

WORLD CHRISTIANITY



SOUTHWESTERN JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY

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Southwestern Journal of Theology invites English-language submissions of original research in biblical studies, historical theology, systematic theology, ethics, philosophy of religion, homiletics, pastoral ministry, evangelism, missiology, and related fields. Articles submitted for consideration should be neither published nor under review for publication elsewhere. The recommended length of articles is between 5000 and 8000 words. For information on editorial and stylistic requirements, please contact the journal's Editorial Assistant at journal@swbts.edu. Articles should be sent to the Managing Editor, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, P.O. Box 22608, Fort Worth, Texas 76122.

Books and software for review may be sent to Book Review Editor, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, P.O. Box 22608, Fort Worth, Texas 76122.

Please direct subscription correspondence and change of address notices to Editorial Assistant, P.O. Box 22608, Fort Worth, Texas 76122. Change of address notices must include both the old and new addresses. A one-volume subscription in the United States is \$30. An international subscription is \$52.

Southwestern Journal of Theology (ISSN 0038-4828) is published at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas 76122. For the contents of back issues and ordering information please see <http://swbts.edu/journal>.

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World Christian Studies

W. Madison Grace II

Editor

Southwestern Journal of Theology

I remember the first time I was introduced to the World Christian Studies. I was asked to teach a course on non-Western Theology and entered into one of the more fruitful conversations and studies in theology that I have had. Quickly, I was used to the names of scholars like Lamin Sanneh, David Wells, among others. The work these authors were producing was in the fields of missions, history, theology, and others and all were addressing the realities of globalization and its effects on Christianity. The critique was made about the centrality Western thought has in scholarship. Timothy Tennent states it well when he claims, “We continue to talk about church history in a way that puts Europe at the center, and church history outside the West is reserved for those preparing for the mission field or church historians pursuing specialist studies.”¹ This sentiment is greatly important to ponder as future books and articles are written, curricula is developed, and methodologies are established. If the gospel is intended for all people then shouldn't our theological and missiological work represent all people? In his own reflection to the globalization of Christianity Mark Noll recognizes that “full attention to the non-Western world had become essential for any responsible grasp of the history of Christianity.”² He later comments on Revelation 5 and states, “The lesson for a historian from this passage would seem obvious. If the people of God come from every tribe and nation, so then should a history of the people of God try to take in every tribe and nation.”³ Effort needs to be made by not just missiologists and historians, but all Christians, to incorporate better the perspectives and work of all Christians around the globe.

As part of the effort to engage the work in World Christianity Southwestern Seminary began a doctoral program in World Christian Studies. Students in this program are already working in non-Western contexts and are involved in researching and writing from these contexts. The present issue of the *Southwestern Journal of Theology* is a collection of articles from this program. The initial article is an introduction to World Christian Studies by

¹Timothy C. Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church is Influencing the Way We Think about and Discuss Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), xviii.

²Mark A. Noll, *From Every Tribe and Nation: A Historian's Discovery of the Global Christian Story*, *Turning South: Christian Scholars in an Age of World Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), xi.

³Noll, *From Every Tribe and Nation*, xiii.

Keith Eitel. Following this introduction are articles on Christianity in the African context. The first article is by Kenny Vines who explores the role of diffusion. Next Olayemi O.T. Fatusi looks at the historical work of the Anglican Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther. Following him is an examination of the non-Western origin of Pentecostalism in Nigeria by looking at the work of Garrick Sokari Braide by Jacob K. Oladipupo. Also looking at the Nigerian context is Moses Audi's work on the effects of the *Boko Haram* insurgency on the Baptist churches. Finally, Mitch Hamilton examines globalization, glocalization, and migration and their effects in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In these articles we find not only the fruit of the labors of students engaging in World Christianity, but we also hear from those who are engaging these cultures with the gospel. As practitioners they are learning and disseminating their knowledge in an effort to have better missiology, church history, and theology, all from a non-Western context.

Continuities in Contrast: World Christianity and the West¹

Keith E. Eitel
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Fort Worth, Texas

The Lions Look Back: World Christianity

“Until lions have their historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunters.”

—African Proverb²

Dramatic transitions now in motion throughout the world show a new scene is actively on stage, specifically the drama of world Christianity. Western missionary roles are supportive though more in the background now, at least in places. Exploding Christian populations in the non-Western world cycles to the next part of the script in motion. Props, and the next scene changes, are now being made.

Andrew F. Walls's writings illustrate historic ebb and flow patterns of Christianity. His *foci* certainly spotlight this living drama as the paradigm for interpreting Christian history is shifting from Western myopia to non-western points of view. Christians everywhere are standing at one of those major crossroads in time that Timothy C. Tennent calls “living on the seam of history;”³ where many things are different and differently seen.

Walls points out an “indigenous-pilgrim” tension in Christian history. It accounts for the serial development of Christianity and he notes that it is a dynamic set of forces. These twins create differing momentums in the Christian church. Indigenous ideas take root in a given culture. Then believers speak or live out Christ prophetically in context. Yet the gospel is usually restless and moving to the margins of lostness with transformative energies of life and salvation. Christianity takes on flavoring from all its journeys and settings along the way. In his now famous article Walls depicts

¹This article first appeared in John Mark Terry, *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2015), 563–72.

²Hyung Jin Park, “Journey of the Gospel: A Study in the Emergence of World Christianity and the Shift of Christian Historiography in the Last Half of the Twentieth Century.” (PhD diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2009), 143.

³Timothy C. Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church Is Influencing the Way We Think About and Discuss Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 6–8.

a hypothetical “scholarly space visitor—a Professor of Comparative Inter-Planetary Religion”⁴ who visits Earth at five distinct times and places over the past two millennia to study the phenomenon of Christianity. The visitor sees continuities and discontinuities in various forms of the Christian faith.

Just as the indigenizing principle, itself rooted in the Gospel, associates Christians with the *particulars* of their culture and group, the pilgrim principle, in tension with the indigenizing and equality of the Gospel associating them with things and people outside the culture and group, is in some respects a *universalizing* factor.⁵

While Christian presence in the West seems numerically to be waning as it encounters the full press of strongly secular and pluralistic cultural challenges, there are enduring Christian principles and responsibilities regarding lostness wherever Christianity is present, including the West, that require missiological initiatives for Christianity to retain New Testament characteristics. Prophetic life and verbal witness constitute the proclamation engines of the pilgrim principle as it seeks new indigenous ground.

This article introduces the drama of contemporary World Christianity that developed most expansively during the 19th and 20th centuries,⁶ and is now center stage for the 21st. It delves into selected thematic categories of this phenomenon and suggests ways in which Western academicians may inadvertently marginalize some World Christians by ignoring theological factors by which many believers outside the West define themselves, namely, their understanding and use of the Bible, theological (and yes even denominational preferences), and striving for religious freedoms, particularly in crisis prone areas. So, the lions have their own historians now, and have always had their own history makers, so the story of the hunt can be seen more completely if Western eyes will to see.

World Christianity in Motion

“Ok, Ok, Mister, same same but different.”⁷

World Christianity: A Journey

It had already been an extensive trip and this writer still had a long set of flights out of Nigeria routing back to the United States. During a visit to the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary in Ogbomoso in 2010, this writer met many fine folk. They are actively doing theological education amid hor-

⁴Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996), 3.

⁵Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 9.

⁶Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*. 7 vols. Contemporary Evangelical Perspectives (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1937; Reprint, 1970), vols. 6 and 7.

⁷Bargaining phrase for an agreed price often heard in Thailand’s night bazars.

rific conflict posed to the whole nation, and the world, from a violent stream of Islam known as *Boko Haram*. One of the institution's administrators accompanied me back to the Lagos airport.

Nearer the airport, he pointed out a long stretch of highway that had many open-air ministry facilities, one after the other, and on both sides. He mentioned how many people they were attracting to their "signs and wonders" styled meetings. Signboards all along the way advertised different ministries and their emphases clearly were on miracles, healing, prosperity, and the like. After he pointed out these ministries, this traveler turned to him and said, "Indeed, there seem to be many people in the 'miracle' business here." The look on his face said it all. He was dismayed and replied, "Sadly that is true." As elsewhere certainly there are theological challenges to faith for non-Western Christians.

Amazing Grace Growth: Good News Travels

Anyone traveling to non-Western settings (especially areas not predominately Islamic) observes a distinct rise in Christian presence and various expressions, especially in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. The statistics per 24-hour period of change is astronomical. Even if discounted for the fact that every group that even claims to adhere to Christianity is counted; this kind of growth is phenomenal. A respected group of missiological researchers assess annual global statistical summaries of Christian presence by region at the start of each year. One column now indicates an estimated 24-hour change rate in Christian adherents for the year 2012; Africa increased by 37,000 per day, Asia by 23,000, and Latin America by 18,000.⁸

With explosive growth rates like these, it is no wonder Philip Jenkins says 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 media hoopla surrounding the end of the second millennium.⁹

⁸Todd M. Johnson and Peter F. Crossing, "Christianity 2013: Renewalists and Faith and Migration," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 37, no. 1 (2013): 32–33. For additional documentation of the rise and dates for the growth, each from different points of view, see the following: Dyron B. Daugherty, *The Changing World of Christianity: The Global History of a Borderless Religion* (New York: Peter Lang, 2012); Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Rise of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross, *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009); Patrick Johnstone, *The Future of the Global Church: History, Trends and Possibilities* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011); Rodney Stark, *The Triumph of Christianity: How the Jesus Movement Became the World's Largest Religion* (New York: HarperOne, 2011).

⁹Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 3. Note Jenkins's use of the term "Southern Christianity" does not encompass the full scope of this growing phenomenon. China, for example, does not

Global vs. World: Words and Their Meanings

Some things seem the same in this millennium; others are vastly different. The distinction between the terms “Global Christianity” versus “World Christianity,” for example, shifts one’s perspective and sheds light on newly perceived categories of thought. Lamin Sanneh, a native of Gambia, prefers the latter term because it gives greater credence to the recipients’ points of view in the expansion and development of World Christianity. He wants, “to reverse the argument by speaking of the *indigenous discovery of Christianity* rather than the *Christian discovery of indigenous societies*.”¹⁰

Theologically Marked: Convictions and Distinctions

Sanneh’s differentiation clarifies why, and perhaps how, categories of theology look the same yet different now. Some western theologians are starting to note ways this thriving population of Christians sees things. Sanneh contends that,

“World Christianity” is the movement of Christianity as it takes form and shape in societies that previously were not Christian, societies that had no bureaucratic tradition with which to domesticate the gospel ... “Global Christianity,” on the other hand, is the faithful replication of Christian forms and patterns developed in Europe.¹¹

A mediate position seems warranted instead of minimizing the complexities of non-Western Christianity to only these two options. In a middle view, one could recognize that the Bible is taken seriously and earlier forms of the faith were voluntarily embraced. Yet there is new flavor for those historic traditions in the non-Western world. As long as the Bible is in local languages, indigenous theologizing happens, and people come to faith in Christ, some adherents embrace semblances and continuities with other forms of the faith in other places. The idea of doctrinal bundles of beliefs, willingly and locally embraced, is a distinct possibility that could perhaps link to earlier forms of the faith that came to indigenous peoples sociologically or historically. Some categories of thought could be “same, same but different.”

How those differences come about, what prior contacts may exist with earlier forms of the faith, what they are functionally like in various settings, how they are digested by the local adherents, and what common touch points may exist between various new forms of faith with the older ones, are all subjects of interest for the student of World Christianity. The aim is to dis-

fit if one thinks only south of the Tropic of Cancer. The explosive Christian growth rates are best defined by theme not geography per se.

¹⁰Lamin O. Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 10.

¹¹Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity?*, 22.

cover how Christianity has serially progressed over time as a cultural pilgrim becomes different while remaining the same.

World Christian Dimensions

“Christianity can only be expected to become even more multiple, diverse, and hybridized”¹²

Angles and Avenues: New Perspectives

Changes in angles make for unique viewpoints. Also one’s point of view affects the ways of understanding and analyzing Christianity, especially its missiological and historical developments. The essence of World Christianity, in this analysis, is a perspectival shift. It involves learning to look at Christian history from the other end of things.

Like others, this writer has experienced frustration when teaching Church History in Africa, thematically arranged as if only North American and European church history ever existed. Call it ethnocentric, and it is, though at the time it was done simply because of ignorance regarding a larger horizon of understanding, that of the gospel receiver’s view on a worldwide scale. An awakening of sorts comes about when historians see things from inside out.

History Lives Again: A Fresh Look

God has been moving since before Creation, always engaging, reaching out, around, and toward (Ephesians 1:3–14). He is, by His own nature, relational, redemptive and—one can even say—missionary? It is evident now that the Christian church exists in some way throughout the world, and it has not grown consistently the same throughout time. It grew iteratively; it has ebbed and flowed like a tide with rhyme and rhythm, push and pull. Telling the story of that rolling tide is the core task of those engaged in studying World Christianity. Such study goes beyond gospel *transmission* and delves into intricacies of the gospel *translated* into lives hitherto untouched among and between a myriad of global peoples. Then again, it latches onto the inmost parts of the human soul at deep levels, core convictions *transform* lives individually and corporately.¹³ This phenomenon repeats throughout the history of Christianity, and gives rise to current non-Western growth. It is contingent on the “missionary.” Walls defines the term broadly to encompass two millennia of history, “The ‘missionary’ in the technical sense is one present, and historically important, example of a recurrent Christian phenomenon.”¹⁴

¹²Katherine Attanasi and Amos Yong, eds., *Pentecostalism and Prosperity: The Socio-Economics of the Global Charismatic Movement*, Christianities of the World series, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), series Introduction.

¹³Andrew F. Walls “Christianity,” In *A New Handbook of Living Religions*, ed. John R. Hinnells (London: Penguin, 1997), 55.

¹⁴Andrew F. Walls, “The Old Age of the Missionary Movement.” *International Review of Mission* 76, no. 301 (1987): 26–32.

Further he observes,

Christian history has seen a constant tension between the forces which localize and indigenize it, and those which universalize it ... The universalizing forces are the same as ever: the worship of Israel's God, the according of ultimate significance to Christ, the sense of continuing divine activity in the Christian community, the use of the scriptures and the consciousness of a community transcending time and space. It will be surprising if the localizing forces of the southern continents do not lead it into new paths.¹⁵

Evangelicals affirm Holy Spirit inspired transformation and work to see it overflowing and *retransmitted*, or further *diffused* so that Christianity's transforming germ, will ultimately be an epidemic.

The Bible: Always A Prophetic Voice

Scholarly conversations surrounding World Christianity tend to diminish or perhaps overwhelm the more traditional Western conservative voices, though the non-Western populations now embracing Christ are often doing so with conservative evangelical views of the Bible and the faith. Why is there a conversational disconnection between biblically conservative views of millions of new adherents in the non-Western world and the same, or similar views, of their Western Christian counterparts? Again, one's perspective matters.

In the ancient church, Tertullian contrasted Jerusalem's biblical fidelity to the paganism of Athens. Jenkins notes a temporal metaphor between the early church and modern religious parallels, "Christians of the global South are citizens of Jerusalem, and they follow the Bible; Americans and Europeans, residents of Athens, obey secular texts. And what has Athens to do with Jerusalem?"¹⁶

Concluding that the Bible is inerrant means that in this conversation one can applaud the progress that an enlarged perspective yields, namely whole new vistas of study regarding burgeoning 21st century World Christianity, especially that of the non-Western world. Yet, there is also a sense of pause regarding the tethering affect that ought to come along with revealed, inerrant truth. Scripture, taken for what it claims, is absolute, normative, and should have the determinative role over human experiences and cultures,

¹⁵Walls "Christianity," 157.

¹⁶Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 4. Jenkins further argues that a defining characteristic of world Christians is their embrace of "the Bible as an inspired text and a tendency to literalism; ... Any acquaintance with African or Asian Christianity soon indicates the pervasive importance of the Bible and of biblical stories," Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity*, 4. See also parallel arguments in Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Rise of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 128, 202, and 7.

especially in translation or transmission phases.¹⁷ Scripture critiques culture rather than the reverse. Can someone thread the eye of the needle between such shifts in perspective while maintaining conservative, biblical convictions? It is not necessary to impose liberal western convictions regarding biblically revealed truth into this discussion, especially when the non-Western leaders generally prefer to align themselves with existing evangelical traditions already.

Theology: In Technicolor

This reviewer confirms that Jenkins' conclusions regarding the non-Western church not only exist and thrive but that those churches generally share the aforementioned normative view of Scripture.¹⁸ Western Christian writers generally tend to express an ecumenical, more convergent view, and downplay theological implications of the Bible, and personal ethical issues, except where socially oriented. These implications are either unaddressed or only cursorily considered. Sanneh addresses Anglican struggles at Lambeth in 1998 over uses of the Bible, as related to homosexual issues. The West, and the Anglican rest, took differing sides. Western bishops accused African counterparts of being, "misguided enough to think that the Bible could replace enlightened reasonableness as a standard of guidance and Christian teaching." He concluded that this was a turning point for, "a post-Christian West, still recovering from seeing religion as contagion, mobilizing behind a domesticated highbrow view of culture for safeguard."¹⁹

Additionally, doctrinal bundles and denominational polity are generally eschewed and deemed culturally conditioned, curiosities best left in 16th century Europe that were framed in reaction to medieval Catholicism.²⁰ Oddly enough, there are Christian populations in the non-Western world that appreciate their identity and heritages linking them to the historic churches that came and connected with them in their non-Western settings.

¹⁷For development of biblically conservative evangelical ideas see these examples: David J. Hesselgrave, "The Three Horizons: Culture, Integration and Communication" *JETS* 28, no. 4 (December 1985): 443–54; Paul G. Hiebert, *The Gospel in Human Contexts: Anthropological Explorations for Contemporary Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009); Bruce Nicholls, *Contextualization: A Theology of Gospel and Culture* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2003).

¹⁸See, for example, discussion and citation regarding the theological convictions of the Nigerian scholar, Byang Kato who set the pace for a normative use of the Bible among African Evangelicals, cited in: Mark A. Noll and Carolyn Nystrom, *Clouds of Witnesses: Christian Voices from Africa and Asia* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2011), 92.

¹⁹Jonathan J. Bonk, "The Defender of the Good News: Questioning Lamin Sanneh," accessed 24 November 2013, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/october/35.112.html?order=&start=1>.

²⁰Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 245–47. Walls distinguishes between the doctrinal bundles, denominational polity or practices, and the formation of sending agencies since William Carey's era and presents them as evidence of younger churches generating new avenues for implementing the Great Commission.

While indeed not all came with the best interest of their hosts, others did and were well received.²¹

If study of World Christianity shifts one's perspective by telling the rest of the story, particularly that of the gospel-receivers, then those same receivers' convictions and distinctions should be told, heard, and studied. This is especially so lest an odd form of neocolonialism accrue in Western academia, one that prescribes ways for non-Western churches to view their vernacular Bibles that downplays scriptural implications and bundles of doctrine simply because western denominational partners affirm the same convictions. Does enough academic freedom exist to acknowledge that some non-Western believers wish to link to historic, missionary related identities? Time will tell.

Critiquing Forward: Time for Western Introspection

Syncretism, spoken by one from outside the recipient culture, signals colonial attitudes or ethnocentrism as concluded by some World Christian Studies writers²². This is largely because of their views and uses of the Bible. Traditional—and yes, formerly predominantly Western—evangelicals define their theology by interpreting the Bible didactically. Sanneh, for example, cites an unnamed African convert mentioned by Robert Moffat in 19th century southern Africa as saying, "... We thought it [the Bible] was a thing to be spoken to, but now we know it has a tongue. It speaks and will speak to the whole world." With that evangelical perspective, self-theologizing commenced. Indeed, the translation itself was an act of indigenous theologizing.²³

If there is hope of re-evangelizing the West through migrating diaspora populations of new Christians,²⁴ then could it likewise be that a corresponding affirmation of the Bible and choice of denominational identity would come with them, albeit reshaped by their own cultural journeys? What would a Bible believing Presbyterian, Baptist, or Methodist look like that brings the gospel molds of Africa, Latin America, or Asia to the process of diffusion into still other places? If Western theologians and students of World Christianity do not recognize, and even encourage this sort of critical self-theologizing, allowing for indigenous embrace of historic identities from outside their contexts, then there exists a flip-flop vestige of colonial

²¹Robert D. Woodberry, "The Missionary Roots of Liberal Democracy," *American Political Science Review* 106, no. 2 (2012): 244–74. For review of colonial and mission administrative policies illustrative of both negative and some positive aspects see: Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998); Kwasi Kwarteng, *Ghosts of Empire: Britain's Legacies in the Modern World* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011); Brian Stanley and Alaine M. Low, *Missions, Nationalism, and the End of Empire*, Studies in the History of Christian Missions (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003). For American mission tendencies during the nineteenth century see, Wilbert R. Shenk, *North American Foreign Missions, 1810–1914: Theology, Theory, and Policy*, Studies in the History of Christian Missions (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004).

²²Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity?*, 44.

²³Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity?*, 106.

²⁴Philip Jenkins, *God's Continent: Christianity, Islam, and Europe's Religious Crisis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 91–93.

practice, though from Western scholars, namely ecumenical convergent writers (certainly an unusual source this time around).

Conservative contextualization methods intend the Bible to be meaningful and relevant in other cultures while not altering its original, template teaching. Ecumenical theologians tend to view its teachings dynamically, blended with recipient languages and cultural elements long since in existence prior to the influx of Christian ideas. That means many indigenous religions, beliefs, customs, and languages (using their own ideological syntax) set cultural beliefs in dialectic tension with incoming biblical truths. Might there be an alternative whereby the Bible critiques all cultures to accomplish what Walls calls, “deep translation”? Walls concludes,

Cross-cultural diffusion (which is the life-blood of historic Christianity), has to go beyond language, the outer skin of culture, into the processes of thinking and choosing, and all the networks of relationship that lie beneath language, turning them all towards Christ. It requires generations to accomplish, for those processes have themselves taken many generations to form. This is deep translation, the appropriation of the Christian gospel in terms of that culture, down to the very roots of identity ...²⁵

If cultural syntax determines the dance, so to speak, between Christ and culture then doctrinal truth is secondary. This is the tendency among some western theologians.

When self-theologizing happens uncritically, and becomes self-validating simply because it is generated within, then it well illustrates this sort of reverse colonialism spoken of above. Leslie Newbiggin alerts those engaging these ideas to the potential of such inconsistency.

The churches of the Third World belong to societies which are struggling to achieve authentic nationhood after a period in which their cultures were overshadowed by the Western invasion ... Churches in the old colonial powers, ridden by feelings of guilt, are eager to apologize for the fact that their presentation of the gospel was so much colored by their culture, that they presented a European or American gospel instead of the pure, unadulterated article, and—for the same reason—are eager to welcome and applaud any expression of Christianity which is authentically Asian or African ... *Thus we applaud in the younger churches a synthesis of nationalism and Christianity which we deplore in our missionary grandparents.*²⁶

²⁵Andrew F. Walls, “Christian Scholarship in Africa in the Twenty-First Century,” *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* 19, no. 4 (2002): 220.

²⁶Leslie Newbiggin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 143.

Now, however, the prophetic voices may be more loudly heard from the non-Western world's affirmation and embrace of the Bible as the basis for critique of every culture, even western ones.

The whole discussion needs balance. Every human brings to the drama of cross-cultural communication a set of gospel blinders, so to speak, that come with being human and sinful. Humans socially interact and do so with the taint of sin. Cultures bear the marks of fallen humanity in one way or another. Cultures are not amoral or neutral in the contextualization dance. People and cultures are given to flux and flow of every wind of thought for varying reasons. Yet the Bible stabilizes during life's gales. Contextualization, or self-theologizing, without biblical certainty consistently guiding the process results in relativized messages and meanings.

With these concepts in place, and differences noted, one celebrates non-Western Christian partners and enters the conversation to understand better their living realities and how believers in other parts of the world can encourage and enhance those developments where invited and feasible. Additionally, missionary activities are different with new World Christian ideas in view.

Free At Last: Cry of Religious Freedom

Is religious freedom synonymous with separation of Church and State? Historians debate motives and mandates regarding American exportation of the latter and note that a unique set of socio-political circumstances converged at the same point as the birth of the United States that may not be reproducible on a worldwide scale.²⁷

The larger concept of religious freedom is a more universal and universalizing principle. Church and State separation is one aspect of American democratization. Where it was imposed in mission settings it was contradicting itself. Where it was embraced and blended with deeper levels of gospel translation in mission settings religious freedom was "picked up ... from missionaries that stemmed from evangelical or Christian dynamics rather than the workings of American or Western culture ... This is a subtle but important distinction."²⁸

Drawing a distinction between religious freedom and the American experience of it is beneficial in the discussion and development of modern understanding of World Christianity. Localized religious freedom will look

²⁷Andrew F. Walls "The American Dimension in the History of the Missionary Movement," In *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions 1880–1980*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk, 1–25 (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1990), 14–16, Walls sees this as a characteristic of American missionary activity that uniquely fit the American experience and blended well with corollary concepts of voluntarism, entrepreneurial ways and means of carrying out missionary vision and activities. The setting was distinctly different from European practices that reflected less voluntarism and more coercion of Church by the State.

²⁸Jay Riley Case, *An Unpredictable Gospel: American Evangelicals and World Christianity, 1812–1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 257.

and feel differently in various non-Western settings. Trails of persecution evident in Africa, Asia, and Latin America speak to the valiant efforts of many to protect conscience and religious conviction from despotic state controls.

Religious freedom, to be meaningful, is tolerant of religious pluralism but protects the right of persuasion regarding one's own convictions in a free exchange of ideas. This is religious dialogue with purpose and done well the weight of the message convinces and converts, not the strong-arm of political coercion. To undermine voluntary persuasion minimalizes the views of others because contrary convictions are ignored. Religious disagreement can be civil and polite.

Where cultures and civilizations clash, the gospel of World Christianity thrives especially if freedom of conscience is protected and where it's not it depends on a believer's willingness to affirm the gospel regardless of costs, even possibly paying the ultimate sacrifice. Expansion of World Christianity is and has been costly.

Conclusion

"Listen to me and you shall hear, news hath not been this thousand year"²⁹

When first this English ballad was sung, it seemed like the world was topsy-turvy. Cromwell tried to abolish traditional English celebrations of Christmas. Once again it was significant when Cornwallis surrendered to Washington after the battle of Yorktown. To the English, and the colonized Americans, the world seemed radically different for opposite reasons. The upstart set of colonies defeated the world's super power, Great Britain, to gain freedom. One's loss blossomed into the other's gain.

The bustling of Christianity in the non-Western world is another such moment in history. The loss of center stage for the West is leadership opportunity for the rest of the world's Christians. It may not alter biblical truth and the theologically universal elements therein, but it does change the perspective from which we address theology, especially its application. Historical awareness of God's activity globally is shifted in these contemporary scenes. Marginal voices of those believers who are self-identifying as part of a global family that affirms particular bundles of doctrinal assumptions and call themselves by denominational names can contribute to worldwide discussion of the Christian faith, and are doing so. Additionally, religious freedom is always a struggle to achieve and to protect. The church worldwide has vested interested in asserting and witnessing to this need far and wide.

So this is our brave new world. It changes at broadband speed. Yet it is the new serial segment in Christ's story to the nations. As the Church

²⁹For the full citation of the ballad see *The World Is Turned Upside Down*. [Microform] to the Tune of, *When the King Enjoys His Own Again* Thomason Tracts 246:669.F.10 [47] London, 1646.

reflects continuity with earlier serial formations it also develops new, perhaps sometimes contrasting ones. Each one is to play a role in the unfolding drama and it is *to be continued*.

Understanding Diffusion: The Role of a Western Missionary in Africa

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Since the first disciples were sent out to spread the good news of Jesus Christ, Christianity has moved across cultural, linguistic, and political borders and made itself at home in each of its new locations. Lamin Sanneh points out that “translatability is the source of the success of Christianity.”¹ Because of this ability, Christianity has been able to diffuse itself into every new location. As it makes itself at home in each new location and culture, it undergoes a transformation process by those in that location and culture. In the broader context of world missions, there are those who would say cross-cultural diffusion is creating a deeper, more complete understanding of Christianity, whereas others would say it is opening the door for dilution and syncretism.²

This raises questions about the diffusion process and the definition of Christianity in reference to orthodoxy and syncretism.³ Are theologians looking at this Christian “basket of fruit” from different perspectives trying to define the same thing? Or is there something about the diffusion process that causes Christianity to become diluted and syncretized in one culture while continuing on in orthodoxy in another. Once Christianity has been

¹Lamin O. Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, 2nd ed., American Society of Missiology Series, 42 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2009), 51.

²Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith*, ed. Ross Cathy (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002), 68; Todd M. Johnson, “Globalization, Christian Identity, and Frontier Missions,” *International Journal of Frontier Missiology* 27 (2010): 168–69. Syncretism, in this article will be defined as anything that is added to, or taken away from, the gospel core of Christianity that would cause it to be redefined differently than defined by the Bible, and the character and nature of God.

³Orthodoxy is defined as “Following or conforming to the traditional or generally accepted rules or beliefs of a religion, philosophy, or practice.” In the case of this article, that religion, philosophy, or practice is the Christian faith, as expressed by early Christians and the ecumenical creeds as well as adhering to evangelical Christianity as defined by David Bebbington’s quadrilateral principles. Oxford Dictionary, “orthodoxy”, accessed 22 March 2019, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/orthodox>. David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 2–17.

introduced, should there be any outsider interaction that would guide diffusion and keep its doctrine and orthodoxy intact? Conversely, would it be best to leave the translation process alone, apart from outsider interaction, allowing for the diffusion process to move freely within the constraints of the indigenous culture creating a new hybrid form of Christianity?

These questions represent the opposite ends of the spectrum. For anyone wrestling with the call of God on their life to go on mission, these are important questions to work through. There is no shortage of material to support either side of the argument. This article will explore the diffusion process of Christianity into the African culture, in general, by examining several models of contextual theology. At the same time, it will explore data from a specific location and people within Africa to help explain what the role of a western missionary is in the diffusion process of Christianity in Africa.

Historically, Christianity has moved cross-culturally, from one culture to another, and has been appropriated contextually by those in the new culture. This movement can be described as diffusion. According to Everett Rogers, “Diffusion is the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among a social system.”⁴ An innovation is “an idea, practice or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption. An innovation presents an individual or an organization with a new alternative or alternatives, as well as new means of solving problems.”⁵ In this case, the innovation is Christianity and the social system is the African culture. As Christianity is diffused from one culture to another, is the process of diffusion passive or active—or a combination of both?⁶ If so, to what extent? Some scholars would argue against Western missionary interaction for fear of exporting Western, or non-indigenous, theological practices into the new culture, which would result in a replicated form of non-indigenous Christianity.⁷

Alternatively, Andrew Walls makes the argument that the incarnate Christ was, and is, a translation of God into humanity.⁸ This translation is ultimately the beginning of the diffusion process of Christianity. As Christianity is diffused into culture and conversion takes place, there is also an in-

⁴Everett M. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 5th ed. (New York: Free Press, 2003), 5.

⁵Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, xvii.

⁶Active diffusion is a process that is directed and managed whereas passive diffusion is not.

⁷Jesse N.K. Mugambi, “The Future of Theological Education in Africa and the Challenges it Faces,” in *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*, ed. Isabel Apawo Phiri and Dietrich Werner (Oxford: Regnum, 2013), 117.

⁸Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996), 27. He says that “in Christian faith, God becomes human,” and “Christ is Word Translated,” and that incarnation is translation.

carnational translation that takes place in each believer as they go and make disciples. This is what Walls calls the “Pilgrim Principle.”⁹ A Christian is an ambassador for Christ (2 Cor 5:20).¹⁰ They are a type of, a replication or rendering of the incarnate Christ. He is with each Christian, in each Christian, and empowering each Christian to do what He did (John 14:12). As Christians live out the great commission, to go and make disciples, they are essentially embodying and taking with them on mission the incarnate Christ.

Whether or not the diffusion process takes place actively or passively, when discussing the movement of Christianity globally, agency needs to be addressed. Christians cite the Bible as reasoning for being the agent of diffusion (Matt 28:19 and Rom 10:14–15). They also cite a divine mandate that supersedes culture, religion, politics, and even personal timidity. In other words, each Christian should be an agent of diffusion. The question is, then, should each change agent diffuse Christianity actively or passively?

The Bible does present a compelling, logical argument for active diffusion in Romans 10:14, “How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?” The logic of this argument is that there are people who have not heard about Christ, the author and founder of Christianity, and those who have heard now have a responsibility to share with those who have not heard. This argument does not specify detailed qualifications for who should do the spreading. The implication is, however, if you are hearing these words that Paul has written, then you, as a Christian, are being called to share the gospel message with others.

There are those who would say there is no need for an intentional agent to be involved in the diffusion process at all, that religious ideas are able to spread spontaneously. In speaking about traditional religions, John Mbiti makes the comment:

religious ideas may spread from one people to another. But such ideas spread spontaneously, especially through migrations, intermarriage, conquest, or expert knowledge being sought by individuals of one tribal group from another. Traditional religions have no missionaries to propagate them; and one individual does not preach his religion to another.¹¹

⁹The Pilgrim and Indigenizing principles work together in concert, while at the same time stand in contrast with each other. As a new believer wrestles with how to live out their new faith within their community (indigenous), they are, at the same time, drawn from within, to leave the community and take the gospel to places and peoples who do not have it (pilgrim).

¹⁰Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the New International Version.

¹¹John S. Mbiti, *African Religions & Philosophy*, 2nd rev. and enl. ed. (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1990), 4.

If this is true, then it is possible that Christianity could be diffused in a similar fashion and that Christianity could be spread as spontaneously as traditional religions. Since the paradigm for diffusion of a religion is already set up culturally, then it would make sense for anyone in the culture to accept and diffuse another religion, in this case Christianity, into the culture. As a counterargument, could it be that even in this paradigm of spontaneous diffusion, there was still someone actively involved in the diffusion process, at least as an initiator?

An example for the need of an etic perspective, or outside perspective, can be found in the film classic, *The Gods Must Be Crazy*. The setting for the film is rural Africa, and an outside innovation, an empty Coke bottle, is introduced. When the bottle mysteriously fell from the sky, the Bushmen applied their cultural understandings to this new innovation. While some of their cultural understandings managed to come close to the bottle's originally intended purpose, the other uses for the bottle did not. Even though many of the new uses for the coke bottle were useful and did make everyday life chores easier to accomplish, they were at risk of destroying the innovation and possibly causing themselves physical harm if the bottle had broken. In addition to physical harm was the already noticeable cultural harm that manifested itself in the form of jealousy.

One aspect of newness that Christianity brings to the African religious landscape is its belief in supra-cultural truths that need to be communicated. To better understand this new aspect and innovation, an examination of the models of contextual theology put forth by Steven Bevans and Robert Schreiter is needed. This article will examine three models from Bevans and one from Schreiter.

Translation Model

The first model is the translation model. This model insists "on the message of the Gospel as an unchanging message."¹² This unchanging message is something that is outside of culture, or "supra cultural."¹³ Aubrey Malphurs uses the idea of essential versus non-essential to describe propositional, or essential, truths that are necessary.¹⁴ Christians hold to the idea that

¹²Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, rev. and expanded ed., Faith and Cultures Series (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002), 37.

¹³A. Scott Moreau, *Contextualization in World Missions: Mapping and Assessing Evangelical Models* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2012), 35; Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 40.

¹⁴Aubrey Malphurs, *A New Kind of Church: Understanding Models of Ministry for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 50–51. Essentials of the faith "are propositional truths that are both clearly taught in the Bible and are necessary for one to be considered orthodox. Should someone in the church reject any of these views, his or her version of Christianity is not orthodox. He or she has fallen outside the faith." Non-essentials of the faith "are views we hold that may be based on the scriptures, tradition or on both. They aren't as clear biblically. Unlike the essentials

“all essential truth is to be found in the Bible.”¹⁵ African theologian Osadolor Imasogie says, “the Holy Bible becomes the primary objective medium by means of which the Living Lord, through the Holy Spirit, continues to disclose God to us.”¹⁶ The challenge, then, is to determine what the essential truths of the faith are, decontextualize them and then translate them into the culture.

This model does not use the term translation to mean a word-for-word translation. Since “words carry much more than denotative meanings,” “translation has to be idiomatic.”¹⁷ Charles Kraft says, of translation, that “it must be done by functional or dynamic equivalence.”¹⁸ The reason is because “the aim of this dynamic-equivalence method of translation is to elicit the same reaction in contemporary hearers or readers as in the original hearers or readers.”¹⁹

Therefore, in this model, the essential truths of the gospel, which define the Christian faith, are kept safe and guarded from any impurities that might corrupt the original kernel, or gospel core. Individual Christians safeguard the gospel core by directing and managing the transmission, or diffusion, of the gospel message. Actively diffusing the gospel core is essential to this model since “theologizing, like all Christian communication, must be directed to someone if it is to serve its purpose. It cannot be flung out into thin air.”²⁰

The strength of this approach is the insurance of a dynamic equivalent translation taking place during the diffusion process. By keeping the focus on the supra cultural truth of the gospel, syncretism, or the uncritical acceptance of certain religious convictions in a culture as equal to or greater in importance than the gospel core, can be avoided.²¹ However, one challenge of this model is if the adherents succumb to obscurantism and confuse “the Gospel with some idea or expression external to the Gospel.”²²

For example, the church in Luangwa says that new believers must go through a baptism class before becoming baptized.²³ This class can last for

of the faith, agreement or disagreement on the nonessentials doesn’t affect one’s orthodoxy, salvation or standing before Christ. The key word here is liberty. There is room to flex.”

¹⁵Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 12.

¹⁶Osadolor Imasogie, *Guidelines for Christian Theology in Africa* (Achimota, Ghana: Africa Christian Press, 1983), 73.

¹⁷Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 38–39.

¹⁸Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross Cultural Perspective*, rev. ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2005), 269.

¹⁹Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 39.

²⁰Kraft, *Christianity in Culture*, 39.

²¹Ed Stetzer, “What Is Contextualization,” *Christianity Today*, 12 October 2014, <http://bit.ly/1yqviml>.

²²Ed Stetzer, “Beware of Obscurantism,” *Christianity Today*, 8 July 2014, <http://bit.ly/1resc1F>.

²³Luangwa, Zambia is where I and my family have been serving the Chikunda

several months and ends with the new convert passing a battery of questions administered by the pastor or deacons. Only upon completion of the class will baptism take place. If the new convert does not pass, then he must retake the class before being baptized. Until a person is baptized in this culture, they are not allowed to partake in the Lord's Supper, attend church business meetings, vote in church decisions, teach, preach, or take any office in the church. This sends a message to non-Christians that salvation is based on knowledge and the ability to pass an exam.

Another challenge this model has is non-contextualization. Many missionaries who minister to cultures other than their own, that have grown up in their respective cultures without interacting with other cultures, "are largely unaware of the cultures in which they live, or the depth to which these contexts shape how and what they think and do."²⁴ This is true of missionaries who have grown up in the United States, where interaction with other cultures is not as easy due to its geography.

Missionaries who are not familiar with African culture would be wise to remember that "Christian theology must be informed by the contextual milieu of its target audience in such a way that the Word will become flesh among the people."²⁵ If not, African culture may be seen as less important or inferior to the theological process. The gospel is then equated with the missionaries' Christianity, and positivism becomes the epistemological foundation, "which holds that [the missionaries] scientific knowledge is an accurate, true photograph of the world and corresponds one-to-one with reality."²⁶ This opens the door for a replication of a Christianity from another culture that ultimately has no relevance to a person's life in the new culture.

For instance, African culture is considered an oral learning culture. However, theological education is something that was important to both European and American missionaries dating back several centuries, which they brought with them when they first arrived on the African continent.²⁷ Upon arrival, missionaries began establishing schools. On the outside, the establishment of these schools could be looked at as meeting a basic humanitarian need: education. According to Western missionaries, Christianity was learned and understood by reading the Bible. For this reason, reading was

people since 2009. This is where the research documentation and all oral interviews for this article were acquired.

²⁴Paul G. Hiebert, *The Gospel in Human Contexts: Anthropological Explorations for Contemporary Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 19.

²⁵Imasogie, *Guidelines for Christian Theology in Africa*, 14.

²⁶Imasogie, *Guidelines for Christian Theology in Africa*, 20.

²⁷Dietrich Werner, "Theological Education in the Changing Context of World Christianity: An Unfinished Agenda," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 35, no. 2 (2011); Isaiah O Olatoyan, "A Visionary Missionary," *Global Missiology English* 4, no. 11 (2014); Peter Acho Awoh, *The Dynamics and Contradictions of Evangelisation in Africa: An Essay on the Kom Experience* (Bamenda, Cameroon: African Books Collective, 2010), 16.

integral to the missionary's strategy, and most of the schools were set up to "teach people to read."²⁸ At that time, that method was effectual for European and American cultures, but not for an African culture.

When entering into the African context, as well as any context, it is important to discover a method that is reflective of the target audience's context. Theology that is created from this method has relevance to a person's life in the new culture. By incorporating "the Word of God as mediated by the Holy Spirit[,] ... the Holy Scriptures[,] ... human culture[,] and world view," Christians in Africa will be able to produce an African Christian theology instead of an African anthropology.²⁹

Synthetic Model

The second model to be examined is the synthetic model. This model "tries to preserve the importance of the Gospel message and the heritage of traditional doctrinal formulations while at the same time acknowledging the vital role that context has played and can play in theology, even to the setting of the theological agenda."³⁰ One of the strengths of this model, especially for the African context, is found in its dialogical nature. Aylward Shorter said, "African Christian theology must grow out of a dialogue between Christianity and the theologies of ATR."³¹ This model "makes an effort to make theologizing an exercise in true conversation and dialogue with the other so that one's own and one's culture's identity can emerge in the process."³² This process would allow for the growth of Christianity both in an African culture and from an African culture.

In the context of Christianity being diffused, this model allows for, and encourages, the process of diffusion to take place through a dialogical process between adopters and change agents. Bevans calls the procedure of the synthetic model "more like producing a work of art than following a rigid set of directions."³³ By allowing for the dialogical process to take place between the change agent and the adopter, the Gospel core is preserved while maintaining an emphasis on cultural identity. The hope in the end process is a picture of Christianity that has kept its value positive and value neutral cultural distinctives without sacrificing the gospel core of Christianity.³⁴

²⁸Edward P. Murphy, *A History of the Jesuits in Zambia: A Mission Becomes a Province* (Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines Publications Africa, 2003), 62.

²⁹Imasogie, *Guidelines for Christian Theology in Africa*, 72–73.

³⁰Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 89.

³¹Aylward Shorter, *African Christian Theology: Adaptation or Incarnation?* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1977), 1.

³²Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 94.

³³Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 92.

³⁴The terms value positive, neutral, and negative are understood and defined in light of culture. Value positive is any cultural distinctive that positively reflects cultural identity but does not damage Christian identity. An example of this would be the use of the local language. Value neutral is any cultural distinctive that may

Diffusion is “essentially a community process [that] also needs the presence of experts—even sometimes missionaries from overseas, to give the community encouragement and to help it make the necessary discernment and the necessary critique of its own culture, and to promote the discovery of the seeds of the Word.”³⁵ This community process is what speaks to the African culture and is a powerful method for diffusion. For example, the Chikunda already have built into their culture the dialogical process, which can be seen in their daily life from village meetings about gathering wood or planting crops to family disputes.³⁶ This process is also seen in church meetings, town council meetings, and even meetings with the chief.

The synthetic model seems to fit the Chikunda culture the best. In reference to keeping the integrity of the traditional message, Mattias Phiri said, “When we meet together, the Bible was interpreted, (also means translated or explained) so that we all understand the message.”³⁷ Shorter previously made the comment that the diffusion process “needs the presence of experts.”³⁸ Mattias said of the new innovation, “It needs a teacher first.”³⁹ As far as taking the culture and context seriously, the change agents began by meeting immediate felt needs and then spiritual needs.⁴⁰ These needs were deter-

be removed and not reflect either positively or negatively on either African or Christian culture, such as style of worship. Value negative is any cultural distinctive that positively reflects African culture but damages the Christian identity, such as utilizing the witch doctor and magic for resolving personal issues.

³⁵Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989), 92.

³⁶I was called by the community at one point to represent the leadership from the local church on a marital dispute between two of the members of that church. We went to the couple’s village and gathered with members of the church, local community and members of each of the family members. For about four hours a moderator controlled the flow of the dialogue and interaction between the members of the community, church, and family. Each person was able to contribute to the conversation as they all attempted to reach a solution that was reasonable. Once everyone had an opportunity to voice their opinion, the moderator took into consideration all that was contributed in that time and then delivered his verdict.

³⁷Interview 1, Mattias #9. These personal Interviews were taken to fill gaps that literary sources could not. A representative from two separate villages, where church planting work had been done, was chosen. Another, who was instrumental in the church planting efforts in both villages, was chosen. All three of the interviewees in this article have a detailed and personal knowledge of the culture, Christianity, and its movement into the community.

³⁸Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 92.

³⁹Interview 2, Mattias #5.

⁴⁰Interview 1 Mattias, #1—At first, he (the missionary) came to see the crocodile. When he killed the crocodile, they came to talk to us about the word of God. Amake Tadiwa #2—When they came, they came to help people, number one, and they came to see the way we live here. Number two, they thought of digging a borehole; Interview 1, Mtambo #1—The reason they came to Chikumbi, Humphrey and Jacob, they came to help us to know God and the church.

mined through the dialogical process which allowed for the change agents and adopters to work together in formulating a plan for diffusing Christianity contextually that was culturally appropriate and biblically sound.⁴¹

Anthropological Model

The third model to be examined is the anthropological model. According to Bevans, this model is “almost at the opposite end of the spectrum from the translation model.”⁴² Where the translation model is concerned about the preservation of the gospel message, the anthropological model is concerned with the “establishment and preservation of cultural identity.”⁴³ What does this model say for the preservation of Christianity? What does this model say for the continuation of the African culture?

In respect to the preservation of Christianity, this model would most likely have a negative influence or impact on some of its core tenets. Christians hold to a supra-cultural message that is found in the Bible. This belief stands in direct contradiction with the idea that “within human culture that we find God’s revelation.”⁴⁴ Christians would say that the idea of man being good and God’s revelation being found in culture mitigates the need for Jesus and His work on the cross.

While the person who uses the translation model basically sees himself or herself as bringing a saving message in to the context and making sure that it is presented in a relevant and attractive way, the practitioner of the anthropological model looks for God’s revelation and self-manifestation as it is hidden within the values, relational patterns, and concerns of a context.⁴⁵

Robert T. Rush said missionaries might be best described as “treasure hunters” and not “pearl merchants.”⁴⁶

With respect to the continuation of the African culture, the anthropological model is a positive model. This model starts with the “present human experience, with a particular focus on human culture.”⁴⁷ Instead of touting the greatness of Western culture, it begins with all that is good with in the African culture. This model removes paternalism and seeks to elevate the local culture. Through this model the African culture would have an equally valuable seat at the table of other world cultures.

⁴¹Interview 1, Mattias #2—We sat down together and started making the program on how we would begin the Bible study.

⁴²Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 54.

⁴³Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 54.

⁴⁴Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 56.

⁴⁵Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 56.

⁴⁶Robert T. Rush, “From Pearl Merchant to Treasure Hunter: The Missionary Yesterday and Today,” *Catholic Mind* 76, no. 1325 (1978), 6–10.

⁴⁷Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 57.

This model places great importance on the people as contextualizers. Since there is a difference between the Western scientific worldview and the African worldview, and “given the way context influences one’s perception of spiritual reality, such a difference in world view must inevitably affect the resulting theology.”⁴⁸ This means that an African Christian would be the best person to “provide the biblical and traditional background that will enable the people to develop their own theology.”⁴⁹ This model’s understanding of revelation “recognizes that revelation is not essentially a message, but the result of an encounter with God’s loving and healing power in the midst of the ordinariness of life.”⁵⁰ This idea fits well within the African culture as it speaks to God’s healing power and the ordinariness of life. These are aspects that are better understood and propagated by Africans and not Westerners.

Christians would argue against the anthropological idea of revelation. They say that revelation is a message and not merely “the result of an encounter with God’s loving and healing power in the midst of the ordinariness of life.”⁵¹ While Christians do believe that general revelation can be found in the midst of ordinary life, however, they do not believe it can radically change a person like the personal acceptance of special revelation can.

For Christians in Luangwa, like Humphrey Mpengula, the anthropological model does not represent a good way to diffuse Christianity. There are people who practice the anthropological model who “would insist that while the acceptance of Christianity might challenge a particular culture, it would not radically change it.”⁵² However, Humphrey Mpengula says, “Culture and Christianity are different. You’ll find that Christianity, there are some ways that I should not do. This I shouldn’t do and that I shouldn’t do, and that and that. But the culture allows me to do those things. That is why I am saying it is different between culture and Christianity. They are not the same. What culture allows, Christianity does not.”⁵³

Adaptation Model

In Robert Schreiter’s book, *Constructing Local Theologies*, he introduces what he calls the “Adaptation Model” of contextual theology.⁵⁴ The method

⁴⁸Imasogie, *Guidelines for Christian Theology in Africa*, 67.

⁴⁹Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 58.

⁵⁰Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 59.

⁵¹Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 59; Rom 10:14–15, 17. “How shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him in whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news! So then, faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.”

⁵²Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 57.

⁵³Interview #2, Humphrey #10.

⁵⁴Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), 9–12.

of this model “is one of planting the seed of faith and allowing it to interact with the native soil, leading to a new flowering of Christianity, faithful to both the local culture and to the apostolic faith.”⁵⁵ According to Scott Moreau, this model is similar to Bevans’s synthetic model, however there are a few nuances that differentiate it from the synthetic model.

If one followed the example that was given, describing the method as a seed that was planted and allowed to interact with the native soil, to its conclusion, then there are some major questions that arise concerning the growth and maturity of the seed after it is planted. There is no mention of a caretaker in this example or outside involvement that would cultivate the ground in which the seed is growing. This example appears to leave the seed alone once in the ground, allowing for the native soil to interact with the seed only, as opposed to Bevans’s synthetic model, which allows for contextualizers to “develop in dialectic fashion something that transcends the sources while retaining their strengths.”⁵⁶

Another nuance of the adaptation model is its need for ideal circumstances to work, whereas the synthetic model does not. Schreiter labels these ideal circumstances as “those instances where there has never been any contact with Christians.”⁵⁷ As the speed of globalization increases, more and more people are leaving the villages and moving into the cities. This makes the prospect of finding ideal circumstances ever fleeting. However, a strength of this model is how “it tries to respect both the integrity of the apostolic tradition and the traditions of the local culture. In ideal circumstances it should allow for the development of a theology that is not only local, but deeply contextual.”⁵⁸

Based on oral interview data, this model has a weakness in what is perceived as passive diffusion. If the seed is planted and left alone to interact with the soil, apart from further cultivation, then it would be like a Bible that was dropped into a village without any explanation and allowing those in the village to interact with it to create their own Christianity. Simon Mtambo said, “if you just left this Bible without teaching me, since I do not know anything (about the Bible) I will pack it up and you will find it when you come back the same way it was when you left.”⁵⁹

In the area of missions and cross-cultural communication, there are various positions when it comes to the understanding and meaning of contextualization. A quick glance at Stephen Bevans’s *Models of Contextual The-*

⁵⁵Moreau, *Contextualization in World Missions: Mapping and Assessing Evangelical Models*, 42.

⁵⁶A. Scott Moreau, Evvy Hay Campbell, and Susan Greener, *Effective Intercultural Communication: A Christian Perspective*, Encountering Mission (Grand Rapids, Baker Academic, 2014), 40.

⁵⁷Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1985), 12.

⁵⁸Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 11.

⁵⁹Personal interview, Simon Mtambo, 24 July 2017, 4.

ology reveals some of the different understandings and interpretations of contextualization. He argues that “[The] contextualization of theology, the attempt to understand Christian faith in terms of a particular context, is really a theological imperative.”⁶⁰ Taking into account discussions by Moreau and David Hesselgrave, contextualization will be defined as “the process whereby Christians adapt the forms, content and praxis of the Christian faith so as to communicate it to the minds and hearts of people with other cultural backgrounds. The goal is to make the Christian faith as a whole—not only the message but also the means of living out our faith in the local setting—understandable.”⁶¹

This leads us back to the original question, what is the role of a Western missionary in the diffusion process of Christianity in Africa? The emic and etic perspectives need to work together to diffuse Christianity that is both culturally relevant and biblically orthodox. This model of working together allows the etic perspective to inform the emic on blind spots that might arise in the diffusion process. At the same time, the emic perspective is able to represent the culture to ensure that cultural distinctives do not get washed out during the diffusion process.

No one person has a complete revelation and understanding of what Christianity is. It can be seen as a mosaic of human understandings and interpretations of Christ. In other words, something that “melds multiformity and rich diversity of colors with harmony and complexity into a pattern that conveys a unified image without sacrificing variety.”⁶² Each piece in this model, the etic, and the emic, represents a color in the mosaic that is Christianity.

By bringing in a piece of the mosaic that is different, the resulting version of Christianity is contextually more complete than it would have been without it. This is not to say that Christianity is incomplete or cannot exist without any certain piece. Rather, the African expression of faith is more complete, or has more depth and understanding of who God is (because of the addition of the etic perspective) than if it had developed from an emic perspective alone.

This represents the concepts previously discussed in relation to Bevan’s models of contextual theology, in particular the Translation and Synthetic models. The research in this article supports the idea of a supra-cultural Christian foundation that is *translated* into the African context, the pilgrim aspect of Christianity. At the same time there is a *synthesis* between the outsider (expatriate missionary) and the insider (African) expressions of Christianity so that the developing African version continues to grow and flourish.

In applying constant and careful attention to its application, this model

⁶⁰Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 3.

⁶¹Moreau, *Contextualization in World Missions*, 36.

⁶²Roger E. Olson, *The Mosaic of Christian Belief: Twenty Centuries of Unity and Diversity*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016), 10.

is not intended to represent or force a colonial or paternalistic perspective. There should be the appropriate representation of emic and etic perspectives to diffuse a Christianity that represents the nature and character of Christ (as defined by the Bible), and the culture (as defined by the emic perspective). Appropriate representation does not mean that each side inputs an amount that is equal to the others in the equation. The dynamic of each culture and person involved in diffusion, both emic and etic, is different and ever-changing. This means that the amount of input from each will differ and vary. The meaning of “appropriate representation” is best summed up in Paul’s letter to the church at Corinth in 1 Corinthians 12 in which he discusses the unity and diversity of the body of Christ. He says, “there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ and each one of you is a part of it.”

This is a great example and analogy to understand the importance of input from both sides in the diffusion process. Paul talks about how the body as a single unit is made up of many parts. Each part has its function and importance. Even though the heart cannot be seen, it is absolutely vital to the function of the body. Some parts of the body are bigger and might play a more vital role in the body, but each part is nonetheless important and valuable to the body as a whole. Likewise, in the diffusion of Christianity, each cultural iteration needs to have both emic and etic perspectives, but the amount of each side will vary from culture to culture.

Each cultural iteration of Christianity should be like a mirror which reflects, perfectly, the image gazing into it, so the result of the newly diffused Christianity should reflect the very nature and character of Christ. Therefore, etic and emic are but pieces to the puzzle, and each culture might require a different amount of each in order to properly reflect Christ. Since Christ is the foundation of Christianity, and to remove or change who Christ is would result in something other than Christianity, the focus should always be on Christ, not culture or the importance of either the etic or the emic perspective.

The challenge for missionaries from any culture, who go to a culture other than their own to diffuse Christianity, is to present the supra cultural truths of the Bible in their purest form and allow the new culture to wrestle with how to clothe it. If the new culture decides they like how Christianity has been clothed from the missionary’s culture, and they want to use the same clothing, then they should be able to make that decision. At the same time, if they decide to wrap it in their own cultural wrappings, then they should be free to do so, as well. Therefore, the task of the missionary is to help them navigate the journey between overemphasizing the indigenous on the one side and the pilgrim on the other as they strive to contextualize Christianity into their culture.

*The Retransmission of Evangelical
Christianity in Nigeria: The Legacy and
Lessons from Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther's
Life and Ministry (1810–1891)¹*

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Crowther's time in mission in Africa was a day of small things, so small it was trodden under foot ... Yet, it is time for a generation to take Crowther as her hero, to get inside that life, seek out his neglected written works, republish and distribute them.

—Andrew Walls²

Introduction

Ajayi Crowther's contribution to the growth of the Christian faith in Nigeria is an amazing story. He pioneered evangelical Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa, and in particular Nigeria, forever changing this part of the world which makes his story a vital contribution to World Christianity.³ His evangelical⁴ convictions, more than any other factor, shaped his gospel retransmission⁵ impact across cultural boundaries. It explains his motivation

¹Olayemi Olusola Talabi Fatusi, "Crowther Goes to Canterbury: A Historical Analysis Of Ajayi Crowther's (1810–1891) Missiological Practices and the Anglican Decade of Evangelism (1990–1999)" (Ph.D diss. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017). Most of the material in this article were adapted from my original doctoral dissertation submitted to the Roy Fish School of Evangelism and Mission, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas USA.

²Andrew Walls, "Do not Despise the Days of Small Things," interview by Gareth Sturdy. *CMS Yes Magazine* (May–August, 2007).

³Andrew Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 155.

⁴The term "Evangelical" is used in this paper in line with David W. Bebbington four primary distinctive of Evangelicals in his book, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to 1980s* (London: Routledge, 1996). It is used in this work to describe Christians who hold the Bible as the highest authority for life and faith with an absolute conviction and commitment to Jesus Christ as the only Savior of lost humanity.

⁵The term "Retransmission" is used and understood in the light of World Christian Study themes from an evangelical perspective. It rests on the understanding of the inherent

and strength to preach the gospel to the unsaved heathen and Muslims in an era when evangelical Christianity was not popular even among Europeans. It was an era when many treated the black man as having no mind and virtually denied him a soul.⁶

The goal of this article is to point out the importance of Crowther's pioneering evangelical Christianity in Nigeria primarily within Anglican Christianity. Hence, the article examines his contribution to the horizon of non-western Christianity, his Christian convictions, gospel retransmission encounters, and approaches to ministry. Undoubtedly, Crowther's story is vital for the evaluation, understanding, and appreciation of African evangelical Christianity because of his Bible- and Christ-centered gospel retransmission. The context of Crowther's story is the non-western hemisphere, a region once considered a mission field that has now become a hub for world Christianity and missionary effort. A glimpse of the factors that impacted this horizon will first be considered.

The Horizon of Non-Western Christianity

The horizon of non-western Christianity dates back to the first century of the Christian faith. Since the beginning of Christianity converts of African descent were present. Luke, the writer of Acts, seems to suggest that the Christian faith has never left out the non-westerners. Though this movement has continued serially in nature,⁷ the history of the Christian faith could correctly be denominated by the dominant culture, which serves as its primary expression during a particular period in history. The Christian faith entered into Western culture and shared in its global, western, historic influence and explorations of the African continent. By the perception of Africans, western exploration and colonization were virtually presented as inseparable twins of Western Christianity.

Undeniably, Western Christianity provided the way for Africans to discover the true God—who already existed in their cultural milieu. As John S. Mbiti put it in Bediako's book; "the westerners did not bring God; rather God brought them, so that Jesus Christ might be known and, therefore, through Christ, the aspiration to reach out for the transcendent God

nature of the gospel to move from one context to another through human recipients. Andrew Walls indicates the gospel's ability to permeate a host cultures through human agents. In other words, it is a conversion movement through which the transmission of the Christian faith occurs. Hence, retransmission means all human agents' effort to participate in the conversion movement by communicating the received gospel to another person or context. The first gospel transmission took place between Jesus Christ and his disciples; every other participation is, therefore, a retransmission. Therefore, retransmission stands for gospel proclamation by those who had received it, transformed by it and motivated by it. It represents and can be used in place of Christian witnessing, evangelism, and gospel sharing.

⁶Jesse Page, *Samuel Crowther: The Slave Boy who became Bishop of the Niger* (London: S.W. Partridge and Co., 1892), 3.

⁷Andrew Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, 23.

embedded in African religion was realized, and the meaning of the African religiosity made complete.”⁸

Hence, the encounter between western Christianity and non-western culture is essentially the encounter of Africans with the gospel message. In other words, God sought Africans using the available vessels of westerners. Therefore, the horizon of non-western Christianity is not necessarily dependent on westerners, but is dependent on the inherent nature of the Christian faith, which is expressed in its attributes of transmission, translation, transformation, and retransmission across cultural frontiers.

Historically, Sub-Sahara Africa in a domain and frontier that the Christian faith has entered and remained seemingly at home. The indigenization of Christianity in sub-Sahara Africa predates the coming of Western missionaries, as evidence by the Sierra Leone experience.⁹ The case of Christianity in Nigeria is not exactly as in Sierra Leone where Christianity existed before the Europeans arrived. Christianity in Nigeria was borne by Sierra Leone’s returning slaves and Western missionary efforts. Nigeria’s Christianity was initiated by emancipated African slaves of different ethnic backgrounds. In other words, the African natives and indigenous leadership played significant roles in sub-Saharan African Christian faith expansion.¹⁰ Among these Samuel Ajayi Crowther was chief.

In the last century significant changes in the spread of the Christian faith have taken place as a result of several factors, but an overarching factor is the indigenization of Christianity and ownership of the Scriptures in the language of the people. The message of the gospel—the power of God unto salvation and the means of evangelization of the non-Christian people—ceased to be termed “their message” or the “message of the stranger” but God’s gift of a voice for life expression.¹¹ The history of biblical interpretation and Christian doctrine availability in Nigerian languages will never be complete without mentioning Crowther’s contribution.

Historically, nothing can compare to the exuberating knowledge that God can speak one’s language—it penetrates the heart like no other. Beyond this exuberating experience, is the unanticipated oppugn of the non-westerners to some Christian perspectives of westerners who disciplined them.¹² This oppugn emanates from notable African insight, leadership, cultural perspective, and biblical insight gained from listening to the voice of Scrip-

⁸John S. Mbiti, “Translatability Seen in Mbiti’s Writings,” in *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion* ed. Kwame Bediako (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1995), 116.

⁹See, Andrew Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian*, 18.

¹⁰Akinyele Omoyajowo, *Makers of the Church in Nigeria* (Lagos: CSS Bookshop, 1995), 36.

¹¹Lamin Sanneh, “World Christianity and the New Historiography,” in *Enlarging the Story: Perspective on Writing World Christian History*, ed. Wilbert R. Shenk (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002), 107.

¹²Andrew Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 41.

ture in their heart languages. This availability of Scripture has contributed immensely to their sense of ownership of the Christian faith, which is a reiteration of Sanneh's view. The non-westerners have come to realize that the Christian faith is more akin to their culture than those from whom they received the faith. Yet, the question is how did Crowther came to embrace Christianity?

Crowther's Introduction to Westernization and Western Religion

The Christians and the form of Christianity Crowther first intimately interacted with were evangelicals.¹³ After being rescued by the British Naval Myrmidon in 1822, Crowther was resettled along with other 187 slaves in Freetown.¹⁴ Freetown was a portion of land purchased with support from the Clapham Sect, a group of Christians who were products of the Great Awakening of Britain. These evangelical Christians took advantage of the prevailing social need to engage in Christian service, which included support of the free slaves and an on-going antislavery fight at the time.¹⁵ Freetown¹⁶ in Sierra Leone became the place of Crowther's first contact with Christianity. By this time a unique characteristic Christian faith had emerged that was driven "by the spirit of adventure and insatiable curiosity, and the motive of spreading the gospel."¹⁷

Freetown soon became the first missionary hub and missions' laboratory in Africa. Walls argues that the Christianity of Freetown did not only have a life of its own much before the European missionaries' arrived but a missionary zeal of its own.¹⁸ These resettled slaves hailed from various parts of the African continent and, in time, formed pillars of education, community governance, trade, and evangelization across Africa.

It was in these circumstances that Crowther came to know and appreciate Europeans and Christianity. Crowther soon became noticed and began the journey to becoming an unrivaled early pioneer of Christian faith indigenization in sub-Saharan Africa. Crowther's connection with missionary clergies like School, Townsend, John Raban, and, later, Henry Venn, pro-

¹³See, John Samuel Pobee, *The Anglican Story in Ghana: From Mission beginnings to Province of Ghana* (Accra, Ghana: Amanza Ltd, 2009), 109.

¹⁴Jesse Page, *The Black Bishop Samuel Adjai Crowther* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1908), 30.

¹⁵Eugene Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society: Its Environment, Its Men, and Its Work* (Salisbury, London: Church Missionary Society, 1809), 457.

¹⁶Stock that the move to relocate the free slaves in Britain was not primarily necessitated by the desire to return the free slaves to their home country as truly free people but rather to alleviate the increasing economic and security burden emanating from the increased number of homeless and jobless people roaming the street of Britain. Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, 457.

¹⁷Kenneth Scott LaTourette, *A History of Christianity*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1953), 1310.

¹⁸Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process*, 95.

vided motivation for his evangelical persuasion and the future evangelization of the African people.

The birth of Ajayi was around the year 1810, though the exact date is unknown.¹⁹ Osogun was his birthplace in the southwest of Nigeria with about 3,000 people at the time. He derived his name Ajayi from his birth experience of being born face down. As was customary in those days among the Yoruba people, whenever a child is born, a diviner is consulted. In his case, the diviner had predicted he would serve the Supreme Transcendent Being and not any deity. Crowther came to the knowledge of this prediction when he was reunited with his mother after a painful separation due to his enslavement of 25 years.²⁰ He had a natural talent for craft and the use of his hands, which he learned from his father and was courageous from childhood.²¹

The benefit of this courage was evident in his vast and obviously hazardous gospel retransmission ministry as the first African Anglican Bishop. In 1821, Fulani raiders in collaboration with some Yoruba Muslims captured Ajayi and his siblings in their hometown. Walls writes of Crowther's rescue and transfer from six different owners before being sold to the Portuguese.²² Of importance, as Omoyajowo notes, is that these transfers were a consequence of his suicide attempts due to the frustration of slavery under fellow black owners, who were mostly Muslim. His experiences with his Muslim owners were not all cruel as he recalled some pleasant experiences with some of them which could have contributed to his tolerance of Muslims.

Admiral Henry J. Leeke, the captain of the British naval ship *Myrmidon* that rescued him, recounted his encounter with him with much freshness at his consecration in Canterbury Cathedral in June 1864. The Admiral was present in full naval uniform at his consecration in the front row of the service with much resplendence.²³ Crowther had the privilege of attending the newly-established Church Missionary Society (CMS) Fourah Bay College, where he learned how to read and write the English language using the New Testament as a textbook for English learning. This introduction to education with the Bible would later become Crowther's pattern. He knew too well the joy and dignity of labor over the boredom of joblessness, a virtue he found very useful as a strategy for empowering his workers and their wives in the Niger mission by encouraging entrepreneurship for some of his clergies.²⁴

¹⁹Jeanne Decorvet and Emmanuel Oladipo, *Samuel Ajayi Crowther* (Lagos: CSS Bookshop, 2006), 58.

²⁰Decorvet and Oladipo *Samuel Ajayi Crowther*, 58.

²¹Omoyajowo, *Makers of the Church in Nigeria 1842–1947*, 31.

²²Andrew F. Walls, "The Legacy of Samuel Ajayi Crowther," in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 16 no. 1 (January 1992): 15–21.

²³Jeanne and Oladipo, "*Samuel Ajayi Crowther*" 104.

²⁴Jeanne and Oladipo, "*Samuel Ajayi Crowther*" 104.

Crowther was introduced to the various tribal languages of the freed slaves who hailed from all over Africa. His giftedness in learning languages at Freetown set him apart. It was this ability that got him on the nineteenth-century British expeditions along the River Niger. He earned the respect of the Europeans on board with him for his insight and forthrightness. The route of this journey on the River Niger later became his regular route for evangelization into the hinterland.

Crowther's Connection and Root in Evangelical Christian Faith

Crowther wrote of his experience of the liberation of his soul from sin:

About the third year of my liberation from the slavery of man, I was convinced of another worse state of slavery, namely, that of sin and Satan. It pleased the Lord to open my heart ... I was admitted into the visible Church of Christ here on earth as a soldier to fight manfully under his banner against our spiritual enemies.²⁵

This experience typifies a strong indication of his acceptance of the evangelical tradition, perspective and convictions of conversion and personal faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. The influence of the connections of Crowther's experience of salvation by grace and the liberation of his soul from sin at Freetown, his family background, and his personal virtue of courage is profoundly evident in the churches he planted and led.

Jesse Page, the famous biographer of the CMS, wrote of Crowther's excellent knowledge of the Christian faith and his ability to effectively communicate it to the natives. Crowther is never deterred by adverse circumstances but remained optimistic of God's help and provision. For Crowther, the Bible was God's message of love and transformation of humanity. "Though poor, he made many rich," seemed to be his motto. He held the Scriptures in utmost esteem. Page acclaimed Crowther's Christian leadership praxis when he cited the Chief Justice of Sierra Leone's statement: In 1822 the Lord Chief Justice publicly stated that in a population of 10,000 there were only six cases for trial and not one from any village under the superintendence of a village schoolmaster. This gratifying fact was noted at the very time when the future Bishop of the Niger, then a little-liberated slave-boy, had been landed at the place.²⁶

Crowther exhibited humility, dutifulness, and consistency in the Christian faith. It was noticed by the CMS leadership in England, particularly by Henry Venn, the CMS secretary. Venn encouraged, with everything at his disposal, the nomination and consecration of Crowther to the Bishopric throne of the Niger Diocese. This was to the disapproval of many Europeans

²⁵Gareth Sturdy, "Do not Despise day of Small Things."

²⁶Jesse Page, *The Black Bishop Samuel Adjai Crowther*, 12.

including missionary leaders like Henry Townsend. Townsend, like many Europeans of his day, could not imagine the submission of a European to a non-westerner. In retrospect, and with the realities of the twenty-first century Anglican Church, such racial blindness, is regrettable.

Ajayi Crowther: A Christian Crossing Frontiers of Culture

The experiences of some African Christians' encounters with the Triune God and his redemptive work through Jesus Christ have changed many cultures in Nigeria. The point is that Crowther's faith in the risen Lord Jesus Christ and the conviction to give other unsaved people the opportunity to trust him as their Savior propels his gospel retransmission exploit. The Christian faith propels its followers to cross-cultural frontiers.²⁷ This frontier-crossing stirs creative movements and strategic openings for the growth of the Christian faith in places where it has not been embraced, thus resulting in a high cultural diversity within the contemporary Church.

Crowther's Encounters in Gospel Retransmission: An Evaluative Platform

In the *Journal of World Christianity*²⁸ Dale Irvin established the historical roots of world Christianity as a field of study in the discipline of missions, ecumenism, and world religions. He put forward three encounters that he believes have continued to define the dynamics of world Christianity. These are, first, encounters across confession or communion designated as Ecumenism. Second, encounters across non-Christian faiths which he designated as Interfaith, and lastly, encounters across cultures designated as Missions. The life and ministry of Crowther will be presented along these three encounters.

Crowther's Ecumenical Encounters

In thinking of world Christianity, one must consider the many parts that make up the body of Christ. The church was born into a diverse world. It

²⁷See Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, 72 for detailed discussion on the concept of the Ephesian moment at a crossroads in Christian History.

²⁸The editors, Dale T. Irvin and Patrick Provost-Smith of *Journal of World Christianity* introduced the new journal as a "collaborative effort of scholars who first met at the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University with the aim of devising an academic journal that is collaborative. And, built upon a network of professional relationships that is international and diverse, and which depends on for its success upon the integration of the journal with the questions and concerns faced by different local Christian communities." The mission of the journal is to advance the understanding of Christianity in its various dimensions on six continents in both its local and global expressions. As a scholarly publication, the *Journal of World Christianity* seeks to meet the highest standards of academic excellence. The *Journal of World Christianity* takes as its point of departure that "World Christianity" is not synonymous with "Third World Christianity" or other such euphemisms. Nevertheless, the journal is particularly concerned with under-represented and marginalized Christian communities, and this will necessarily result in a greater degree of attention on Asian, African, and Latin American contexts, and the experience of women globally." <http://journalofworldchristianity.org>.

has to be diverse and also appreciate diversity.²⁹ Ecumenism and its nuances wrestle with the diversities in world Christianity. Modern ecumenism can be traced to the 1910 World Missionary Conference with the vision of Christian unity sternly pushed by the conference leadership of John R. Mott. Today two models of ecumenism are evident; both of these could claim legitimate heir-ship of the 1910 World Missionary Conference.³⁰

As a benefactor of the CMS in England Crowther naturally followed its ecumenical cooperative model. It was in this spirit that Crowther led the CMS Yoruba mission in the eighteenth century to open its door of fellowship and cooperation with Methodist missionaries' in language training. As early as the mid-nineteen century Crowther already had begun to live in this reality, thereby setting a pathway for an evangelical ecumenical agenda for the Church of Nigeria.

A typical example of this is found at the Baptist Seminary at Ogbomosho where Crowther and American Baptist missionaries and their native converts at Ogbomosho met during one of Crowther's interior land travels. Crowther encouraged healthy relationships with missionaries of other denominations. The use of the Baptist minister, Mr. Radillo, as an interpreter by Rev. John Christopher Taylor, one of Crowther's close associates, attests to the fact that it is not just about him but a principle he authorized and exemplified.³¹

The development of this evangelical ecumenical policy took a new turn in the mid-twentieth century CMS missionary service in Northern Nigeria. At the time, the CMS had two mission stations in northern Nigeria—the Zaria Mission and the Bauchi Mission Stations. The CMS relinquished the Bauchi Mission to the Sudan United Mission (SUM) in the spirit of evangelical ecumenical partnership in missions in order to consolidate the Hausa missions headquartered at the Zaria Mission station. Crowther's evangelical ecumenical principle was one that was driven by missions and had a faithfulness to the Scriptures.

Crowther's Interfaith Encounters

The twenty-first century church can learn much from Crowther's approach to other faiths, particularly Islam. Crowther's usage of interfaith dialogue can be seen in these three components: non-confrontational (not to be confused with non-engagement), Bible-based, and usage of a vernacular translation.³²

²⁹Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, 77.

³⁰The Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910 was a decisive moment in missions from the Western world to the rest of the world. Much has been written about this conference. It suffices to state in line with Kenneth Scott Latourette submission in *A History of Christianity* that, "Edinburgh 1910 was the culmination of growing protestants missionary gatherings at the time. More importantly, it remained a landmark in the ecumenical movement that had over half a century profound influence on global missionary thinking."

³¹Decorvet and Oladipo, *Samuel Ajayi Crowther*, 108.

³²"Samuel Ajayi Crowther: Engaging Islam in West Africa," *Evangelical InterFaith*

Crowther's experiences at Nupe, where the Muslim authority jailed him, attest to his engagement of people of other faiths with the gospel. He encouraged sensitivity to the environment in the pragmatic engagement of non-Christians with the Scriptures. Crowther encouraged tolerance in relating with people of other faiths. By tolerance, Crowther speaks of listening and seeking adequate opportunity to present the gospel, even to the Muslims. Crowther's engagement with non-Christians using Scriptures was intentional and it attested to his evangelical conviction.

Crowther's Missions Encounter

The sphere of culture remains a domain Christianity will continue to engage in as it seeks to transmit the "faith once delivered to the saints," a faith McGavran speaks of as 'known only through the words revealed by God.'³³ How then could a faith solely revealed in the Scriptures in transmission effectively engage diverse cultures? In the first pastoral charge of Crowther delivered in 1866 as the pioneer native missionary Bishop of the Niger area, he made a clarion call for faithfulness to the Scriptures as the authentic impetus for the growth of Christianity among tribal people.

Crowther decried the danger of planting a church on the foundations of cultural convenience instead of first trusting in Jesus Christ as revealed in the Bible. He wrote, "it is judicious to introduce at first among the people God's word as necessary for their salvation."³⁴ Conversion is the "great adventure of Christian faith" in gospel retransmission into a new culture, this point on the centrality of conversion stands out in Crowther ministry.

As the CMS launched out of Europe into non-western cultures with the gospel in the eighteenth century, it dragged along the British Anglicanism of "Christendom's form of Christianity"³⁵ Burrows observed that this form of Christianity seemed to neglect the centrality of conversion in the Christian faith with a possible loss of its evangelical identity. Thankfully, what was lacking in the British Anglicanism of the eighteenth century was supplied with the conservative, Basel evangelical missionaries who emphasized individual and societal conversion. Crowther is evidently a fruit of this evangelical emphasis on conversion.

Crowther's ministry was remarkable in the sense of its commitment to the idea of individual and societal conversion. For example, he took a courageous step at the risk of his life to halt pagans from human sacrifice at Onitsha Abor, where he went to ordain a new priest. The motive of Crowther's

Dialogue Series, accessed 9 April 2019, <https://fullerstudio.fuller.edu/samuel-ajayi-crowther-engaging-islam-in-west-africa/>.

³³Donald Anderson McGavran, "The Biblical Base from Which Adjustments Are Made" in *Christopaganism or Indigenous Christianity?* ed. Tetsunao Yamamori and Charles R. Taber (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1975), 38.

³⁴For a detailed copy of this Pastoral Charge delivered at the Banks of the River Niger in West Africa see, Fatusi, "Crowther goes to Canturbury," Appendix 3.

³⁵William R. Burrows, *Understanding World Christianity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2011), 111.

action was two-fold: to uphold the scriptural condemnation of this practice and to orient the people culturally by calling them to God's purposes for human creation. This event created a tremendous opportunity for expansion of the Christian faith in these new communities. It could rightly be posited that Crowther's approaches in the context of these encounters mark the outset of a departure from the western form of Christianity transmitted by western missionaries in Nigeria. Crowther's approach has remained a characteristic feature of non-western Christianity, pointing to the Nigerian Anglican Church as a citadel of orthodox Christian faith within the worldwide Anglican Communion, noteworthy in the contemporary history of world Christianity.

This unique evangelical approach to African cultural ills and orientations set him apart from the default Anglican European missionary method. Scholars have pointed out the impact of this unique global evangelistic ministry and its departure from western to non-western Christianity that is now in its full form today, which has been attributed to Crowther.³⁶ Again, Crowther's emphasis on the capacity of human development and the harnessing of resources for the purpose of gospel retransmission explains the institutionalization of his name in many quarters in Nigeria today.³⁷

An evaluation of Crowther's nineteenth century missionary practices will be grossly incomplete without highlighting his educational and entrepreneur mission strategies. Omoyajowo states that "the main weapon of Bishop Crowther's evangelization was the school,"³⁸ which affirms the prominent role of education and entrepreneur skills in Crowther's gospel retransmission. As a child Crowther grew up as a peasant farmer and was introduced to skill acquisition and formal learning at Sierra Leone where he "add[ed] carpentry to his traditional weaving and agricultural skills."³⁹ Later he was one of the first students, and the foremost in many respects, at Fourah Bay College which was established to offer higher education for the settled slaves in Sierra Leone. Crowther did not shirk from promoting education as a true companion of his newly planted churches where possible. This accounts for the heritage of the Church as the center of learning in Nigeria. The Church, therefore, becomes the center of life in the community.

It was clear that education was a significant strategy in Crowther's gospel retransmission. This confirmed the consistency at which the strategy was employed in his gospel venture. It is noteworthy to mention the short-lived Preparandi, a polytechnic institution, established by Crowther at Lokoja on

³⁶Gareth Sturdy, "Do not Despise the Day of Small Things."

³⁷The Anglican Church worldwide in particular Nigeria, today has continued to celebrate Crowther by naming several national projects after him. These include the Crowther University, Crowther Diocese, Crowther Radio, and Crowther Graduate School.

³⁸Omoyajowo, *Makers of the Church in Nigeria 1842-1947*, 42.

³⁹Walls, "The Legacy of Samuel Ajayi Crowther," 15-21.

21 September 1886. The institution was, thus, a significant factor in the expansion of Christianity among the natives.⁴⁰

Eugene Stocks, the CMS historian, wrote on the integration of entrepreneurial and gospel retransmission as a veritable strategy that squelches the social menace of slavery at the root among the natives.⁴¹ One significant impact of this integration is the empowerment of lay members of the Church to support the local development of churches.

The inception of Crowther's missionary service in the hinterland is connected to his participation in the Niger River expeditions of 1841, 1854, and 1857. There is no doubt that the British Expeditions of the nineteenth century on the Niger River opened up the hinterland of Nigeria and created the watershed platform for the exposure to western civilization and Christianity. The participation of Crowther and his contribution has been well documented.⁴² During the hazardous expeditions in which Crowther and Rev. Schon survived, Crowther was noted to have observed with keen interest the religious state and practices of the interior natives around the Niger River.⁴³ His motivation for gaining this information was to seek opportunities to share his faith and thereby retransmit the gospel. He corroborated and analyzed the integrity of his information so that he could accomplish his evangelical desire—to transmit the gospel to the different people groups located along the river so that “truly God has not left himself

⁴⁰Bishop Crowther had officially opened the Preparandi Institution on 21 September 1886. From its inception in 1883, it catered to six students, all Igbo from Onitsha, who graduated in 1887, five qualifying as teachers and preachers employed to the south of the confluence, with one of them a printer. By that year, also, a new batch of six students were admitted. The institution was, thus, a vital element for missionary and educational expansion, and an early start in promoting technological instruction and producing technical manpower. The new leaders shutdown the school in 1889 and sold off its two-story building. The new policy of the Sudan Party, which swept Crowther's men out of power, was designed to revolutionize evangelical mission and education.

⁴¹Eugene Stocks, *The History of The Church Missionary Society: Its Environment, Its Men, and Its Work* (Cleekwell, London: Gilbert and Rivington, 1899), 94.

⁴²A Bibliographic search of the expeditions produces over 1200 documented research work on the subject of the expeditions of the Niger River in the 1840s. Although the literature on the subject is numerous, the author is aware of the contentious arguments between the perceived merits and demerits of the expeditions to Africa. The fundamental purpose of the expeditions as stated in the *Historical Dictionary of the British Empire (K-Z)*, (ed. James S. Olson and Robert Shadle [Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1996], 868), is “this expedition was to establish British trading posts along the Niger and to see if it was navigable from the Sea.” It was Church Missionary Society (CMS) cardinal strategy and policy of using the gospel, commerce, and civilization to open up the country that got them on board the expeditions according to Eugene Stocks. The choice of J.F Schon and Samuel Adjai Crowther as CMS representative was providence for the future of Christianity in Nigeria.

⁴³The scrutiny and integrity of Crowther's findings documented on the people groups along the Niger River found in his personal journal. James Fredrick Schon and Samuel Ajayi Crowther, *Journals*, 2nd ed. (London Frank Cass, 1970), 144. Cited by Lamin Sanneh in “The CMS and the African Transformation: Samuel Ajayi Crowther and the Opening of Nigeria,” in *The Church Mission Society and World Christianity, 1799–1999* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 179.

without a witness” among Africans.⁴⁴ Crowther was grateful for the potential impact in the region and resolved to teach the Bible for godliness and salvation and confront what he judged was heretical by biblical standards.⁴⁵

Second, the expedition brought forward the missionary potential of Crowther that led to his going to England for education and ordination, which marks the beginning of the fruitful indigenous ministry in Nigeria.⁴⁶

Unfortunately, by the later part of Crowther’s life, the blissful Niger Mission had succumbed to setbacks by the time of his death. Crowther’s missionary labor was halted, eventually dismantled, and his authority stifled by visiting evangelical pietistic youth. Some native clergy—including Crowther’s son, Archdeacon Dandeson Crowther—were not pleased with the humiliation of Bishop Crowther and protested and dissociated themselves from the CMS. They, like many other movements in the Anglican Church at the time,⁴⁷ became an independent native church within the Anglican Communion.⁴⁸ After this time the Anglican Church in Nigeria suffered many spiritual setbacks.

Lessons for the 21st Century Global Church

It is important to recognize several vital lessons the life and ministry of Samuel Ajayi Crowther presents to our generation, particularly to the practitioners and observers of the retransmission of the gospel today. The process of retransmission is not a one man show or a display of human ability, rather it is a collective effort of individuals who rely not on their own strength but on God. Samuel Ajayi Crowther did not work alone, he had a team.

The twenty-first century global church must decry the danger of planting and operating churches on the foundations of cultural convenience or orientation; rather, primary place must be given to faith resting upon God’s word, which leads to genuine trust in the Savior Jesus Christ. Today, the church is being dragged into the mud of sexual orientation and is pressured to alter historic, biblical faith, submission to the authority of God’s word, and the transformational power of the gospel. Sound doctrine is being jettisoned on the altar of convenience and personal orientation is birthing endless arguments. Like Crowther, it is time to exalt the Word of God above all else—in teaching, preaching, and living.

Methods may change but the essential content of the gospel must be sacrosanct in all ages. The enormous choices of technology available to us

⁴⁴Schon and Crowther, *Journals*, 5.

⁴⁵Sanneh in “The CMS and the African Transformation,” 181.

⁴⁶The author is aware that Samuel Ajayi Crowther is not the first African man from West Africa to be ordained as an Anglican priest by an European Bishop in London. This is well stated in Page, *The Black Bishop*, 52.

⁴⁷David B. Barret, *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 141.

⁴⁸Sanneh, “The CMS and the African Transformation”, 194.

today should never confuse us as to the relevance of the gospel for all humanity in every region of the world. The gospel remains the power of God unto salvation—this truth demands our commitment. Every generation of believers in Christ must make new commitments to retransmit the gospel to the next generation.

Indigenous Christians are most suited to reach indigenous people. Samuel Ajayi Crowther exemplified this well. Even though there were many western missionaries who were his contemporaries in the retransmission of the gospel in Africa, his language and cultural affinity catalyzed his efforts and stirred his incarnational ministry passion.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this article has attempted to establish the evangelical root and persuasion of Ajayi Crowther that perspicuously points to his missiological praxis. It equally shows that the nineteenth century pioneering evangelical antecedents of Crowther's ministry was a foundation upon which the twenty-first-century Christian faith expansion and movements in the Anglican Communion in Nigeria was cast. The contemporary manifestation of the evangelical movement in the Church of Nigeria today still points to Crowther's evangelical convictions on the Scriptures, the need for conversion of sinners in missions, and the need for collaborating efforts in mission-driven ecumenism. Indeed, the historic growth and expansion that places the Anglican Church in Nigeria on the pedestal of global leadership within the global Anglican Church today can be traced back to Crowther's principles and strategies in gospel retransmission.

An Assessment of the Origin of Nigerian Pentecostalism and Garrick Sokari Braide's Healing Ministry of the Niger Delta (1882-1918)

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Introduction

Early Christian missionaries that were accountable for planting Christianity in the present day area called Nigeria in the 1840s-50s were mainly from Europe and North America.¹ Since then, Christianity has expanded from western and southeastern Nigeria to every part of the country. From the beginning of Christianity in Nigeria, the religion went through several stages of developments, which include the schism in Baptist Church at Lagos in 1888 that led to the commencement of African independent church movements, which eventually became the precursor of indigenous Pentecostalism in Nigeria. The Aladura movement was another stage of development in Nigerian Christianity that precedes the significant Pentecostal-charismatic movements revival of the 1970s. Above all, Pentecostalism is the fastest growing religious phenomenon in the twenty-first century not only in Nigeria but also in the world. This phenomenon has led to social changes. African church historian Asonzeh Ukah says, "Pentecostalism in its latest incarnation is one of the principal driving forces of this phenomenon of socio-cultural change" in Nigerian society.² Ukah pays attention to the growth of

¹Flora Shaw gave the name, "Nigeria," to this area. She was the wife of the former colonial master, Frederick Lugard and the name became official after the amalgamation of Southern and Northern protectorate under the leadership of colonial master in 1914. The name first emerged in The Times of London on January 8, 1897, in Flora Essay who eventually became the wife of Lord Fredrick Lugard. Before the name was put forward, Nigeria had been known by other names in different areas such as Yoruba kingdom, Hausa Kingdom, Ibo Societies, etc. The word Nigeria is a derogatory smaller expression, which was used in replacement of "agglomeration of pagan and Mahomedan States" which is another derogatory word being used in the replacement of Britain official title for the area known as, "Royal Niger Company Territories." The reason is due to Flora assumption that the phrase "Royal Niger Company Territories" is too long and weird to be used as nomenclature of Real Estate property under the Trading Company in that part of Africa. See Kunlekunle, Nigeria As a Name and the Amalgamation in <http://www.nairaland.com/844612/nigeria-name-amalgamation>

²Asonzeh F.K. Ukah, *A New Paradigm of Pentecostal Power: A Study of the Redeemed*

the Pentecostal denomination that Nimi Wariboko refers to as “the largest Pentecostal denomination in Nigeria, the Redeemed Christian Church of God.”³ In agreement with Ukah and Wariboko on the remarkable growth of Pentecostalism in Africa, Philip Jenkins asserts, “Pentecostal expansion across the Southern continents has been so astonishing as to justify claims of a new Reformation.”⁴ In his insightful work, Ogbu Kalu noted, “there is no aspect of the globalization discourse that has attracted more attention than the analyses of charismatic Pentecostal spirituality in the third world.”⁵ Timothy Tennent in his work highlighted the features of global Pentecostalism as he remarked: “Pentecostalism is a global phenomenon with adherents in nearly every country in the world.”⁶ Randy Ray Arnett’s observation in his dissertation is instructive in this regard, “Pentecostalism has changed the face of Christianity globally and most especially in the majority world.”⁷

The Nigerian Pentecostal Movement has experienced tremendous growth that outweighs that of the foreign mission-based denominations in Nigeria such as the Anglicans, Baptists, and Methodists in the twenty-first century. What are the roots of the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria? Andrew F. Walls in his scholarly discussion and views on the origin of the Pentecostal movement traces its foundation to Azusa Street. “Pentecostalism is a worldwide phenomenon. It must not be forgotten that even in the west it was originally a product of black Christian activity.”⁸ Reinforcing the opinion of Walls in tracing the origin of Pentecostalism to the Azusa Street Revival of 1906, Paul Freston in his work *Contour of Latin American Pentecostalism* holds that “Pentecostalism’s early arrival in Latin America is because of the proximity of Los Angeles, the birthplace of Pentecostalism to the Mexican border.”⁹ In contrast to the opinions of Walls and Freston, Ogbu Kalu points out that the root of Pentecostalism in Africa is indigenous. Furthermore, Kalu noted that the connection between Western Pentecostal evangelists and that of African Pentecostal evangelists contrasts the pattern

Christian Church of God in Nigeria (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2008), 412.

³Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism, Studies in African History and the Diaspora*, (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2014), 19.

⁴Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 9.

⁵Ogbu Kalu and Alaine M. Low, *Interpreting Contemporary Christianity: Global Processes and Local Identities*, Studies in the History of Christian Missions (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 19.

⁶Timothy C. Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church Is Influencing the Way We Think About and Discuss Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 167.

⁷Randy Ray Arnett, “Pentecostalization: The Changing Face of Baptists in West Africa” (PhD. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012), 48.

⁸Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002), 46.

⁹Paul Freston, “Contours of Latin American Pentecostalism,” in *Christianity Reborn: The Global Expansion of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*, Studies in the History of Christian Missions (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 224.

of the old missionary Christianity of the mainline churches.¹⁰ Kalu strengthens his argument when he declares “one may need a foreign missionary to hear the gospel for the first time, but not necessarily for experiencing the baptism of the Spirit.”¹¹ In addition, Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers, and Cornelis Van Der Laan commented on the origin of Pentecostalism, “the ‘made in the USA’ assumption is of the great disservices done to the worldwide Pentecostalism.”¹² In the same vein, these authors called attention to the fact that due recognition and respect needs to be given to the places in the world that the Pentecostal movement started without the influence of Azusa Street in America. Respect is required for those places that claim the experience of the Pentecostal movement in their history before the so-called “made in the USA” assumption, which is the Azusa Street Pentecostal movement.

Should the Nigerian Pentecostal movement identify its roots in the Azusa Street Revival of the USA, or did it have an indigenous origin that is rooted in a homegrown revival, which was not influenced nor attached to any Western Pentecostal movement? According to Matthews Ojo, the Pentecostal revival in Nigeria is rooted in “an indigenous religious movement of the revival of Garrick Sokari Braide, who was an Anglican member in Niger Delta in the 1910s.”¹³ Richard Burges also places the origin of Pentecostalism in Nigeria in the time of the Garrick Sokari Braide revival and concludes that the revival started when he was in the mainline church.¹⁴ Additionally, Moses Oludele Idowu referred to Garrick Braide’s Movement as the first prophet-healing revival movement in Nigeria.¹⁵ While Ojo, Burges, Wariboko, and Ukah, mention that the Sokari Braide revival movement in Nigeria could be the origin of the indigenous Pentecostal movement, none of them has eventually accounted for the history of the movement to support their argument. This article claims that Braide’s revival came before the Azusa Street revival of 1906 in the USA, which establishes the fact that there was more than one Pentecostal stream. Braide’s revival in the Niger Delta was an indigenous one responding to what mainline churches such as Anglican, Methodist, and Baptist in their theology consider to be their normal indigenous Christianity in the nineteenth century of Nigeria.¹⁶ The

¹⁰Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), vii.

¹¹Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, vii.

¹²Michael Bergunder, et al., *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods, The Anthropology of Christianity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 57.

¹³Matthews A. Ojo, *The End-Time Army: Charismatic Movements in Modern Nigeria, Religion in Contemporary Africa Series* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2006), 31.

¹⁴Richard Hugh Burgess, “The Civil War Revival and Its Pentecostal Progeny: A Religious Movement among the Igbo People of Eastern Nigeria.” (Ph.D. diss., University of Birmingham, 2004).

¹⁵Moses Oludele Idowu, *The Great Revival of 1930: The Origin of Modern Pentecostalism in Nigeria*, 2nd ed., African Church History Series (Ikeja, Lagos State: Divine Artillery, 2007), 24.

¹⁶Indigenous Christianity as used here from the view of mainline churches in Nigeria

paper also strengthens the arguments that Pentecostalism in Nigeria is not a branch of the Azusa Street revival movement of 1906. In the first segment of the paper, focus will be given to Garrick Sokari Braide's life and ministry in the Niger Delta as he attempts to investigate some of the available sources of the revival. Second analysis will be given to the miracle and healing ministry of Braide to underscore the indigenous nature of the movement. Finally, the Braide revival will be related to the contemporary Pentecostal movements in Nigeria.

The Background of Garrick Sokari Braide and the Great Revival

Harold Turner introduces Garrick Sokari Braide's Christian journey as an Anglican convert who was baptized at Bakana in the Niger Delta.¹⁷ He eventually became the first evangelist in Nigeria who was successful in his methods of evangelism. Miracles, healings, and serious opposition to African Traditional religious practices characterized Braide's revival movements by burning charms and amulets. Elsewhere, Turner also supports this description of Braide's movements as the first Pentecostal movement in Nigeria.¹⁸

Onah Augustine Odey supports Turner as he noted that Garrick Sokari Idakemita Marian Braide (1882–1918) is not only the first evangelist in Nigeria but also the one that “laid the foundations of Pentecostalism in Nigerian Church History.”¹⁹ Braide, a native of Nigeria, implemented a practical contextualization approach in the presentation of the gospel in the Niger Delta that makes Christianity real among the people in their own context. G.O.M. Tasié in his monumental work noted that Braide was born in Obonoma, which was one of the smallest villages in the Niger Delta and the traditional midpoint for the religious excursion among the Kalabari people.²⁰ The deity of Obonoma titled “ogu” is the most powerful among the deities in the community and the parents of Braide spearheaded the “ogu cult,” which was the deity of the village. Braide grew up in Bakana, one of the areas in the same community of the Niger Delta. The poor background of his parents could not grant him the opportunity of formal education. In her work *A History of Christianity in Africa, From Antiquity to the Present*, Elizabeth Isichei explains that Braide's mother was from the Kalabari family and his

is the form of Christian expression and meanings that are biblical, culturally fitting for the adherents of Christianity in Nigeria, and in agreement with the understanding and doctrines of the early Christian missionaries that brought the Christianity to the land. This is in contrary to syncretistic Christianity that allows and promotes any form of rituals.

¹⁷H.W. Turner, “Prophets and Politics: A Nigerian Test Case,” *Bulletin of the Society for African Church History* 2 (1965): 97–118.

¹⁸Harold W. Turner, *Religious Innovation in Africa: Collected Essays on New Religious Movements* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1979), 2.

¹⁹Onah Augustine Odey, “Prophet-Evangelist Garrick Sokari Idaketima Marian Braide: The First Revivalist in Nigeria, (1882–1918),” *International Journals of Humanities and Social Science*, vol. 3, no. 17 (September, 2013): 286.

²⁰G.O.M. Tasié, *Christian Missionary Enterprise in the Niger Delta, 1864–1918* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 323.

father was a humble Ibo slave.²¹ As a result of a lack of formal education, he eventually became a fisherman and trader who toured across the region of the Niger Delta in Nigeria.

Garrick Sokari Braide started his evangelistic ministry among the Kalabari people of the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. Ekebuisi and Tasie's work, which primarily focuses on the culture of the area, noted that the Kalabari tribe is a confederation of about thirty-two villages in the nineteenth-century, which generally consisted of three major towns known as Abonnema, Bakanna, and Buguma.²² The major occupation of Kalabari at that time was fishing, and the religious traditional beliefs include the beliefs in good and evil spirits with diversities of the means of worship. Ekebuisi noted that in the traditional worldviews of the Kalabari people, nothing happens by chance because it is always associated with supernatural forces, which can be either good or evil.²³ It is in the background of these traditional beliefs that Garrick Sokari Braide's ministry emerged and began to grow as a result of the demonstration of the supernatural power of God over other forces and traditional powers.

Although Tasie noted that it was not certain when exactly Braide became a Christian, Ayegboyin and Ademola Ishola agreed with him that it was in the 1890s. Braide had been attending Sunday school at St. Andrew's in Bakana under Rev. Kemmer since he was eight years old.²⁴ He became a full member of the Anglican Communion in his village in 1906 and began to make an impact in the denomination in January 23, 1910, in Bakana. In the same vein, Lamin Sanneh asserts, "he was baptized and confirmed by Bishop James Johnson."²⁵ Although there had been reports from all around and proclamation about his prophetic prayers, miracles, and healing gifts in the Niger Delta, Braide officially made the public declaration to ministry in 1912 and became a preacher. Odey insists, "in 1909 M.A. Kemma his pastor published official pronouncement in the Niger Delta Pastorate Chronicle, an official organ of the Niger Delta Anglican Church. In it, the pastor enumerated many instances of Braide's prayer power."²⁶ Ekeibuisi notes that Bishop Johnson, who confirmed the call and ministry of Braide, made an appeal for the rejection of Braide's movements and teachings by going to different places preaching and teaching without eating any food except cold water

²¹Elizabeth Isichei *A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1995), 268.

²²Chinonyerem Chijioko Ekebuisi, *The Life and Ministry of Prophet Garrick Sokari Braide: Elijah the Second of Niger Delta, Nigeria (C. 1882–1918)* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2015), 53; Tasie, *Christian Missionary Enterprise in the Niger Delta, 1864–1918*, 96.

²³Ekebuisi, *The Life and Ministry of Prophet Garrick Sokari Braide*, 59.

²⁴Tasie, *Christian Missionary Enterprise in the Niger Delta, 1864–1918*, 168; Deji Ayegboyin and S. Ademola Ishola, *African Indigenous Churches: An Historical Perspective* (Lagos, Nigeria: Greater Heights, 1997), 30.

²⁵Lamin O. Sanneh, *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1983), 181.

²⁶Odey, "Prophet-Evangelist Garrick Sokari Idaketima Marian Braide," 288.

until his death at Bonny on 17 May 1917 where he preached his last message.²⁷ Anderson, relying on secondary sources, affirms this as he notes that Bishop Johnson, who had established the Ministry of Braide to be authentic by ordaining him into ministry, declared him to be a “devil inspired heretic” and would suspend any clergy who supported Braide’s ministry.²⁸

His Call and Ministry

Many people in Nigeria have never heard about Garrick Braide’s ministry because many scholars and church historians did not emphasize his crucial role in the history of the Pentecostal revival in Nigeria. Olofinjana noted that he became a Christian at the age of eight and joined the Sunday school class in the church where he was taught on how to memorize the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Creeds before being qualified for confirmation. Braide was an enthusiastic and committed Christian. His original biography by one of his relatives unveils his passion for prayers and alone time with God. His brother asserts:

It was his custom to slip in secretly into St. Andrews Church on weekdays and here prostrate himself in prayer to Almighty God imploring forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ our Lord. Sometimes he asks the pastor’s permission to spend the whole night in prayer in the church with his Bible and prayer book.²⁹

After Garrick Braide’s confirmation, his prayer life became effective. Turner affirms that “Braide had revealed charismatic powers as early as 1909 and had given considerable pastoral assistance for some six years in his home parish before springing into wider fame.”³⁰ Israel Olofinjana accounts for his call to ministry:

This happened as he was taking the Lord’s Supper with others; he saw a bright light flash over him as the elements of the Lord’s Supper entered his mouth. He then heard a still small voice say to him “Jesus died for you; He gave His body and shed His blood on the cross to wash away your sins.” After the experience Braide knelt down and prayed to God. For the entire night he could not sleep so he got up from his bed and prayed with tears

²⁷Ekebuisi, *The Life and Ministry of Prophet Garrick Sokari Braide*, 177.

²⁸Allan Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Africa World Press, 2001), 81.

²⁹Ekebuisi, *The Life of Prophet Garrick Braide of Bakana*, 4. A.C. Baride was one of the brothers of Garrick Sokari of the same parents who eventually become one of the ministers and co-evangelists with Garrick Braide in his revival movements in the Niger Delta. See also, Tasié, Tasié, *Christian Missionary Enterprise in the Niger Delta, 1864-1918*, 174. Resources about the trials of Braide by the colonial government in Nigeria can be located at the court record books and some relevant reports about his ministry at National Archives at Enugu in Nigeria.

³⁰Harold W. Turner, *Religious Innovation in Africa*, 139.

streaming from his eyes. He felt unworthy in the presence of God's goodness and holiness. After this experience he heard a still small voice calling and asking, "Garrick! Garrick! Are you prepared to be my servant? Are you ready to witness to mankind the saving truths of the Gospel?"³¹

The important question to ask is what sparked such a fast growth and successful ministry of Braide? Saale Lazarus Baribiae argued that the devotees were made to feel at home during the worship service because of the use of the native liturgy of worshiping and praising God and the implementation of local cultures of singing, dancing, and clapping in the service—all of which were forbidden in mission churches.³² In the same manner, Matthew Kustenbauder perceived that Braide's focus on "public preaching and healing" enabled him to have an extraordinarily effective ministry.³³ In addition, Richard Hugh Burgess in his doctoral dissertation supports the notion as he unveils that the "local response was spectacular, mainly due to Braide's healing gifts and crusade against idolatry, a radical departure from the conversion by catechism approach of the established church"³⁴ Braide's revival practices such as singing, dancing, drumming, healing, and miracles bear semblance to the Niger Delta traditional cultures before the advent of Christianity. The traditional mindset of the people was one of the major factors of the successful ministry of Braide in the Niger Delta.

Braide's Healing Ministry

In describing the healing and evangelistic ministry of Braide, Tasié notes that his method was:

To organize a crusade against charms, fetishes, and idols, probably believing that until the people lost faith in the powers of these objects they would not find peace in Christianity. His demands upon his hearers were simple: that they should destroy fetishes, confess their sins and put absolute faith in the sufficiency of Christ, He prescribed for converts strenuous religious exercises, which help them to cultivate certain Christian discipline. He emphasized prayer sometimes specifying the numbers of times a day; he encouraged fasting and promoted the practice of praising God in local songs and shouting.³⁵

³¹Israel O. Olofinjana, *20 Pentecostal Pioneers in Nigeria: Their Lives, Their Legacies* vol. 1 (Bloomington: Xlibris, 2011), 3.

³²Lazarus Baribiae Saale, "The Christ Army Church and Socio-Cultural Changes in Khana Local Government of Ogoniland" *African Research Review* 9, no. 1 (2015): 109–22.

³³Matthew Kustenbauder, "Prophetic Movements: Western Africa," in *New Encyclopedia of Africa* 4, ed. John Middleton and Joseph C. Miller (Detroit: Thomson/Gale: 2008), 273–79.

³⁴Burgess, "The Civil War Revival and Its Pentecostal Progeny," 126.

³⁵Tasié, *Christian Missionary Enterprise in the Niger Delta, 1864–1918*, 336.

Also, Israel Olofinjana itemizes what Braide emphasizes in his ministry that makes him earn a good reputation and popularity among the people. In analyzing Braide's call to ministry and pioneering work, Olofinjana records five crucial characteristics of his teachings that redefined Christianity among the people in the following areas: First, he stressed complete reliance on God and taught people to trust God by discouraging them from seeking healing and help from traditional medicine. Second, he discouraged people from taking alcoholic beverages and magical practices. Third, he encouraged them to fast and pray. Fourth, he taught them to observe the Lord's Day and abstain from any work on Sunday. Finally, he encouraged people to praise God in their language with their local songs and to take the worldview of Africans into consideration in the presentation of the gospel.³⁶ Allan Anderson comments on what causes an African to embrace the gospel of Christ is because it is relevant to their worldviews and perception.

To be relevant to all of Africa needs the biblical message must provide a comprehensive and qualitatively higher alternative to the solutions traditional people seek. It must provide dynamic, life-giving power that secures deliverance from evil and allows people to feel safe in a hostile world. It must furthermore provide for the existential "this worldly needs" and not only for "the life to come." It must counter the dominant fear and suspicion that traditionalists feel. It is in these and host of others areas that a dynamic pneumatology must speak.³⁷

Despite the support and recognition, Braide received from the indigenous people of the Niger Delta, both Bishop James Johnson, who was the head of the Anglican pastorate of the Niger Delta, and the Colonial Government of Nigeria condemned him. Braide's evangelical and healing ministry in addition to his preaching against alcoholic drinks, declination of moral values, condemnation of charms and magic, confrontation of magicians, and destruction of shrines, did not only pose a threat to Johnson who ordained him to ministry, but also invited the wrath of the colonial government that was affected on account of the decrease in tax revenue.³⁸ For example, Johnson did not recognize him as the prophet in Anglican Church, and this caused him to separate from the Anglican Communion. In his work *Elijah II Radicalization and Consolidation of The Garrick Braide Movement in 1915-1918*, Frieder Ludwig describes how Bishop Johnson insisted that Sokari Braide should not be referred to as the prophet in his presence.

³⁶Olofinjana, *20 Pentecostal Pioneers in Nigeria: Their Lives, Their Legacies*, 4-5.

³⁷Allan H. Anderson, "Pentecostal Pneumatology and African Power Concepts: Continuity or Change?" *Missionalia* 19, no. 1 (1991): 65-74.

³⁸Anderson, "Pentecostal Pneumatology and African Power Concepts?" 65-74.

Christmas Eve 1915 was not a good day for James Johnson, the African Assistant Bishop and President of the Niger Delta Church Board. On that day, a meeting between Johnson and Garrick Sokari Braide had been arranged by some Bonny chiefs in an attempt to reconcile the Bishop with the charismatic catechist. The failure of this attempt is described as follows: Chief Alexander Hart introduced Braide and said: "Your Lordship, this is the young man in other words the prophet we have come to present to you for recognition and induction." Then the Bishop said: "Don't call him a prophet. Change that name. I shall listen to you when you have changed the name." Since Johnson refused to listen to Braide unless the title "prophet" was changed to "evangelist," the meeting ended in the withdrawal of Braide and his followers.³⁹

Agreeing with Ludwig, I.D. Samuel explains the reaction of Braide from this meeting. "Garrick picked up his walking stick and walked out of the Bishop's Court, about 2200 people of different walks of life followed him to Chief Uku alias Oko Jumbo."⁴⁰

In the articles from 1916 that he wrote to state the reason for the rejection of Braide's ministry, Bishop Johnson commented about the healing ministry of Braide as he declared that:

Many of these people return home rejoicing, having been thoroughly cured of their sickness either through his prayer directly, or through the use of a few words of prayer dictated to them by him, or through a mere touch of his hand upon them. However, if the exercise by Garrick of his healing art was at one time of an entirely wholesome and helpful character, as we presume was the case, it has certainly degenerated.⁴¹

In addition, Olabimitan Kehinde comments that Braide's evangelistic work "made cultural and political impacts in his context," which is, "the very reason his activities alarmed colonial authorities."⁴² Degema Percy A. Talbot, who was the then colonial district officer representing the British government, accused Braide of promoting "Ethiopianism" of blacks against the ruling of white colonial leaders that is tantamount to violation of the laws of the government and sentenced to prison in 1917.⁴³ In addition, Turner noted

³⁹Frieder Ludwig, "Elijah Ii: Radicalization and Consolidation of the Garrick Braide Movement 1915–1918." *Journal of Religion in Africa* 23, no. 4 (1993): 296–317.

⁴⁰Samuel I.D., *Life of Garrick Braide*, 1965, 7A–9A.

⁴¹James Johnson, Elijah II, *Church Missionary Review* (August, 1916): 455–62.

⁴²Kehinde Olabimtan, *Samuel Johnson of Yorubaland, 1846–1901: Identity, Change and the Making of the Mission Agent*. Africa in Development (New York: Peter Lang, 2013), 13.

⁴³Simeon A. Coker, *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*, ed. Robert A. Hill (Columbia, SC: Model Editions Partnership, 2000). Electronic

that “the principal result of his movements has been first a seditious against the government, secondly, a great loss to trade... and thirdly a large increase in the death rate due to the excitement and the filthy observances enacted.”⁴⁴ Olofinjana also noted the “colonial administration faced a deficit of 576,000 pounds in 1916” in the sales of alcohol on account of Garrick Braide’s evangelistic ministry.⁴⁵

Assessment of Garrick Braide’s Healing Ministry

In assessing Garrick Sokari Braide’s movements in the Niger Delta and the origin of the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria, I examined the following aspects: First, an Independent revival movement of Garrick Braide reflects the African Traditional Religion’s features in its strategies of evangelism. In addition, his methods of organizing crusades are completely different from the worship and evangelism strategies of the Anglican Church where Braide became a Christian. The observations of John Grimley and Gordon Robinson in *Church Growth in Central and Southern Nigeria* are informative on this point. John Grimley claims that in an attempt of many Independent African churches to construct “their ecclesiastical organization, they borrowed some elements of traditional churches and also followed the basic pattern of organization of African communities.”⁴⁶ The attempt to incorporate such cultural elements has been criticized by some as an invitation to pagan ideas in some of these independent movements, which is tantamount to syncretism but some scholars have seen this as contextualization that enables the gospel to be at home with the indigenous people.

Braide’s prophetic leanings, by demonstrating gifts of healings, led the Anglican Communion of his days in the Niger Delta to conclude that his ministry contained “extravagant excesses” and charged him of integrating traditional African religious rituals into the spirituality of the church.⁴⁷ It is true that emphasizing prosperity, miracles, and healings at the expense of the biblical gospel is an aberration to the church and the gospel of Christ. Destruction of shrines, charms, and discouraging the use of traditional medicines proved that Braide’s movement did not comply with African Traditional Religion that could lead to syncretism, but instead, it was a movement led by an indigenous leader with the aim of challenging the indigenous worldview with the gospel. The strategy of the contextualization of the Gospel used by Braide in his proclamation of the message of salvation among the indigenous people of his community is worthy to note. Andrew Walls in his assessment of the evangelical revival and the missionary

version based on The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, ed. Robert A. Hill, vol. 8, (Berkeley: University of California Press, [year?]), 2.

⁴⁴Harold W. Turner, *Religious Innovation in Africa*, 140.

⁴⁵Olofinjana, *20 Pentecostal Pioneers in Nigeria*, 6.

⁴⁶John B. Grimley and Gordon E. Robinson, *Church Growth in Central and Southern Nigeria*, Church Growth Series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 300.

⁴⁷Grimley and Robinson, *Church Growth in Central and Southern Nigeria*, 301.

movements in Africa observes that although Braide's movement did not fit into the Anglican communion of the Niger Delta, "the leadership of the church could not deny the effectiveness of his ministry."⁴⁸ Ekeibuisi noted that Braide regarded his prophethood as perfectly compatible with the doctrines of the Niger Delta Anglican pastorate church and sought official recognition according to the demands of people who want to who want to institutionalize the office of prophet in the church.⁴⁹ Johnson's refusal proves that Anglicanism in the Niger Delta around 1890 and early 1900s did not recognize such an office. Braides' movement—which based his call into ministry on the direct call from God through visions and dreams and was focused on miracles, signs, and wonders—is the foundation for the Pentecostal Charismatic movement in Nigeria today.

Second, despite the fact that Braide's revival movements did not have speaking in tongues or the prosperity gospel, which have become the major characteristics of the contemporary Pentecostal movement in Nigeria today, his movement became the soil in which the contemporary Pentecostal movement grew in Nigeria. Scholars such as Richard Burgess, in his dissertation *The Civil War and Its Pentecostal Progeny: A Religious Movement Among the Igbo People of Eastern Nigeria, (1967-2002)*, describe the movement as "the first Pentecostal movement in Nigeria."⁵⁰ Idowu Oludele affirms that after the death of Braide in 1918, his followers eventually established a congregation, called "Christ Army Church," which was "the first indigenous church in Nigeria, [that] is still standing today."⁵¹

Furthermore, the healing ministry of Braide contradicted that of the Anglican mission strategies, and it invited persecution from Anglican Church leaders and the colonial government. Braide's ministry claimed to have followed the biblical pattern of the Old Testament, however, Idowu Oludele comments on the excesses and the derailing of the movement:

Owing to lack of watchfulness, ignorance, fanaticism of the revival movements, excesses of his associates, some elements of the spirit of pride and a spirit of insubordinations fanned by the envy of the Anglican Church authorities, Braide finally fell into the hand of the enemies. He was arrested in 1916 and tried by the colonial authority on series of charges bordering on treason. He was jailed in November 1916 and died two years later.⁵²

⁴⁸Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996).

⁴⁹Chinonyerem Chijioko Ekeibuisi, *The Life and Ministry of Prophet Garrick Sokari Braide: Elijah the Second of Niger Delta, Nigeria (c. 1882-1918)*. (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2015), 141.

⁵⁰Burgess, "The Civil War Revival and Its Pentecostal Progeny," 126.

⁵¹Moses Oludele Idowu, *The Great Revival of 1930: The Origin of Modern Pentecostalism in Nigeria* (Ikeja, Lagos State: Divine Artillery, 2007), 25.

⁵²Idowu, *The Great Revival of 1930*, 25.

Additionally, the missionaries who started the Anglican Communion in the Niger Delta understood that until the natives become the agents and Ministers, there could be no native church, and consequently there can be no significant progress in mission work that would lead to the “mission euthanasia” in the community.⁵³ Furthermore, Tasié had noted that in 1887 Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther had also emphasized “the necessity of raising native-born youth of the Delta in the ministry of the church.”⁵⁴ Braide’s ministry arose due to this circumstance in the Niger Delta among his community but he was eventually rejected by the Anglican pastorate. It is not out of place to strongly agree that Braide’s movement of 1882–1918 is the first precursor to the contemporary Pentecostal movement in Nigerian Christianity. He was the first Nigerian to start divine healing, miracles, and prophetic movement for Nigerians on Nigerian soil in response to the spiritual and socio-political and religious situation of Nigeria during the colonial government. All the events of his movements and revival happened ever before Nigeria got her independence from British government in 1960.

Braide’s use of the indigenous language of his community to propagate the gospel instead of the Ibo language that was forced on the people by the colonial government and promoted by the Anglican missionaries is an evidence of an indigenous movement that enhances the effectiveness of his ministry and brought the gospel home to his people. It is important to note that for any effective mission work to be well rooted in any culture, the gospel must be preached in the native language of the indigenous people, the Bible must be translated in the same language and the indigenous people must be disciplined to take leadership in the local church. Braide fulfilled one of these important elements when he preached in the indigenous language of his community. Tasié remarks that Braide “spoke their local language ... knew their idioms and was familiar with their cosmology and fears of the forces of nature.”⁵⁵ Anderson accentuates that early missionaries who took the gospel to Africa and started mainline churches such as the Anglican Communion in the Niger Delta were inclusive, but were ineffectual in reaching the local people with their message because they did not speak the language of the people.⁵⁶ Braide’s preaching in the indigenous language of the

⁵³Tasié, *Christian Missionary Enterprise in the Niger Delta, 1864–1918*, 172; According to the principle of Henry Venn native church policy of Anglican in Nigeria, any serious progress of a mission hinges on the training and making disciples of the native leaders and pastors who will eventually take over from the missionaries as native pastors and native Congregational church leaders. Euthanasia of mission is the process by which a mission progressively becomes indigenous and independent. See Jehu Hanciles, *Euthanasia of a Mission: African Church Autonomy in a Colonial Context* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 26. The euthanasia of mission only takes place when the church becomes self-governing and self-propagating and self-supporting that leads to the formation of settled Christian community, see William Knight, *Memoir of the Rev. H. Venn*. (London, 1882), 307.

⁵⁴Tasié, *Christian Missionary Enterprise in the Niger Delta, 1864–1918*, 170.

⁵⁵G.O.M. Tasié, “The Prophetic Calling: Garrick Sokari Braide of Bakana (d. 1918),” in *Varieties of Christian Experience in Nigeria*, ed. Elizabeth Isichei (London: Macmillan, 1982).

⁵⁶Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*

local people was able to confront the traditional religion of the community and help displace their gods and idols. His desire was to remain an Anglican, but to revive and bring new strategies to evangelism that would result in the conversion of the native people. The designation of prophetic ministry that he employed, which underscored his pneumatic and Pentecostal orientation, was against the expression and strategies of the mission work of the Anglicans in the Niger Delta.

Braide's main messages centered on dependence on God by forsaking idols and discouraging the use of charms and alcohol. This message sustained persecution from the colonial government because it effected the tax revenue for the state as well as the leadership theology of the Anglican Church. Braide paid attention to meeting the daily needs of the people in his presentation of the gospel, but ultimately his message affected the main source of revenue of the colonial government, which was one of the charges against him when he was arrested and jailed.⁵⁷ In 1915 Braide was imprisoned on a false charge in 1915 and later died in 1918.⁵⁸

It is not out of place to contend that Braide led the Christian Reformation in the Anglican Communion in the Niger Delta. Braide's ministry that emphasized healing, crusades, prayers, and prophetic activities aided in reaching the local people. His ministry is a display of African Christianity that attempts to demonstrate the authenticity of spiritual things in general and biblical promises in particular. Lamin Sanneh maintains that:

Braide did not deny the reality of the supernatural world; he merely offered what he considered to be more effective ways of dealing with that world. In his duel with the traditional rainmakers, for example, he settles the dispute by calling on what he regarded as a higher power to achieve precisely what this opponent had previously achieved by calling on intermediary power. It is clear that Braide had merely asserted the power of a Christian God over a territory of long familiarity, rather than shifting the religious context to totally new ground. Furthermore, his charismatic powers transformed him into the familiar local figure, the powerful medicine man whom this time achieved miracles by the use of Christian religious symbols.⁵⁹

His movement can be seen as the representation of the Niger Delta's response to the Anglican missionary enterprise in the community. Braide demonstrated an African quest for the presence of the Holy Spirit to tackle

(New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 24–25.

⁵⁷Lamin Sanneh, *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1983), 180–84; Isichei and). *A History of Christianity in Africa*, 286–87.

⁵⁸Ogbu Kalu, *African Christianity: An African Story* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007), 278–308.

⁵⁹Sanneh, *West African Christianity*, 182.

the troubles, evils, and vexations of the local and indigenous people of his community. Kwabena Asamoah–Gyadu in his evaluation of the theological legacy of African Independent Churches (AIC) asserts:

One of the distinctive features of the indigenous prophets whose ministries brought the AICs into being is that they functioned very firmly as prophets and modeled their ministries after Old Testament prophets, particularly Elijah. It is not surprising that Prophet Harris became known as the Black Elijah and Garrick Braide was known as Elijah II. Their religious dispositions were quite intense as they spent long periods in seclusion praying and fasting that they may be endued with the power for the work.⁶⁰

Sokari Braide's prayer life and message of calling people from the traditional religion of Africa to God and his emphasis of fasting as an indispensable spiritual exercise bears semblance to the ministry of the Old Testament prophets such as Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Malachi. The preaching of the gospel took priority in his revival movement before he would agree to go and perform any miracle. Lamin Sanneh comments that Braide would not go and perform any miracle except "on the condition that there is an agreement that he will be allowed to preach his message."⁶¹ In addition, it is a herculean task to assess the preaching of Braide on faith in God; the effect of this aspect of his ministry is that Braide's movement increased the numbers of Christian baptism by 150 percent from 1912–1918. In 1909, the converts who demanded baptism were numbered at 902, but as of 1918 when Braide died, it had increased to 11,694. By 1921 after his death, his disciples had counted 43,000 converts for baptism.⁶²

One of the dark sides of Braide's movements is the superstitious admiration and unnecessary veneration for the personality of Braide, which is a major part of the cause for the deviation of his movement from the biblical pattern. His followers attached too much importance to his personality and touched his physical body for miracles of healing and safety from evils. Today, this way of elevating human beings is manifested in many Pentecostal movements in Africa because many give the worship due to God to their human church leaders. Sanneh noted that "the water in which he washed was collected and dispensed as containing magical properties, and his words were received as charged with spiritual force."⁶³ In addition, Tasie noted that Braide was a monogamist, but he accepted polygamy in his movement, which is one of the most difficult issues to handle in African churches up till today.

⁶⁰J. Kwabena Asamoah–Gyadu, "Spirit of Elijah: Reinvention of the Prophetism in African Initiated Christianity," *Ogbomosho Journal of Theology* 13, no. 1 (2008): 43–56.

⁶¹Sanneh, *West African Christianity*, 181.

⁶²Sanneh, *West African Christianity*, 182.

⁶³Sanneh, *West African Christianity*, 182.

For him, the essential requirements for one to become Christian can be summarized as, first, the complete breach with traditional religion; and secondly, absolute dependence upon God. Following his approach, therefore, the essential question for a Christian was whether he had destroyed his fetishes and confessed his acceptance of Christ. If so, Braide would say, he could be admitted into the church, whether he had been taught (intellectually) the rudiments of Christianity or not.⁶⁴

Many Anglican pastors were drawn by Braide's methodology in his days in the same way that mainline churches began to tolerate Pentecostal charismatic doctrines in an attempt to curtail "the steady drift of their members."⁶⁵

The Garrick Braide movement and its contribution to the transformation and reformation of the indigenous Christianity in the Niger Delta cannot be overemphasized. The reformation that his movement and revival brought to Niger Delta Christianity reverberates to the contemporary Pentecostal charismatic movement in Nigeria today. As a matter of fact, Braide is the first and a major source of Indigenous Pentecostalism in Nigeria. Chinonyerem Chijioke Ekebuisi, noted that part of the legacies and innovation which has been ascribed to Braide's movements includes, "effective indigenization," attractive and realistic view of salvation to the indigenous people in his teachings, mediating supernatural powers, the impartation of anointing and charisma-exuberant and lively liturgy.⁶⁶ All these characteristics and others manifest themselves in the Pentecostal-charismatic movements in Nigeria today.

Comparing Garrick Braide's movement with the characteristics of the Asuza Street movement revealed the indigenous nature of Pentecostal movement in Nigeria. One of the major differences between the Asuza Street revival and the Garrick Braide movements is that the American media popularized and publicized the Asuza Street revival, but there were no such media in the nineteenth and early twentieth century in Nigeria to publicize and popularize Garrick Braide's revival movements. Azusa Street has also been noted to emphasize the baptism of the Holy Spirit with evidence of speaking in tongues, healings, miracles and deliverance,⁶⁷ whereas the movement of Garrick Braide emphasized healings, miracles, and conversion.

⁶⁴Tasie, *Christian Missionary Enterprise in the Niger Delta 1846-19*, 187.

⁶⁵Asamoah-Gyadu, "Spirit of Elijah: Reinvention of the Prophetism in African Initiated Christianity."

⁶⁶Ekebuisi, *The Life and Ministry of Prophet Garrick Sokari Braide*, 185-203.

⁶⁷Edith, Blumhofer. "Azusa Street Revival." *The Christian Century* 123, no. 5 (2006): 22.

Braide's Revival Connection to Contemporary Pentecostal Movement in Nigeria

It is true that Scholars such as G.O.M. Tasié, Ogbu Kalu, Ojo Matthews, Wariboko and Ade Ajayi report that Braide did not observe speaking in tongues as part of his revival movement; prophecy, miracles, healings, and mass conversion characterized the revival. Odey insists that Braide's method of evangelism redefined Christianity as a practical religion of the Niger Delta, which led to great numbers of converts.⁶⁸ Elizabeth Isichei affirms that "Braide won Christians by appealing to their deepest needs" through the demonstration of his gifts of healing to the multitudes gathered at his meetings.⁶⁹ This is a popular strategy of the contemporary Pentecostal campaigns in Nigeria who emphasize the prosperity gospel, freedom from demonic powers, and healing in their attempt gain the attention of the poor and the needy. Ekebuisi also notes that Braide's ministry benefited the main-line churches of Igboland and that his impact captures the attention of many people including the British public.⁷⁰ In addition, in order to underscore that the Anglican Communion in the Niger Delta where Braide was converted to Christianity has been instrumental to the origin of Pentecostalism at its seedling stage.

Anglican mission introduced Pentecostalism into Igboland through their charismatic activities long before the churches that claim exclusive Pentecostalism came about a century later. The only difference is that the original Anglican was imbued in their Evangelical tradition as opposed to the modern Pentecostalism, which is characterized by seemingly emotional and ecstatic tendencies without much biblical anchorage.⁷¹

Biara and Christian reflect that Braide initiated a radical method of evangelism that served as the nursing mother of the contemporary Pentecostalism in Nigeria. He is one of the early prophets in the history of Nigerian Christianity that prepared the soil in which modern Pentecostals grow. Although he was groomed in the Anglican Communion, his way of responding to the gospel and methods of evangelism is more in line with the indigenous worldview added to a biblical worldview. Kanayo Nwadiolor

⁶⁸Odey, "Prophet-Evangelist Garrick Sokari Idaketima Marian Braide." In 1909 for instance, the report shows that there are about 300 converts to Christianity in the Niger Delta, but when Braide became involved in evangelistic activities, the number was said to have risen to (2,933). The ministry of Braide accomplishes in three months what the CMS, which is the Evangelical arms of Anglican Communion, cannot achieve in half of a century in the Niger Delta.

⁶⁹Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present*, 286–98.

⁷⁰Ekebuisi, *The Life and Ministry of Prophet Garrick Sokari Braide*, 7.

⁷¹Benjamin C.D. Diara and Nche George Christian, "Anglican Church and the Development of Pentecostalism in Igboland," *Journal of Educational and Social Research* 3, no. 10 (2013): 43.

buttresses this argument when he declares, “the seeds that indigenous prophets sowed sprouted in the inter-war years into the root of modern Pentecostal movements.”⁷² Elsewhere, Ojo argued that the Pentecostal movement has “an indigenous origin that takes his root from two revival movements” which include the Garrick Sokari Braide movement and the Diamond Society movement in southwestern Nigeria.⁷³

Garrick Braide’s movement provided thriving fruit for the origins of Pentecostalism in Nigerian church. The result ministry was dynamic and gave great attention to healings and the destruction of charms and traditional medicines. The movement was not a replication of Western Christianity but was of an indigenous origin which set loose Africans to encounter the life and the needs of the Niger Delta. Many advocates for mainline church movements have criticized Braide’s movement, but it was a movement that showed how local people responded to the gospel indigenously and not from a western perspective. The movement is one of the earliest major revivals in Nigeria that reformed the face of Nigerian Christianity which gave birth to later Pentecostal movements that eventually brought about the enormous development that contributed to the “shift of the center of gravity of Christianity to the south” in the twenty first century.⁷⁴

Conclusion

In conclusion, this article examined the root of the indigenous Pentecostal movement in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria prior to the Azusa Street Pentecostal experience of 1906. The core argument in this work centered on the fact that Braide’s prophetic revival in the Niger Delta was an indigenous revival that did not depend on any western affiliated revival or movement. This indigenous revival defines and establishes the charismatic Nigerian Christian spirituality that clearly shows how the Niger Delta responds to the gospel in an indigenous manner. The movement shows a reliable, conservative, and evangelical movement that centered on the Bible without any western help.

Contrary to the opinion of many scholars of missions and church historians, this research shows that the origin of Nigerian Pentecostalism was in the Braide revival movement of 1882–1918. Proving that the movement preceded the Azusa Street revival and, thus, was not dependent on Western Pentecostalism and shows another stream of modern Pentecostalism. Braide’s movement and ministry is an original and indigenous work birthed out of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

⁷²Kanayo Louis Nwadiolor, “Pentecostal Hermeneutics and the Commercialization of the Gospel Message in Nigeria,” *International Journal of Research* 2, no. 2 (2015): 1278.

⁷³Matthews Ojo, “American Pentecostalism and the Growth of Pentecostal Charismatic Movements in Nigeria,” in *Freedom’s Distant Shores: American Protestants and Post-Colonial Alliances with Africa*, ed. R. Drew Smith (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), 157.

⁷⁴Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002).

Missions and Insurgency in Nigeria: A Historical Survey of Nigerian Baptist Convention Work, 1980 to 2020 and the Future of World Christianity¹

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The missions' enterprise of the Nigerian Baptist Convention (NBC) has faced the rise of Islamic insurgency over the years. The continued missionary activities of the NBC have, therefore, been affected in various ways. While it could be affirmed that the effect has both opportunities and challenges, the challenges are becoming so overwhelming that the opportunities are becoming bleak.

This article establishes the impact of Islam and call for Islamization, through religiopolitical violence, on the glocalization of the Church and the retransmission of the gospel in Nigeria. While religious and political violence predates colonization in the region and informs the situation today, the focus will be upon the development in Nigeria between 1980 and 2020. This period provides two major historical paradigms that inform the context for the changes attending the Church's self-image, commitment to gospel retransmission, and the glocal impact. The two paradigms, in turn, serve as a springboard into the future of Christianity in Nigeria and beyond.

Historical Survey of Insurgency: 1980–2018

The first season of the impact of religious violence on the Church in Nigeria was between 1980 and 2000 with a series of attacks occurred. Muslims were seeking to satisfy requirements for an Islamic state for Nigeria, which was the end of a long process. Prior to this they were able to enshrine the *sharia* into the Nigerian Constitution in 1979.²

Opposed to a secular state, which was considered to be Western and therefore inappropriate, they had hoped that *sharia* would serve as the sole law guiding the nation. Muslims fought for Nigeria to join the Organization

¹This article is an excerpt from my dissertation titled "World Christianity in Crisis: Glocalization, Re-transmission, and *Boko Haram's* Challenge to Nigerian Baptists (2000–2012)" (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016).

²Matthew Hassan Kukah, *Religion, Politics and Power in Northern Nigeria*, (Ibadan: Spectrum, 1999), 115–44.

of Islamic Countries (OIC) to which the Nigerian delegation was prevailed at its beginning in 1969.³ Other requirements for membership beyond operating *sharia* included payment of membership fees, reduction or eradication of Christianity from the land, ensuring all leadership positions are occupied by Muslims, non-Muslim rights withheld, etc. These have proved difficult to achieve.

Several factors illustrate these difficulties such as dissension by some Muslims from the pursuit of Islamization. These Muslim dissenters were considered infidels and non-Muslims and were targets of violence in the desire to purify Islam. The Christians in Northern Nigeria also endured deprivation and denial of rights.⁴

Between 1980 and 1999 the second republic rose militarily with a Muslim presidency, thus satisfying an aspect of the requirement of OIC members.⁵ Prior to the military intervention a religious bill was being considered that would outlaw public preaching;⁶ it was targeted at the Church. The intervention of the military in the mid 1980s, which happened to be Muslim, facilitated executive fiat of membership to the OIC⁷ leaving one final and difficult requirement: a ten-year consecutive annual membership fee payment.

From AD 2000 to the present this same pursuit continued and became intensified. The rise of a presidency from the Southern Christian extraction in 1999 brought a renewed effort to Islamization. Twelve of nineteen states of Northern Nigeria declared themselves as *sharia* states.⁸ It marked the beginning of a concerted effort to achieving their purposes by applying pressure on the sitting government. Some success was gained during Olusegun Obasanjo's and Ebele Goodluck Jonathan's presidencies with a few payments to the OIC being made. Also, during Jonathan's rule Almajiri schools were built and partnerships with Islamic countries were secured, which led to Islamic banking and loans coming to Nigeria.

In the year AD 2000 several churches were destroyed, especially in Kaduna. The Baptist Theological Seminary was also burnt down. Though

³Jan H. Boer, *Christians: Why We Reject Muslim Law*, Studies in Christian-Muslim Relations, vol. 7 (Belleville, Ontario: Essence, 2008). See also, Joseph Kenny, "Sharia and Christianity in Nigeria: Islam and a 'Secular' State," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 26, no. 4 (November 1996): 360–62, <http://www.jstor.com/stable/1581837>; "Flashback: The Major Players in Nigeria's OIC Membership," *Nairaland*, 2 January 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/zkamjtf>.

⁴Jan H. Boer, *Nigeria's Decades of Blood*. Studies in Christian Muslim Relations, vol. 1 (Jos: Stream Christian, 2003), 38ff. Zach Warner, "The Sad Rise of Boko Haram," *New Africa* (April 2012): 38–39. Kukah, *Religion, Politics and Power in Northern Nigeria*, 154–56.

⁵"Flashback," 14, Danjuma Byang, Citing Kabiru Yusuf "Nigeria in OIC." See also, Bede E. Inekwere, "A History of Religious Violence in Nigeria: Grounds for a Mutual Co-existence between Christians and Muslims" (PhD diss., University of the West, 2015).

⁶Audi, "World Christianity in Crisis," 334–38.

⁷"Flashback."

⁸John Oluwafemi Adewumi, "Towards Developing a New Approach to Evangelism in Northern Nigeria" (unpublished essay, The Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006), 1.

this destroyed lives and property, Christianity was not eradicated. *Boko Haram* came to power after the demise of Musa Yar'Addua and his deputy, a Christian, took his place in 2010. Since then the rate of hostage taking, killings, maiming, and destruction of properties has intensified.⁹ The current government was ushered in with the promise to solve the problem of the insurgency in 2015, but instead of peace only violence has increased. While no record of OIC membership payments, the government has strengthened Islamic banking and has acquired a *sukuk* loan for development. Appointed offices of the Federation were all replaced with Muslim leadership—from security, paramilitary and military, and even in the judiciary. All efforts have been made to ensure the election of Muslims into elected offices.

The Muslim constituencies in the nation do not view this as discrimination. To them, anything less than operating under Islamic law is unacceptable. They see it as seeking equality with the Christians who had enjoyed the secular law which is Christo-western.¹⁰ Below is a brief overview of the suffering of the Nigerian Church.

***Boko Haram* and Its Impact on Nigerian Baptists**

The insurgency of *Boko Haram* (*BH*) affected Nigerian Baptists in many ways. This section will discuss the impact of the insurgency, the Church's image, the Church's response, the transformation of life, gospel retransmission, and, finally, its glocalization.

The Physical Impact of The Insurgency on Nigerian Baptists

The Nigerian Baptist churches have suffered in various ways in the hands of *BH*. The physical hardships inflicted on Nigeria have led to the destruction of churches, the killing of Christians, and displacement of many people, especially those living in the northeast. Interviews conducted report on various aspects of the suffering of the Baptist churches starting with the challenge of displacement.¹¹ Many Christians abandoned their homes, businesses, and farms due to the attacks. Most of these who were displaced left with the hope to return soon, but ended up having to seek help at refugee camps. They are affected spiritually, physically, psychologically, and economi-

⁹Daniel Egiegba Agbiboa, "Why Boko Haram Exists: The Relative Deprivation Perspective," *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review* 3, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 1, <http://tinyurl.com/npl2d4d>.

¹⁰Jan H. Boer, *Muslims: Why the Violence?* Studies in Christian Muslim Relations, vol. 2 (Belleville, Ontario: Essence Publishing, 2004), 65, citing, *New Nigerian*. See Kenny, "Sharia and Christianity in Nigeria," 357–61.

¹¹Information about those interviewed is found in, Audi, "World Christianity in Crisis," Appendix 2, 207–08. Nine people were interviewed. (Additional information about each of them is found in the pages containing interview transcripts in the appendixes as follows: Rev. Zacharia Joshua Ako: 210, 217; Rev. Dr. S. Ademola Ishola: 219; Rev. James Vandiwghya: 228; Rev. Saul Anana Danzaria: 235; Rev. Joseph J. Hayab: 246–49; Rev. Thimnu Babagunda: 266; Rev. Prof. John Ade Ajayi: 278–82; Rev. Dr. Oluwafemi Adewumi: 291–92; and, Rev. Dr. Joseph Audu Reni: 299–300).

cally.¹² The displacement “has caused untold hardships on both children and adults in Nigeria.”¹³

S. Ademola Ishola notes that the indigenous northern Christians have suffered the most. They have no place to go compared to Christians from the south who live in northern Nigeria. These southerners have the option of relocating to their states of origin, which is outside the region affected by the *BH* insurgency. The challenge facing Christians of northern origin includes the need to re-establish their homes and means of livelihood once the insurgency ends.¹⁴

Northern Christians face challenges from Muslims but also from Christians from other parts of the country. They do not readily receive support from their fellow Christians,¹⁵ and are even not welcome in some Christian fellowships. This discrimination against northern Christians by Christians from other parts of the country is not easily reported.¹⁶ The results of the insurgency compounded the challenges for crop farmers and herdsmen by bringing famine.¹⁷ Christian businesses were also destroyed and individuals were maimed or killed.¹⁸ These communities used to have several social events that brought it together that cut across religious, ethnic, and regional lines. Since the rise of *BH*, however, these events are no longer possible because of suspicion, hatred, and fear of volatility arising from such occasions. The memories of the destruction of churches, killings, and displacement caused by a group claiming religious allegiance has weakened opportunities for gospel retransmission.¹⁹

Those most affected in the northeastern states of Nigeria were over 200 local Baptist churches and 138 pastors in Adamawa and Bornu. Only two church buildings were still standing at the time of the interview.²⁰ Of 138 pastors in the Conference, only about 10 of them are in the Maiduguri metropolis. The members of all others have either been killed or displaced to other states.²¹ Those who escaped and dared to return were killed as well. Evangelism came to a standstill. Most churches that still met were simply providing solace for the survivors. Many have resolved not to return to the

¹²James Vandiwghya, Interview Transcript, 20 December 2014, 229.

¹³Zacharia Joshua Ako, Interview Transcript, 23 November 2014, 211.

¹⁴S. Ademola Ishola, Interview Transcript, 23 December 2014, 220–21.

¹⁵Moses Audi, “The Challenge of Ethno-Linguistic Crisis to Missions Effort in Nigeria,” *Missiologie* 1 no. 2 (November 2011): 5–6.

¹⁶Names of persons left out intentionally for reason of security. The pastor who was a victim of this experience shared this with a small group during a Joint Christin Ministry in West Africa (JCMWA) meeting in Jos, Nigeria on 26 September 2013, at *Ekkliisiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria* (EYN—Church of the Brethren) Headquarters, Jos.

¹⁷Vandiwghya, Transcript, 20 December 2014, 229.

¹⁸Saul Anana Danzaria, Interview Transcript, 20 December 2014, 236.

¹⁹Vandiwghya, Transcript.

²⁰Danzaria, 236–37. Vandiwghya, Transcript.

²¹Danzaria, 236–38, 243–44. S.A. Danzaria, “The Christian Response to Religious Persecution 1 Peter 4:12–19,” Golden Gate Baptist Church: Annual Session of Fellowship Baptist Conference, 21–23 February 2013, 9–11. John Ade Ajayi, Transcript, 283, 285.

region because of fear, a threat to life, and being a minority by religions and ethnic affiliation.²²

Boko Haram and Image of Nigerian Baptists

A critical observation reveals that Baptist churches in Nigeria basically see themselves as socio-political groups that will fight for their rights. Using socio-political apparatuses, the churches operate as pure social entities in worship. Worship is often entertainment driven and inclined towards marketing.²³ The churches also seek to field political offices with members who will be pre-disposed to defending the course of the church. There is a strong drive towards providing political leadership at local, state, and federal levels. The arguments have been, “Christians shying away from political involvement will result in the rule of the ungodly.” The desire for political representation is higher than the desire for missionary engagement.²⁴

The churches are pietistic and seek personal spiritual satisfaction with little concern about non-Christians. Christian commitment is primarily judged by participation in religious (church) activities rather than a transformed life and commitment to the great commission. Spirituality is measured by commitment to prayer activities and philanthropism. The moral impact on society is secondary to the manifestation of the miraculous.²⁵ In short, what one gets from God is more important than seeking to know and obey God’s expectations.

The churches look to government to bring about change in society. They look to the political-legal system to defend religious liberty. They hope for a peaceful community enacted by the political will of national leaders. The preservation of the church seems to be dependent on political power and control, which has motivated many to be politically involved.

Theologically, the churches are not conscious that they are pilgrims on the earth. They see the world and its material gains as a Christian’s right. The churches place their hope in using the “power of being children of God” to defend the church. They believe that if Christians are spiritual then no challenges will come their way. They will pray, command every situation, and all they ask will come to pass. Any suffering is a consequence of individual sin.²⁶ The growth and expansion of God’s kingdom is here in the world. Most of the churches look forward to time here on earth when Christians will be the majority and things will be done the “Christian way.” Thus, there is not much commitment to missions.

The insurgency also brought religious, ethnic, and regional divides both

²²Enima Thimnu Babagunda, Interview Transcript, 27 May 2015, 268–69.

²³Danzaria, Transcript, 243; Ajayi Transcript, 280, 286.

²⁴Ground for this assertion is the discussion on the response of the church above. See also, Kukah, *Religion, Politics and Power in Northern Nigeria*, 7–8; Matthew Hassan Kukah, *Democracy and Civil Society in Nigeria* (Ibadan: Spectrum, 1999), 97–102.

²⁵Ajayi, Transcript, 280; John J. Hayab, Transcript, 254; J. Audu. Reni, Transcript, 303; Babagunda, Transcript, 270.

²⁶Audi, *The Church as a Pilgrim Community* (Kaduna: Soltel, 2015), 21–51.

within and outside the church.²⁷ Ethno-linguistic divides and sentiments are expressed in establishing churches, appointing leaders, or even calling pastors to already existing churches. The desire among many to have a church with their isolated cultural identity within pluralistic contexts is a growing phenomenon. Ethnic affinity determines suitability for a given responsibility in the churches rather than God's leading.²⁸

The Baptists are gradually becoming prosperity driven. The health and wealth gospel is influencing many in their consideration of missions and persecution.²⁹ The expected transformation that will produce the fruit of the Spirit and appropriate self-image is lacking. This also, in turn, affects the retransmission of the gospel.³⁰ Similarly, Zacharia Ako noted that this is the most difficult time in Nigeria regarding the Christian-Muslim relations. Instead of the Church drawing closer to God, the church is getting further away from God. "Persistent attack from the Muslims or *BH* insurgency" is breathing hatred and encouraging violent responses.³¹ The *BH* insurgency is a clarion call for the church to awaken to her responsibility—missions in the face of persecution³² as well as a need to evaluate her theology.

The Church's Response

Earlier Christian responses (prior to 2000) to religious crises in Nigeria were better than the response today. These crises were understood as persecution, but the Church remained involved in evangelism and Christians apparently lived more exemplary lives.

In those days, in the early 70's, late 60's, there were mini-revivals in Nigeria, especially among the youths on campuses. There was hardly any church that I knew of, that did not have a day of evangelism. Three programs were prevalent ... bible study ... prayer meetings and evangelism.³³

It was also noted that Muslim opposition was accepted as an inevitable challenge, which led the churches to continue to evangelize and interact with Muslims.³⁴ Interviews conducted also affirmed this change. During the periods of between 1980 and 2000, Muslims and Christians protected and cared for each other. Here is an experience in Kaduna in 1987:

²⁷Online reaction to the arrest of herdsmen with weapons reveals such sentiment. See "Soldiers Arrest 92 Armed Herdsmen in Abuja," *Punch*, <http://www.punchng.com/soldiers-arrest-92-armed-herdsmen-in-abuja/>.

²⁸Moses Audi, *An Evaluation of the Homogeneous Presupposition in African Mission* (Ibadan: O'dua, 2003), 14–29. See Hayab, Transcript, 255–56.

²⁹Ajayi, Transcript, 280–81.

³⁰See Hayab, Transcript, 255–56.

³¹Ako, Transcript, 216.

³²Ako, 215–17.

³³Ajayi, Transcript, 17 July 2015, 280.

³⁴Ezekiel A. Bamigboye, *History of Baptist Work in Northern Nigeria 1901 to 1975* (Ibadan: Powerhouse, 2000), 56–57.

Certainly, I remember vividly when we had a large-scale religious crisis in 1987 particularly in Kaduna State. Christians then didn't retaliate. Most of the crisis that erupted, led to the burning down of many churches. But interestingly, the following Sunday after the crisis, believers were seen worshipping on the rubbles of those ... churches that were burnt. And, surprisingly, the attendance that particular Sunday in most churches was fuller than usual. ... But subsequently, over the years when Christians began to feel the need to retaliate and when that started happening, then it developed a circle of violence that has not been ... broken up till this moment.³⁵

In 2004 John Ade Ajayi noted the growing Islamic violence in Nigeria and warned of the danger for Nigerian Christianity and compared it to similar situations in Egypt. He noted four basic responses of the Nigerian Church at the time to the violence.³⁶

	Description of Christian Response	Percentage
1	Physical violence	14
2	Conciliatory approach	20
3	Prayer	54
4	Legal	2

Christian Response to Violence in Nigeria³⁷

Ajayi noted that tendency towards violence was growing in Nigeria since 2004.³⁸ There are indications that these statistics have further changed significantly.

Since 2006, Muslims welcomed Christians who were fleeing the insurgency only to hand them over to fellow Muslims. By 2009 previous Christian-Muslim relationships were gone and Christians began growing in violent responses towards Islamic opposition.³⁹ This change of attitude did not go unnoticed even by the Muslims who felt Christians changed from who they used to be.⁴⁰

Attitudinal change has itself constituted a barrier for reaching Muslims today. One finds an expression of hatred towards Muslims. The trust

³⁵Reni, Transcript, 24 January 2016, 301–02.

³⁶John Ade Ajayi, "Missiological Implications on the North African Christianity for the Nigerian Christians," (MDiv Thesis, The Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary Ogbomoso, 2004), 63.

³⁷Ajayi, "Missiological Implications," Tabulated by Moses Audi. It is unclear if the responses provided reflect an overlap from the instrument Ajayi used in data collection, such as the possibility of such a tendency was high, see Ajayi, "Missiological Implications," 102–04.

³⁸Ajayi, "Missiological Implications."

³⁹Vandiughya, Transcript, 230–31.

⁴⁰Vandiughya, Transcript, 305; Ako, Transcript, 213, 215; Hayab, Transcript, 257.

that once existed has given way to resentment.⁴¹ Transformation expected from faith in Christ does not seem to have taken place in the lives of significant numbers of people in the Church today. It is observed that there is a deficiency in evangelization, which is central to the experience of transformation. Most churches no longer have a specified time for evangelism. Regarding trust, Joseph J. Hayab noted, religion and ethnic affinity have become a far higher basis for appointments and support of the masses rather than competence in religious and political spheres in Nigeria.⁴²

Muslims and Islam are seen as the enemy of the church.⁴³ In reaction to this trend S. Ademola Ishola says:

You find (some) among us who feel it must be fire for fire this time around and Christian ... (passivism) is no longer tolerated. That we should fold our arms and let them continue to kill our people ... For me personally of course, as a denominational leader, I feel boxed – do I command people go ahead and also kill them; destroy their Mosque or properties?⁴⁴

The statement above indicates that leaders are faced with a dilemma. While a number of Christian leaders know that violence is not appropriate, they are sympathetic, or even willing, to assent to such action. They are in between what they know is right and what they want to see happen.

For Ajayi, the rise of *BH* is not unconnected to the failure of the Church in serving society. The self-image of the Nigerian Church has dimmed the light of the gospel. While most Nigerian Christians do not see the necessity of evangelizing Muslims, the Muslims also do not see Christian godliness any longer and, thus, are not attracted to the Christian message. Muslims see indecent dress,⁴⁵ eating of unholy foods,⁴⁶ insincerity,⁴⁷ alcoholism,⁴⁸ exploi-

⁴¹This is acknowledged by most of the interviews conducted. See Audi, "World Christianity in Crisis," Appendix B.

⁴²Hayab, Transcript, 248.

⁴³Danzaria, Transcript, 238; Ishola, Transcript, 220; Ako, Transcript, 213–14; Hayab, Transcript, 255.

⁴⁴Ishola, Transcript. All those interviewed noted the growing tendency to the violent response to insurgency and toward Muslims in general. See Ako, Transcript, 212.

⁴⁵See, Eunice Adewumi, "The Effect of Islam on Women on Evangelizing Women in Northern Nigeria," (Essay, Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary Ogbomoso, 2004), 43; Kukah, *Religion, Politics and Power in Northern Nigeria*, xi, 39.

⁴⁶Foods considered unholy such as pork, dog meat, cat meat, etc. are associated with those affiliated with Christianity.

⁴⁷In the business world, those who will doubt the cost of commodities from Muslims after asking for the true cost are church affiliates. This makes the Muslims feel they are not sincere since they cannot trust the true cost as demanded.

⁴⁸Simon Heap, "We Think Prohibition Was a Farce: Drinking in the Alcohol Prohibited Zone of Colonial Northern Nigeria," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 31, no. 1 (1998): 23–51, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/220883>. There are local establishments for drinking alcoholic substances all over the Christian dominated areas of the North. Churches and drinking establishments are side by side. Dowry requirements include alcohol.

tation, corruption,⁴⁹ and sexual morality as prevalent among cultures identified with Christianity in northern Nigeria.⁵⁰

The situation was compounded by the failure of the church in evangelism, missions, and discipleship which is replaced today with “prosperity; ... health and wealth Christianity and actually hero worship.”⁵¹ When evangelization does occur it is material centered, business-like, and miracle-centered. Amusa Iyanda Lawuyi noted that one of the factors that gave rise to Islam in Nigeria is nominalism,⁵² a perspective prevalent on the whole Nigerian society. Missions is redefined as “welfarism” and social service within the church. The spiritual well-being of members no longer occupies a central place in worship. Members are impressed to pray against their enemies rather than “rescue the perishing and disciple them.”⁵³

Attitudinal changes informed by fear, anger, aggression, distrust, hatred have become prominent bringing about a growing tendency for retaliation.⁵⁴ Spirituality is seen as a personal matter not concerned with fellowship with others. As a result, even church worship is pietistic and selfish merely satisfied with preserving the status quo.⁵⁵

The Church is responding in many worldly ways. Hayab noted three major responses—situational ethics, self-defense, and an affront against an identified enemy.⁵⁶ Other responses identified are a misinterpretation of the Bible, violent prayers,⁵⁷ and commitment to appeasing the masses.

The worldly ways the Church is responding to *BH* reveals its spiritual state. Some are even returning to African Religion. Babagunda and Hayab state that the insurgency is making “so many Christians go back into African Traditional Religion (ATR) seeking powers so that they could have ... immediate protection so to say from those people that take advantage of

⁴⁹When a contract is given to a Muslim, you are likely to get a better bargain than giving it to one affiliated to a Christian.

⁵⁰Most hotel ownership and involvement in prostitution are associated with church people by the Muslims probably by virtue of their names and dressing. It is the reason that part of the targets for the insurgents are drinking establishments. See Heap, “We Think Prohibition Was a Farce.” Muslims may fear the application of *Sharia*. The Muslim practice of *pardah* also keeps the women in homes. See Adewumi, “The Effect of Islam on Women on Evangelizing Women in Northern Nigeria.”

⁵¹Ajayi, Transcript, 280. Ajayi further noted that while Nigerian Pentecostals have borrowed from American televangelists, all other churches, including the Baptists, are adopting such teachings, 284.

⁵²Amusa Iyanda Lawuyi, “The Challenges Towards Evangelizing the Hausa Speaking Muslims in Agege Area of Lagos State,” (Essay, Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary Ogbomoso, 2004), 62.

⁵³Ajayi, Transcript, 280.

⁵⁴Reni, Transcript, 301.

⁵⁵The Churches are inward looking. See Danzaria, Transcript.

⁵⁶Hayab, Transcript, 255.

⁵⁷Some examples of violent prayers are also called “warfare prayers” and are reflected in the devotional guide used by the Baptist family. *Daily Encounter with God 2015*. Ibadan: Sunday School Division, Christian Education Department, NBC, 2015, (January 1, 11, 18, and 20, 2015).

killing the Christians anyhow.”⁵⁸ Many in the churches have the impression that they are vulnerable and could secure protection through their old religions; revealing the inadequacy in transformation.⁵⁹ Domestication of the faith and the return to ATR, a development even Muslims disdain,⁶⁰ also have taken away the transforming power of the gospel.⁶¹ In effect, the Bible is simply added to the existing religion, making Christianity utilitarian and self-centered.

With these challenges there have been some who have researched various approaches to ministry among Muslims, but most of the work is unnoticed and remain only in theological institution libraries.⁶² There are also publications that provide a biblical response to violence on the Church in Nigeria as a product of academic conferences.⁶³ Pertaining to missions, there is an unwritten policy that a missionary should be indigenous, but this has negatively affected missions because, for the unreached, unengaged groups, there is virtually no one to send and many new believer are given ministerial responsibilities.

The Impact of Insurgency on Gospel Retransmission

Boko Haram has affected gospel retransmission. In contrast to the the 1980s, there is an observable decline in missionary commitment especially to the Muslims and the cultural groups that are predominantly Muslim.⁶⁴ The relocation of Christians and Muslims has increased the barrier between them. The manner of relocation also made evangelism and mission more challenging. Baptist churches no longer share the gospel, especially with Muslims, compared to the past. Pastors seek to serve outside the northern region of the country, which has also led to a decline in Church membership. A significant percentage of worshipers no longer go to church for worship and engage in evangelism. This inability to gather for worship has further weakened the possibility of doing missions.⁶⁵ This challenge of accomplish-

⁵⁸Babagunda, Transcript, 269; Hayab, Transcript, 251.

⁵⁹Babagunda and Hayab, Transcript, 269.

⁶⁰They disdain AR and equate it with Christianity because they see the practices among groups that claim to be Christian. It is one of the reasons the Muslims see Christianity as western civilization. See Jibrin Ibrahim, “Religion and Political Turbulence in Nigeria,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 29 no. (1991): 115–21, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/160995>.

⁶¹Babagunda, Transcript, 269–70, 272. Hayab, Transcript, 251.

⁶²Abiodun Sunday Bonibaiyede-David, “Church Planting Strategies in Closed-Door Countries: A Necessity for NBC Missions,” (M. Div. Essay, Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, 2002), 39–49b. Audi, “Evangelism among the Fulbe in Nigeria,” 27–31. Adewumi, “The Effects of Islam on Evangelizing Women in Northern Nigeria.” Adewumi. “Towards Developing a New Approach to Evangelism in Northern Nigeria.”

⁶³Moses Audi, “Biblical Response to Global Violence” *BTSK Insight* 15, May 2018.

⁶⁴Reni, Transcript, 303, 306; Ako, Transcript, 216; Vandiwghya, Transcript, 233; Hayab, Transcript, 242.

⁶⁵Danzaria, Transcript, 250, 251–53; Ako, Transcript, 211–12; Vandiwghya, Transcript, 230, 232–33; Danzaria, Transcript, 242–43; Ajayi, Transcript, 280, 282.

ing missions is further complicated by a desire of Christians for justice and vengeance.

Retransmission of the gospel is replaced with a prayer against the Islamic agenda, which is a noticeable change from historic responses to persecution in the Church. While most pastors and non-pastors do not see the need to reach out to Muslims, some of the pastors in the middle of the insurgency are calling on the church to engage the Muslim communities with the gospel more than the pastors outside of it.⁶⁶ For James Vandiwghya, *BH* created fear and suspicion in the hearts of those who would desire evangelism. It became difficult to evangelize even the non-Muslims because of *BH*'s methods.⁶⁷

It has changed the mood and ministry approaches of the Church from large evangelistic rallies to a total withdrawal from outreach.⁶⁸ The decline in ministry and worship participation is due to relocation to areas considered more peaceful.⁶⁹ Prior to the advent of *BH*, churches organized evangelistic rallies, but this method had to be suspended because *BH* targeted these gatherings. The existing tension also caused open preaching to cease.

The Glocal Impact of the Nigerian Baptists

The *Boko Haram* insurgency directly affects the entire nation of Nigeria. However, this research concerns its impact on Nigerian Baptist Convention churches which serves as a case study for the impact on the church in Nigeria.

The Local Nigerian Baptists. There are two aspect to Nigerian Baptists' impact at home—within and outside the denomination. But more attention will be given to the impact within. The Nigerian Baptist Convention as a denomination has demonstrated great intentionality and commitment to missionary work in northern Nigeria despite limited resources for such ministry. It is among the last few denominations formally to enter northern Nigeria for the purpose of missions. While regional allocation among mission agencies in Nigeria in the nineteenth century is partly the reason for the delayed entry, NBC's self-established churches have been in northern Nigeria for over a century. Most of these churches were primarily established by lay Yoruba traders for themselves.⁷⁰

⁶⁶Ako, Transcript, 215–16; Danzaria, Transcript, 243–44.

⁶⁷Vandiwghya, Transcript, 230.

⁶⁸David. D. Dagah, Solomon Joseph Munga, and Samuel Shekari, Interviews, Kaduna: Albarka Fellowship Baptist Church, 25 January 2013.

⁶⁹Dauda Danjuma Gata, Bala Haruna Gukut, and D. Madaki Ashere, Interviews, Kaduna: Albarka Fellowship Baptist Church, 25 January 2013. Rev. Musa shared his experience of rejection at worship in Jos by Northern Christians because he was a Pullo at Fulbe National Consultation, Organized by Nigeria Evangelical Mission Association (NEMA), Jos: NEMA Headquarters, 17–20 April 2012.

⁷⁰Ezekiel A. Bamigboye, *History of Baptist Work in Northern Nigeria—1901–1975*, 59–184; Travis Collins, *Baptist Mission of Nigeria* (Ibadan: Y-Books, 1993), 42–46; and, S.

Though not proactive towards reaching the northern indigenous peoples,⁷¹ they made some significant impact on what is known today as Baptist work in northern Nigeria.⁷² Today, the NBC has thirteen (13) conferences out of thirty (30)⁷³ and ten (10) home mission fields⁷⁴ in northern Nigeria. Four (4) of its eleven (11) theological schools are also in the North. But much has changed since the advent of *BH*. Previous insurgencies and religiously (Islamic) motivated violence did not devastate the Nigerian Baptists as has *BH*. Below are some observable changes to the denomination at home.

Churches made of northern indigenous peoples are most affected and feel most abandoned.⁷⁵ The Nigerian Baptists at local and national levels are not responding effectively to the emotional, physical, material and spiritual needs of the victims. The 2012 shift of the Convention's venue from Abuja on the advice to not to take the Convention to a war zone was disheartening and discouraging to the churches in the North who also saw no drastic steps taken to stand with those affected by the insurgency. The *BH* crisis has further divided the church, which was already suffering from ethnic tension.⁷⁶ This development strengthened the ethnolinguistic, geopolitical, and religious tensions in the convention.⁷⁷

The crisis has further weakened missions to Muslims in the North. The local church missions in the North, which is primarily focused on the diaspora is dying due to the relocation of target groups. The effort towards the indigenous peoples is also closing due to the relocation of the Christian population and decline in interest. *BH* has further strained the fragile inter-ethnic relationships with peoples of Islamic background and closed the door to missionary opportunities with them while many mission agencies and de-

Ademola Ajayi, *Baptist Work in Nigeria—1850–2005* (Ibadan: Book Wright, 2010), 120.

⁷¹Isaiah Oluwajemiriye Olatoyan, "The Local Church and the Great Commission: A Biblical Perspective on the Practice of Evangelism and Missions among Churches of the Nigerian Baptist Convention" (DMiss diss. Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2011), 9–10.

⁷²Bamigboye, *History of Baptist Work in Northern Nigeria—1901–1975*; Collins, *Baptist Mission of Nigeria*; and, Ajayi, *Baptist Work in Nigeria—1850–2005*.

⁷³See Audi, "World Christianity in Crisis," Appendix C2.

⁷⁴See Audi, "World Christianity in Crisis," Appendix C1.

⁷⁵Zacharia Joshua Ako, "The Havoc of Religious Intolerance in Fellowship Baptist Conference," Paper Presented at Mission Summit of Lagos-East Baptist Conference, March 22, 2014, 11, 12.

⁷⁶See, Audi, *An Evaluation of the Homogeneous Presupposition in African Mission*. Moses Audi, "Ethnic Plurality and Church Planting in Nigeria," *BETFA* 3 (2004): 31–41; Audi, "The Challenge of Ethno-Linguistic Crisis to Missions Effort in Nigeria," 4–8; Moses Audi, "Heterogeneity and the Nature of the Church: A Biblical and Theological Reflection," in *Contemporary Issues in Systematic Theology: An African Christian Perspective*, ed. Moses Audi, Olusayo Oladejo, Emiola Nihinlola, and John Enyinnaya (Ibadan: Sceptre, 2011), 98–112; and, Moses Audi, "Introduction: Heterogeneity of the Kingdom of God" *OJOT* 12 (2007): 1–4.

⁷⁷Since the early 1980s, the GMB has been appointing people to their ethnic groups as missionaries with very few exceptions on the initiative of the given missionary.

nominations are focused on ATR background peoples in northern Nigeria.⁷⁸ Another way by which mission doors are closing is the changed attitudes among Christians towards Muslims in general, which has aided the accusations of insurgents that Christianity is abominable.

The denominational missionary efforts are also greatly affected. None of the fields targeting indigenous Muslim peoples in the North under the GMB have a missionary and there are no recruitments while the few serving missionaries are discouraged.⁷⁹

Interdenominationally, the NBC is one of the leading evangelical missionary churches and has the oldest indigenous missions' board.⁸⁰ It has contributed in various ways and inspired other mission agencies in Nigeria.⁸¹ Its growth impressed all its partners and observers. It has initiated several pioneer missions to unreached, diaspora, and other specialized ministries.⁸² It is also a member of the Nigerian Evangelical Missions Association (NEMA) and Joint Christian Ministry in West Africa (JCMWA)—a partnership for the purpose of missions. The NBC is one of the largest evangelical bodies and has an influence on several other denominations within the continent.⁸³

Nigerian Baptists Impacting World Christianity. Samson Ayokunle, the President of the NBC bemoans the neglect of the international Christian community over Nigeria's fight against *BH*. His call for assistance was primarily a call to material and human rights support for the Church in Nigeria.⁸⁴ His expression is indicative of the frustration regarding the best way to respond to the crisis. The desire for justice alongside the growing humanitarian need had seemingly removed the sympathy for the spiritual state of the perpetrators of this violence.

The GMB is involved in missions to Muslim countries in Africa—Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Guinea. What is happening at home will

⁷⁸Munga, Interview.

⁷⁹John Femi Adewumi, Interview Transcript, 26 July 2015, 294–96; Danzaria, Transcript, 243–44; Ajayi, Transcript, 286; Babagunda, Transcript, 269.

⁸⁰Adewumi, 295. He noted that the NBC is a leading missionary to the Muslim culture groups in northern Nigeria.

⁸¹Morgen Morgensen, *Fulbe Muslims Encounter Christ: Contextual Communication of the Gospel to Pastoral Fulbe in Northern Nigeria* (Jos: Intercultural Consultancy Services, 2002), acknowledgements. The NBC was a later inclusion for his studies as it was the only denomination that has congregations among the pastoral Fulbe in Nigeria by the time of research. Converts in other denominations are isolated and in integrated congregations.

⁸²“Evangelism and Church Growth Development Statistics, 1989–2000,” West Africa/ MAP, SUPP. Tables B and D, page 2 of summary analysis. Nigeria is said to have 85–94% of the growth in West Africa.

⁸³Most church groups are looking up to Nigeria. The NBC with its eleven theological schools have trained leaders for most of West and Central Africa. The NBC is said to be the second largest denomination outside the United States of America. See “Maisha to Baptist Family: Give Your All to Global Missions,” *The Nigerian Baptist*, 95 no. 6 (June 2016): 25.

⁸⁴“Nigerian Baptist leader castigates international community for ignoring terrorism in Nigeria,” *Information Service of the Baptist World Alliance*, 16 January 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/hygr7rgv>.

surely affect what happens in those places as well.⁸⁵ Safety considerations inform the appointments of missionaries. Oluwafemi Adewumi, serving in Mali, expressed the reservation of sending missionaries. He noted, when missionaries are appointed, they face a challenge from those who will persuade them not to go to volatile Muslim areas.⁸⁶ Several agencies have had to recall their missionaries from places considered as unsafe. In some instances, the indigenous people advise missionaries on safety issues as well.⁸⁷

From World Christian Studies (WCS) writings also, Nigeria is one of the countries in the southern continent identified as a hub of Christianity. Discussing the place of Nigeria and the Islamic tension Jenkin notes,

The twin experience of Sudan and Egypt explains why African Christians, so uncomfortably close to the scene of action, should be nervous about any extension of Islamic law and political culture. If Muslims insist that their faith demands the establishment of Islamic states, regardless of the existence of religious minorities, then violence is assuredly going to occur. This issue becomes acute in the very important nation of Nigeria which is today about equally divided between Christians and Muslims.⁸⁸

Furthermore, he noted,

When in 2000 the U.S. intelligence community sketched the major security threats over the next fifteen years, the explosion of religious and ethnic tensions in Nigeria was prominently listed. Depending on international alignments, the religious fate of Nigeria could be a political fact of immense importance in the new century.⁸⁹

The above is indicative that Nigeria and its developments are being watched globally. Nigeria's political, economic, and religious developments will provide one form of influence or another, which raises the need for global Christianity to respond.

The Future of World Christianity, 2018 and Beyond

The insurgency has revealed the true state of the Church in Nigeria. The Church is fast losing its glocal character and the power of gospel retransmission. It is becoming nominal and reveals its weakness to confront

⁸⁵For a list of the international missions points of the GMB/NBC see Audi, "World Christianity in Crisis," Appendix A.

⁸⁶Adewumi, Transcript, 294–95.

⁸⁷Adewumi, Transcript.

⁸⁸Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 172–73.

⁸⁹Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 174–75.

persecution adequately. The Church is also losing vitality due to the decline in its theology, especially its teaching of the Bible.

Two opposing directions are possible in Nigeria. If the trend towards more violence, a loss of the Church's image, ineffective glocalization, and the use of worldly responses, then the future of world Christianity is bleak. However, the opposing direction will result in a formidable worldwide faith. When Nigerian Baptists return to teaching and upholding the Bible, a commitment to missions and discipleship, it will build an army that will bring about transformation and growth of the Nigerian Church. This, in turn, will restore the mission and missionary commitments and bring a bright future to the Church.

Globalization, Glocalization, and the Impact of Circular Migration on the Expansion of Christianity in Islamic Sub-Saharan Africa

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Bamako, Mali

Introduction

One of the most fascinating stories in the history of Christian expansion is being composed in contemporary sub-Saharan Africa. The last century has witnessed phenomenal growth as traditional Africans are embracing a new faith. In many areas this expansion appears to be unstoppable with some estimates citing nearly a half a billion Africans have converted to Christianity since 1900.¹ This numerical growth, along with the subsequent development of indigenous churches, has generated considerable interest of both African and Western scholarship.²

Religious change is known in the northern region of sub-Saharan Africa. At one time, the area was exclusively animistic. Today the Sahel is decidedly Islamic. Most are Malikite Sunni's who have embraced strong Sufi traditions.³ Despite accommodation to traditional religious belief structures, this form of Islam has proven to be resistant to Christian influence. Christians are indeed present, but conversions in any significant numbers are absent. Thus, for the moment, the dominant Muslim presence seems to present a formidable barrier to the northward expansion of African Christianity.

The modern discipline of World Christian Studies seeks to document, describe, and explain the expansion of Christianity around the world. This discipline examines the condition of Christianity in indigenous contexts and seeks to understand these realities in non-western constructs. Those from an Evangelical perspective seek to do more than just to comprehend—they seek to apply that understanding to support, encourage, and even engage

¹Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3. Between 1900 and 2010, Christianity in Africa grew from 10 million to 493 million believers. By 2050, the number is estimated to be over one billion.

²Numerous scholars have written prolifically on the expansion of Christianity in Africa. The literature includes World Christian Studies (WCS) authors such as Andrew Walls, Philip Jenkins, Afe Adogame, and Jehu Hanciles.

³David Robinson, *Muslim Societies in African History*, *New Approaches to African History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 95.

these Christian movements. For African scholars, numerous questions abide in the quest to understand Christian expansion into the Sahel. Particularly, are there historical precedents for religious change in the region? If so, are there lessons from the past that can influence Christian missional strategies in the present? This article will seek to demonstrate that migration leads to globalization, and that globalization leads to an increased receptivity to religious change.

Migration: Global to Local—Glocalization

The catalysts for the Islamization of sub-Saharan West Africa came from the North. They were immigrant Islamic merchants in search of gold. Their presence had a globalizing effect upon the indigenous population. Unfortunately, the term globalization has become so popular and is so widely defined that Jehu Hanciles laments that it can mean “all things to all people.” For this discussion, I will use globalization to describe “the process whereby individuals and their communities become connected to and affected by the rest of the world.”⁴ Glocalization then is a subset of globalization in that it describes a process whereby the global invades the local and leads to the adoption of new ideas and the establishment of new cultural norms.⁵ This was the history of the Middle Niger of West Africa and can be demonstrated in the following review of her history.

Islamization of West Africa

Because of the cultural depth of traditional religion in the Middle Niger, the full shift to Islam would take more than a millennium. David Robinson describes the Islamization of sub-Saharan Africa in three phases.

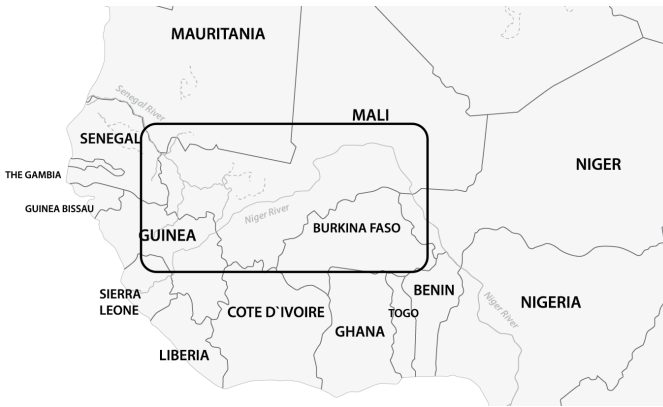
The first presence came from merchants involved in the Transsaharan trade. These entrepreneurs and their families lived principally in the towns, often in quarters that were labeled “Muslim.” They lived as minorities within “pagan” or non-Muslim majorities. This phase is often called “minority” or “quarantine” Islam. The second phase often goes by the name “court” Islam, because it features the adoption of Islam by the rulers and members of the ruling classes of states, in addition to the merchants. No significant effort was made to change the local religious practices, especially outside of the towns. The third phase can be called “majority” Islam, whereby the faith spread beyond the merchants

⁴M. Augustus Hamilton, “Analysis of the Dynamic Relationship between Globalization and the Transmission of the Gospel: A Case Study of Soninke Transmigrants in Africa and Europe” (Ph.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017), 183.

⁵See Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, Theory, Culture & Society (London: Sage, 1992), 173–74. See also Os Guinness and David Wells, “Global Gospel, Global Era: Christian Discipleship and Mission in the Age of Globalization,” (2010), 5/12.

and ruling classes to the countryside where most people were living.⁶

Each of these three stages represents a progression of both the quantity and the quality of Islam in much of sub-Saharan Africa. Islamic merchants introduced their faith to indigenous *commerçants*. As trade became valuable for both profit and power, political leaders of each major kingdom adopted Islam. At times, they would impose the religion on the masses. Ultimately however, it would be the European colonialists who would create the conditions necessary for the Islamization of the Middle Niger.



The Middle Niger⁷

Wagadu (300–500). The Middle Niger of antiquity was geographically isolated.⁸ Movements of people were blocked to the North by the Sahara Desert, to the West by the Atlantic Ocean and to the South by nearly impenetrable and disease-ridden jungles. People could move to the East, but there were few reasons for doing so. Shepherds and merchants may have traveled within the region, but emigration was neither reasonable nor practical. Consequently, the people were predominantly sedentary.

External influence on the region came in stages. The introduction of the camel in the fifth century allowed for productive trade from the North. The first to make contact were Islamic merchants, who were willing to take significant risk to trade desert salt for the gold mined at the headwaters of the Niger. As they returned to their homelands bringing word of the wealth of the region, others would follow.

⁶Robinson, *Globalization*, 28.

⁷Map of the Middle Niger by Ben Hamilton. Used by permission.

⁸The Middle Niger of today includes portions of Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Algeria, Niger, Libya, Chad, and Sudan. The region encompasses over 45 million people and more than 215 people groups. See “Desert Peoples: Reaching the Unreached,” Commission Stories, International Mission Board, 2013, accessed 1 December 2014, <http://www.commissionstories.com/africa/interactives/view/of-the-215-people-groups-on-the-southern-edge-of-the-sahara-desert-more-tha>.

A written history of the Middle Niger did not begin until around 850 AD with the arrival of Muslim historians.⁹ They describe a region known as Wagadu to the northwest.¹⁰ The inhabitants were animist Soninke.¹¹ Like much of sub-Saharan Africa traditional religion was central to their everyday lives and played a role in their sedentary nature. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu states,

African religious life was generally (and still is) bound to particular locations, sacred shrines, rivers, mountains, and caves, huts, and cattle kraals. The graves of the ancestors, the place where one's umbilical cord was buried, and the family rural home in general, form the religious center for many Africans even if they have become modernized and live away from their traditional homes.¹²

In a real sense, traditional beliefs required that the people stay close to home. All their spiritual intermediaries were local. The further one would go from the graves of the ancestors, the less connected they would be. Since everything rested on the favor of these intermediaries, few things were worth upsetting the balance. This historic time and circumstance of Wagadu provide a starting point in our understanding of the western Sahel and the processes of religious change. The people would have likely remained sedentary animists for many generations were it not for the outside influence that was yet to come.

Ghana (500–1200). As noted above, developing trade was the initial conduit of religious and political change for the Middle Niger. Evolving market conditions allowed for the organization of the people of Wagadu into the Kingdom of Ghana. Vast gold reserves in the southern highlands created strong economic incentives for engagement by peoples north of the Sahara.¹³ Roman influence on North Africa followed by Islamic mercantile

⁹Timothy Geysbeek, "History from the Musadu Epic: The Formation of Manding Power on the Southern Frontier of the Mali Empire" (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 2002), 17–18.

¹⁰For a fuller examination of the history of the Middle Niger, see Dorothea Elisabeth Schulz, *Culture and Customs of Mali*, Culture and Customs of Africa (Santa Barbara, CA.: Greenwood, 2012), 4. See also, Patrick R. McNaughton, "The Bamana Blacksmiths: A Study of Sculptors and Their Art" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1977), 4.

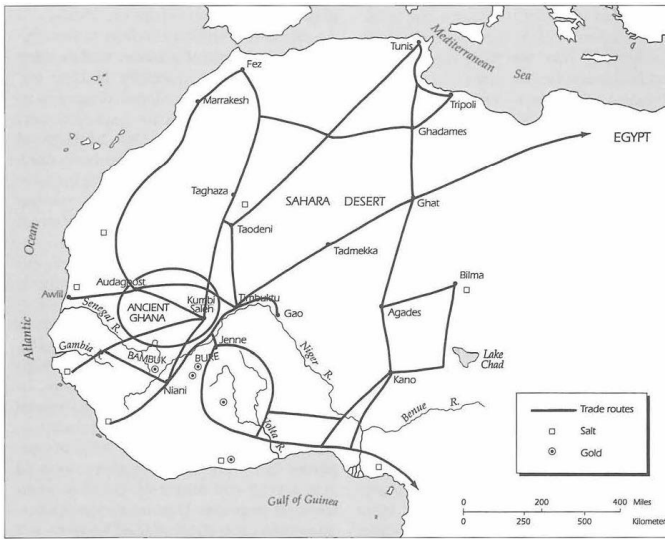
¹¹Eric Pollet and Grace Winter, *La Société Soninké (Dyabunu, Mali)*, Études Ethnologiques (Bruxelles: Éditions de l'Institut de Sociologie, 1972). The Soninke are a distinct ethnic group in the Middle Niger today. They are the descendants of the peoples who populated the historic region of Wagadou.

¹²Frieder Ludwig and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Christian Presence in the West: New Immigrant Congregations and Transnational Networks in North America and Europe* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2011), 336.

¹³Claude Meillassoux, *Urbanization of an African Community: Voluntary Associations in Bamako*, American Ethnological Society Monograph (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1968), 76.

trade created a hunger for the gold of the Sudan. South of the Sahara, salt was a rare commodity except along the coast. Access to this salt in volume from the mines in the North provided excellent opportunities to establish lucrative market relationships.¹⁴

The formation of trading routes through the desert accompanied these relationships with new central routes in place as early as 1,000 AD.¹⁵ These trade routes would forever change the region. Soninke villages merged into civil societies and people clustered together around the markets for common purposes.



Trade Routes of Middle Niger¹⁶

Thus, the kingdom of Ghana formed as these economic trading centers coalesced into unified trading blocks and political states. Because much of the commerce from the North crossed the strongly Islamic regions of the Maghreb, they also brought the influence and infusion of this new religion to the Middle Niger. For the animistic people of the Western Sudan, accommodation to religious change became an attractive, if not a necessary factor in business.

As such, the leaders and merchants of these Soninke states would become some of the first converts to Islam. Since the Animism of the populace was traditional, and the practice of Islam was foreign, adoption by the broader

¹⁴See François Manchuelle, "Background to Black African Immigration to France: The Labor Migrations of the Soninke 1848–1987" (University of California, 1987), 32.

¹⁵See Ade Ajayi and Michael Crowder, *History of West Africa*, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 1:139–40. See also Philip Koslow, *Ancient Ghana: The Land of Gold*, Kingdoms of Africa (New York: Chelsea House, 1995), 27.

¹⁶Philip Koslow, *Songhay: The Empire Builders*, The Kingdoms of Africa (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1995), 34.

society would not be immediate. However, gradually it found a home among the educated elite and the economically advantaged. Thus, using Robinson's model, Ghana entered into the Minority Stage of Islamization.¹⁷

Mali (1200–1600). In time, the kingdom of Ghana would begin to decline due to economic division and military pressures from the North.¹⁸ Other interests would rise to seek control of the gateways to the trans-Saharan trade routes. In the South, the Manden peoples populated the gold fields of the Fouta Djallon of the Sudan.¹⁹ These fields made their people very wealthy and positioned them to rise to power. They resented their Soninke overlords who had served as “middlemen” in the gold trade. Capitalizing on the weakened state of the North, their economic position enabled them to establish and then preside over a new empire that would become known as the Kingdom of Mali. The former kingdom of Ghana had been organized around city-states. In the new order, political systems would evolve around a king and associated nobility. Their centralized wealth brought the capacity to conscript an army that could secure the new kingdom.

One of their kings was particularly noteworthy. Keita (Mansa) Musa (1280–1337) expanded imperial control of the kingdom of Mali over most all the Middle Niger. By 1325 he had conquered the cities of Timbuktu and Gao to the far north and east. His broad power unified the control of trade and gave him immense power and wealth. By some accounts, he was the wealthiest person to have ever lived.²⁰ Most notably, Musa adopted Islam and anchored Islam into the political systems of the day. As a Muslim, he made the pilgrimage to Mecca twice and in 1324 did so with great fanfare.²¹ His show of wealth became known throughout the Islamic world and consequently opened new and fresh markets for trade.²² The journey also exposed him to a global world and most certainly influenced his perspective of Islam.²³ On his return, he brought scholars from the East to establish Islamic

¹⁷Robinson, *Globalization*, 28.

¹⁸See Ajayi and Crowder, 1, 128–30. And Pascal James Imperato and Gavin H. Imperato, *Historical Dictionary of Mali*, 4th ed., Historical Dictionaries of Africa (Lanham: Scarecrow, 2008), 2.

¹⁹For an excellent discussion on the region, see Ajayi and Crowder, *History of West Africa*, 1:119.

²⁰“The 25 Richest People Who Ever Lived—Inflation Adjusted,” Celebrity Net Worth, 2014, accessed 1 October 2018, <https://www.celebritynetworth.com/articles/entertainment-articles/25-richest-people-lived-inflation-adjusted/>.

²¹Djibril Tamsir Niane, “Sundiata and Mansa Musa: Architects of Mali’s Golden Empire,” *The UNESCO Courier*, August–September (1979).

²²Nubia Kai, *Kuma Malinke Historiography: Sundiata Keita to Almamy Samori Toure* (1972), 251. See also John Coleman De Graft-Johnson, *African Glory: The Story of Vanished Negro Civilizations* (New York: Walker, 1966), 97. By today’s standards, Mansa Musa may have been the wealthiest person to have ever lived. On this one Hajj, he led a caravan of over 6000 porters of gold, and its length exceeded 40 miles. It is reported that he distributed so much gold in Cairo that it depressed the gold market there for years to come. His show of wealth placed the Kingdom of Mali at the center of all Islam and trade in sub-Saharan Africa.

²³J. Spencer Trimingham, *A History of Islam in West Africa*, University of Glasgow Publications (London: Oxford, 1970), 71. See also, Lamin O. Sanneh, “The Origins of

training centers in both Timbuktu and Gao.²⁴

In Robinson's model, the Kingdom of Mali represents the establishment of the "court" phase of Islamization in the Middle Niger. During this period, Islam became the dominant religion among the ruling classes, the educated and the merchants. External commercial forces exerted tremendous influence through these relationships. Even so, Mansa Musa did not impose Islam upon the people. Had he done so, there would have been a revolt. After his death in 1337, the kingdom weakened without his strong leadership and steadily declined. This weakness created opportunities for the northern states to gradually regain independent control of the valuable trading routes and commercial markets.

Songhai (1400–1600). The Songhai (Songhay) peoples along the northern bend of the Niger River capitalized on the decline of Mali and used their military prowess to control surrounding territories.²⁵ In 1464, Sunni 'Ali (Ber) began a broad conquest along the Niger River and ultimately established his capital in Gao, on the far eastern edge of the kingdom. Like those before him, he embraced Islam to maintain external trade and to satisfy the Soninke traders within the kingdom. When he died in 1492, one of his generals, Askia Muhammad Toure, became king.²⁶ Under his strong rule, the Songhai Empire expanded significantly to the West and ultimately controlled the Senegal River valley from the Atlantic to its headwaters, the Hausa region of modern-day northern Nigeria and as far east as Chad.

Like Mansa Musa of the previous kingdom of Mali, Askia continued to propagate Islam, particularly among the ruling classes.²⁷ In so doing, he maintained an environment that facilitated Islamic growth among the population. He built schools for the study and spread of Islam. He dedicated resources to strengthen the great learning center of Islamic scholars at the Sankore University in Timbuktu.²⁸ These efforts helped him to maintain close ties with the Islamic traders on the desert side and led to the adoption

Clericalism in West African Islam," *The Journal of African History*, 17, no. 1 (1976): 51.

²⁴Hammadou Boly, "La Soufisme Au Mali Du Xixeme Siecle a Nos Jours" (Ph.D. diss., Universite de Strasbourg, 2013), 32. These scholars would play a significant role in the Islamization of the northern sector of the Middle Niger. The infusion of this Eastern Islamic tradition upon the local culture (glocalization) was instrumental. These religious leaders indoctrinated their students, who would then carry Islam into the smaller towns and villages.

²⁵There are multiple people groups in the region. The Soninke were to the West, Manden were to the South, and Songhai were to the East in the region of Timbuktu.

²⁶Ajayi and Crowder, *History of West Africa*, 1:228. See also Imperato and Imperato, 21. The Askia's were a dynasty of eleven kings, who ruled over much of the Songhai Empire in the 16th century.

²⁷See Philip Koslow, *Songhay: The Empire Builders*, *The Kingdoms of Africa* (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1995), 24. See also Pat McKissack and Fredrick McKissack, *The Royal Kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhay: Life in Medieval Africa*, 1st ed. (New York: H. Holt, 1994), 96–99. This marked a significant change. Formerly, the adoption of Islam was for economic and political purposes. Now it would appear that the adoption was much more solidified.

²⁸McKissack, *The Royal Kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhay*, 100.

of Islam by significant numbers of Songhai society.

Askia died in 1528. He was a dynamic leader and had a profound influence on the establishment of Islam among the northern ethnic groups of the Middle Niger. This, along with the strength of the Soninke merchants, the Fulani shepherds, and the Toucouleur peoples to the West, would significantly influence the spread of Islam further south. At the time, however, the lack of a suitable successor to Askia created a leadership vacuum, and the Songhai Kingdom joined the remains of the Kingdom of Mali in complete decline.

The Mali and Songhai kingdoms represent the full transition from the "Minority Stage" to the "Court Stage" of the Islamization of the Middle Niger. During this period, Islamic belief and practice had become established among the aristocracy of the courts of the two kingdoms. However, Islam had not thoroughly infiltrated into the people. This was particularly true in the South where traditional religion remained strong. They were predominantly sedentary farmers with little need for foreign merchants or their religion.

As the vast unified empires dissolved, individual kingdom-states would arise and once again assert their influence and power. Many small kingdoms would come and go, but two great movements emerged in the Middle Niger. On the one hand, the Bambara from the south would take control of the Niger River delta in the region of Segou. They fiercely rejected Islam and sought to control the region and associated trade by force. The Fulani, on the other hand, migrated away from the Futa Toro in the Northwest and spread across much of West Africa. They were committed Muslims and sought to spread Islam across the region, by compulsion if necessary. Thus, the stage was set for the ensuing conflict.

Fulani Caliphates (1600–1865). The Fulani peoples possibly descended from Morocco and settled on the western fringes of Wagadu. They formed the state of Tekruur in the ninth century and ultimately became a part of the larger empire of Ghana.²⁹ Strategically located in the Futa Toro of the Senegal River, their region became an active trading center for the gold from the Bambuk region to the South, salt from the Awlil region to the North, and grain from the Sahel to the East.³⁰

As allies of the Berbers and Tuaregs of the North, the people of Tek-

²⁹See also John H. Hanson, *Migration, Jihad, and Muslim Authority in West Africa: The Futanke Colonies in Karta* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 25; and also, B.O. Oloruntimehin, *The Segu Tukulor Empire*, Ibadan History Series (London: Longman, 1972), 7–8. The Fulani (Peul or Fulbe) are predominantly a nomadic pastoral people. Early settlements were established in this region due to the availability of water. Once there, a segment joined with the local population and became sedentary, establishing a culture of agriculture and fishing. They became known as the Toucouleur. The nomadic non-Toucouleur Fulani continued to migrate extensively across the Middle Niger, managing their livestock and engaging in trade.

³⁰Philip Koslow, *The Lords of the Savannah: The Bambara, Fulani, Igbo, Mossi, and Nupe*, The Kingdoms of Africa (Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 1997), 20.

ruur were positioned well and enjoyed prosperity regardless of the status of either Wagadu or Ghana. The Kingdom of Mali had risen to control the central trans-Saharan trade routes as later would the Songhai Kingdom, thereby diluting their lucrative trade market. Despite the financial decline, their location along the western corridors allowed the Fulani/Toucouleur people to retain strong trading connections with Islamic influences of the Maghreb.³¹

The Islamization of the Futa Toro region would follow roughly the same pattern as in the central Niger. Formal Islam in the Futa Toro was in the court stage, confined to the ruling classes, the educated, and the economically advantaged. The Arabic required to study, understand, and teach Islam was simply beyond the capacity of the common man. Thus, for Islam to truly move from the court to the majority stage, it would have to be delivered in a modified form. Those changes came with the introduction of the spiritual elements of Sufism.³²

Emerging out of Sunnism in the late seventh century, Sufism was a mystical-ascetic aspect of Islam that placed greater emphasis upon esoteric divine revelation than upon typical religious forms, even the Qur'an. This form of Sufism would become synonymous with Islam as it was adopted in the Middle Niger and it would become well established by the sixteenth century. The attraction of Sufism, as it developed in the southwest Maghreb, was that it drew from the mystical elements of the traditional religious base of the populace and it allowed non-Arabic speakers to lead and practice Islam with authenticity and authority. Thus, it came in a form that could enjoy popularity among the people. Unexpectedly, however, as the spiritual devotion of the common people grew, the disparity between the basic tenants of Islamic faith and the practice of the court became evident.³³ This incongruity would ultimately lead to efforts of reform.

By all accounts, Islamic reform in the Middle Niger began in the deserts of southwest Mauritania in the seventeenth century. A Muslim cleric named Nāsir al-Din called for an Islamic revival that would unite the community into a new system of governance. He sought to establish a caliphate that would stand above the desert tribal divisions in Mauritania and the political divisions of the Wolof and Futa Toro states to the south.³⁴ While unsuccessful in creating an Islamic political center, he did spark a revival that

³¹William J. Foltz, *From French West Africa to the Mali Federation*, Yale Studies in Political Science (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 5.

³²For an excellent discussion of Sufism in the Futa Toro, see Robinson, *Globalization*, 27.

³³This is not to imply that the leaders were not Sufi. It is intended to highlight the differences between court Islam and majority Islam. Court Islam utilized Islamic practice for political and economic purposes. Since the populace had access to neither, they would adopt Islam for religious purposes, and thus grew weary of the hypocrisy of their leaders. It would be this frustration that would fuel the popular reform movements.

³⁴Philip Curtin, "Jihad in West Africa: Early Phasis and Inter-Relations in Mauritania and Senegal," *The Journal of African History* 12, no. 1 (171): 14–16.

would lead to five separate jihads among the Tukulor and Fulani.³⁵

These Tukulor/Fulani jihads became efforts to establish regional caliphates, to ensure leaders conformed to the demands of the Islamic faith and to bring the population into proper practice. Much of the Middle Niger was still in the court stage of Islamization. The migratory Fulani sought to bring Islamic practice upon a much larger segment of the population of the southern Middle Niger, particularly in the animistic groups. These efforts represent the beginnings of the third level of Islamization suggested by Roberts, or “Majority” Islam.³⁶

The initial methodology of the reformers was to indoctrinate local populations in Islam through charismatic teaching. Where there was resistance, such as in Bambara controlled regions, they would enforce acceptance through military prowess. Drawing from their ethnically diverse religious base, they found that they could quickly raise an army from their followers. These Fulani jihadists were successful in almost every area of engagement. Were it not for the incursion of French colonial forces in the late nineteenth century, the military power of the Fulani hegemonies would likely have fully imposed Islam upon the entire region by force. Even so, the seeds had already been sown across much of the region.

Colonial Occupation (1450–1960). European encroachment would have a significant impact on the inhabitants of the Middle Niger, their migratory patterns, and their religious practice.³⁷ French presence equated to French control. Colonial policy gave no concern to the ongoing Fulani religious expansion in the nineteenth century, except to constrain their militant activities and seek to maintain peace. Although colonial presence prevented further jihads, it created the conditions that allowed Islam to reach the majority stage in the Middle Niger.

First, colonial rule sought to unify the people of the region by imposing French as the language of government. The Bambara people had been resistant to Islamic incursion and were willing to aid the French against the Fulani. In recognition of their assistance, the Bambara language was encouraged to become the language of commerce.³⁸ By enforcing the use of these two languages, bridges were built across ethnic groups that would ultimately benefit Islamic expansion.

Second, colonial rule transitioned the culture from a system that was sedentary and predominantly agricultural to a cash economy. Trade, and even more importantly, taxes resulted in a need to possess French currency. The necessity of earning a wage would encourage many to migrate away from

³⁵Curtin, “Jihad in West Africa,” 15. Jihad should not be interpreted to mean warfare against conflicting ideologies. It is a struggle for something, such as reform. It would only be in the late periods that the jihads were characterized by warfare and destruction.

³⁶Robinson, *Globalization*, 28.

³⁷Efraim Karsh, *Islamic Imperialism: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 69–70.

³⁸Sundiata A. Djata, “Fanga: The Bamana in the Middle Niger 1830–1910” (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois, 1994), 302.

home in search of work. This separation reinforced circular migratory patterns. In so doing, isolated areas became exposed to Islamic teachings.

Finally, colonial rule created an environment that allowed the movements of itinerate, Muslim clerics. As such, they could teach the populace and encourage conversion. Islamic expansion could now follow the subtler routes into the culture without the additional baggage of political control. Given time, Islam would be adopted by the majority of the people of the Middle Niger.

Thus, as in the Middle Niger, one can readily see that glocalization, the influence of the global upon the local, can definitively effect religious change on a region or a people. It took nearly a thousand years for the region to transition from traditional religion to the minority and then the court stages of Islamization. Then, the movement to majority stage happened quickly. The population of Mali has grown from 1.3 million people in 1900 to over 19 million people today. In 1912, only 3% of the Bambara and 30% of the people in Mali were Muslim. By 2015, 95% of the Bambara and 87% of the total population had adopted Islam.³⁹

Migration: Local to Global—Globalization

I have proposed that it was immigration that led to the glocalization and ultimately the Islamization of the Middle Niger. The region experienced religious change because of the influence of the global immigrant upon the local resident. In the modern age of globalization, I believe it will not be the immigrant who continues to effect transition, but rather the emigrant. I suggest that it will be those that leave, become exposed to a global world, and then return who will precipitate the most significant changes to their people and cultures.

Clearly, globalization is facilitated by migration. Although modernity has created diverse delivery systems of global information in the last century, it is still the human carrier that has the most profound influence upon local change. In the past, it was immigrants who came to Africa from other places. Today, the tides have turned, and emigration is the norm. Migrants leave the Middle Niger with a dream of finding a better life and hope to return to their homeland to share the spoils of their success. Many are traveling into Christianized regions and are becoming exposed to the gospel. When they return, they bring their new-found faith with them.

Migration is a Reality in Mali Today

Mali serves as an excellent example of a modern, sub-Saharan country on the move. Out of nineteen million people, more than four million of her

³⁹Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 736. See also, Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, "World Christian Database" (Boston: Brill, 2007).

citizens live abroad.⁴⁰ Most are economic emigrants in search of a better life for their families. The majority remain in Africa, but an estimated 120,000 Malians are living in France.⁴¹ They are drawn to places like Paris, utilizing long established village or religious networks. Although the route of passage may be indeterminate, these emigrants leave with established systems of support in both their places of origin and their places of destination. If they can survive the journey, they typically have a place to land.

Those without such networks also make the journey independently, often leaving their Malian families destitute. These European immigrants, motivated by a desire to survive, follow the dangerous northern routes across the desert and the Mediterranean. Many will become the victims of human trafficking and many will either die along the journey or become enslaved in North Africa.⁴² Some will make it to Europe; some will be arrested and sent back.

Of those who do make it, most will join the ranks of irregular immigrants from across Africa and the Middle East. They live in refugee centers with basic supports. Each day brings a fear that they will be repatriated. Even if they can find work, they are typically abused and underpaid as they engage in the most menial of labor. It can be a very difficult life that was not expected when they left, and impossible to explain to their family back home.

By comparison to their counterparts in Mali, labor migrants are wealthy and are held in very high esteem by their home communities. Remittances by Malians abroad equates to nearly 6.5% of Mali's Gross Domestic Product.⁴³ For many Malian families, these resources provide their primary means of support, creating intense pressure on the migrants to secure and send funds. The sense of responsibility can be overwhelming. One Malian interviewed spoke of his family and related, "If they live, it is me that made them live. If they die, it is me that made them die."⁴⁴

The reality of migration in Mali encompasses more than just international emigrants. The internal displacement of Malians is nearly epidemic. In the past, drought-induced food insecurities were a primary cause of such movements. In 2012–13, internal conflict displaced more than a half a million people from the North. Some took refuge in surrounding countries, but many moved to the populated regions of the South.⁴⁵ These rural to urban movements have led to rapid urbanization. The majority became squatters,

⁴⁰Diana Cartier, "Mali Crisis: A Migration Perspective," (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2013), 6.

⁴¹"Qui Sont Les Maliens De France?," *Lemonde*, 2013, accessed 1 October 2018, https://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2013/01/18/qui-sont-les-maliens-de-france_1818961_3224.html.

⁴²Amélie Gatoux, "Mmc West Africa August 2018: Monthly Trends Analysis," (Dakar: Mixed Migration Center, 2018).

⁴³"World Bank Mali Country Profile," World Bank, 2018, accessed 1 October 2018, <https://data.worldbank.org/country/mali>.

⁴⁴Hamilton, "Analysis," 292–93.

⁴⁵Cartier, "Mali Crisis: A Migration Perspective."

inhabiting available vacant buildings in cities like Bamako. Poverty among this group is rampant, with many resorting to *la mendiante*, or begging on the streets.

As with emigration, forced displacements tend to be circular. Most of those driven out by the northern conflict in 2013 have returned to their homes.⁴⁶ Even so, they maintain their citizenship in both Bamako and their local region. They do so for both security and economic interests. They seek to maintain relationships so they have a place to go if things get dangerous again. And, they continue to cultivate their economic ties as they maximize their earning potential.

Exposure to a Global World Effects Cultural Change

The impact of globalization on Malian migrants is evident. The movement from village to regional center, capital city and perhaps another country creates exposure to an increasingly broader world. Priorities expand and hesitations diminish as one is immersed in new cultures and communities. These shifts have been observed at four levels.

First, globalization introduces individualism into a collective worldview.⁴⁷ Native Malians are typically born into a highly collective culture. Decision making occurs at group levels, and family hierarchies dominate most all choices. These processes extend into the most personal of affairs including religion, marriage, employment, finances and even the use of time. Emigrants pressed into new environments discover freedom from this collective control and the associated individualism is often embraced.

Second, globalization brings a changed perception of wealth.⁴⁸ Mali culture holds a strong expectation that each person is responsible for contributing to the financial security of the whole. In the local worldview, the needs of the group supersede the needs of the individual. This conviction motivates most emigrants, and it remains an obligation for many. The necessity to provide for their personal needs accentuates the individualism associated with migration, and the temptation to prioritize resources for personal benefit can be intense.

Third, globalization brings an acceptance of non-traditional thoughts and activities.⁴⁹ In Mali, there is a fierce tenacity to maintain religious belief and cultural practice. Gender and class roles can be quite rigid. Islamic conventions are generally inflexible. Most find that maintaining these beliefs and practices can be difficult while on migratory pathways. The necessity to engage the community in their host city can often lead to accommodation. Migrants can become adept in the art of role shifting, doing whatever is

⁴⁶“Rapport Sur Les Mouvements De Populations,” (Bamako: International Organization For Migration, 2018).

⁴⁷Hamilton, “Analysis,” 200.

⁴⁸Hamilton, “Analysis,” 202.

⁴⁹Hamilton, “Analysis,” 203.

necessary to meet their daily needs.⁵⁰ Yet in distant urban contexts, they very well may soften their historic convictions and adopt new systems of belief.⁵¹

Fourth, globalization brings an increased awareness of other religions.⁵² Most Malians are tolerant of other forms of religious practice, but they have not ever been personally exposed to anything beyond their cultural Islam. On the migratory pathway, however, things change. Some become exposed to more orthodox versions of Islam, leading to a stricter form of practice. Others become immersed in secular contexts, and their religious commitments weaken over time. Still others become exposed to Christianity and ultimately come to faith in Christ.

Many are Exposed to Christianity, Some Come to Faith

For those migrants who come to faith in Christ, the process is typically not a singular event, but rather a series of events.⁵³ At its essence, conversion requires change at cognitive, affective, and volitional levels. One must come to a specific place in what they know about the gospel, and they must also come to a specific place in how they feel about becoming a follower of Christ.⁵⁴ Interviews with Malian migrants who have come to faith indicates that the above processes of globalization were a vital component of these cognitive and affective shifts.

An excellent example of this process can be found with Abdoulaye.⁵⁵ He was raised in a village in northern Mali that held to strict Islamic and cultural norms. Seeking to find food for his family, he began to travel as a young teenager. He spent four years in Senegal and Mauritania looking for work before returning home. Along the way, he heard occasional stories about Christianity. These stories did little more than catch his attention as he held to his Islamic convictions. Afterward, he traveled to France to work for his uncle on an illegally obtained visa. It was there that he became fully introduced to the gospel.

This exposure came through a chance encounter with a childhood friend named Bacary. Having left home about the same time as Abdoulaye, Bacary had spent time in the Middle East and was now working in Paris. Along his journey, he had become a follower of Christ. Their renewed relationship led to a cognitive awareness of the gospel and a dramatically

⁵⁰Zain Abdullah, *Black Mecca: The African Muslims of Harlem* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 13.

⁵¹Guvnor Jónsson, "Migration Aspirations and Immobility in a Malian Soninke Village" (Oxford: International Migration Institute, 2008), 17.

⁵²Guinness and Wells, "Global Gospel, Global Era," 221–22.

⁵³Reinhold Straehler, "Coming to Faith in Christ: Case Studies of Muslims in Kenya" (D.Th. diss., University of South Africa, 2009), 54.

⁵⁴"Coming to Faith in Christ: Case Studies of Muslims in Kenya" (University of South Africa, 2009).

⁵⁵Hamilton, "Analysis," 337. The story of Abdoulaye was recorded as a focused oral interview. For security purposes, the material was de-identified. Abdoulaye is not his real name, and he was referenced as PP in the study.

changed attitude about Christianity. The message was coming from someone he understood and trusted. Over time, Abdoulaye also put his faith in Christ. He was successful in Paris and could return to Mali with the admiration of the local community. He sought out other believers around his village and was soon baptized at an evangelical mission. Abdoulaye has now spent the last three decades living his Christian faith in the village. Because of his position in the community, he carries a level of credibility and influence that has allowed him to see others come to faith.

A young pastor named Mussa is another example. When fighting erupted in northern Mali in 2012, he was one of the thousands who were displaced from his city. He fled to Bamako and began to minister to those who were discouraged and destitute. He held weekly services for the displaced believers. Within a few short weeks, the attendance had grown to eighteen families of five to ten members each. Of particular interest was one family that was not Christian, but Muslim. Their affinity with other refugees was stronger than their religious inhibitions and their displacement allowed for an increased receptivity to Christianity. Such would have never occurred in their local contexts. During his time in Bamako, both churches and mission organizations served these refugees with food, clothing, and shelter. Nearly all have now returned to their homes in the North, and the remaining believers were assimilated into local Bamako churches. For those who went back, they carried their experience and exposure to Christianity home with them.⁵⁶

Returning Migrants Carry Influence

Within these two short testimonies, it becomes evident that emigrants can carry significant influence in their local culture. Those who provide funds through their remittances are considered heroes among their family and community. Even from a distance, they carry a voice that can speak across cultural and religious divides. Their immersion into a global context effects change, and they then become global conduits of that change back home. Those who return to Mali will live somewhere in the minority/court stage of expression in their community. Like their Muslim counterparts of old, these emigrants return to occupy influential positions in society. Those who are believers will often find the freedom to live their faith without serious consequence. Some will occupy positions that will allow them to introduce new ideas, including the gospel.

There was once a day when the religion of the Middle Niger was animistic. Over the course of a thousand years, Islam made its way into the culture through the influence of immigrant merchants. At first, only a minority of the people adopted this new religion. In time, it was embraced by the courts of the economically privileged and the political elite. However, it was the influence of these indigenous leaders that allowed the full adoption of Islam by the people during the 20th century.

⁵⁶Interview with Dr. Mohammad Yattara, Bamako, 26 September 2018.

Today, Christianity is beginning to make inroads into the region and is using the same pathways as ancient Islam. In the past, it was the immigrant strangers that carried the seeds of a new religion. The global came to the local and influenced the culture. Today, religious change is coming to the Sahel through the hearts and voices of their emigrant brothers. The local is going into the global and people are being changed. They return with what they have found and it is being embraced by others. While Christianity is currently in the minority stage today, it stands poised to soon enter the court stage. Given time, it may overcome the Islamic barriers and be embraced by the majority of the people.

Conclusion

Today, globalization and urbanization have changed the complexion of the modern mission field. Over 55% of the world now lives in large urban contexts and will increase to 68% by 2050.⁵⁷ Additionally, nearly one billion people, one-seventh of the world's population can be found on migratory pathways.⁵⁸ Most are making their way towards these urban centers. Many of these migrants represent ethnic groups that are considered unreached and unengaged. Fortunately, expressions of Christianity can be found in most of these urban environments, and the opportunities for these isolated peoples to become exposed to the gospel is growing. As globalized migrants, they are more open to the influence of the gospel than ever before. If they were to come to faith, most would return to places modern missionaries could not ever go with an influence they could never attain.

Throughout Christian history, the church has sought to be found obedient to the commission of Christ to "*go and make disciples of all the nations*".⁵⁹ She has embraced the missional process delivered to the disciples. "but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth (Acts 1:8)." She has been faithful to offer a Spirit-empowered witness at home and abroad. The moment each of these missionaries left their Jerusalem, they also became migrants. As such, their pathways took them to familiar places like Judea, foreign places like Judea, and at times, faraway places that were completely unknown.

There was once a day when going to the unknown was critically necessary. If the missionary did not go, the people that lived there would never hear. That day has changed. Today, unreached people from the remotest parts of the earth are on the move. They are migrants, and as such share a com-

⁵⁷"World Urbanization Prospects: 2018 Revision," United Nations, 2018, accessed 4 October 2018, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS?end=2017&start=1960>.

⁵⁸Marie McAuliff and Martin Ruhs, "World Migration Report 2018," ed. Marie McAuliff and Martin Ruhs (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2018).

⁵⁹Matthew 28:19, Unless noted otherwise, all Scripture references are from the New American Standard Version.

mon connection to the missionary migrants that they meet along the way. Together they walk similar pathways and experience similar challenges. It is at these intersections, this middle ground of Judea and Samaria where those who were once far away and inaccessible are now close and open to conversation. They can now step beyond their cultural and religious restrictions and into a place to truly hear and respond to the message of Christ. In the end, it may well be these migrants who will become missionaries to their fellow migrants and their community back home.

Book Reviews

The Eucharist—Its Origins and Contexts: Sacred Meal, Communal Meal, Table Fellowship in Late Antiquity, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity. 3 Volumes. Edited by David Hellholm and Dieter Sänger. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017. lx + 2199 pages. Cloth, \$435.00.

The subject three-volume project was a continuation of the previous three-volume research project “Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism” but with “reference to another subject”—the Eucharist (xxxiii). The Organizing Committee is represented by researchers of differing theological backgrounds from Germany and Scandinavia. Contributors to the project are “Christian and non-Christian” scholars “from all around the world,” and from multiple fields of research and study, including “History of Religion, Egyptology, Classics, Ancient History, Old and New Testament, Judaism, Patristics, Archaeology, and History of Art” (xxxiii).

The initial essay by Körtner acts as an introduction to the project and contours many of the essays, though it is provided in German only (1–21). The essay emphasizes ecumenism (9–13) and theology (18–20), while pushing for further study. The first English essay by Altmann (23–41) notes the trend in Eucharistic research towards “Greco-Roman symposium-esque features,” but also points out neglected Old Testament contexts (24). Concern over “the Passover Seder from the medieval Passover Hagaddah” and its anachronistic use is helpfully discussed (23; and *passim* vol. 1).

How meals functioned sociologically in the ancient world (both Jewish or early Christian, but also Greco-Roman), with interest on the feasting community and its variegated rituals, is contoured in several early essays (Altmann, 23–41; Eidevall, 43–59; Jacobs, 161–76; Sänger, 181–222) and some later essays (Leonhardt-Balzer, 258; Leonhard, 308; Kelhoffer, 313–29; Marguerat, 513–35; Winnige, 582–83; Vegge, 645–71; Ulfgard, 697–731). Among the earlier essays, roles (host, priest, victim, laity, etc.), arrangements (consecration, seating, calendar dates, lamb or goat, location, etc.), and elements (the sacrifice, wine, meat, blood, etc.) are explicated in terms of their social-symbolic meanings (honoring kinship and friendship, strengthening solidarity, Yahweh or the deity as a guest of honor, observing occasions of sacrifice, celebrating, dedicating the Jerusalem temple, royal banqueting, destruction, victory, covenanting, divine-human interaction).

Communal meals and their customs (e.g. purity/impurity) at Qumran are discussed in two essays (Wassén, 77–100; Frey, 101–30), as well as Magness’ reassessment of sacrificial practices at Qumran (131–55; towards a positive conclusion). Food/eating customs in Tobit and *Aristeas* are discussed by Jacobs (157–79). Sänger emphasizes the “formulaic references to the bread of life, cup of immortality, and ointment of incorruption” in *Joseph and Aseneth* as symbolic of Jewish religious customs in general, rather than pointing to a specific sacred meal (181–222). A further, inspiring essay by Hartvigsen draws richly on the same text while emphasizing the narrative importance of food, drink, ointment, and honeycomb (223–51). Leonhardt-Balzer’s essay examines Philo and Josephus’s mention of meals, and draws parallels with the Greco-Roman context (253–73; see 258 for the notable mention

of Philo's likening of the symposiarch to the Logos, συμποσίαρχος λόγος; Philo *Somn.* 2.249).

Moving into the New Testament, the importance of Exodus 12 as a script for Passover celebration is discussed by Leonhard, but with a negative conclusion; Exodus 12 is considered a cult etiology (276–87). A chronologically sensitive comparison of the Last Supper with later Rabbis and Haggadah is carefully discussed with several profitable insights (287–305). Further, for Leonhard, the Upper Room setting of the Last Supper is considered plausible, though the social status of those present is not (308). The association between Pesach and Eucharist is, then, one of early Christian “theological imagination” owing to the proximity of Jesus’ final meal with Passover (308). Finally, certain Seder features “must be understood as instances of Greco-Roman communal meals” rather than Jewish customs (276). John and Jesus and their respective non-participation and participation in meals inform the next essay by Kelhoffer, with careful exegetical argumentation and an interest in social capital/power (313–29). Ådna’s essay makes excellent use of the criteria of authenticity in establishing Jesus’ table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners against the skepticism of, specifically, Dennis E. Smith (331–53).

Holmstrand examines Jesus’ feeding of the multitudes (numerous texts are considered, though Mark 6:30–44 is given priority), and their reception in the first three centuries AD (355–88), a reception that is admittedly small (only eight references; cf. 385). Blomqvist and Blomqvist provide an exciting philological study of related Eucharistic vocabulary attested across several texts/sources from the period of c. AD 50–200 (389–421). Byrskog helpfully examines the symbolic actions of Jesus that are a critique of the Temple and cult (Mark 11:1–11; 11:12–14, 20–25; 11:15–19) as well as his counter-temple teaching (Mark 11:27–33; 12:1–9; 12:35–37a; 12:37b–40; 13:1–2), before examining the Mark/Matthew and Luke/Paul forms of the tradition while making use of social memory (428–36; 436–45). Specific features (forgiveness of sins, new covenant, etc.) that speak clearly of the Supper’s significance are taken as secondary, though Byrskog desires such significance for Mark (443). Lastly, a pre-Markan Supper text in Greek is neatly hypothesized (444). Sandnes’ essay (453–75) is an excellent comparison between the Markan and Matthean accounts and, taken together with Byrskog’s essay, stands in stark contrast to the negative findings of Kazen, who essentially repristinates the skepticism of Jesus questing observable from the late nineteenth century onward (477–502).

Popkes’ essay focuses on Luke 24 and John, and positively assesses their knowledge of the Supper’s institution, though neither is (said to be) explicit in their Gospels (503–512); meals in Acts (and Luke) are treated in the following essay by Marguerat, who points out their social significance (513–535). Next is Müller’s treatment (537–554) of the strong and the weak in Romans 14–15 (with reference to 1 Cor 8:10), followed by Duff’s helpful exegetical essay on 1 Corinthians 11:17–34 (555–78). Winnige’s essay comparing 1 Corinthians 11 with Luke 22 is a well-written study exploring several difficulties in Supper scholarship (e.g. the text-critical problem in Luke 22:19b–20, which he sees as textually authentic; Luke’s reliance on Paul mostly but sometimes Mark, as in “poured out ... for”; the memorializing aspect, also seen as a late development, perhaps owing to Greco-Roman culture; the new covenant, which is considered a later addition; Pesach, also a late addition; libation; etc.); he further details an (oral) traditioning history (579–602). Nevertheless, he observes a Greco-Roman symposium behind certain features of the Supper and discerns “*Pesach* connotations” as late (cf. 599–600). John examines Peter’s Antioch

controversy as attested in Galatians 2:11–21 (603–24; he understands the table fellowship controversy as encompassing the Lord's Supper and reflective of a Judeo-Christianity schism). Löhr (625–44) assesses the meaning of subsequent sacramental terminology, including *communio* and *participatio*. Vegge's essay (645–71) looks at additional New Testament scriptures, specifically Colossians and Jude 12, and is methodologically informed by the sociological models of Theissen and Lindbeck. His treatment of Jude is especially helpful.

Ulfsgard helpfully examines meals and eating in Revelation (673–95). Revelation 3:20 is seen as an eschatological messianic banquet (681); also discussed is the marriage supper of the Lamb and additional eschatological eating/drinking, including the tree of life and the hidden (eschatological) manna (683–90). "Antidivine meals," meaning meals symbolic of divine judgment (Rev 2:14–16, 20; 17:16; 19:17–18), are also discussed (690–92). Bormann (697–731) examines the cultural-anthropological dimension. And finally, Weidemann (733–69) draws a connection between baptismal accounts in Luke and Paul (primarily) and table fellowship/eucharistic practices.

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***The Books of Haggai and Malachi.* By Mignon R. Jacobs. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. xlv + 377 pages. Hardcover, \$48.00.**

Mignon R. Jacobs is the Dean and Chief Academic Officer at Ashland Theological Seminary. She has chaired the Israelite prophetic literature section of the Society of Biblical Literature and is noted for her work in Old Testament narratives. Her work on Haggai and Malachi represents an update for the NICOT series on these two biblical books. The previous volume was written in 1987 by Pieter A. Verhoef. Together with Mark Boda's volume on Zechariah (2016), the NICOT has now completed an update of the Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi corpus.

Jacobs structures her commentary with an introductory chapter inserted before the main discussion of the text of both biblical books. The introduction to each book differs slightly. The introduction to Haggai includes discussion of the prophet and date, while the introduction to Malachi does not. The introduction to both books contains comment about the historical and sociopolitical context, conceptual framework, the text and intertextual indicators before ending with an overall analysis of the structure and message of the book. Jacobs's pattern of presentation of the text and commentary follows other volumes in the series. First, she presents her own translation with translational notes. Then, she engages scholarly discussion on the text along with her own notes while using transliterated Hebrew.

The way that Jacobs accomplishes her goal of interpreting the text as prophetic literature while noting the intertextual voices within the text is helpful, as with many of the minor prophets. In her comments on Haggai 1:3b–4, Jacobs points out major intertextual connections with texts from Ezekiel, Isaiah, 1 Kings and Jeremiah. She also presents several minor connections of phrasing with other texts. Even though Jacobs presents the possible connections without judging their significance, her presentation of the connections is still helpful for those trying to make interpretive decisions although she does not make such decisions herself.

Jacobs has masterfully controlled the secondary literature on Haggai and Malachi. Her bibliography contains all the major players as one would expect, and her footnotes show detailed familiarity with their arguments regarding texts like Haggai

1:11 where some scholars see parallels with texts from Deuteronomy. Additionally, her notes on the text are detailed. When Jacobs translates Haggai 2:15–19, she then presents eleven notes concerning translational decisions plus footnotes (104–06).

Another strength of this book is the way in which Jacobs presents charts and maps. For example, the chart of Persian and Yehudite Leaders helps to understand the historical figures mentioned in and around 500 BC. Furthermore, the map of Yehud among the Persian Provinces (135) is an excellent visual aid for reading and understanding not only the references in Malachi, but those in Haggai as well. Those who are using this work as a textbook will find that Jacobs has presented charts and maps that will be useful for students to memorize.

The work does have a few shortcomings. One may expect a biblical commentator to claim something about the identity of the biblical book's author; however, Jacobs makes no such claims. She does argue that a real prophet named Haggai lived during the time the book describes (approximately 520 BC) as the book claims. Yet, she never makes any statements about authorship. In dealing with the book of Malachi, Jacobs quickly notes that scholars disagree whether Malachi refers to a person or functions as a title before she moves to the next issue. At the same time, it is true that the historical location of each book for which she argues could be used to bolster an argument for traditional authorship of both books (she dates Haggai to 520 BC, and Malachi to approximately 515–458 BC); however, she makes no such claim in this work.

Additionally, Jacobs states in the introduction that one of her goals is to “inquire about the significance of the text for both the ancient and the modern audience” (viii). She does an admirable job of demonstrating the significance of the text for the ancient audience. However, she often fails to suggest ways that the text is significant for its modern audience. For example, in discussing Malachi 2:16 (often translated “God hates divorce”) she makes no reference to the contemporary issue of divorce.

Similarly, discussions of theological and thematic elements are not given priority in this book. To be clear, she does list intertextual links between Malachi and the New Testament, but these discussions conclude at the textual level without moving to the theological level. Moreover, her discussion of four prevalent themes in Malachi takes up less than one full page (152–53).

To sum up, this work represents a significant step in terms of scholarly commentaries on the books of Haggai and Malachi. Anyone teaching a course on Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi will want to make use of Jacob's work, since the work of Meyers and Meyers is becoming dated. For the seminary student, and the local pastor with interpretation (not application) questions, this book will provide an excellent starting point for digging into the text of these two minor prophets. I highly recommend this book.

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***Worlds That Could Not Be: Utopia in Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah.* Edited by Steven J. Schweitzer and Frauke Uhlenbruch. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016. xii + 211 pages. Hardback, \$114.00.**

This volume of collected essays addresses a growing trend in research concerning the books of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah: the concept of utopia. Utopia itself is difficult to define, especially as it relates to Biblical Studies. Thomas More

coined the term as the name for a fictional island with a seemingly ideal society; however, the term has expanded considerably as a way of speaking of categories of literature, ideologies embedded in literary works, and sociological movements that produce this type of literature (cf. esp. 82). Admittedly, at first it may seem strange that a term coined in a fictional work from 16th century England would apply to religious documents emerging from the Near Eastern world nearly two millennia earlier. To understand why scholars have used the concept of utopia to study this literature, it is helpful to look specifically at Chronicles.

As is well known, Chronicles presents the history of Israel in ways that differ from Samuel and Kings. As previous generations of scholars tried to explain these differences, they generally relied on historical arguments: either Chronicles used a different historical source or Chronicles retrojected the practices of his present time into Israel's past. For instance, since pre-exilic documents do not mention the twenty-four priestly courses, some scholars argued that Chronicles retrojected this second temple practice into the time of David in order to authorize the practice for his own time. Utopia provides another explanation for such differences. If one thinks of utopia as expressing the desire for a better alternative reality (see especially Schweitzer's essay), one can argue that Chronicles may not attempt to authorize a current practice but change it. In this case, Chronicles was not intended to be an instrument to reinforce the status quo but an instrument of reform.

The essays in the volume address the questions of utopia and biblical literature from different points of view and different emphases. Some essays deal more directly with the texts. Others take on the feel of thought experiments, probing the possible historical, ideological, or literary assumptions and intentions behind a text and through modern approaches. Despite the diversity, some themes recur consistently. First, the essays admit that care is required to speak of biblical literature through the lens of utopia, though most find it beneficial in some way (see Uhlenbruch's comments on 1 Chronicles 1–9 as a "cyborg text," 76).

Second, many essays address the nature of utopia as a place that is better than the present one, at least viewed from a particular point of view. In light of this theme, Snyman probes the line between utopia and dystopia and considers the circumstances that would likely produce utopia, conditions he does not find easily in the context of Chronicles (38–58). Exploring the particular point of view of the returned community, Cataldo addresses how a sociological look at prejudice may inform the restoration efforts of Ezra and Nehemiah (144–68).

Third, the essays explore how these biblical books address power and authority. For instance, Polaski examines how scribes navigate their position of prestige within the Persian Empire by looking at the way writing functions in Chronicles. He points out that most often the scribes depict writing as inadequate since it requires some type of supplementation. However, he notes that writing in which "empire and Temple align" (e.g. the temple plans) requires no supplementation. This alignment reveals part of the strategy for the scribe to navigate his both his prestigious position as scribe and his subordinate position as subject of the Persian Empire.

Beyond these recurring themes, I would like to point out some individual essays. First, Stordalen's essay ("Worlds That Could Not Be: Realism and Irrealism in Thomas More's *Utopia*") takes a fascinating look at the world portrayed in More's *Utopia* and the way that More's reading audience mapped out their world. Important to realize is that such maps are "graphics [that] chart geographic, historical, symbolical, and religious matter in one and the same space" (20). Furthermore, these

maps often contained Paradise (Garden of Eden), but “the reader of the map would nevertheless not have expected to be able to go there” (23). Stordalen speaks of these features as real and unreal, drawing connections to the early chapters of Genesis to show that these chapters present a world in contrast to the world of experience.

Second, Schweitzer’s essay (“Exile, Empire, and Prophecy: Reframing Utopian Concerns in Chronicles”) lays out his influential utopian approach. He then models the approach by addressing three concerns of Chronicles: exile, empire, and prophecy. By looking at these themes, he emphasizes that Chronicles focuses on cultic concerns rather than political ones as the means for establishing a better world for the community. Prophets play a role in this world as they “give the impression of continuity between these ancient narratives and the present, as they interpret the past for the present audience to create a different future based on that same past” (101). The essay is a model example for applying this approach.

Third, Jendrek’s essay (“Taking the Reader into Utopia”) looks at the role of prayer in Chronicles to promote a hope for a future restoration of Israel. He works closely with a number of texts, pointing out textual connections between prayers. He points to Schweitzer’s argument that Chronicles presents Israel in an atemporal way. Then, he argues that these connections function within that atemporality to “bridge the times texts tell about and any reader’s present by transporting the motifs and the summons to worship YHWH to *any time* a reader reads them” (181). The essay illustrates how the shape of historical narratives themselves may help bridge the gap between text and reader.

I conclude with two remarks. First, the volume concludes with an essay by a specialist in utopian studies. Due to the nature of the essay, I have not addressed it above; however, I hope that other scholars working in a cross-disciplinary manner will follow the same example. Second, although I still wonder about the validity of a utopian reading of biblical literature and although I disagreed with a number of specific interpretations, the volume stimulated a number of questions that I hope to pursue and placed several observations in a new context for me to consider. This stimulating volume suites especially well anyone wanting to explore the growing academic trend of reading utopia in biblical literature.

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***Basic Introduction to the New Testament.* By John Stott. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017. 216 pages. Paperback, \$16.00**

John Stott’s introduction to the New Testament has aged gracefully since its first installment in 1951. This 2017 edition, revised by Stephen Motyer, succeeds in the quest to “lighten” language and acknowledge more recent biblical scholarship. It also includes a foreword by Alistair Begg, who vividly celebrates Stott’s capacity to “thread the needle” through a passage of Scripture without “tearing the text” or pulling it out of shape.

The nine chapters of this reader-friendly volume address the authors of the New Testament writings and their respective messages. The arrangement of each chapter is such that the reader may gain insight into the context and content of the author’s message. While acknowledging the foundational unity of the New Testament authors in terms of their awareness of the world’s estrangement from God and its need for deliverance from the affliction of sin through Christ, Stott also emphasizes the manner in which these authors supplement each other in light of

their individual purposes and concerns. This is particularly the case with regard to the Gospel writers.

Although it does not include an exhaustive treatment of background and exegetical matters, this book, with its economy of words and concise organization, seems to supply more weighty and significant content than other standard introductory works. For example, Stott begins with Mark's Gospel and briefly summarizes the case for Marcan priority, noting that 600 of Mark's 662 verses may be found in Matthew's Gospel. Additionally, Stott succeeds in identifying for the reader the distinguishing features associated with each of the synoptic Gospels. Mark is described as the Gospel of the Christ the suffering servant. The fact that a third of Mark recounts events directly connected to Christ's death supports this designation. Matthew's Gospel is hailed as the Gospel of Christ the ruling king. With a shorter narrative style than Mark, Matthew repeatedly references the Kingdom of heaven and links events in the life of Jesus to Old Testament prophecies, with the result that Jesus is presented as the unique Son of God who is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. Luke's Gospel is fashioned as the Gospel of Christ the universal savior. Identifying Luke as the only Gentile among the New Testament writers and as an educated historian, Stott highlights this Gospel's appeal to the masses and to the marginalized in society. He also views the book of Acts as a continuation of Luke, recording the expansion of the early church and providing encouragement and hope to a suffering church.

In a chapter devoted to the writings of John, the reader is presented with a portrait of him as an eyewitness of the ministry of Jesus, a person with intimate knowledge of the Lord and one who was profoundly changed by Him. Stott calls attention to the prologue of John's Gospel which affirms the Son's pre-existence with the Father and to the Gospel's evangelistic intent that is indicated in John 20:30–31. John's letters are described as supplements to his Gospel which address the subjects of Christological error, moral deception and self-exaltation.

With his thirteen letters comprising exactly a quarter of the New Testament, Paul is the focus of the book's fifth chapter. His letters trumpet the message of salvation by the grace of God in Christ. Stott observes that Paul viewed the grace of God as both an attitude and action of God in relation to fallen humans. He then proceeds to arrange the chapter along the themes of justification, sanctification, edification and glorification. This arrangement allows for a helpful overview of the main thrusts of Pauline theology.

Successive chapters on Hebrews, James, Peter, and Revelation round out the composition of this New Testament introduction. After acknowledging the age-old dilemma of authorship, Stott identifies the finality of Jesus Christ as the theme of Hebrews. This theme is then developed through emphases related to Christ's supremacy, sacrifice, and suffering. In his brief chapter on James, Stott asserts that any perceived conflict between the teachings of James and Paul may be resolved by understanding that the two differed "in emphasis, not in message." He attributes authorship to James, the brother of our Lord, and presents James as a general letter which relies on the teachings of Jesus and that stresses the significance of practical obedience in the Christian life. Stott's treatment of Peter seems somewhat limited and general in scope when compared to the other chapters. Peter is identified as the apostle of hope who writes to suffering Christians and points them to the example of Christ in suffering.

The final chapter of the book addresses Revelation. This reviewer found Stott's apparent unwillingness to identify the author of the fourth Gospel as the author of Revelation troubling. At the very least, one wonders why so much attention was focused on the issue in an introductory text. The chapter does include a summary of the preterist, historicist, futurist approaches and, what Stott terms, the timeless-symbolic approach.

Aside from the concern expressed regarding the authorship of Revelation, this reviewer was baffled by the decision to leave out any treatment of the book of Jude. Any argument for "balance" in the alignment or arrangement of chapters fails to justify such an exclusion. Nonetheless, despite these issues, this book, in view of its concise style and overall clarity, should be a helpful resource for students of Scripture seeking a basic introduction to New Testament writings.

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***Seeing God: The Beatific Vision in Christian Tradition.* By Hans Boersma. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. 467 pages. Hardcover, \$55.00.**

To followers of Hans Boersma's writings over recent years, *Seeing God*, Boersma's recent ambitious opus tracing the doctrine of the beatific vision through the Christian tradition should not come as a surprise. Nor will Boersma's readers be surprised as he attempts to view the beatific vision through his familiar lens of "sacramental ontology." As Boersma puts it, "A sacramental understanding of the beatific vision takes seriously the teleological character of history ... We usually deal with the topic of sacramental ontology by using vertical or spacial metaphors ... [but] in connection with the beatific vision, however, we have to think in horizontal or temporal categories. We anticipate seeing God at the end of history" (10).

In *Seeing God*, Boersma attempts to trace the doctrine of the beatific vision through Christian history and tradition in order to articulate a holistic and catholic doctrine of the beatific vision. In doing so, Boersma acts as a historical theologian, tracking the beatific vision throughout Christian history, breaking the book into five parts: introduction/beatific vision in modernity, the beatific vision in the early church, the beatific vision in the medieval church, the beatific vision in Protestant thought, and concluding with a dogmatic appraisal of the beatific vision. Examining the pieces and the work as a whole, this reviewer was particularly impressed with Boersma's strong work in the early church and medieval fathers, in particular Gregory of Nyssa, Symeon the New Theologian, John of the Cross, Bonaventure, and Nicholas of Cusa. With regards to patristic thought, Boersma has worked on Gregory of Nyssa for years, and in *Seeing God*, his work with Nyssa continues to add to our modern understanding of this underappreciated Cappadocian father. Boersma also helps the reader understand important aspects of medieval mysticism by highlighting the distinction between Symeon the New Theologian (the "theologian of light") and John of the Cross (the "theologian of darkness"). Likewise, Boersma's contrast of Bonaventure's and Nicholas of Cusa's views on mysticism show the sharp distinctives between affective mysticism and intellectual mysticism respectively and is quite helpful in parsing out the distinctions that occur between the two even within the church today.

Boersma does an excellent job emphasizing the importance of the beatific vision to church doctrine throughout Christian history, as well as citing its decline in contemporary Protestant theology. Boersma cites several Reformed theologians

as partially responsible for this decline, but specifically cites Hermann Bavink, who says, “A corollary vision of God in his essence would be the deification of humanity and the erasure of the boundary between the Creator and creature. That would be in keeping with the Neoplatonic mysticism adopted by Rome but not with the mysticism of the Reformation, at least not with that of the Reformed church and theology” (35).

However, while *Seeing God* is strong in many areas, there are a couple of places where this reviewer believes critiques are in order. In his section on the beatific vision within Protestant thought, Boersma spends most of his time examining the Reformed tradition, with the only exception being John Donne, who falls squarely within the Anglican tradition. Boersma fails to discuss the beatific vision as it manifests within either the Lutheran or the Anabaptist branches of Protestant thought, a correction that I believe would greatly enhance this work. Likewise, I believe that Boersma overstates his case with regards to some of the Reformed theologians supposedly high view of the doctrine of the beatific vision (most prominently seen with Boersma’s claims made in reference to John Calvin). Fortunately, even Boersma recognizes that his views on this issue are not mainstream, and instead tries to present an alternate case, saying, “So far, most Calvin scholarship has argued that Calvin simply abandoned the traditional doctrine of the beatific vision. This chapter will take issue with that view” (258). While he has not fully convinced this reviewer, he does bring up some excellent points for critical evaluation.

But perhaps the most important critique for *Seeing God* is Boersma’s somewhat vague definition of sacramental ontology. This is not a one-time issue, but Boersma’s lack of a concrete definition for sacramental ontology seems to be recurring throughout his recent works. While I think many readers would agree with Boersma that the beatific vision is ontologically holy and sacred, is that all that Boersma means by Christians needing to view it through a lens of “sacramental ontology?” Or does he intend for his reader to go further? Regrettably, Boersma does not say, leaving this reviewer in the dark as to how much of Boersma’s final conclusions he can ultimately agree with.

All in all, in creating a resource tracing the doctrine of the beatific vision through the ages, Boersma does an excellent job of tracing the beatific vision from the pre-Christian era with Plato and Plotinus through to the post-Reformation era with Jonathan Edwards. *Seeing God* is an excellent resource for those interested in the beatific vision. Additionally, despite the vagueness of “sacramental ontology,” Boersma arrives at a healthy and helpful hypothetical conclusion on the reality of the beatific vision. The reader may or may not agree with all of Boersma’s conclusions, but due to Boersma’s excellent scholarship, his readers will understand how and why this esteemed Christian scholar has arrived at his conclusions.

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***Theologies of the American Revivalists: From Whitefield to Finney.* By Robert W. Caldwell. III. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017. 246 pages. \$35.00.**

Over the past decade or so, Robert Caldwell has established himself as a leading authority on Jonathan Edwards’s thought, having written two significant monographs and a number of helpful essays. In *Theologies of the American Revivalists: From Whitefield to Finney*, Caldwell expands his focus to cover the period lasting roughly

1730 to 1830, a century that included both the First and Second Great Awakenings. For the sake of his study, Caldwell focuses on the interplay of three related themes as central to one's revival theology: "their theologies of salvation, the ways they practically preached the gospel, and the conversion experiences they expected from those experiencing salvation" (6). He then devotes eight chapters to both well-known figures and influential movements, as well as more obscure revivalists and less-familiar movements, resulting in a "theological history of what it meant to 'become a Christian' during the age of America's Great Awakenings" (10).

The first chapter establishes Caldwell's benchmark as moderate evangelical revival theology, which was a pietistic form of Calvinism that emphasized personal conversion. Moderate revival theology included: conviction of sin, typically through confrontation with one's failure to obey God's moral law and attempts to attend to the "means of grace"; conversion, a process that included regeneration, repentance, and faith, and which could last an extended period of time; and consolation, or assurance of salvation, which normally came after one's conversion and was sought through rigorous self-examination and the pursuit of personal holiness. Curiously, Caldwell seems to imply Whitefield was a moderate evangelical in his first chapter, though in this second chapter Whitefield is noted as a key shaper of Crosswell's revivalism. Most scholars would identify Whitefield as a radical rather than a moderate.

Jonathan Edwards emerged as the leading defender of moderate revivalism, though as the second chapter recounts, his constructive reflections on original sin, imputation, and human free will, as well as his "spirituality of disinterestedness," which minimized focus upon one's own self-interests, opened the door to later Edwardseans revising and even abandoning traditional Reformed categories in their respective revival theologies. Furthermore, the views of radicals such as Andrew Crosswell emphasized immediate conversion and collapsed assurance into conversion, paving the way for a transition from traditionally Reformed to modern evangelical accounts of how one becomes a Christian.

Chapter three discusses the New Divinity theologians, second-generation Edwardseans who further developed Edwards's thought to make it friendlier to immediate conversion and less focused on the means of grace as prerequisite to regeneration. They offered a robust understanding of human sinfulness and maintained belief in predestination, but rejected imputation and argued that merit is specific to individuals. The latter ideas led to revisionist understandings of original sin, the atonement, and justification. The following three chapters offer various denominational responses to these revival theologies during the Second Great Awakening. Pro-revival Congregationalists and Presbyterians tended to embrace the New Divinity, with progressives such as Nathaniel Taylor further developing these ideas into the New Haven Theology, which denied predestination and original sin, while affirming an unbound will capable of responding to God in faith. Methodists were uniformly pro-revival, adopting the Arminianism and holiness views pioneered by John Wesley. Whereas various forms of Calvinism thrived on the Eastern Seaboard, Arminianism took root on the frontier, where it was spread through camp meetings and itinerancy.

Most readers of this journal will be especially interested in Caldwell's treatment of the Baptists. Not surprisingly, the Baptists were less defined by their soteriology than their ecclesiology, and traditional Calvinism, the New Divinity, and Arminianism each found Baptist proponents. While most of the Arminians

identified with the Free Will Baptist tradition, the spectrum from Jesse Mercer's conservative Calvinism to the New Divinity of Jonathan Maxcy and William B. Johnson transcended the divide between Regular Baptists and Separate Baptists. Caldwell's identification of this spectrum, coupled with Thomas Kidd's arguments that Regulars were moderate evangelicals and Separates were radical evangelicals, offer a more fruitful way of interpreting Baptists of this era than the tired dichotomies between pro-revival and anti-revival and/or Calvinist and non-Calvinist. The older interpretations often serve polemical ends, but they do not reflect careful historical investigation.

In chapter seven, Caldwell turns his attention to Charles Finney, the most controversial revival theologian. Caldwell demonstrates that Finney was not a heretic who abandoned traditional Calvinism, but rather was a New School Presbyterian who embraced New Haven Theology. When it came to the application of that theology in his "new measures," Finney did not invent new practices, but rather popularized heretofore frontier Methodist strategies, such as the anxious bench and protracted meetings, to historically Calvinist congregations on the East Coast. Finney's New Haven revival theology thus offered a bridge between Reformed denominations and Arminian practices.

In the final chapter, Caldwell discusses two responses to modern revival theology. The theologians of Princeton seminary exhibited hesitancy toward revivalism that was rooted in their confessional Calvinism. The Princeton theologians were in favor of revival, but they were suspicious of Edwards because of the role he played as a bridge to innovations in Reformed theology that, to them, represented a theological downgrade. The Campbellite movement represented a more rationalistic response to revivalism. The Campbellites affirmed an intellectualist view of saving faith, immediate conversion, and a view of regeneration that combined belief and baptism. Campbellism thrived in the nineteenth century, especially in frontier contexts where their restorationist message appealed to evangelicals skeptical of interdenominational competition for converts.

Theologies of the American Revivalists is a landmark study that summarizes and synthesizes the best of recent scholarship about the history of revival theology. Caldwell treats each figure and movement with empathy, avoiding a narrative about good guys and bad guys. The book is scholarly without being stolid, edifying without being preachy, and accessible to non-experts. It is ideal for classroom use, though interested pastors will also find much to learn. Caldwell's work will help to reframe how historians (and pastors!) think about revival history. Highly recommended.

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***Destroyer of the Gods: Early Christian Distinctiveness in the Roman World.* By Larry W. Hurtado. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016. xiv + 290 pages. Paperback, \$19.95.**

"Among both the scholarly guild and the wider public, there is a widespread presumption that all religions are basically the same, with insignificant variations of belief and practices, but essentially fitting one conceptual box" (xii). Hurtado argues that this common assumption is essentially "flawed" (xii). He explains, "I want to highlight some major features of early Christianity that made it distinctive, noteworthy, and even peculiar in the ancient Greek and Roman setting" (6).

The opening chapters discuss how outsiders referred to Christians as “different, odd, and even objectionable” (15). Hurtado surveys the views of Pliny, Galen, Marcus Aurelius, Lucian, and Celsus. The Greco-Roman world did not lack for deities—indeed, it was “a world full of gods” (44). Religion was woven into the warp and woof of society, and citizens participated in a smorgasbord of worship (47). Nonetheless, the pagan stance of *eusebeia* (piety) was considered *asebeia* (impiety) by the early Christians (50). In turn, the pagans accused the Christians of “atheism” (56). To express their disdain for the pagan gods, early Christians adopted the Jewish vocabulary of “idol” (*eidōlon*) and its linguistic blends (51).

In Christian belief, the one Creator God was “radically transcendent” (62), yet he redemptively loved humanity (65–66). Early Christians particularly distinguished themselves from Jewish monotheism by the “genuine novelty” and “historic innovation” of their “extraordinary” reverence and devotion directed to Jesus Christ (66, 73, 75). Furthermore, they were rather sectarian in their exclusivist claims (70).

Hurtado recognizes that “our notions of ‘religion’ do not map directly onto the concepts and practices of the ancient world” (80). Moreover, he critiques past scholars who have contrasted Christianity as “a religion of beliefs” with Judaism and paganism as religions of ritual. Christianity also emphasized practices and rites (91). In fact, claims Hurtado, for the early Christians “particular religious practices were as central as beliefs in defining them and expressing their religious identity” (91).

Chapter 3 draws attention to the self-designation of Christians as a “people,” “race,” and “nation” (101; cf. 1 Pet 2:9). This reader retained a desire for more investigation into the early Christian understanding of “race,” “ethnicity,” and “culture” vs. contemporary notions (cf. 79). The book emphasizes how early Christians transcended “ethnic” and “racial” identifications, yet the primary sources often designate Christians as a “new race” or a “third race.” A footnote briefly interacts with the work of Denise Kimber Buell (234n65), mentioning “reservations” with her *Why This New Race? Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity*, but one thirsted for more development.

Chapter 4 discusses the “bookish” nature of early Christianity. The movement was “phenomenally prolific and varied in literary output” (119) and was characterized by an essential “textuality” (126, 141). Notwithstanding, Christians were “at odds with the larger book culture of the time” due to their preference for the codex, and they exhibited this penchant “precisely for texts that they most highly valued, those that they treated as scriptures” (135–37). The chapter closes with a discussion of the *nomina sacra*—a topic with which readers of Hurtado’s other works will be well-acquainted (138–41).

Chapter 5 relates the distinctive social and behavioral practices of early Christians. Paganism did not underscore ethical conduct as embodied in a description of moral “dos and don’ts” (154–55). Early Christians opposed the cultural practices of abortion, infant exposure, gladiatorial combat, and *porneia* (which Hurtado interprets as comprising a wide spectrum of “illicit sex”). The early Christian “household codes” were distinctive as well—when these “codes” were read in congregational contexts, “those in the various subordinate social categories also heard the exhortations given to those in the corresponding dominant positions” (179).

While pagan men were “allowed great latitude in their sexual activities” (157), the Apostle Paul espoused an equality of conjugal rights and mutual marital faithfulness (164). The Pastoral Epistles emphasize being “a one-woman man,” paralleling the cultural elevation of being a “one-man woman” (166). “It seems that for early Christians what was good for the goose was also thought good for the gander!”

(167). Ecclesiastical authors also condemned the sexual exploitation of children, even forming a new vocabulary (*paidophthoreō* and *paidophthoros*) to express revulsion at such abuse (181).

The appendix (191–96) succinctly critiques the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* that once dominated German scholarship. The book's endnotes are definitely worth perusing. In note 43 on page 257, Hurtado thanks Jan Bremmer for pointing him to Euripides' *Hippolytus* as a Greco-Roman example of having sexual relations with "your father's wife" (cf. 1 Cor 5:1). I would also point readers to Seneca's version of *Phaedra* and its interesting parallels with Paul's rhetorical purpose. In a minor oversight, a Latin misspelling (*univria* for *univira*) slipped by the copy-editors (260n60).

Hurtado concludes, "Early Christianity of the first three centuries was a different, even distinctive, kind of religious movement in the cafeteria of religious options of the time" (183). Today we tend to think of religion as matter of voluntary choice distinct from cultural ethnicity, we tend to assume that religions teach a system of ethics, and we tend to distinguish between those who believe that "God" exists and those who deny that "God" exists. The fact that such sentiments have become commonplace reveals just how much the distinctive nature of early Christianity has affected the modern world (187). Hurtado affirms, "I hope that we who are so very conscious of our own time will perceive better the importance and influence of this remarkable religious movement of the ancient Roman world" (p. 189).

Hurtado traces "The Particular Christian Offence" reflected in the New Testament documents (52–62), but the book does not interact with Paul's discussion of the *skandalon* of the cross (1 Cor 1:18–25). This theological crux was a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, and it affected behavior as well as belief. Christian authors emphasized a cruciform ethic of self-donation and humility—a virtue not accentuated in the Greco-Roman milieu. In various instances, Hurtado tips his hat to the distinctive nature of early Christian theology (especially how devotion to Jesus modified the strict monotheism inherited from Judaism). At other times, his purposeful approach of studying Christianity like "any other historical phenomenon" limits his musings upon questions that beg theological input (5–10, 35). Nevertheless, he performs admirably, even while contending with his theological hand tied behind his back. Like early Christianity, Hurtado's work impresses "with high distinction."

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***Divine Simplicity: A Biblical and Trinitarian Account.* By Jordan P. Barrett. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017. 228 + xiii pages. Hardcover, \$79.00.**

Jordan Barrett addresses a critical ancient doctrine which has a long pedigree within Christian thought but has recently sparked a contentious debate among scholars. This young theologian thus takes on an important and difficult task, and the Emerging Scholars series should be commended for choosing to publish his monograph, a revision of a Wheaton doctoral dissertation written under Kevin Vanhoozer.

Barrett argues the doctrine of divine simplicity should not be rejected as an imposition from classical philosophy but must be received as rooted in Scripture. To prove his point, he first surveys contemporary critics of divine simplicity; second, traces the history of the doctrine's reception in the early, medieval, and modern periods; third, discusses a biblical basis for its development; and, fourth, boldly offers his own Trinitarian account for divine simplicity. Did he demonstrate his thesis?

In chapter one, Barrett surveys the contemporary scene. Numerous well-respected authors have rejected divine simplicity, including Robert Jenson, Alvin Plantinga, and John Feinberg. These critics appeal to their readings of Augustine and Aquinas, doubt it has a biblical basis, and believe it compromises other major doctrines. Yet others, including Colin Gunton, John Frame, and Eberhard Jüngel, retain the doctrine but with major revision. Revisionists opine that divine simplicity is too dependent upon Hellenistic philosophy and reframe it according to the gospel conception of God. Finally, a “minority” has stepped forward to defend divine simplicity, including Peter Sanlon, Stephen R. Holmes, and Steven J. Duby. Their defenses range in presentation and sophistication but assert it is fundamental to the Christian conception of God.

In the second, third, and fourth chapters, the author traces the construal of the doctrine according to various patristic, medieval, and Reformation theologians. While the fathers may have borrowed from philosophy, they derived divine simplicity from scriptural exegesis in order to repudiate the rise of heresies. In particular, the claim of Eunomius to name the divine essence prompted the Cappadocians to construct a corollary doctrine from the divine name(s) and God the Trinity’s operations, distinguishing the persons without dividing the essence. (This correlation informs Barrett’s later proposal.) Similar conclusions are drawn through a survey of Augustine, which includes exegeses of 1 Corinthians 1:24 regarding the simple richness of the divine attributes shared within the Trinity (58–61) and of John 5:19 concerning the Trinity’s distinguishable yet inseparable operations (62–65). The chapter on the Middle Ages clears away misattributions of perfect being theology and rationalism and discusses Aquinas’s theological exegesis of the divine name in Exodus 3 (85–89). The chapter on Reformation developments focuses on the Reformed and their modern successors. The doctrine was either assumed or explicitly affirmed from Calvin through the Scholastics, while Herman Bavinck and Karl Barth provide helpful discussions. Both Bavinck and Barth stressed the transcendence and graciousness of God, who reveals a “richness” about himself that transcends both simplicity and multiplicity (124–25).

While the first four chapters of the book establish the doctrine’s historical and contemporary context, in the final two chapters Barrett offers his own contributions. First, in chapter five, he grounds the doctrine of divine simplicity within the biblical witness. Barrett believes there is a more direct biblical way to the doctrine than that provided by affiliating the doctrine with divine aseity or divine holiness (133–34). His strategy is to show that the name(s) of God and the inseparable operations of the three Persons of the Trinity provide a scriptural “pattern of judgments” (135–37) requiring the doctrine. Extending the introduction of the divine name, YHWH, in the book of Exodus (3:14, 6:6–8, 33:12–13), Barrett agrees that Exodus 34:6–7 is “the climax of the meaning and significance of the divine name” (145). Through this significant revelation, God’s various attributes provide “the fullest statement about the divine nature” (146). The way various Psalms treat the divine name doxologically fortifies this claim (147–50). Moreover, the New Testament includes Jesus and the entire Trinity within the name of the Lord, *kyrios* (150–54). Barrett concludes the divine name “is God himself in his self-revelation,” contains no contradictions, and requires “many different descriptions” to convey his fullness (154–55). The second part of chapter five turns to Scripture’s presentations of the work of the Trinity, evincing indivisible yet distinct operations which correlate with an indivisible yet distinguishable nature (156–60).

The author's second major contribution is to provide a Trinitarian account of divine simplicity, which he established biblically in chapter five but develops dogmatically in chapter six. The "task" of divine simplicity is to "properly confess the nature of God set forth in Scripture in ways that avoid either dividing God into parts or removing all distinctions" (163). The nuances of Trinitarianism thus provide a parallel for the doctrine of divine simplicity. After drawing on medieval philosophy to navigate between the errors of realist identity and nominalist distinctions, his own "theological discernment" from the textual witness is presented (178). Barrett's key theological innovation concerns a likeness between Trinity and essence, *analogia diversitatis*. By "analogy of diversity," he means that "as the triune God is one nature in three distinct persons, so the simplicity of God affirms one nature in multiple perfections" (180). After summarizing seven implications of the analogy, he claims his proposal is a development within the tradition.

This book should be taken seriously by every theologian concerned with identifying properly who the God is whom true Christians say we worship. While there are yet other biblical routes to the doctrine of divine simplicity, and while Barrett's proposal of *analogia diversitatis* will require widespread testing before it should be fully accepted, he has added a significant piece to the academic discussion on theology proper. Stylistically, this is a clean text, except that the author might have meant *diversitatis* rather than *divinitatis* in a few places (184, 187).

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***40 Questions about Church Membership and Discipline.* By Jeremy M. Kimble. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2017. 272 pages. Softcover, \$19.99.**

Throughout this helpful volume, readers are invited to investigate the closely related topics of church membership and church discipline with the help of biblical, systematic, and pastoral insight. These closely related subjects occupy an interest from the academic guild as well as professional clergy, all of whom seek to assess cogent answers and their implications for effective 21st century ecclesial ministry. Jeremy Kimble, assistant professor of theology at Cedarville University, offers readers yet another selection in the popular and well received *40 Questions* series of books, all edited by Benjamin Merkle. Each volume in this series follows the same approach within its specific inquiry. Authors ask direct questions of the subject matter at hand, provide a three to four page response, and conclude each chapter with insightful reflection questions.

In Kimble's volume, the forty questions are divided into four parts: Part One addresses "General Questions about Membership and Discipline" (consisting of four questions); Part Two addresses "General Questions about Church Membership" (consisting of sixteen questions); Part Three addresses "General Questions about Church Discipline" (consisting of eighteen questions); and finally, Part Four addresses "Concluding Questions about Membership and Discipline" (consisting of two questions). Thus, the bulk of Kimble's focus lies within parts two and three, yet he addresses every question with the same strategy. For every question, Kimble states his inquiry clearly, situates the importance of the question with historical and cultural clarity, and then turns to providing answers formed from the disciplines of biblical and systematic theology. While space does not allow Kimble to treat every

relevant biblical passage related to his inquiry, he consistently brings to light the salient exegetical labor necessary to support his solutions.

Christians outside of the Baptist tradition will quibble with some of Kimble's answers. Kimble's footnotes provide readers with additional source material for further study spanning the Christian tradition, but the questions related to baptism and membership assume traditional Credobaptist moorings. This approach would not preclude Paedobaptists from benefiting from the overall substance and tone of the book, but the outworking of Kimble's hermeneutic necessarily exposes the consistency to his advocacy of traditional Baptist convictions of baptizing professing Christians within a church family whose membership is visible both in its celebration of communion and redemptive church discipline.

Readers within the Baptist tradition may not find agreement with Kimble on some points. One example might include Kimble's advocacy for delayed baptism. Noting the pastoral difficulties related to offering false assurance to the unconverted on the one hand, and withholding baptism from legitimate Christians on the other hand, Kimble proposes a modified delayed baptism position. He avers, "there is wisdom in delaying baptism until at least ten or twelve years of age, or perhaps early teen years" (119). Kimble wisely and helpfully encourages local church leadership to investigate these instances on a case-by-case approach. Further, some Baptist readers may question Kimble's advocacy for distinguishing two types of membership based upon one's age at the time of baptism. For example, teenage Christians can enjoy the benefits and blessings of the Lord's Supper and discipleship, but churches may withhold other membership responsibilities (participating in church discipline, for example) until a later age. While there is hardly a Credobaptist consensus to these difficult issues, readers can commend Kimble's approach while disagreeing with some of his answers. In every case, even where there may be disagreement, Kimble assists pastors and church leaders in clarifying and substantiating their answers to these questions.

Readers will detect numerous strengths to this volume. In his introduction, Kimble states his intent for his book is to "assist Christians, pastors, and churches to rightly understand and apply biblical truth regarding church membership and church discipline" (9). While scholars may not be his intended audience, they too will benefit from Kimble's solutions to the practical issues he raises. If for no other reason, Kimble's solutions could provide scholars with an opportunity to think alongside a member of the guild who presents a cogent case in irenic tones. Question 30, for example, addresses how church discipline can be introduced into one's church, and Kimble's solution warrants a reading from the academy and the parish.

Pastors should include this volume to their immediate reading list. Even if one disagrees with Kimble on one or more questions, one will no doubt find his answers to be clear and representative of many evangelicals today. Further, this book should be read and studied by various members of church leadership because many lay leaders are convinced of the theological rationale but remain unaware of how to initiate a corresponding ministry response. The reflection questions in each chapter would facilitate the sort of discussion needed among church leadership today.

Readers of all evangelical faith traditions will appreciate Kimble's clarifying answers to many of the practical questions facing the church today. Examples include, "What are the responsibilities of being a church member? (Question 20); "How does a church discipline one of its leaders?" (Questions 29); "What kind of sins require

church discipline?” (Question 35). These questions permeate contemporary ministry dialogue, and Kimble carefully shepherds readers to helpful and applicable answers.

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***Rethinking Holiness: A Theological Introduction.* By Bernie A. Van De Walle. Grand Rapids. Baker Academic, 2017. xvi + 176 pages. Paperback, \$23.00.**

What is holiness? Why has it been misunderstood for so many years? Bernie Van De Walle, professor of historical and systematic theology at Ambrose University, seeks to answer these questions and many others on the topic of holiness. Van De Walle states that there has been a renaissance in the interest of holiness recently in evangelicalism. The focus has been on ethics and morals. However, Van De Walle presents holiness as primarily an issue of relationship to the only holy being, God, rather than of behavior and ethics. This is not a “how-to” book but rather a theological treatise on what it means to be holy.

Van De Walle begins by presenting his observations in the church, and outside the church, of a desire for holiness in chapter 1. He sees patterns in evangelical churches such as the return to ancient liturgical practices, an emphasis on a holistic gospel that values both body and soul, and a desire for social activism, to name a few. Outside the church there are many who are seeking spirituality—albeit through fads and gurus. Many also criticize the church concerning its practice not matching its confession. With this said, the need for an emphasis on holiness is crucial for the church’s witness today.

The following two chapters cover biblical, theological, and historical descriptions of holiness and then Van De Walle seeks to define holiness. In chapter 2 Van De Walle defines holiness according to Scripture and the cultures in which the books of Scripture were written—the ancient Near East, ancient Israel, and the Greco-Roman world. While there has been too much emphasis on behavior when it comes to the topic, holiness should be considered as “the transcendence or absolute otherness that is basic to God’s being.” Holiness is a characteristic of God alone. Any object that is “holy” derives its character only from God. Holiness is displayed in God’s transcendence and moral perfection as chapter 3 explains. Christ is the example and picture of this concept of holiness.

Chapters 4–6 examine holiness in relation to anthropology. Chapter 4 recounts what it means to be human and God’s purpose for humanity. Man is a holy creation, so fallenness is not the true nature of man. Van De Walle holds to the relational view of the *imago dei* which considers the image as the actual relationship of collective humanity within itself and with God. His argument for this view is quite confusing and at worst—problematic. However, he does explain that the purpose of fallen humanity is not simply a return to original innocence but a transformation into full and perfect communion with God and His creation. In chapter 5 Van De Walle outlines the metaphors for sin as described in Scripture. Sin is not primarily a contrast to universal virtues, ethics, rules, or regulations but a contrast to God’s nature and character. Sin is personal and relational. Van De Walle describes the whole scope of salvation in chapter 6. He notes that, since Luther, there has been an overemphasis on justification to the neglect of sanctification in Protestantism. Salvation is not simply justifying a sinner and that is it. Salvation includes a work of

progress by the Holy Spirit to make humanity what it was created to be, like God. Therefore, believers are being conformed into the image of Christ.

Chapter 7 examines holiness in relation to Church. Van De Walle explains that the Church is holy only in its relation to God. It is positionally holy in that it is called the body of Christ, the temple of the Holy Spirit, and the people of God. Obviously, there have been many shortcomings in Church during its history. Van De Walle uses the language of “already but not yet” to describe the Church’s holiness. The church is holy in its relation to God, but not yet there in active expression.

The obvious strengths of *Rethinking Holiness* is its keen observations of the current streams of thought and practices that have arisen because of the desire for holiness. Van De Walle also builds his argument for the need for holiness for the Church’s witness. It is a readable treatise and, for the most part, he defines his terms well. Many readers would not get lost in the jargon.

Weaknesses of this book would include its lack of references for his claim that many contemporary evangelicals do not care about holiness in the Christian life. While this is indeed true in many circles, citing several sources of quotes and books would have strengthened his argument. Second, there were some not so clear theological claims he made that would confuse his audience. His view of the *imago dei* is not a majority position and at times he contradicted himself. His view on justification was more understandable but still not fully developed. While he brings to light the overemphasis in evangelicalism on justification, he seems to add to the definition of justification that almost merges it with sanctification. One last weakness would be the lack of concrete examples of holiness. Even though he does state that this book is not a “how-to”, a few examples would have helped advance his view of holiness as a way of being.

Overall, this book is a needed contribution to current evangelical thinking on an often neglected topic. He rightly outlines the two wrong views of the Christian life, legalism and license, and clearly shows the flaws of both. Aside, from some unclear points of his theology, Van De Walle has written a book that I expect many pastors and students will thoroughly enjoy.

Daniel Weaver
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***When is it Right to Die?* By Jonie Eareckson Tada. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018. 203 pages. Softcover, \$16.99.**

Joni Eareckson Tada is a Christian evangelist, radio personality, author and the CEO of Joni and Friends, an organization that ministers to special-needs families and churches with similar ministries. She is the author of numerous books, including *A Step Further*, and *A Spectacle of Glory*.

Although there are numerous publications that discuss assisted suicide, disabilities, and other bioethical issues, Tada’s personal history of struggling through quadriplegia, breast cancer, and depression adds considerable weight to the discussion of how to respond to dying. Her time spent as an advocate for the disabled also gives her many personal anecdotes and real-life scenarios to draw upon in her examples. Her experiences make her undoubtedly one of the most qualified persons to write on this particular subject.

As the title suggests, the thesis concerns the moral judgments that must be made at the end of life and how to find the right way to approach death as a Christian.

In a sense, Tada's book is about having a *good* death, not to seek it prematurely and neither to prolong a natural process unnecessarily.

Tada uses concrete examples from her experiences with those whom have had to make difficult moral decisions in ambiguous situations. Each chapter asks a question of the reader, presents gray-area cases, and ends with group discussion prompts, making the book suitable for group or private Bible study. Tada discusses in detail the meaning of suffering and pain, what it really means to die with dignity, if life is worth living under certain conditions, and how the moral decisions made by the dying are a testament, for either good or ill, to those around them.

Related topics touched upon are famous euthanasia cases, the widespread abortion of Down Syndrome babies, life support systems, unresponsive wakefulness syndrome, minimally conscious states, and hospice care. One of the most helpful subjects she brings up is that of Advance Care Directives versus Living Wills and the questions everyone should ask before signing such documents.

As far as Tada's ethical system is concerned, on the surface it appears to be a Christian situation ethic, but the conclusions she arrives at are far from Joseph Fletcher's. Unlike pure situation ethics with its human-centered perspective that can devolve into sheer relativism, Tada reshapes her circumstantial or situation ethic by encouraging prayer and Scripture reading before making any serious moral decision like the ones described in her examples. She always points to God as the ultimate source of wisdom during these times, keeping the Holy Spirit as the foundation of the moral choice, not simply the situation itself. Therefore, her ethic remains a biblical ethic but retains some important elements of situation ethic, such as motive and intention.

Certain subject matter pertaining to her topic that she does *not* touch upon such as the movement to change the laws regarding organ harvesting from people diagnosed as persistently unconscious and the euthanizing of dementia patients who cannot give consent can be found in the work of authors and advocates like Wesley J. Smith, a common contributor for *First Things*.

This reader found *When is it Right to Die?* to be approachable and appropriate for the average reader or to be used as a group study, which it is clearly formatted for. It is easily digestible despite the painful subject matter and non-academic in nature, intended for a mainstream audience, whether Christian or not. Tada's honesty, insight and optimism is a testimony in itself, and she repeatedly points her audience toward salvation in Jesus Christ, making her book an evangelical tool as much as an informative and sensitive look into humanity's deepest fear: death.

Kristin A. Vargas

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***Four Views on the Church's Mission.* Edited by Jason S. Sexton and Stanley N. Gundry. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. 208 pages. Paperback, \$16.99.**

The views represented in this volume are an "intra-evangelical conversation seeking to bring mission and church closely together, as it belongs" (12). Jason Sexton serves as the book's general editor. He is a lecturer at California State University, Fullerton, and serves as a research associate with the University of Southern California's Center for Religion & Civic Culture. Sexton provides both introductory and concluding essays for the book. Due to the nature of the discussion, the conclusion one draws will have tremendous practical ramifications. Naturally, both scholars and

laymen have a vested interest in how the church understands its mission. Thus, the audience for the book is not only limited to theologians and missiologists, but also pastors and interested laypeople.

The first view, which is called the soteriological mission, is represented by Jonathan Leeman, who serves as editorial director of 9Marks Ministries. This view places the verbal proclamation of the gospel at the center of the church's mission. The fundamental problem that the world faces is a spiritual one, in which a holy God has been offended. Humanity stands condemned before a righteous God due to their own sin. Jesus Christ has come into the world to seek and save the lost. His life, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven secure salvation for all who would repent of their sins and place their faith in him. The church's primary task is to bring this message of the gospel to a broken world. While the inclusion of social justice is important to the broader contours of the mission of the church, the specific task is to make disciples and that is what frames and drives its mission.

The second view is called participatory mission. This view is represented by Christopher J.H. Wright. He serves as the International Ministries Director for the Langham Partnership. If Leeman takes the narrow view, Wright takes the broad view. This approach places the mission of God within the larger biblical narrative. Wright binds the church's mission with the mission of God. He sees an inseparable link between the two. Thus, the church participates in a mission in which God is the primary actor. God acts in space and time to redeem the world. When the church proclaims the gospel, loves their neighbor, and cares for other aspects of God's creation, they are joining with God in his mission.

The third view is called contextual mission. This view sees the mission of the church as primarily bearing witness to the whole world. This essay is written by John R. Franke, who is the lead coordinator of the Gospel in Our Culture Network. His view stresses the contextual nature of the church's mission. Christians are to be witnesses to God's activity in the world. The mission of the church will look different as it adapts to each individual culture and context. Due to the diversity and uniqueness of God's creation and the needs of different people, the church must adapt to the distinct context in which it finds itself. Just as Christ served in the power of the Spirit to bring about God's Kingdom in a specific place and time, so too must the church.

The fourth view is called sacramental mission. The essay is written by Peter J. Leithart, who serves as the president of the Theopolis Institute. This view has an ecumenical and political emphasis which gives form to the mission of God in the world. The church's sacraments serve as catalysts to love and serve the world. Leithart traces the importance of communal ritual acts in Scripture as integral to the life of God's people. The sacraments allow for a Christocentric vision in which the global church can be united in Christ and act as instruments of righteousness, justice, reconciliation, and peace. When the church partakes in this sacramental life, they become visible and engage the socio-political structures of the world.

As is typical with many books of this type, many intriguing points of agreement and disagreement come out in the response essays. All the contributors generally affirm that Leeman's distinctions between a broad and narrow understanding of mission are helpful, although some would not want to split the categories so sharply. His more conservative approach is the most targeted due its emphasis on the "narrow" understanding of mission. Wright's essay seems to be the least objectionable to the position of the other contributors. His conciliatory style is warm and agreeable.

However, they tend to criticize him not on what he says, but what he emphasizes or fails to say. Franke's position is criticized by its elasticity and diversity. The boundaries of plurality appear to be too wide (if they exist at all). Leithart's contribution seems to be the most elusive. All the other contributors ask for clarity or further elaboration. Although he writes persuasively and with great profundity, it is hard to see the full implications of his position. The most helpful point to come out in these essays is the place of hell, which Leeman brings to the forefront. The volume raises the question: What are the consequences for the church and for the unconverted if they are not in line with the mission of God?

Adam Cavalier

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***Transcending Mission: The Eclipse of a Modern Tradition.* By Michael W. Stroope. Downer's Grover, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2017. xviii + 457 pages. Paperback, \$40.00.**

Sure to provoke controversy, Michael W. Stroope's latest book challenges many commonly held practices in the church today regarding mission. In *Transcending Mission*, Stroope confronts how the church talks about mission. He offers a blistering critique of the modern rhetoric surrounding the terms mission, missions, missional, etc. Stroope says that this problem has distorted hermeneutics, obfuscated our view of church history, and damaged the vision and efforts of the local church. As the subtitle indicates, Stroope maintains that the way in which the contemporary church talks about mission is problematic and should be remedied with a more nuanced approach.

In the first major section of the book, Stroope critically analyzes modern attempts to justify mission rhetoric. Instead of shedding light and clarifying, Stroope sees the term mission, and all its related terms, as a confusing mixture of ideas. Illustrating the ambiguity of the term, he identifies as many as seven different ways authors use the word! "The problem with *mission* is not that there are so many meanings; the problem is the word itself, *Mission is the problem*" (10). Stroope proposes that we should not attempt to simply revise our language about mission. Rather, we should completely move past this unhelpful terminology and adopt entirely new ways of communicating about the church's purpose and task in the world. In short, this section identifies the multilayered problem of mission language in the church.

In the second section, Stroope looks at how a concept of mission has been used to reinterpret history. He sees the modern notion of mission, specifically western approaches, anachronistically applied to earlier periods. Here, Stroope interprets how the modern tradition of mission first began and developed as a Roman Catholic movement and evolved into a Protestant phenomenon. He sees its roots in the Crusades and later development in western Christendom. These factors have established socio-political overtones in mission rhetoric.

In his third section, Stroope considers the modern mission movement as the pinnacle of the tradition. He sees this period in history as expanding mission and increasing its prominence in the church at large. Various key events like the Edinburgh Mission Conference in 1910 reinforced old ideas, developed the terminology, and shaped the tradition.

The previous sections primarily focus their criticism of the modern mission tradition's methodology and terminology. In an epilogue that follows, Stroope puts forth a case for how we should begin to think and talk about the church's purpose

and role in the world. Thus, the majority of the book is spent negatively evaluating the tradition, and the last section of the book is where he positively puts an alternative in place. Stroope proposes that we begin to talk about the church's task as a "pilgrim witness." He suggests that we return to a language that highlights divine revelation and eschatological hope. "Rather than preaching mission, advocating for mission, mobilizing for mission, or revising mission, the biblical injunction is to proclaim, promote, and live the kingdom of God" (361). The term *pilgrim* conveys the idea of transition and dependence. The church should not primarily seek worldly power and success. Stroope insists that terrestrial conquest, occupation, and triumph must not be a part of the church's mission purpose and vocabulary.

Indeed, Stroope is to be commended in his quest to sharpen and improve the church's terminology. His efforts to redirect language to reflect biblical concepts and truth should be welcomed. He is particularly wise to point out the problems in the recent tendency to draw a sharp distinction between the words "mission" and "missions" (the former emphasizing divine activity and the latter stressing the role of human agency). He is also particularly strong as he advocates the use of kingdom language. He believes this approach eliminates the problematic issues that come with mission language.

Although Stroope does concede that it would be unwise and nearly impossible to eliminate all mission language (29), he does not provide a way forward in how mission language could continue. Providing a path forward in retaining missional language would have been helpful. This slight concession on mission language causes the reader to question how it might be redeemed. Furthermore, Stroope's assessment leaves out the possibility that his alternative terminology would be subject to later distortions by others—suffering the same problems as mission language. While the new vocabulary has the potential to sharpen our understanding of the church's purpose and practice today, why would the new terminology be immune to subsequent problems brought on by others?

A similar argument continues over the term "evangelical" and its subsequent usages. It has been subject to misinterpretation, abuse, and ambiguity. Surely, that term comes with unwelcome connotations. Does that mean we should abandon its use as well? Or should we continue to seek precision and clarity? The church needs to continue its conversations on both fronts. While Stroope's volume is sure to generate strong opinions, his effort is well-researched, clear, and passionate.

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***Preaching as Reminding: Stirring Memory in an Age of Forgetfulness.* By Jeffrey D. Arthurs. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2017. xi + 166 pages. Paperback, \$20.00.**

In *Preaching as Reminding: Stirring Memory in an Age of Forgetfulness*, Jeffrey D. Arthurs, professor of preaching and communication at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, argues that preachers function as the Lord's "remembrancers," tasked with stirring memory of God's grace and work in the hearts and minds of God's people (9). Preaching need not be defined by novelty, but rather by a retrieval of what Christians know already yet forget or grow numb to in this age of distraction.

The book is divided into two halves. The first three chapters provide a biblical theology of memory. Arthurs stresses that, according to Scripture, "remembering

is more than mental recall. It involves emotion and volition as well as cognition” (13). This is why both the Old and New Testaments are filled with admonitions to “remember” and with activities, structures, and rituals that recall God’s faithfulness in the past. The Bible is clear about two aspects of memory: God remembers his covenant and his children, and his children all too often forget him. Chapter three serves as a bridge from a biblical theology of memory to how preachers are God’s chosen instruments to help believers remember correctly. Arthurs draws from preachers in the Bible, notably Moses, the prophets, and Paul, and demonstrates that the discipline of remembering was a central element of their preaching.

The second section is methodological in nature and outlines how preachers can best serve their hearers as the Lord’s remembrancers. Arthurs explains how style, delivery and ceremony can stir memory in both the individual and collective consciences of the congregation. He gives practical insight on how preachers can leverage tone, intonation, body language, facial expression, corporate reading, and the ordinances to “keep the truth warm in heart and mind” (126).

Preaching as Reminding is a helpful volume with three noteworthy strengths. First, the subject matter—memory—is not often addressed in the field of homiletics. Arthurs gives his readers a unique lens through which to view their task. Using the vocabulary of 2 Peter 1:12–13, Arthurs reminds preachers of their calling: “One of the most crucial functions preaching accomplishes, a function often neglected in homiletics textbooks, is the stirring of memory. We need not—indeed we should not—scurry about like a character in a video game searching for originality. That is not our calling” (4). Arthurs helps preachers develop an attractive unoriginality in their preaching and hopes to see sermons remind and, in a sense, reunite (*re-member*) Christians to the life, death, and resurrection of their Lord. This framework will invigorate and encourage the preacher who feels the pressure of homiletical innovation.

Of course, preaching should not be characterized by a drab rehearsal of uninspiring truths. Rather, preachers should take stock of, and improve upon, their emotional intelligence, non-verbal cues, and delivery skill. Preachers should not be “charlatans” or “hucksters,” but should be authentic communicators who, as far as possible, remove all hurdles to effective communication (105). Chapters four through six are excellent in helping preachers understand how delivery and style can either advance or inhibit people’s understanding and internalizing of the sermon.

Second, Arthurs’ use of neuroscience throughout brings an interesting dialogue partner to the conversation. To be clear, he does not rely upon neuroscience to argue his case; the book is filled with biblical references and logical argumentation that the stirring of memory is a *biblical* call upon preachers. Instead, Arthurs uses neuroscience to show how God has designed the human brain. His use of neuroscience and memory is a way to appreciate and uphold the *imago Dei*, for we are people wired for memory because God is a God who remembers. Preachers would do well to understand this aspect of human nature. Had Arthurs emphasized this point at the expense of biblical data, this would be a significant weakness. Thankfully, he avoids this pitfall.

Finally, Arthurs is a superb writer whose prose, illustrations, and insight are a delight to read. The book is simultaneously theological and practical, serious and entertaining, weighty and light. It is wide-ranging in terms of quotations and illustrative material, giving it a compelling depth and color.

Preaching as Reminding is not a manual on sermon preparation nor a primer on preaching basics. Beginning preachers will be better served by resources that address the foundations of preaching: exegesis, hermeneutics, outlines, illustrations, application, and the like. However, for the preacher who has these tools firmly in his belt, *Preaching as Reminding* is an excellent volume that will energize his passion for proclamation and will shed new light on the preaching moment.

Jesse Payne
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***Progress in the Pulpit: How to Grow in Your Preaching.* By Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix. Chicago: Moody, 2017. 237 pages. Hardcover, \$29.99.**

Are the majority of preachers as good as they will ever be by age 25? The claim often appears true. Why? Because many preachers fail to grow in their preaching. They start preaching. They find a rhythm. They get comfortable. They hit cruise control. True of you? Yes or no, Vines and Shaddix have composed a book to help all preachers rise to the next level in their preaching. Of course, no one ever arrives at homiletical perfection. Yet, based upon 1 Timothy 4:15, Vines and Shaddix claim that those called of God to herald His Word must strive by God's grace to steward their responsibility with increasing faithfulness.

Progress in the Pulpit provides a unique combination of homiletical fundamentals and advanced ideas to remind and challenge all preachers. The content proceeds according to the following categories: Defining the Sermon, Developing the Sermon, and Delivering the Sermon. With these categories, both authors desire "to enhance the preaching ministry so the message of the gospel continues in America and even to the ends of the earth" (18).

Preaching today comes in all shapes and sizes, but the essential conviction of this book is "that biblical exposition should serve as the foundational approach to preaching" (22). Therefore, the trajectory of homiletical growth espoused here is unashamedly a growth in expository or text-driven preaching. Shaddix argues that if the Bible is and does what it claims, then to do anything other than fully expose God's Word to God's people would be the equivalent of "possessing a cure for cancer and withholding it from the public" (32). In order to expose God's Word to God's people, Shaddix encourages planning one's preaching and suggests keeping the following food groups in mind for a balanced diet: systematic exposition, doctrinal instruction, and prophetic interpretation (51).

This volume presents an encyclopedia of suggestions for homiletical growth. The following points, however, highlight some of the most helpful information to consider. In chapter seven, Shaddix takes on the heated debate of how to preach Christ from any text and argues that the Gospel must be preached in every sermon. His clear and concise argumentation crystalizes the way to understanding the connection of any text to Christ and hence the open door to the Gospel message.

Second, Vines delves into sermon clarity in chapter nine. The heart of clarity beats by crafting a single, brief sentence that communicates the essence of the entire sermon. As elementary a concept as this may seem, many ignore it every Sunday. Vines suggests putting the point of the text in a tweetable 140 characters. This simplification of the point from the pulpit is critical for clarity in the pew.

A third highlight might be an aha moment for many and for some will be worth the price of the book. Have you ever wondered why some sermons seem to

hold the audience's attention while others fail? Based on rhetorical research and insight from TED Talks, Vines posits the idea that retaining the audience's attention past twenty minutes requires building in "soft breaks" (147). These breaks needed every ten minutes or so are moments that re-grip the audience with stories, humor, an illustration, a demonstration, or something the breaks out of the ordinary.

Next, Shaddix offers in chapter 12 what might be the most neglected element needed for progress in the pulpit—teaching the congregation how to listen to a sermon. As counterintuitive as this might seem, progress in the pulpit is not just about the preacher improving, but also improving the fruitfulness of his preaching. Unfortunately, most Christians have never received teaching concerning the purpose and function of the sermon. They have heard even less on how to listen for maximum benefit. Most preachers take this teaching and knowledge for granted. As a result, people suffer from not knowing how to make the most of next Sunday's sermon. Shaddix highlights the issue as an area where most all preachers can make progress.

The homiletical wealth *Progress in the Pulpit* provides might leave one staggering and wondering where to begin. The book does not offer a systematic plan or map out any recommended starting points. This perhaps, would have been helpful. The authors, however, do provide recommended reading for progress at the end of each chapter and a sermon presentation feedback guide in the appendix. The reader will notice a slight difference in perspective by each author as is to be expected. The writing style changes from one author to the other, but the trajectory of their thought remains aligned.

Overall, this volume easily attains the goal of enhancing the preaching ministry of those willing to read and heed its advice. The authors write simply and personally so that the book reads more like a conversation with two wise preachers than it does an academic tutorial. Vines and Shaddix write as pastors who have given their lives to progress in their preaching. They offer more to the preacher willing to grow than he can possibly implement next Sunday. Arrival, however, is not the point, progress is.

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