



Migration And The Trans-Nationalisation Of African Pentecostalism In Europe: Encounter And Prospects

Titus S. Olorunnisola (Ph.D)

Department of Missiology and Theology

ACOM/Sydney College of Divinity, Australia.

Post-Doctoral Research Associate, YTU/University of Divinity,
Melbourne Australia.

ABSTRACT

Migration, the movement of people from one geographical location to another is an indispensable component of globalisation which has impacted the latter with visible effects. Neo-Pentecostal Christian movements from different parts of Africa have seized the advantage of both migration and globalization to advance their missionary causes. This has resulted in planting new churches and organization of para-church ministries and outreaches in different parts of Europe and elsewhere. Using the Critical Integrated Analysis (CIA) method, which seeks to generate data from the existing body of knowledge, the article explored the trajectories of African migration vis-à-vis the penetration of African-led Pentecostal churches in some part of Europe. This process has stemmed encounters between the European and African cultures plus the hurdle of navigating the cultural nuances of the Europeans. The article discovered that although there are shreds of evidence of growth among African-led migrant churches, more grounds need to be covered. It suggested that migrant churches need to structure their ministries and organisations in ways that propel appropriate cultural engagement with their host communities to enable them to influence and transform their immediate social realities.

Keywords: African migrant-led churches, migration, globalization, reverse mission, African Pentecostalism, diaspora mission.

INTRODUCTION

There is an unprecedented growth in the globalization of African religious movement as a manifestation of migration. African nationalities who immigrate onto European shores and elsewhere now consider themselves as divine agents of proliferation of the Pentecostal brand of African Christianity. This assumption is against the backdrop of the disappearing Christianity in the West that raised the consciousness of the churches of neo-Christian continents (Africa, Asia, and Latin America) to construe and pursue a new dimension of mission in places once dominated by Christianity.

The purpose of this article is to re-evaluate the ways in which migration and globalization have aided the growing mission awareness of the African migrant-led churches in Europe and their future prospects as they engage in mission the post-Christian culture of Europe. Having examined the historical emergence of African migrant-led churches in Europe, the article would demonstrate the need for an adequate transcultural engagement within the dynamics of sociological and religious assumptions of the host communities. It would draw insights from the pattern of missionary engagement and experience of the early missionaries in Africa.

“THE NEW FACT OF OUR TIME”

The historic World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910 ushered in a new fact in both the formulation and the execution of missionary policies and practices. The various sponsoring mission organizations or agencies had assembled together to examine the ‘missionary problems in relation to the non-Christian world’ and to consider how the gospel could further influence the world’s numerous religions, of which African primal religions were focused. Out of all the constituent Commissions set up, Commission IV was particularly saddled with the responsibilities of examining the relationship of Christian faith to non-western religions critically and to make recommendations. There was no African national at Edinburgh Conference. The various missionary-participants either denied any ‘face’ of religion in Africa or repudiated the possibility of Christian God conversing with Africans. Stanley (2009, p. 231-247) summed up the concern of the Commission: “the problem which the Commission faced is that most of its respondents from Africa doubted the applicability of its predominant theology of religions to their own context”. They labelled the existing religions in Africa as animistic and was they considered if of ‘practically (of) no religious content’ and subsequently had no preparation for Christianity. The emerging situation thereafter practically proved that Edinburgh 1910 was wrong; a new fact of our time relating to the growth of Christianity outside historic Christian Europe had emerged. The conclusions of Edinburgh 1910 have been disproved by different studies on the shape of African Church historiography and the resurgence experienced in African Christianity decades following the Edinburgh’s conclusion (Kalu, 2005; Bediako, 2004; Kalu, 2008).

The last two decades of the 20th century witnessed significant changes visible in the history of Christianity and Christian mission at large. By then, Christianity had thoroughly penetrated into the areas earlier considered alien to the reception of the Christian faith. This surge left Kwame Bediako, a Ghanaian scholar in African Christianity with no choice than to describe Christianity in Africa as a non-Western religion (Bediako, 1995). Kalu (2008) described these changes as changing tides between the local and the global with resurging currents. Furthermore, Philip Jenkins, in the first volume of his trilogy on the move of Christianity did not hesitate to refer to Christianity from the South as *The Next Christendom* and further postulates that:

The era of Western Christianity has passed within our lifetimes, and the day of Southern Christianity is dawning. The fact of change itself is undeniable: it has happened, and will continue to happen. So little did we notice this momentous change that it was barely mentioned in all the medial hoopla surrounding the end of the second millennium (Jenkins, 2002, p. 3).

Nonetheless, this shift in the centre of gravity of Christianity remains a dissenting issue in scholarship. Lamin Sanneh, another scholar in history and world Christianity is hesitant to estimate Christianity as purely a non-Western religion. According to Sanneh, “Christianity has not ceased to be a Western religion, but its future as a world religion is now being decided and shaped by the hands and in the minds of its non-Western adherents, who share little of the West’s cultural assumptions” (Sanneh, 2005, p. 4). Notwithstanding, the disagreement in the opinions of these scholars, they all have one point of agreement, that is, the future of the spread of worldwide Christianity is closely tied to the participation of the non-Western believers. Europe and North America were once synonymous to Christianity in the ways in which they moulded the current phase of global Christianity through cultural conveyance and dogged missionary activities to the rest of the world.

The major factors responsible for this phenomenal growth may be ascribed to the patterns of appropriation of the indigenous mission, contextualization, and the gospel acculturation which

bridged the gap between the mission strategy of the missionary era and the neo-mission strategy of the post-missionary age.

GLOBALIZATION, MIGRATION AND MODERN MISSION STORY

Hanciles (2008, p. 89) offers a penetrating insight about the connection between migration, globalization and modern mission story. According to Hanciles,

Contemporary international migration is complex and multifarious, but it is clearly anchored in historical processes, in particular Western colonial expansion and is a manifestation of worldwide transformations associated with globalization. Most important, the volume and velocity of population transfers have profound implications for the spread of religious ideas and will conceivably transform the contours of major world religions. The link between migration, missionary expansion, and globalization is indubitable and, within the current global context, spotlights the great significance of African Christianity.

Globalization and migration have reconstructed a new narrative of the modern missionary movement in different ways with positive consequences. African migration has become one vital force in achieving missionary expansion in recent years. Immigrants from African nations can be categorized into academic or political or generally speaking, economic migrants in different parts of the world. Consequent to people's migration from one part of the world to another for various reasons including trades cum economic, political and educational purposes, religion has historically been identified as an integral component of migration (Haar, 1998). The individuals who migrate on these grounds from Africa have often ended up becoming pollinating agents through which brands of African Christianity encounter the rest of their host communities. In recent years, the concentration of the mission effort which resulted from the activities of persons migrated on the above grounds have proliferated Europe, the United States, Canada and gradually on the increase in Australia and the Pacific. Most of the mega Pentecostal or evangelical churches in Europe today are led by members of migrant communities of African descents. This development is projecting the mission as a perfect symbiotic and compatible partner of migration. It is only in recent years that the stories of churches founded on the basis of 'home front' mission mobilisation began to emerge, and even despite this, migration and mission still operate in the same proximity through contact and contexts of their host communities.

One major distinction which has been emphasized in recent scholarship on the subject of migration in relation to the global distribution of Christianity and newer Christian movement is the need to understand the local versus global significance of religion within human activities. Freston (2008, p. 24) observed that for far too long, religion has been studied "under the rubric of globalization, especially with regard to macro-trends in the Third World." He moves on to emphasize the need for shifting emphasis on globalization and religion in order to make it less abstract to the growing religious trends in the First World. Greater dimensions of African religious movement needs to be carefully studied on the global scale to reveal its implications for both globalization and Christian witness (Hanciles, 2008, p. 71-90).

SELECTED CASES

The emergence of the mission efforts through the African migrant-led churches is not a recent development. In his assessment, Adogame (2013) has categorized the establishment of the churches of African origin in diaspora into three phases. The first phase covered the period of the establishment of the African Churches Mission (ACM) in Liverpool, United Kingdom, between 1922 and 1964. This was spearheaded by a Nigerian-born Daniels G. Ekarte. This

church was dissolved in the year 1964 due to the demise of its founder and it metamorphosed into another church organization.

The second phase, the 1960s to 1970s involved the transportation of the earlier formed African Instituted Churches or African Initiated Churches (AICs) to different parts of Europe and America. Known for their African cultural idiosyncrasies, worldviews and ritual systems, Aladura churches, such as the Church of the Lord – Aladura, the Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S), the Celestial Church of Christ (CCC) and others typify initial group of churches among Africans in diaspora across continental Europe since 1964. Other churches which share similar cultural outlooks such as the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) and the Evangelical Church of Yahweh (EYC) have since been established all over European cities (Adogame, 2008).

The third phase comprised the inception of the African-led Pentecostal/Charismatic churches from the 1980s downward. This period is of high significance as most of the churches that have been proactive in the foreign mission laid the foundation for their mission initiatives during this period.

The mission mobilization of these African churches is not limited to the new generation churches (Pentecostal and charismatics) alone, as the mainline denominations like Baptist, Anglican, Methodist and even Catholics are actively involved with different strategies of collaboration and or personal denominational frontier move.

Within the Pentecostal/Charismatic circles - which has agreeably given African Christianity a new missional flavour and fervour, there are three categorizations with regards to the foreign mission mobilization. The first category is those churches which are headquartered in Africa, and their missionary agencies are mobilized from home-front to other continents of the world. The examples here include the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) led by Pastor Enoch Adeboye, Deeper Life Bible Church pioneered by Pastor Williams Kumuyi, The Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries (MFM) started by Dr Daniel K. Olukoya, and the Living Faith Church (Winners Chapel) whose vision began with Bishop David Oyedepo. Each of these churches takes up a unique emphasis on an aspect of the gospel as appealed to the founder or its leadership. During a program organized by the RCCG in Australia and the Pacific region in November 2013, the General Overseer of the church, who was visiting from Nigeria informed the participants that the church then had branches in the 180 countries of the world.

The second group is the churches pioneered by African leaders which started overseas and are now mobilizing from overseas back to African continents and other countries. These churches started mostly in different parts of Europe to include; the Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC) London, headed by Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo with headquarters in London, and the Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for All Nations founded by Pastor Sunday Adelaja in Kiev, Ukraine. The KICC is the acclaimed largest Pentecostal church in London with around 6,000 worshippers in the three worship sessions every Sunday. The second church, the Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for All Nations is the much-admired largest Pentecostal/charismatic church in the whole of European continent with over 30,000 worshippers in its Sunday worship sessions. These and other numerous stories give the impression that the churches of African origin have been chosen to architect new dawn in the era of mission in a globalized world. The diaspora mission today has become the desire of every church denomination in most parts of Africa.

These churches in different parts of Europe and America have become more prominent in view of their evangelistic drive and retention of high-quality spiritual flavour among their host

communities. The indigenous mission strives to learn from them and can in return produce a cross-fertilization of ideas. The transportation of the vitality existing at home into their host communities is gradually leading to an emerging trend of spirituality in the lands that once housed the historic Christianity. The Ghanaian theologian, Asamoah-Gyadu (2008, p. 1) asserts that “painful experiences notwithstanding therefore, African Christian and African-led churches in Europe interpret their presence in terms of a call to mission and evangelism.”

TRENDS IN MISSION AND MINISTRY

The sense of calling into mission and dogged pursuance of that calling has led to a numerical growth both home and abroad. This growth notwithstanding, a trend is emerging which requires the attention of these migrant-led churches because of its implications for these churches, transcultural mission, and the concept of reverse mission. These churches are becoming more homogeneous by attracting mostly Africans especially migrants from the originating country of the individual church organisation. However, the reasons for this may not be far-fetched. First is the issue of common identity. There is cultural affinity, social, and spiritual worldviews commonly shared by different immigrant communities. Most of the leaders of the immigrant churches are migrants who have the same or similar cultural worldview with similar migration stories to those of their members. Under these circumstances it is natural to assume that homogeneity has a great tendency to become a dominant factor for mission mobilization. In view of this postulation, Gerrie ter Haar, the renowned Dutch scholar on African Christianity in diaspora especially in Europe has opined that:

Africans in Europe are relatively small minority and have little or no power as a group. For many of them, their (Christian) religion helps them to achieve a degree of security and inner strength which may well encourage them in future to reconsider their self-identity specifically in terms of being African communities. Or, alternatively, the experience of exclusion, inspired by racism or other excluding mechanisms, may have a similar effect. This is the case, for example, in the United Kingdom where, due to the circumstances of an entirely different context, African and Afro-Caribbean church leaders tend to insist on their African identity in the experience of their faith (Haar, 1999, p. 1).

Under such circumstances, as Haar described above, mission does not exist as merely a model of conversion and soul-winning but principally as an agent of integration and assimilation for the migrants in their new home. It can also be a deliberate delineated catchment area of mission preference for these churches.

Second, there is another possibility that is supported by biblical shreds of evidence. Some migrant-led churches may have a divine mandate to minister to members of their own community of people as a cardinal aspect of their mission mandate. There are various faces of Christian mission in the New Testament as exemplified in the narratives on mission engagements of Peter and Paul. Peter was the first to take the gospel to the Gentiles after he was convinced that the Holy Spirit was instrumental to his visit to Cornelius (Acts 10:1-48). Subsequently, Peter and Paul were involved in the mission to the culturally diverse community of people, raising a nascent community of believers and strengthening them accordingly. Paul is portrayed in the New Testament as having a mission to both the Jews as well as the Gentiles. His commitment to mission reveals both his self-imposed sense of indebtedness to proclaim the gospel across cultural levels by becoming “all things to all people so that by all means” he would save some with his message and actions (1 Cor. 9:22).

Understandably from the perspective of the narratives in Acts, that the primary mission catchment area of Paul was the Jews in diaspora, but due to stern obstinacy and persecution raised by Jews in the course of his mission, he had no choice than to turn to the Gentiles (Acts 18:1-8). This change of direction, as we later see in Paul's writing to the churches in Galatia, was attributed to the Holy Spirit. Paul states: "On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been to the Jews. For God, who was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles (Galatians 2:7-8).

The question arising from this is, did the Holy Spirit actually instruct Paul to turn to the Gentiles and Peter to remain with the Jews? If involved at all, to what extent was the Holy Spirit involved at that point of their missionary endeavour? We have seen different occasions when the Holy Spirit directly guided the apostles by the way of vision or dream but when there was to be a recourse it was not directly connected to the Holy Spirit (See Acts 10:1-48, 13:1-3, 15:28,16:6-10 cf. 18:1-6). But if it did not seem good to the Holy Spirit and to Paul who had taken that decision the Holy Spirit would have forbid him as he has previously done when they attempted to enter Bithynia before the vision of a Macedonian man requesting Paul to come over and help there (Acts 16:7-10).

The intricacies of the mission in the New Testament may, therefore, be intuitive for an understanding of the mission of migrant-led churches in the era of supposedly 'reverse mission'. One of the distinguishing features of these churches is the specific sense of calling or prompting of the Holy Spirit to focus on a specific area as their own mission field and strategy. That most of the migrant-led churches appeal to migrants of similar cultural and historical origin might be a divine act. How then can we differentiate between the preferences of the leaders of these churches in the choice of their catchment area and divine mandate to only focus on a segment of their host communities with utmost attention on the fellow Africans?

If one considers the above as the best plausible explanation on the trends in the emerging mission in the era of the reverse mission, is it conceivable to regard it as reverse mission or mission in reverse? Invariably this phrase has attracted frequent attention of scholars from the sociological, religious, historical, theological, and missiological perspectives, with each focusing on different aspects of this concept (Adogame, 2000, p. 400-409; Adogame, 2005, p. 494-514; Walls, 2002; Uka, 2008). A political scientist, Timothy Byrnes, as cited by Adogame (2005, p. 170) for instance, has expressed a view of reverse mission as "any process through which members of religious communities speak in the US for their brothers and sisters living abroad who, though profoundly affected by the US foreign policy, have no political platform in the United States from which to speak for themselves." Whilst Byrnes relates his discussion directly to the advocacy of the members of the three Catholic communities in political line, so that the group at home (United States) stands in support and advocacy for their brethren abroad; this may be a sense in which the reverse mission is used in a social scientist's point of view.

This idea is used here as a missiological concept denoting a process through which the Christianity return to its historic heartlands in Europe and North America by the missionaries of African, Latin American and Asian descent who were previously considered as the mission fields to be evangelized by the missionaries of the churches of European and North American origins. The declining nature of spiritual vitality, rationalism, secularism, moral decadence and the reducing number of church attendance in the Northern hemisphere necessitates and justifies the invasion from the South. As noted earlier, most of the churches of African descents in Europe have succeeded in establishing the concept of the reverse mission but only in

winning people of the same origin except Sunday Adelaja's Embassy of God's Church in Kiev, Ukraine whose membership is over 98% European (Agogame, 2005; Asamoah-Gyadu, 2006). Perhaps it may be suggested that the strategic positioning which gives the Adelaja's Church an edge among others may be learnt for contextual incorporation into their mission strategy.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

The ambivalence of the concentration of churches in the era of mission in reverse as elicited above may be considered a major retrogress for both the concept and its future projection. It has been sceptically argued that the concept of reverse mission in time will be tested whether it is just a mere Pentecostal rhetoric or a self-imposed accolade in the 21st century or a concept that would symbolically exemplify its coinage (Adogame, 2005). If the notion of reverse mission would be relevant in the future of migrant-led churches in a globalized world, there is a need for re-evaluation of mission approaches and strategies in relation to their host communities. Agogame (2008) also captures this concerns by citing the recent decent developments among migrant-led churches in Germany, for instance, including conscious decision about the timing and the duration of services, cultural sensitivities to their host communities and location of worship centres, among others.

How then will the church become fruitful in carrying out the letter of the Great Commission in this globalized age? In the remainder of this section, I will explore a few suggestions which may practically enhance the migrant-led churches to carry out their missions as they look into the future. Firstly, there is the need for the migrant-led churches to embark on the synthetic mission of engagement between the Christian mission and the existential concerns of their host communities. The rapidly changing face of Christian mission warrants that the spread and acceptance of the gospel will be directly proportional to how much its agency allows their message to engage with those human needs in their contexts. In the New Testament times, Jesus healed so many people and cast out demons because those were the prevalent needs of the day. The people accepted Him not only because of the message of life He proclaimed but also because it supplied what was deficient in the people and the religion of their day. This was precisely the strategy of the earliest missionaries during the incursion of Christianity into many African nations and especially Nigeria.¹

In the case of Nigeria, it was an age when the nation was in need of education, adequate healthcare delivery and other basic social needs. The penetration of Christian mission was weaved around these themes and by extension civilization. The mission became agent of social modernization as hospitals were built for medical services, educational institutions were set up to provide literacy for the children and adult alike as well as training for the clergy, and social acts such as distribution of clothes and so on became vital missionary tools and legacy passed on later when the mission churches became independent (Ajayi, 1965, p. 126-166). This gesture helped both the natives and the missionaries. On the one hand, they developed those being evangelized through literacy so that they could read and write to some. On the other hand, the missionaries had to undergo the rigorous exercise of learning the local languages and cultural values. It was reported that the first American Baptist missionary Thomas Jefferson Bowen, through his proficiency in Yoruba language, produced the first published *Grammar and Dictionary of the Yoruba Language* (Ajayi, 1965, p. 127).² The missionaries' skills and dexterity

¹ Scholars in the history of Nigerian Christian mission would generally talk about re-entry of Christianity in the 19th century as the first attempt in the 17th century failed due to slave trade.

²J. F. Ade Ajayi who was a foremost Nigerian Church Historian further informed that the earlier orthographic guides in linguistics in major Nigerian languages; Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo were written by the missionaries.

against the backdrop of their willful desire to synthesize the gospel to the immediate problems of Africa further helped the Bible translation in the local languages in the early period of their missionary penetration.

The migrant-led churches in the globalized 21st century must, as a matter of necessity, engage the gospel with the challenges which are by no means the same as those facing African nations then and even now. Some of the existential problems of the West at this time range from addiction to alcohol or arbitrary substance use, prostitution of diverse magnitude, and the like. The Western system claims to be rich especially with the social security and welfare package for its citizens that on the surface it appears everything is adequate. But when one takes a critical look at the happening in most of western societies, despite the structure, there is a vacuum that the mission agents can explore in the name of the gospel which opens up possibilities for making the gospel to encounter the teething troubles of the society.³ It is in this sense that mission is designed not only to be an ally of migration but most importantly as a catalyst for social transformation.

Secondly, it is imperative to consider a useful way for merger of dominant worldview with the worldview of their host communities. What is proposed here is more of what H. G. Gadamer has called “a fusion of horizons” for the sake of modern mission. Cross-cultural missions require meticulous strategy to make the gospel message ‘at home’ so that the gospel status is not reduced to the level of a stranger struggling for relevance and survival in a strange land. The gospel has always been clothed in the culture where it finds itself for the purpose of relevance starting with the first Christian Century Palestine to the period of geographical shift to Europe and even now in Africa other neo-Christian continents of the world. Diverse terminologies like acculturation, inculturation, adaptation, indigenization and most profoundly, contextualization have been used by various scholars to justify the boom in the African Christianity (Bediako, 2005; Walls, 2002).

My thesis here is that Christianity grows by leap and bounds in Africa because the indigenous leaders in post missionary era deconstructed the prevailing missionaries’ view against the easy acceptance of Christianity by the natives and subdued Christianity to a foreign status to Africans. These concepts, although have been explored differently, nonetheless may all be summed up as the process of bringing the gospel message alive in a cultural milieu with windows of reception without necessarily endangering the Spirit of Christian mission. In this regard, I perfectly concur with Sanneh (2008, p. 3), when he observed that “When the faith was taken from Jerusalem to Antioch, Christianity acquired a worldwide cultural and geographical orientation. These two external forces of imperial pressure and the Antioch experience were matched internally by a steadily growing consciousness of Christianity’s world mission.” The message and mission of the church is universal in its design but the question that often confronts the church in every missionary age remains how to proclaim that message in transcultural contexts to make it acceptable. Sanneh further echoes this challenge:

That view of religion confronts Christianity with a momentous challenge. How can Christianity maintain its commitment to culture, insofar as culture embodies faith in a concrete way, while avoiding the sort of cultural idolatry that fuses truth claims and exclusive national ideas? How is cultural commitment compatible with religious openness? The history of Christianity, it has to be admitted, demonstrates an uneven

³ It is suffice to note that some churches are already toing along the direction of societal transformation. An example is the God’s Embassy of Ukraine which has already been referred to in this write up. It was reported that this church concentrated on rehabilitation of drug addicts, prostitutes and so on. Today most of the members are ex-mafias, ex-drug addicts and so. This might be the major reason for the numbers of white in this church.

record in balancing cultural specificity and theological normativeness, and the field is littered with failed attempts at reconciling Christ and culture (Sanneh, 2008, p. 4).

Sanneh is right. Thriving in another culture, needless to say, requires a great deal of openness and compromise on the part of the missionary. The extent to which the compromise is entertained must, however, be defined. The missionary ought to give up part of his own basic cultural ideas and worldview and imbibe a measure of worldviews of the host community in way that does not contradict the core of the gospel message. This responsibility must be undertaken in hope that in every cultural encounter with the gospel there are elements of the culture which must be challenged and that those things which are lacking in the culture can be supplied by the gospel.

In the design and execution of their mission, migrant-led era must be more opened and become sensitive to the people whom they seek to evangelize. This may involve diverse methods of mission engagement, contemporary western worship style and so on. Bringing spiritual vibrancy and spirituality of African worship experience in this way is not a main source of cross-fertilization of idea for the western church but it becomes main resource for rejuvenation and vitality which when properly incorporated draws more people to accept the message of Christ. These kinds of dynamism that can be imported from the South to the “disappearing center” in the North, to infest a new face of mission through transnationalization; like the strong desire for signs and wonders, diverse manifestation of Holy Spirit and His gifts in missions, spiritual warfare and passionate contextualization of Christianity are gradually dominating the scholarship in contemporary mission (Ott, et. al 2010, p. 238-291).

CONCLUSION

Globalization and migration have a greater tendency to further influence the nature and patterns of migrant-led churches across the globe. This is the one reality that needed to be assessed further in the future for various implications that it brings for the transnationalization of religious movement between the local and the global. The prospect is still very high for the churches of the Southern hemisphere in the North. The concept of reverse mission will not become elusive when there is a more dynamic engagement between the mission of the churches in reverse mission and the existential concerns of the nations of the Northern hemisphere. This may not come at once but a gradual process that will evolve when the mission churches in reverse mission become more proactive at making the gospel encounter their host communities for all-round societal transformation. The view maintained in this article is that technical hitches involved in reverse mission are not unsurmountable with the doggedness and unwavering commitment of the migrant-led churches to the sense of ‘sentness’ to carry the gospel to the rest of the world especially the former center of the gravity of world Christianity. The time will tell how much of the concept of reverse mission will be successful in translating the concept from a mere vision into a viable fruition. This also remains the subject of further research.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adogame, A. (2008). “Globalization and African New Religious Movements in Europe” in *Interpreting Contemporary Christianity: Global Processes and Local Identities*. Ed. Ogbu U. Kalu. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 296-318.
- Adogame, A. (2014). Ed. *The Public Face of African New Religious Movements in Diaspora: Imaging the Religious ‘Other’*. England: Ashgate.
- Adogame, A. (2000). “The Quest for Space in the Global Religious Marketplace: African Religions in Europe”, *International Review of Mission*, 89 (354): 400-409.

- Adogame, A. (2013). *The African Christian Diaspora: New Currents and Emerging Trends in World Christianity*. London: Boomsbury Academic.
- Adogame, A. (2005). "African Christian Communities in Diaspora" in Ogbu Kalu (ed.) *African Christianity: An African Story*. Pretoria: University of Pretoria. 494-514.
- Ajayi, J. F. A. (1965). *Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891: The Making of a New Élite* Ibadan: Longmans, Green and Co.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, K. "African-led Christianity in Migration and Diaspora Evangelism Lausanne World Pulse" at <http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/973?> July 2008. Assessed on 15 August, 2019.
- Bediako, K. (1995) *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Bediako, K. (2004). *Jesus and the Gospel in Africa: History and Experience*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Hanciles, J. J. (2008). "African Christianity, Globalization, and Mission: Marginalizing the Center" in *Interpreting Contemporary Christianity: Global Processes and Local Identities*. Ed. Ogbu U. Kalu. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 71-92.
- Haar, G.T. (1999). Imposing Identity: The Case of African Christians in the Netherlands <http://www.uni-marburg.de/fbll/religionswissenschaft/journal/diskus vol. 5>. Assessed on 15 May 2014.
- Ott, Craig, Stephen J. Strauss and Timothy C. Tennent (2010). *Encountering Theology of Mission: Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments, and Contemporary Issues*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic.
- Stanley, B. (2009). *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Sanneh, L. (2005). "Introduction" in *The Changing Face of Christianity: Africa, the West, and the World* (Ed.) Lamin Sanneh and Joel Carpenter. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sanneh, L. (2008). *Disciples of All Nations: Pillars of World Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jenkins, P. (2002). *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kalu, O. U. (2005). "The Shape and Flow of African Church Historiography in *African Christianity: An African Story* ed. Ogbu Kalu. Pretoria: University of Pretoria. 10-41.
- Kalu, O. U. (2008). "Changing Tides: Some Currents in World Christianity at the Opening of the Twenty-First Century in *Interpreting Contemporary Christianity: Global Processes and Local Identities*. Ed. Ogbu U. Kalu. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 3-23.
- Uka, E. M. (2008). *Missionary Go Home? A Sociological Interpretation of an African Response to Christian Mission*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Walls, A. F. (2002). *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History. Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.