostals that Zalanga has most carefully highlighted with remarkable candor and lucidity may well be the grain of sand around which the pearl of Pentecostal political philosophy can be created. Strauss in his discourse of history of political philosophies demonstrated that Western scholars took the basest instincts of their people and developed brilliant political philosophies around them for the common good of their societies. Hobbes transformed the fear of violent death into a theory of sovereignty and civil society. Locke turned Hobbes's desire for self-preservation into the desire for property, and the acquisitiveness that stands at the cradle of civil society and political liberty.⁶⁶ Beyond Hobbes and Locke, we know of Saint Augustine and Adam Smith, who came up with brilliant ideas or philosophies to convert private vices into public goods.⁶⁷ Where are the African savants whose minds can be stimulated by the "problems and decadence" of African Pentecostals—as metonyms of the social problems of African social order—to create excellent political philosophies for African societies? Where are the African Pentecostal thinkers (similar to the Jewish Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig) who can translate the *content and form* of African Pentecostal experience into the language of contemporary political philosophy and—as Martin Heidegger states of the task of philosophy—"preserve the *force of the most elemental words* in which [African-Pentecostalized] *Dasein* expresses itself, and to keep common understanding from flattening them to the point of unintelligibility, which functions in turn as a source of pseudo-problems."⁶⁸

Let me conclude by framing the ideas of the 17 chapters of this volume in the Rosenzweigian schema of life, way, and truth. The first cluster (Chaps. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7), which I situated within the notion of politics as the process of power-exchange—the existential predicament of *being* at stake is at issue in the encounter of powers of being, encounter of persons with persons in the political—speaks to the "life" of politics. The six authors not only speak to the "life" of politics of African Pentecostals, but also situated Pentecostalism as "life" within the prevailing political order and history of Africa. The second cluster (Chaps. 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, and 18) is about the "way." In this

case, the authors want to convert African Pentecostals into the orthodoxy of rationalism, evangelizing them, so to speak, in the name of liberal democracy, modernity, pluralism, and diversity. The philosophic point—and perhaps also the theological one—of the critique marshaled by this cluster of authors is that it is only in risking openness to the Other in modern democratic spirit that African Pentecostalism can fulfill its mission of witnessing expansive divine love, promoting human flourishing, and initiating something new amid ongoing social automatism. The “truth” is symbolized by Chaps. 12, 14, and 17. These three chapters somewhat comprise the convergence of the earlier two clusters, gesturing to the universality and concreteness of political philosophy. Political philosophy, which is a reasoned account of founding and governance of the best or just social order, speak to the *nomos*, *kairos*, and *ethos* that have serious implications on civilizational life of a people and their collective capacity for technological advancement.

The hidden thread of political philosophy that runs through all three clusters is that of liberal democracy of pluralistic and diverse society. And what this triadic cluster seems to conclude is that neither Pentecostalism nor Africa can come to the “Father” of sociopolitical paradise of human flourishing except through liberal democracy. It announces that the praxis of social transformation is the life, subjective openness to rationality is the way, and democratic pluralism as a governance model is the truth of an authentic political philosophy for African Pentecostalism.

NOTES

1. Ruth Marshall, *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), and Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2014).
2. See Allen D. Hertzke and Timothy Samuel Shah, eds., *Christianity and Freedom: Contemporary Perspectives*, Law and Christianity, vol. 2 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
3. It was Ludwig Feuerbach who said, “The ultimate essence of religion is revealed by the simplest act of religion—prayer.” See his *The Essence of Christianity*, trans. Marian Evans (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1881), 122.
4. Jean-Louis Chrétien, “The Wounded Word: The Phenomenology of Prayer,” in Dominique Janicaud, Jean-Francois Courtine, Jean-Louis Chrétien, Michel Henry, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Paul Ricoeur, *Phenomenology and the “Theological Turn”: The French Debate* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 153–154.
5. Nimi Wariboko, “Political Theology from Tillich to Pentecostalism in Africa,” in *Paul Tillich and Pentecostal Theology: Spiritual Presence and Spiritual Power*, ed. Nimi Wariboko and Amos Yong (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 127, 133–136.
6. For quotes see Christopher Fynsk, foreword to *The Inoperative Community*, by Jean-Luc Nancy, trans. Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland, and Simona Sawhney (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), x, xxxvii.

7. Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 145–165.
8. Giorgio Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, trans. Adam Kotsko (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015), 81.
9. Walter Benjamin, “Notes Toward a Work on the Category of Justice,” trans. Peter Fenves in his *The Messianic Reduction: Walter Benjamin and the Shape of Time* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 257, quoted in Agamben, *Use of Bodies*, 81.
10. Richard Fenn, “Sociology and Religion: Searching for the Sacred,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Science*, ed. Philip Clayton and Zachary Simpson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 259.
11. This way of putting the matter was inspired by Kevin Hart, “its/is true,” in *Words of Life: New Theological Turns in French Phenomenology*, ed. Bruce Ellis Benson and Norman Wirzba (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 70.
12. Kevin Hart, “its/is true,” 70.
13. The analysis here is indebted to Abed Azzam, *Nietzsche Versus Paul* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 32–33.
14. Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 221–257.
15. Pentecostalism has revealed a deep-seated hunger of Africans for national, continental, and racial dignity. But I wonder if religion is best situated to play this role.
16. Friedrich W. Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality: A Polemic*, trans. Maudemarie Clark and Alan J. Swensen (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1998).
17. I am alluding here to Jacques Rancière’s notion of politics. See his *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, trans. Julie Rose (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).
18. Nimi Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle: Ethical Methodology in New Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012).
19. Stéphane Mosès, *The Angel of History: Rosenzweig, Benjamin, and Scholem*, trans. Barbara Harshav (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 132.
20. Mosès, *Angel of History*, 135–136.
21. Mosès, *Angel of History*, 111.
22. See Mosès, *Angel of History*, 1–8.
23. Franz Kafka, “The City Coat of Arms,” in *The Great Wall of China: Stories and Reflections of Franz Kafka*, trans. Willa Muir and Edwin Muir (New York: Schocken Books, 1946), 245.
24. Kafka, “City Coat of Arms,” 245–247.
25. See Mosès, *Angel of History*, 5.
26. Jorge Luis Borges, “The Secret Miracle,” in *Ficciones*, trans. Anthony Kerrigan (New York: Grove Press, 1962), 147.
27. Borges, “Secret Miracle,” 143–150.
28. See Mosès, *Angel of History*, 8.
29. F. W. J. Schelling, *Abyss of Freedom/Ages of the World* (Second Draft, 1813), trans. Judith Norman (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997).
30. Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, trans. William W. Hallo (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1985). I was led to Rosenzweig in this case by Paul Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination*, trans. David Pellauer, ed. Mark I. Wallace (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 93–107.

31. Rosenzweig's use of blood community is not always literal or racial; it is a philosophical idea—the human hope for the future. For an excellent explanation of this idea see Leora Batnitzky, *Idolatry and Representation: The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 75–79, 172–177.
32. Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred*, 95; see also Stéphane Mosès, *System and Revelation: The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig*, trans. Catherine Tihanyi (Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1992), 170–173, 223–230, 259–261.
33. Rosenzweig, *Star of Redemption*, 300.
34. Mosès, *System and Revelation*, 260–261.
35. “Before God then, Jew and Christian both labor at the same task. He cannot dispense with either. He has set enmity between the two for all time, and withal has most intimately bound each to each.” Rosenzweig, *Star of Redemption*, 415.
36. Rosenzweig, *Star of Redemption*, 415–416.
37. Rosenzweig, *Star of Redemption*, 242–249.
38. Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010), 26.
39. Eric L. Santner, *On the Psychotheology of Everyday Life: Reflections on Freud and Rosenzweig* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 73.
40. Santner, *Psychotheology of Everyday Life*, 133.
41. Rosenzweig, *Star of Redemption*, 424.
42. For a theological and philosophical elaboration of this point see Nimi Wariboko, “The Synaptic Mind of James Forbes: A Delta of Theology,” in *Give Yourself to the Wind: Interpretive Essays on the Public Theology and Sacred Rhetoric of James A. Forbes, Jr.*, ed. Brad R. Braxton and Eric Williams (New York: Orbis Books, forthcoming 2018), and L. L. Wellborn, *Paul's Summons to Messianic Life: Political Theology and the Coming Awakening* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).
43. Rosenzweig, *Star of Redemption*, 299–300, 398–402.
44. Nimi Wariboko, *The Charismatic City and the Public Resurgence of Religion: A Pentecostal Social Ethics of Cosmopolitan Urban Life* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
45. Harvey Cox, *The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization In Theological Perspective* (New York: Collier, 1990).
46. Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), 63.
47. The options before us are not limited to withdrawal into private, individual spaces or the embrace of public space as conditioned by the calculus of capturing state power and dedicated self-seeking. Our choice is not between exclusion and embrace. See Nimi Wariboko, *Economics in Spirit and Truth: A Moral Philosophy of Finance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), xi–xii, 168–171.
48. For a discussion on subjectivation in Pentecostalism, see Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*.
49. Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 178.
50. Santner, *Psychotheology of Everyday Life*, 133.
51. Rancière, *Disagreement*.
52. Rancière, *Disagreement*, 29.
53. Rancière, *Disagreement*, 8–9.

54. Santner, *Psychotheology of Everyday Life*, 128.
55. Alain Badiou with Fabien Tarby, *Philosophy and Event*, trans. Louise Burchill (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2013), 12–13.
56. Wariboko, *Pentecostal Principle*.
57. Rosenzweig, *Star of Redemption*, 358–359.
58. Rosenzweig, *Star of Redemption*, 396.
59. Rosenzweig, *Star of Redemption*, 359.
60. Leo Strauss, *What is Political Philosophy? And Other Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), 94.
61. Rosenzweig, *Star of Redemption*, 329–330.
62. Strauss, *What is Political Philosophy?* 90.
63. Batnitzky, *Idolatry and Representation*, 175.
64. Wariboko, *Economics in Spirit and Truth*, 87–104.
65. Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).
66. Strauss, *What is Political Philosophy?* 40–52.
67. Nimi Wariboko, *God and Money: A Theology of Money in a Globalizing World* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008), 33–36.
68. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 262.

INDEX¹

NUMBERS AND SYMBOLS

1984, 106

9/11 Commission, The, 47

A

Abahoro, 27

Abaroho, 141

Abbasid Empire, 59

Abélès, Marc, 5

Abrahamic religions, 209

Abundant Life Faith Centre, 29

Accra Confession, 132

Acholi, 311

Action, 71

Activism, 48

Acts of the Apostles, 57

Adam and Eve, 374

Adeboye, Enoch Adejare (Pastor), 12

Adefarasin, Paul (Pastor), 377

Adegboyega, Samuel, 142

Adelaja, Sunday (Pastor), 8, 325

Adeyemi, Sam, 29

Aesthetics, 104

Aesthetics of success, 12

Affluenza, 293, 363

Afghanistan, 303

Africa, 4, 14

Africa House of Prayer, 170

African Diaspora, 14

African independent churches (AICs), 12

Africanisation, 26

African Ministry Prayer Network
(AMPN), 170

Africanness, 66

African Pentecostalism, 3

African philosophy, 6, 106

African politics, 4

African state, 7

African traditional religions (ATRs),
12, 87

Afrikaner, 21

Agbara Nla (The Ultimate Power),
13, 103

Agency, 20

Agora, 5

Agrarian culture, 112

Akan religion, 121

Aladura, 27

Akindayomi, Josiah Olufemi
(Reverend), 326

Algeria, 49

Aliliki preachers, 34

All African Conference of Churches, 132

Allen, Asa Alonso, 15

Allotey, Christinah (Reverend), 193

Altersovereignty, 244n49

Amos (Prophet), 358

¹ Note: Page numbers followed by 'n' refer to notes.

Anawim of Yahweh, 214
 Ancestors, 373
 Ancestral spirits, 88
 Ancient Mystical Order Rosae Crucis (AMORC), 226
 Anglican, 29
 Animism, 95
 Anim, Peter, 28
 Anointing, 260
 Anthropomorphism, 105
 Anti-Semitism, 59
 Apartheid, 21, 120
 Apostates, 44
 The Apostolic Church (TAC), 28
 Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), 21, 121
 Arabic, 51
 Arab Spring, 59
 Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo, 29
 Arendt, Hannah, 18, 236
 Arewa Youth Forum, 334
 Aristocracy, 362
 Aristotle, 236
 Asceticism, 142, 349
 Ashimolowo, Matthew (Pastor), 324
 Asia, 25
 Assemblies of God (AG), 28
 Association of Christian Religious Practitioners (ACRP), 130
 Association of Ministry Training Practitioners (AMTP), 130
 Atheism, 325
 Atta Mills, John, 51
 Authenticity, 16, 353
 Authority, 121
 Autocephaly, 141
 Autonomy, 387
 Axum, 132
 Al-Ayyeri, Yusuf, 52
 Azusa Street, 10

B

Babalawos, 109
 Babalola, Joseph Ayo, 28
 Babatope, John Aluko, 142
 Babel, 215
 Bachelet, Michelle, 160
 Backsliding, 112
 Backwardness, 113

Badimo, 185
 Baha'i, 304
 Bakare, Tunde (Pastor), 325
 Banda, Joyce, 160
 Bangladesh, 49
Bantu Philosophy, 6
 Baptism, 32, 126
 Baptist, 29
 Bara, Mary, 160
 Barbarism, 110
 Al-Bashir, Omar, 55
 Basson, Wium, 333
 Battle Cry Ministries, 190
 Bauchi, Dahiru, 47
 Beatriz, 322
 Bechuanaland Protectorate, 181
 Beijing Consensus, 352
 Belhar Confession, 132
 Beliefs, 91
 Believers, 119
 Bello, Ahmadu (Sir), 46
 Bentham, Jeremy, 13
 Bible, 53
 Biblical inerrancy, 27
 Big Brother, 106
 Big man, 379
 Big Man of God, 148
 Bio-piety, 410
 Bishop of politicians, 331
 Bismark, Tudor, 29
 Blackness, 112
 Bodies, 14, 105
 Body of Christ, 114
 Body politic, 210
Bogadi (bride wealth), 185
Bogosi (kingship), 185
 Boko Haram, 47, 310
Bongaka (medicine), 185
 Bonnke, Reinhard, 16
 Borges, Jorge Luis, 396
 Bosa, Maipelo (Pastor), 193
 Botswana, 16, 181
 Botswana Bible Training Institute (BBTI), 196
 Botswana Christian Council (BCC), 190
Botswana Handbook of Churches (1994), 183
 Bourgeoisie, 246
 Braide, Garrick Sokari, 26

Branham, William Marrion, 15
 Bretton Woods, 8
 Brexit, 335
 British, 48
 British Protectorate, 36
 Buber, Martin, 413
 Buddhism, 304
 Bureaucracy, 129
 Burgess, Richard S., 22
 Burkina Faso, 47
 Business, 160
 Businesses, 254
Buy the Future, 66

C

Calvary, 113
 Calvinism, 350
 Calvin, John, 139
 Cameroon, 46
 Candles, 13
 Capitalism, 12
 Capitalist accumulation, 251
 Caprivi war, 310
 Care of external things, 235
 Care of the soul, 235
 Catholic Apostolic Church, 140
 Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR), 29
 Catholic Church, 5, 361
 Causality, 209
 Causation, 372
Cen, 311
 Central African Republic, 46
 Centralization, 259
 Chad, 49
 Character, 8
 Charisma, 121
 Charismata, 16, 52, 263
 Charismatic fellowships, 10
 Charity, 236
 Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S), 326
 Chiluba, Frederick, 51
 Chimeras, 103
 China, 49, 352
 Christ, 21
 Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), 28
 Christ Army Church, 35
 Christcentric righteousness, 354
 Christ Embassy International, 29

Christendom, 304
 Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), 22
 Christian drama, 13
 Christian expansionism, 108
 Christian Institute, 125
 Christianity, 5
 Christians, 11
 Christian Sabbath, 407
 Christian Science, 146
 Christian tradition, 387
 Christian war, 314
 Christian Women's Fellowship, 190
 Christinah Allotey, 17
 Christology, 121, 140
 Churches, 4
 Church Fathers, 210
 Church governance, 267
 Church Leaders Consultation, 125
 Church of God Missions International, 29
 Church of Jesus Christ, 28
 Church of Pentecost (COP), 28
 Church of the Nazarene, 140
 Church planting, 181
 Church Radio Council, 190
 Church-speak, 267
 Cinema, 13
 Citizens, 65, 229
 Citizenship, 3
 City, 76
 City-building, 77
The City of God, 234
 City of God, 233
 City of man, 234
 Civilization, 6
 Civilizing mission, 112
 Civic public, 265, 308
 Civil repair, 278
 Civil society, 55, 246
 Civil society organizations (CSOs), 248
 Civil wars, 20
 Class, 11
 Classical Pentecostals, 10
 Clergy, 176
 Clientelism, 264
 Clinton, Hilary Rodham, 160
 Cohabitation, 194
 Cold War, 307

Colonial administrators, 6
 Colonialism, 5
 Colonization, 87
 Color, 208
 Coloured Independent Churches, 120
Commandement, 229
 Commission on World Mission and
 Evangelism, 125
 Common good, 228
 Commons, 389
 Communication, 119
 Communicative power, 165
 Community, 59
 Community Bible Academy, 120
 Community service, 258
 Compassion, 16
 Competition, 207, 252
 Complicity, 19
 Concurus, 121
Confessing the One Faith, 131
 Conflict, 303
 Congo War, 310
 Conscientious objection, 305
 Consciousness, 95, 206
 Conservatism, 10
 Conspiracy, 227
 Constitution, 182
 Constitutionalism, 162
 Consultation on World Evangelism, 128
 Consumerism, 81, 344
 Continental philosophy, 386
 Conversions, 34, 259
 Co-operation, 280
 Co-option, 162
 Copeland, Kenneth, 291
 Corporate religiosity, 254
 Corporations, 254
 Corruption, 49, 246, 256
 Cosmology, 32
 Cosmopolitanism, 403
 Cosmos, 107
 Council of African Instituted
 Churches, 124
 Critical theory, 386
 Crucifixion, 113
 Cullis, Charles, 140
 Cults, 89
 Cultural adjustment theology, 74
 Cultural imaginary, 109

Cultural imperialism, 352
 Cultural lag theory, 348
 Culture, 71
 Curses, 289

D

Dada, Idi Amin, 311
 Dance, 13
 Dan Fodio, Uthman, 46
 The dark continent, 110
 Darkness, 27
Dasein, 226
 Daystar Christian Centre, 29, 257
 Decision making, 163
 Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC), 28
 Deliverance, 122, 260
 Deliverance Church of Kenya, 45
 Democracy, 48
 Democratic representation, 4
 Democratization, 248
 Demon-possession, 15
 Demons, 10
 Denomination, 45, 344
 Denudation, 102
 Derrida, Jacques, 18, 227
 Desmond Tutu Chair of Ecumenical
 Theology and Social Transformation
 in Africa, 14, 123
 Destiny, 287
 Detienne, Marcel, 5
 Deus Israel (God of Israel), 6
 Development, 3
 Devil, 18, 107
 Diakonia, 128
 Dialogue, 44
 Diamond Group/Precious Stone
 Society, 142
 Diaspora, 115
 Digital culture, 105
 Dignity, 16, 70
Dikgosi (traditional kings), 187
Dingaka, 185
 Discernment, 52
 Divine healing, 8
 Divine mystique, 325
 Doe, Samuel Kanyon, 334
 Dogma, 208
 Dollars, Creflo, 15

Dominant media culture (DMC), 53
Dominion theology, 374
Dreams, 52
Duncan-Williams, Nicholas
(Bishop), 324
Duplantis, Jesse, 15
Durban Christian Center, 45
Durkheim, Emile, 280
Dutch Reformed Church, 131
Dutch Reformed Mission Church, 131
Dystopianism, 105

E

Ecclesiology, 123
Economy, 236
Ecumenical dialogue, 11
Ecumenical movements, 119
Ecumenical Theology, 14
Ecumenicity, 123
Ecumenism, 3, 120
Edinburgh mission conference, 119
Education, 51
Egalitarianism, 225
Egocentrism, 297
Egypt, 43
Embassy of God Church, Kiev,
Ukraine, 325
Emenogu, Davidson (King), 334
Emotionalism, 10
Empathy, 16
Employment, 65
Enchanted, 287
Enchanted worldview, 376
Enchantment, 19
Enculturation, 90
Enemies, 373
Enlightenment, 45
Entertainment, 78
Entrepreneurial, 15
Entrepreneurial religions, 78
Entrepreneurship, 16, 70
Episcopal governance, 148
Episcopatism, 148
Epistemology, 19, 277
Equality, 17, 259
Erdoğan, Recep Tayyip, 59
Esu, 114
Ethics, 27, 123

Ethiopian churches, 92
Ethiopianism, 26
Ethiopian movement, 182
Ethiopian Orthodox Church, 132
Ethnicity, 3, 204
Ethnic politics, 387
Ethos, 414
Eucharist, 126
Europe, 48
Evangelical Fellowship of Botswana
(EFB), 190
Evangelicalism, 259
Evangelicals, 143
Evangelism, 33
Evil, 10, 110
Evil eye, 115
Evil spirits, 8
Ewe culture, 104
Exclusion, 65
Exegesis, 127
Existence, 388
Exorcism, 91, 126, 260
Experience, 45, 283
Extractive economies, 230
Eye, 102

F

Fabian, Johannes, 412
Fahd, King, 47
Faith, 8
Faith based organizations (FBOs), 163
Faith communities, 27
Faith crimes, 286
Faith Evangelistic Ministries (FEM),
16, 159
Faith Tabernacle, 28
Family, 54
Family of God Church, 29
Fanon, Franz, 106, 311
Fasting, 21
Fatalism, 95
Fellowship, 125
Fellowship of Christian Union Students
(FOCUS), 34
Feminism, 16
Ferrer, Vincent, 140
FESTAC '77, 327
The *filiogue* controversy, 127

Film culture, 102
 Forces, 107
 Foreign policy, 162
 Foreign policy studies, 16
 Foucault, Michel, 13, 105
 Foursquare Gospel Church (FGC), 28
 Fourth World, 358
 Fragmentation, 122
 Fraternal, 122
 Freedom, 386, 387
 French, 48
 Friendship, 244n49
 Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship
 (FGBMF), 29
 Full Gospel Church of God, 45
 Fundamentalism, 11
 Future, 66

G

Gaddafi, Muammar, 48
 Garden of Eden, 364
 Gender, 3, 129
 General overseer, 69
 Genesis, 396
 Geneva, 132
 Gentleness, 16
 George Perfect, 36
 Germ theory, 373
 Ghana, 32
 Ghana Evangelical Fellowship, 36
 Ghostliness, 240
 Gideon Bible International, 34
 Gifford, Paul, 22
 Gitari, Bishop David, 170
 Global economy, 364
 Globalization, 112
 Glossolalia, 27, 139
 God, 5, 17
 Good governance, 412
 Good government, 228
 Gospel of health and wealth, 127
 Gospel-of-Prosperity (GOSPRO), 249
 Governance, 8
 Government, 9
 Gowon, Yakubu, 330
 Grace Bible Church, 30
 Gramsci, Antonio, 281
 Gross Domestic Products (GDP), 137

Gross National Income (GNI), 137
 Growth, 181
 Gumi, Muhammadu (Sheikh), 46

H

Habermas, Jürgen, 353
 Hagin, Kenneth Jr., 15
 Hagin, Kenneth Sr., 15
 Ham, 209
Harambee spirit, 176
 Hard power, 161
 Harmony, 54
 Harris, William Wade, 26
 Healing, 22
 Healthcare, 78
 Heart of darkness, 110
 Heaven, 11
 Hegemony, 281
 Heidegger, Martin, 226
 Heretics, 44
 Hermeneutics, 58
 Hero-worship, 327
 Heward-Mills, Dag, 30
 Hinduism, 304
 Hinn, Benny, 15
 HIV/AIDS, 332
 Hobbes, Thomas, 228
 Holiness, 10
 Holocaust, 59
 Holy Spirit, 27
 Holy Spirit Mobile Force
 (HSMF), 312
 Holy Spirit Movement (HSM), 312
 Homosexuality, 194
 Hope, 225
 Hospitals, 6
 Hountondji, Paulin J., 7
 Household of God Church International
 Ministries, 325
*How Colonialism Preempted Modernity in
 Africa*, 5
 Human development, 360
 Human flourishing, 408
 Humanitarianism, 166
 Human nature, 22
 Human rights, 162
 Humanity, 58
 Humility, 16

I

Idahosa, Benson Andrew, 15
 Idahosa, Margaret, 29
 Idealism, 238
 Identity, 3
 Identity politics, 105
 Ideology, 48
 Idolatry, 211
 Idowu, Bolaji, 374
 Idris Vaughan, 36
 Imagescape, 78
 Imaginary, 229
 Imagination, 70
 Immortality, 400
 Inclusion, 65
 Inclusivism, 386
 Independence, 8
 India, 49
 Indigenization, 186
 Indigenous agency, 10
 Individuality, 252
 Industrial capitalism, 127
 Industrialization, 350
 Industrial revolutions, 282
 Inequality, 4
 Influence, 159
 Informality, 252
 Information politics, 165
 Infra-politics, 247
 Infrastructural deficit, 224
 Injustice, 361
 Instability, 20, 304
 Institute for Contextual Theology, 125
 Institutions, 102, 229
 Integrity, 16, 170
 Intercessors for Africa, 29
 Inter-faith dialogue, 11
 Internally displaced persons (IDP), 173
 International Central Gospel Church (ICGC), 11, 30, 69
 International Criminal Court (ICC), 313
 International relations, 161
 Investment, 65
 Iranian revolution, 47
 Irele, Abiola, 7
 Iron cage, 281
 Irving, Edward, 140
 Islam, 11
 Islamic Brotherhood, 48

Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), 47
 Islamization, 47
 Ismailism, 48
 Isola Ogunsola, 109
 Iyke, Jim, 333
 Izala movement, 46

J

Jabula New Life Covenant Church, 29
 Jackson, Michael, 334
 Jakes, T.D., 15
 Jansenists, 359
Jesus Christ of Nazareth, 108
 Jesus Is Alive Ministries (JIAM), 163
 Jew, 17
 Jihad, 46
 Johnson, Prince Yormie, 334
 Jonathan, Goodluck, 51
 Joshua, T.B. (Prophet), 21
 Jubilee Christian Centre (JCC), 163
 Judaism, 304
 Justice, 106, 131, 259

K

Kafka, Franz, 396
 Kairos, 414
 Kalu, Ogbu Uke, 4
 Kant, Immanuel, 240
 Karanja, Tabitha, 160
 Kariuki, Mark (Bishop), 33
 Katholikos, 5
 Kenya, 16
 Kenya House of Prayer, 170
 Kenyon, Essek William, 15
 Kerugma, 128
 Kgaswane, Emmy (Pastor), 193
 Kgori, P. (Reverend), 193
 Kgosidintwa (Pastor), 193
 Kgotla, 185
 Kikwete, Jakaya Mrisho (President), 333
 Kimbanguism, 45
 Kimbangu, Simon, 26
 Kingdom of God, 231
 Kingdom values, 259
 King, Rodney, 106
 Kingsway International Christian Center (KICC), 324

Kinship, 32
 Kinyanjui, Teresia Wairimu (Evangelist),
 15, 159
 Kirchner, Christina, 160
 Kitonga, Arthur, 30
 Kiuna, Reverend Kathy, 163
 Knowledge, 6, 113
 Koike, Yuriko, 160
 Koinonia, 128
 Kony, Joseph, 312
 Korankye Ankrah, Sam, 68
Koto Orun, 105
 Kruger, Ruben Jacobus, 333
 Kuria, Mannases, 170

L

Lackey, Jana, 191
 Lacunza, Manuel De, 140
 Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, 76
 Lai, Wilfred, 33
 Lake, John Graham, 94
Lakwena, 312
 Lakwena, Alice, 311
 Latter Rain Ministries, 325
 Lausanne movement, 125
 Laws, 184
 Leadership, 21, 49, 322
Lean In, 160
 Legitimacy, 65
 Legitimation, 25, 34
 Lenshina, Alice, 93
 Leslie, Handel, 30
 Leviathan, 281
 Lévy-Bruhl, Lucien, 7
 Liberal democracy, 353
 Liberalization, 67
 Liberation, 12, 66
 Liberation theology, 4, 66
 Lighthouse Chapel International, 30
 Liturgical cosmology, 130
 Liturgical space, 122
 Liturgy, 13
 Living Faith Mission, 20
 Livingstone, David, 92
 Localism, 259
 Logos, 58
 London Missionary Society (LMS), 181
 Long, Eddie Lee, 15

Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), 20, 303
 Louis XIV, 229
 Love Botswana Outreach Mission, 191
 Loyalty, 263
 Lukoya, Severino, 312
 Luther, Martin, 139

M

McCauley, Ray, 30
 Machiavelli, Niccolò, 228
 Madikizela-Mandela, Winnie, 333
 Madrassas, 47
 Magic, 374
 Magical mirrors, 102
 Magufuli, John, 333
 Mahdi movement, 46
 Mainline churches, 14, 92
 Maitatsine movement, 47
 Malawi, 34
 Malema, Julius Sello, 333
 Mali, 47
Mami Wata, 226
 Management consultancy, 71
 Mandela, Nelson, 314
 Mannheim, Karl, 295
 Man of God, 261
 Marginalization, 16
 Marine spirit, 288
 Market, 65, 66
 Market fundamentalism, 358
 Marriage, 261
 Marshall, Ruth, 4
 Martyrdom, 227
 Marx, Karl, 280
 Masinde, J.B. (Bishop), 33
 Masquerade, 104
 Materialism, 15
 Matsemane (Pastor), 193
 Matshidiso, Betty (Pastor), 193
 Mauritania, 49
 Al-Mawdudi, Sayyid Abu al-'Ala, 48
 May, Theresa, 160
 Mbembe, Achille, 18
 Mberekpe, Camilla, 333
 Mbiti, John S., 88, 211
 Mbona cults, 90
 Mediascape, 78
 Media technology, 11

Mega-churches, 10
 Membership, 33
 Mentality, 71
 Mental warfare, 291
 Mentorship, 174
 Merkel, Angela, 160
 Messiah, 405
 Messianic churches, 92
 Messianism, 395
 Methodism, 140
 Methodist, 29
 Mhlanga, M. (Apostle), 193
 Microentrepreneurs, 251
 Middle East, 47
 Militancy, 48
 Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs), 152
 Mills, John Evans Fifi Atta, 333
 Ministers Fraternal, 190
 Ministration, 30
 Ministry, 31
 Minorities, 388
 Miracles, 8, 332
 Missiology, 121
 Mission, 14, 120
 Missionaries, 5
 Missionary wives, 182
 Moakofhi (Pastor), 193
 Modernity, 5
 Modernization, 4, 67
 Moehler, Johann Adam, 140
 Moffat, Mary, 187
 Moi, Daniel Arap (President), 171
 Mondoro cults, 90
 Money-making, 251
 Monitoring spirits, 102
 Monotheism, 95
 Moral development, 355
 Moral economy, 252
 Morality, 77
 Moral Majority movement, 360
 Moral universalism, 355
 Mostert, Johan, 21, 314
 Mother Theresa of Calcutta, 164
 Motlhageng, Kathrine (Pastor), 193
 Mountain of Fire Ministries, 20
 Mount Zion Faith Ministries, 103
 Mozambique, 52
 Mucapi Movement, 93

Mudimbe, V.Y., 6
 Mughal Empire, 59
Muhajirun, 48
 Muhammad, 48
 Multi-millionaire, 262
 Muslim Brotherhood, 50
 Muslims, 11
 Mutharika, Bingu wa, 333, 334
 Mutumwa Healing Movement, 93
 Mystery of the Cross, 400
 Mysticism, 108
 Mythology, 273n45

N
 Natality, 232
 National anthem, 173
 Nationalism, 8, 49
 Nationality, 354
 National question, 230
 National Resistance Army (NRA), 311
 Nation-building, 8, 354
 Nations, 70
 Nation-state, 8
 Ndwapi, Gaolekwi (Prophet Dr.), 190, 193
 Neoliberalism, 66, 76
 Neoliberal paradigm, 7
 Neo-Pentecostals, 10
 Networking, 172
 Networks, 266
 New Age, 71
 New birth, 10
 New Jerusalem, 364
 Newness, 81
 New Thought movement, 15, 145
 Nietzsche, Friedrich W., 393
 Niger Delta, 35
 Nigeria National Fasting and Prayer Day, 330
Nigerian Pentecostalism, 385
 Nihilism, 279
 Njoya, Timothy, 170
 Nkomazana, N. (Pastor Precious), 193
 Nkonyane, Daniel, 141
 Nkrumah, Kwame, 308
 Nku, Christinah (Mrs), 192
 Noah, 209
 Noble morality, 393

Nomos, 279
 Non-governmental organizations
 (NGOs), 4, 266
 Non-violence, 162
 Normalization, 232
 Norman Vincent Peale, 15
 North Africa, 43
 Noumena, 240
 Noumenon, 18
 Ntsikana, 322
 Nxele, 322
 Nyau Dance Society, 90
 Nye, Joseph Jr., 161
 Nyerere, Julius, 308

O

Obama, Michelle, 161
 Obas, 36
 Obasanjo, Olusegun, 330
 Obedience, 376
 Obote, Milton, 311
 Occult, 15
 Occult power, 115
 Ochollo society, 5
 Ocularity, 13
 Odubanjo, David Osmond, 28
 Ogunde, Hubert, 104
 Ojuk, Philip, 312
 Okello, Tito, 311
 Okotic, Christopher Oghenebroric
 (Pastor), 325
 Old Testament, 145
 Olive oil, 13
 Olukoya, Daniel Kolawole (Dr.), 22
 Omniscience, 106
 Ontology, 225
 Onyame, 121
 Opposition, 267
 Oppression, 49
 Oratory, 52
 Organization of African Initiated
 Churches, 190
 Organization of Islamic Countries
 (OIC), 47
 Oritsejafor, Ayo, 15
 Orphanages, 257
 Orthodoxy, 128
 Osinbajo, Yemi, 22

Otabil, Mensa (Pastor), 11
 Others, 409
 Other-worldly, 15, 247
 Ottoman Empire, 59
 Otunga, Cardinal Maurice, 170
 Oyakhilome, Chris, 29
 Oyedepo, David O., 12

P

Pacifism, 305
 Pagan, 396
 Paganism, 112
 Pakistan, 46
 Palmer, Phoebe, 140
 Panopticism, 103
 Panopticon, 13, 105
 Paradise, 11
 Parham, Charles Fox, 204
 Parousia, 210
 Participation, 162
 Party politics, 3
 Pastoral power, 224
 Pastorprenneur, 330
 Pastors, 15
 Patriarchy, 164
 Patrimonialism, 261
 Patriotism, 305
 Patronage, 379
 Patron-client, 262
 Paul, Saint, 406
 Pauperism, 138
 Peace, 44, 303
 Peacebuilding, 16
 Peel, J.D.Y., 8
 Pentecost, 121
 Pentecostal charismata, 11
 Pentecostal Christianity, 8
 Pentecostal churches, 92
 Pentecostal entrepreneur, 213
 Pentecostal epistemology, 235
 Pentecostal ethics, 106
 Pentecostal ethnicity, 18
 Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria
 (PFN), 22
 Pentecostalism, 3
Pentecostalism and Development, 4
 Pentecostal legitimization, 11
 Pentecostal movement, 3

- Pentecostal philosophy, 18, 226
 Pentecostal political philosophy, 223
 Pentecostal political regime, 18
Pentecostal Principle, 395
 Pentecostals, 4
 Pentecostal theology, 4, 27
 Per capita, 138
 Performance, 6, 66
 Persuades, 161
 Pew Research Center, 43
 Phenomena, 240
 Phenomenology, 105
 Philanthropy, 152
 Philippines, 49
 Philosophy, 278
 Pluralism, 214
 Plurality, 231
 Pneumatic, 26
 Pneumatological, 381
 Pneumatological assist, 238
 Polis, 225
Politeia, 237
 Political, 3, 223
 Political action, 225
 Political economy, 31
 Political education, 228
 Political liberalism, 387
 Political participation, 3
 Political party, 331
 Political philosophy, 226
 Political power, 22
 Political regime, 235
 Political science, 228
 Political spirituality, 4
 Political theology, 223
 Politicians, 375
 Politics, 3, 159
 Polygamy, 95
 Polytheism, 364
 Pope, Alexander, 348
 Popular culture, 33
 Popular opinion, 265
 Portuguese, 48
 Postcoloniality, 7, 207
 Postcolony, 18
 Postsocialist, 8
 Poverty, 3
 Poverty-alleviation programmes, 266
 Power, 3
 Pragmatism, 127
 Praxis, 165
 Prayers, 8
 Prayer tours, 247
 Praying churches, 92
 Preachers, 66
 Presbyterian, 29
 Presidents, 21
 President Uhuru Kenyatta, 167
 Prevailing Christian Ministries (PCM), 17
 Price, Elizabeth Lees, 187
 Price, Frederick K.C., 15
 Priesthood, 121
 Primitive mentality, 7
 Primordial public, 265, 308
The Prince, 229
 Private jet, 266
 Privatization, 65
 Process-relational, 121
 Profit-making, 251
 Progress, 66
 Prophecies, 27
 Prophetic healing churches, 92
 Prosperity, 8
 Prosperity gospel, 15, 137, 248
 Prosperity Pentecostalism, 212
 Protestant, 46
 Protestant ethic, 22, 344
 Protestantism, 112
 Providence, 321
 Psalm, 107
 Pseudo-sovereign, 238
 Psychology, 9
 Public goods, 361
 Public knowledge, 236
 Public life, 16, 159
 Public policy, 16, 161
 Public service, 224
 Public space, 5, 306
 Public sphere, 66
 Purchasing power parity, 150
 Puritanism, 348
- Q**
 Al Qaeda, 47
 Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO), 130
 Qur'an, 44
 Qutb, Sayyid, 48

R

Race, 17, 208
 Racism, 208
Raison d'état, 230
 Rationality, 19, 115
 Rationalization, 356
 Rawlings, 67
 Realism, 102, 229
 Reality, 127
 Realpolitik, 267
 Reason, 228
 Reason of state, 18, 228
 Reconciliation, 121, 394
 Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), 12, 253
 Redeemed Gospel Church, 30
 Redemption, 230
 Redemption Camp, 12
 Reform rebels, 311
 Relative deprivation theory, 58
 Religion, 4
 Religiosity, 81
 Religious corporatization, 254
 Religious firms, 297
 Religious pluralism, 56
 Representation, 225
 Republic, 228
 Resistance, 357
Res publica, 236
 Resurrection, 113
 Retreats, 247
 Revelations, 6, 91
 Reverse engineering, 352
 Revolution, 225
 Rhema Bible Church, 30
 Rhetorical framing strategies, 344
 Right, 229
 Righteousness, 56
 Rituals, 45
 Roberts, Oral, 15, 146
 Rodney, Walter, 311
 Rootedness, 124
 Rosenzweig, Franz, 410, 413
 Rousef, Dilma, 160
 Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 226
 Royal House Chapel
 International, 68
 Rule of law, 48, 246
 Rupture, 258

S

Sacred, 122
 Sadare, Bayo, 142
 St. Aquinas, 144
 St. Augustine, 18, 234
 Salafi, 43
 Salafism, 46
 Salvation, 10, 18
 Sandberg, Sheryl, 160
 Sarepta Theological College, 121
 Satan, 114
 Saudi Arabia, 43
 Schisms, 122, 140
 Science, 19, 95, 284
 Science and technology, 277
 Scientific method, 283
 Scientific worldview, 19
 Scriptural literalism, 11, 53
 Scripture Union (SU), 33
 Second coming of Christ, 247
 Secular, 226
 Secularism, 3, 227
 Secularist, 45
 Secularity, 37, 226
 Secularization, 227
 Secular omniscience, 107
 Security, 378
 Seed faith, 68
 Self, 8
 Self-government, 246, 257
 Senanu, Kwabla, 333
 Seymour, William Joseph, 204
 Al-Shabaab, 47
 Shabani, Gerty (Pastor), 193
 Sharia, 50, 52, 246
 Shia, 46
 Shifta War, 309
 Sibanda, G. (Pastor), 193
 Sickness, 15
 Sikh, 348
 Silicon Valley, 127
 Sin, 10
 Sin, Cardinal Jaime, 59
 Sinfulness, 232
 Single Ladies Interdenominational
 Ministry (SLIM), 163
 Single women missionaries, 182
 Sirleaf, Ellen Johnson, 160
 Sizani, T.(Pastor), 193

- Skepticism, 241
- Slave morality, 393
- Slavery, 74
- Slave trade, 210
- Smart, Ninian, 122
- Social activism, 246
- Social agenda, 121
- Social capital, 16
- Social change, 4
- Social cohesion, 54
- Socialism, 131
- Socialization, 279
- Social justice, 16
- Social movements, 163
- Social order, 19, 236
- Social question, 230
- Social relations, 264
- Social responsibility, 120
- Social services, 65, 265
- Social structure, 296
- Social Transformation, 14
- Social trust, 172
- Society, 3, 44
- Sociology, 278
- Sociology of knowledge, 279
- Sociology of religion, 16, 165
- Sodom and Gomorrah, 12
- Soft power, 15, 159
- Sokoto Caliphate, 46
- Solidarity, 278
- Somalia, 46
- Sono, Mosa, 30
- Sorcery, 26
- Soteriology, 121
- Soul care, 27
- Soulcraft, 404
- Soundscape, 76
- South Africa, 14
- South African Association of Pastoral Workers (SAAP), 130
- South African Council of Churches (SACC), 123
- South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), 130
- South America, 4, 49
- South Korea, 49
- Sovereignty, 228
- Sowing, 255
- Soyinka, Wole, 110
- Spatialities, 110
- Speaking in tongues, 8
- Spectacles, 103
- Spectral affects, 103
- Spectrality, 240
- Spectral other, 103
- Spell of the invisible, 231
- Spirit, 9
- Spiritual, 4
- Spiritual agenda, 121
- Spiritual capital, 166
- Spiritual ignorance, 345
- Spirituality, 48
- Spiritual knowledge, 18, 232
- Spiritual presences, 388
- Spiritual warfare, 10, 291
- Spontaneity, 10
- State, 25
- Statecraft, 395
- State failure, 305
- State–society, 404
- Statist, 8
- “Store front” churches, 124
- Structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), 31
- Student Christian Movement (SCM), 29
- Subjecthood, 246
- Subjectivity, 114
- Sudan, 46
- Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), 313
- Suffering, 18, 195
- Sunni, 46
- Supernatural, 13
- Supreme Being, 19
- Surveillance, 13
- Surveilling eye, 102
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 152
- Suu Kyi, Aung San, 160
- Symbolism, 109
- Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN), 21, 322
- Syncretism, 96
- Syria, 50

T

Taiwo, Olufemi, 5
 Tanzania, 46
 Taxation, 78
 Technological eye, 115
 Technology, 19
 Techno-religious realism, 105
 Teleportation, 103
 Television evangelism, 146
 Tempels, Placide(Fr.), 6
 Temporalities, 110, 225
 Temptation, 112
 Ten Commandments, 312
 Teresia Wairimu Evangelistic Ministries International (TWEM), 166
 Territorial Christianity, 17, 183
 Terrorism, 303
 Terrorist, 47
 Testimonies, 241
 Tetragrammaton, 396
 Theater, 13
 Theocracy, 227, 379
 Theology, 19
 Theology of complicity, 224
 Theology of corruption, 232
 Third religious public, 248
 This-worldly, 15, 247
 Tilton, Robert Gibson, 15
 Time, 397
 Time gap, 399
 Tithes, 33, 255
Together Towards Life (2013), 125
 Tolerance, 386
 Toure, Sekou, 308
 Tower of Babel, 396
 Traditions, 44
 Transcendence, 236
 Transformation, 70
 Trauma, 224
 Traveling troupes, 104
 Tribalism, 73
 Trine, Ralph Waldo, 15
 Trudell, Dorothea, 140
 Trustworthiness, 16
 Truth, 113
 Tsvangirai, Morgan Richard, 333
 Tswana society, 185
 Tunolase, Moses Orimolade, 95
 Turnball, Andrew, 36

U

Ubwanga, 89
 Ufuma prayer houses, 142
 Uganda, 20
 Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF), 313
 Uganda People's Defense Army (UPDA), 311
 Uganda Peoples' Democratic Christian Army (UPDCA), 312
 Ukraine, 8
 Umar, Suleiman, 147
 Unemployment, 15
 Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), 8
 United Nations Bill of Rights, 55
 United States (U.S.), 15
 Uniting Church of Southern Africa, 132
 Unity, 120
 Universities, 362
 University of the Western Cape (UWC), 14, 120
 Urbanity, 11, 252
 Urbanization, 67
 Urban space, 66
 Ur-mandate, 210
 Utopianism, 105

V

Values, 162
 Van der Westhuyzen, Jaco, 333
 Victimhood, 314
 Victimization, 20
 Victorious living, 151
 Vietnam War, 305
 Vineyard Christian Fellowship, 121
 Violence, 18
 Virtue, 390
 Visions, 52, 226
 Visual culture, 105
 Visuality, 106
 Voice, 16
 Volunteerism, 246

W

Wahhabi, 43
 Wahhabism, 46

Wahome, Elizabeth, 163
 Wanjiru, Margaret (Bishop), 33, 163
 Warfare, 101
 Wariboko, Nimi, 4, 235
 Washington Consensus, 351
 Watchers for Africa, 170
 Wealth, 18, 68
 Weber, Max, 19, 121, 281
 Website, 33
 Well-being, 109
 Welsh Apostolic Church, 28
 Wesleyan theology, 139
 Westernization, 6
 Western medicine, 108
 Williams, Daniel Powell, 36
 Williams, Nicholas Duncan, 15
 Williams, William Jones, 36
 Winfrey, Oprah, 160
 Winners' Chapel, 12
 Winners Chapel International, 253
 Witchcraft, 10, 26
 Witch doctors (*ng'anga*), 89
 Witch Eradication Movements, 93
 Wogu, Augustus Ehurie, 28
 Wolf, 228
 Woman of God, 261
 Women, 16
 Women Aglow, 29
 Women's Aglow Fellowship
 International in Botswana
 (WAFI), 17, 190
 Women's empowerment, 16
 Word-Faith theology, 145
 World Council of Churches, 37
 Worldlessness, 236
 Worldliness, 224, 237
 World-making, 66
 Worldviews, 13

Worship, 13
 Wutawanashe, Andrew, 324
 Wutawunashe, Andrew, 29

X

Xenoglossia, 140

Y

Yahweh, 206
 Yakubu Yahaya, 47
Yaponyanrin, 105
 Yar'Adua, Umaru Musa, 330
 Yemen, 50
 Yoga, 162
 Yoruba, 13
 Yoruba cosmology, 13
 Yoruba dramas, 109
 Yoruba theater, 104
 Young Women's Christian
 Association, 190
 Young, Dorna (Pastor), 193
 Youth, 121

Z

Al-Zakzaky, Ibrahim, 47
 Zambia, 12, 88
 Zimbabwe Assemblies of God AG Africa
 (ZAOGA), 32
 Zion Christian Church, 45
 Zionist churches, 27, 92
 Zombification, 239
 Zoopolitics, 228
 Zoroastrianism, 349
 Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu, Goodwill
 (King), 333