

**ELEMENTS OF AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION  
IN CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH, SOUTHWESTERN  
NIGERIA**

**BY**

**ÒGÚNRÌNÁDÉ, Adéwálé Olúkáyò ò dé**  
**B.A. Hons. (Ìbàdàn), M.A. (Ìbàdàn)**

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## CERTIFICATION

I certify that this thesis was carried out by Adéwálé Olúkáyò òdé ÒGÚNRÌNÁDÉ, under my direct supervision in the Department of Religious Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Ìbàdàn, in partial fulfilment for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Religious Studies.

.....

### SUPERVISOR

Rev. Dr. Samson A. Fátókun  
B.A. Special Hons. (Ifè),  
M.A. (Ìbàdàn), Ph.D. (Ìbàdàn).

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to God Almighty for His mercies and grace throughout the study.

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## ABSTRACT

The Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) has a reputation for high spiritualism, but it also has a subtle link with African traditional religion (ATR). Studies on the church have concentrated on the church's origin, spiritual programmes and legendary personalities but have not addressed the church's connection with ATR. This study, therefore, examined the ATR elements appropriated in CAC in terms of the objects used, the procedures involved in their use and the functions associated with them.

Sixty CAC branches were purposively selected in Ibadan, Lagos, Abéòkúta, Àkúré, Adó-Èkítì and Òsògbo. Unstructured interviews were conducted with purposively sampled 60 pastors (10 from each city) and 120 laity (20 from each city). A total of 360 copies of a questionnaire were administered to the same number of respondents. A ten-week participant observation monitoring was also conducted. Data were subjected to content analysis and simple descriptive analysis.

Four ATR elements were adopted in CAC: spiritualisation of the head, pregnancy conception, photographs/objects and the earth. Across all these elements, water, olive oil and Psalms/songs were utilised, albeit differently. For the head, spiritual washing with water and consecration with olive oil occurred. For conception, consecrated water was drunk and rubbed on the tummy. Water was sprinkled on photographs, handkerchiefs, mantles, land and all forms of property. Barren women, carrying dummy/symbolic babies, sprinkled water or olive oil on their tummies while chanting psalms or songs spiritedly. Pregnant women prayed naked in the mid-night, chanting psalms and songs. Five types of chanting were identified: psalms/songs associated with warfare, imprecations, power, spiritual beings and supremacy of God. The ATR belief in the spiritualisation for destiny fulfilment was slightly modified in the CAC context where the head was believed to be spiritually empowered to accept its fortunes and reverse negative situations. In ATR and CAC, using spiritually treated water and chanting was believed to be capable of bringing about conception. While the spiritualisation of photographs/objects in ATR was done to manipulate situations positively or negatively, it was done in CAC for positive effects. The spiritualisation of the earth in ATR was to manage metaphysical forces, but it was used in CAC to spiritually influence blessings and protection. About seventy percent of the respondents believed that the head could harbour evil or good, and therefore needs to be spiritually treated while 88% believed that sanctified water and oil could cure ill-luck. About eighty percent believed that barrenness transcends medical reasons, and should be spiritually handled, 78.8% believed that praying on photographs/objects had positive effects, and 69.2% believed that evil and good forces are resident in the earth, and could be positively or negatively engaged.

The appropriation of some natural and synthetic elements used in ATR in CAC shows a link between the church and the religion. Thus, the concepts of spiritual manipulation and protection enhancement are evident in the procedures of both ATR and CAC.

**Keywords:** Christ Apostolic Church, African Traditional Religion, spiritualisation.

**Word count:** 474

# CHAPTER ONE

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

Though Christianity came to Southwestern Nigeria through the various missionary activities of the missionary bodies mainly from Europe and America, the Southwest was already engaged in the practice of traditional religions. African Traditional Religion was popular among the Yorubá people. This religion provided them with the basis for life and sustenance both physically and spiritually. Despite the fact that African Traditional Religion is not a proselytizing religion<sup>1</sup> like Christianity and Islam, it has its adherents who are fully committed to its tenets. When Christianity came, it wielded a lot of influence on the people that conversion into it was enormous. However, the mission Christianity that was popular then appeared incomplete in satisfying the myriad physical and spiritual desires of the people. No wonder Ogbu U. Kalu describes it as not wielding enough spirituality as would satisfy the desires of the people. He portrays it as a faith that begins and terminates in the church building where hymns are sung, lessons are read and portions are recited from the scriptures, prayers are offered while lessons and sermons are administered. He feels that the Christianity that the foreign missionaries brought was not effectively taking care of every moment and every area of the lives of Nigerian Christians under all circumstances.<sup>2</sup>

We infer that with this, the deep emotions of the Nigerian Christians were too overwhelming for the formal liturgies introduced by the missionaries. The effects on them were that they were emotionally malnourished and spiritually thirsty because they were forced to be fed with foreign ration, which their systems were rejecting. With this, there existed a deep gulf between Mission Christianity and African Christians. C.O. Òsún opines that in pre-British and British era, Christian missionaries in Nigeria did not have available resources to bring about a balance with vital resources of life in terms

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<sup>1</sup> G. I. Onah, The meaning of peace in African traditional religion. Retrieved on April10, 2011 from <http://www.afrikaworld.net/afrel/chinwenwoye.htm>

<sup>2</sup> O. U. Kalu, 1986. African Church historiography: An ecumenical perspective. Paper presented at a workshop on African Church History on August 3, 1986 in Kenya. 20.

of accomplishments, health, and total or holistic well-being as traditional religion and Islam had.<sup>3</sup> Ogbu U. Kalu also opines that Mission Christianity did not emphasize enough spirituality in a spiritually active culture and worldview, such as Nigeria.<sup>4</sup>

With the emergence of the African Indigenous churches in the early Twentieth Century, a new twist emerged whereby the churches practiced Christianity based on the recognition of the values of the indigenous societies that accommodated them. The homegrown African traditional religious elements of these societies are allowed to permeate most facets of the practices in these churches. One main initiative of the indigenous churches is that they have incorporated certain African religious elements in their practices thereby making African worldview to have a place in the church. This type of Christianity appeared remarkable and interesting, which created a new way of demonstrating Christianity using homegrown tools. However, this Christianity was challenged as from 1967 with the emergence of the Charismatic movement and the neo-Pentecostals towards the end of the Twentieth Century. Graham Duncan and Ogbu U. Kalu claimed that the upsurge of the Pentecostal and charismatic movements in Nigeria which was between 1967 and 1975 had a great effect on the process of making Christianity feel at home in Africa.<sup>5</sup>

Neo-Pentecostal movements that came to Nigeria in the 1980s boisterously promised to provide solution to the myriads of problems that Nigerians encountered at that very crucial time of the nation's economic and political histories.<sup>6</sup> Diverse modern cultures alien to Nigeria have infiltrated the indigenous churches because of their emergence. This makes the contextualization of Christianity in the indigenous churches difficult, since some of them were influenced by these modern cultures.<sup>7</sup> In the midst of

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<sup>3</sup> C.O. Oshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria: A suggested Pentecostal consideration of its historical, organizational and theological developments, 1918-1975. Ph.D Thesis. Exeter University. xvi+23.

<sup>4</sup> Kalu, O. U. 1986. African Church historiography. 20.

<sup>5</sup> G. Duncan, and Kalu, O. U. 2005. "Bakuzufu": revival movement and indigenous appropriation in African Christianity. *African Christianity: an African story*. Kalu, O. U. Ed. 278-307.

<sup>6</sup> D. Ayégbóyín, and F.K.U. Asonzeh, 2002. Taxonomy of churches in Nigeria: A historical perspective. *Orita*. *Ìbàdàn Journal of Religious Studies*. 34, 1&2, 68-86. See also M.A. Òjó, Pentecostalism, public accountability and governance in Nigeria. Paper presented for discussion at the workshop on "Pentecostal-Civil Society Dialogue on Public Accountability and Governance" on Monday, October 18, 2004 at the Agip Recital Hall, Muson Center, Onikan, Lagos.

<sup>7</sup> Many churches were challenged by this new trend. Such churches battled seriously to discourage their members from being enticed by the foreign cultures. The most vulnerable group of people were the youth

the influence of modern Pentecostalism, some indigenous churches have managed to be conservative. These churches visualized and interpreted day-to-day existential challenges in the light of the African worldview. They see the African world as a world of spirits and power encounter, filled with forces surveying the African space and fighting for supremacy.<sup>8</sup>

The Bubonic plague that ravaged the world at the end of the First World War made its impact in Africa. Consequently, the invention of a spiritual solution sparked off a Pentecostal awakening in the already dry spiritual atmosphere of Nigeria, especially the Southwestern part. Most of the indigenous churches that developed later had their roots from the Precious Stone Society. This society was a praying group, formed to initiate spiritual revivalism, after the departure of the foreign missionaries to their countries because of the epidemic and economic depression that accompanied the war. The Precious Stone Society was formerly inaugurated in 1920,<sup>9</sup> and later became the Faith Tabernacle in 1923. The Faith Tabernacle was affiliated to the Apostolic Church of Great Britain. However, due to some doctrinal, institutional, and political differences, there was a cleavage. Two independent Nigerian church denominations known as the Apostolic Church and Christ Apostolic Church evolved. Christ Apostolic Church is our area of focus in this research.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Though the Christ Apostolic Church has been seen to have a reputation for high spiritualism, revivalism and many legendary personnel who had worked tirelessly to give the church the fame it has, it also has a subtle link with African traditional religion. Existing studies on the church have addressed largely the origin, growth, theology,

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members of the mainline churches who fancied the vibrant form of Christianity that neo-Pentecostals were affording. These mainline churches in order to stop their youth members from leaving the church started to incorporate attributes of neo-Pentecostal churches as Praise and Worship session and the use of such musical instruments as Modern Band Set, Guitar, Saxophone, Tamborine and a separate choir for the session. Christ Apostolic Church also battled with this challenge for some time. Some of her assemblies later succumbed to allowing a separate service popularly known as *English Service* to hold in order to keep its teeming youth members from going out of the church.

<sup>8</sup> S. Ellis, and Gerrie ter Haar, 2004. *Worlds of power: religious thought and political practice in Africa*. London: Hurst and Company. P. M. Steyne, 1989. *Gods of power: A study of the beliefs and practices of animists*. Houston: Touch Publications.

<sup>9</sup> C.O. Oshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. xvi+ 11.

revivals, spirituality, challenges and legendary personnel of the church rather than how the church has engaged African traditional religious elements as obtained in the Yorùbá traditional religion and practices and utilized them in her practices and liturgy. This study, therefore, examined the African traditional religious elements in Christ Apostolic Church in relation to how they have been appropriated in terms of the objects used, the procedures involved in their use and the functions associated with them. It further observed whether the appropriation of these elements have contributed to the spiritual satisfaction and benefits of church members and the society.

The elements identified are: spiritualization of the head (*Ori*) (that the physical head had spiritual capacity to harbour evil (*Ìbo*) and fortune), pregnancy conception (that barrenness transcended medical factors and that it is cured through fertility prayer), photographs/objects (that material items could convey spiritual messages to recipients), and the earth (that evil and good forces reside in the earth).

The questions that this research shall try to address are: first, to what extent can we say that the traditional religion and worldview of the Yorùbá people of Southwestern Nigeria influenced the liturgy of Christ Apostolic Church in Southwestern Nigeria? It is necessary to observe that Western Christianity could not adequately satisfy the emotional, spiritual, physical, and material yearnings of the indigenous Christians<sup>10</sup>. Second, what are the contributions of the African elements engaged by the church towards the endearment of members and non-members, Christians and non-Christians alike to the church? This question arises from the view of Oṣṣmóyájowó<sup>11</sup> that “there is no gainsaying the fact that the Aladura have incorporated many features from the indigenous forms of worship.”

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<sup>10</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. *Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria*. xvi+ 27.

<sup>11</sup> J. A. Oṣṣmóyájowó, 1978. *The Aladura churches in Nigeria since Independence*. Fashole Luke. Ed. *Christianity in Independent Africa*. Ìbàdàn: Ìbàdàn University Press. 96-110. See also E. I. Metuh, (n/d) *Dialogue with African Traditional Religion (ATR) The Teaching of the Special Synod on Africa*. Retrieved from <http://www.afrikaworld.net/afrel/metuh.htm> on the 22nd of August, 2010. 1-10.

### 1.3 Purpose of the Study

Christ Apostolic Church has been perceived by many scholars as a church that is fervent in revivals and rich in legendary personalities who had worked hard to bring fame to it. Scholars as J. Alokun, C.O. Oshun, and M.O. Idowu<sup>12</sup> have all given much attention to the church's history, legendary personalities and the its revivals but very little attention has been given to the fact that the church has some connection with African Traditional Religion. They have either not noticed or deliberately disregarded the reality that Christ Apostolic Church has a subtle link with African Traditional Religion. It is, however, our aim in this work to examine the African traditional religious elements appropriated in Christ Apostolic Church in terms of the objects used, the procedures involved in their use and the functions associated with them. This study will examine four African religious elements that have been spiritualized in the church namely; head, pregnancy conception, photographs and objects, and the earth. This work will further examine the objects that have been used and the functions associated with their uses. Here, we shall attempt to show how spiritualized water and oil, psalms and songs and fabricated items are used to spiritually manipulate the four elements mentioned above and the results achieved. Also, we shall identify the problems and prospects of engaging African traditional religious elements in the church.

### 1.4 Scope of the Study

The scope of this investigation is limited to Christ Apostolic Church in the southwestern part of Nigeria. Ibadan and Lagos are the main cities of the research as they are heterogeneously populated with adherents of the church from the Southwestern states. These cities also accommodate many assemblies of the church. The other Southwestern cities are referred to in this work. They are Osogbo in Ogun State, Akure in Ondo State, Abeokuta in Ogun State and Ado-Ekiti in Ekiti State. As far as this research is concerned, we refer to Southwestern Nigeria as comprising only the states that have been mentioned. Kwara and Kogi States have been deliberately excluded as not much of

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<sup>12</sup> A. Alókún, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church: CAC 1928-1988*. Lagos: Ìbùkúnolú Printers Nigeria Ltd., C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria: a suggested Pentecostal consideration of its historical, organizational and theological developments, 1918-1975. Ph.D Thesis. Exeter University. M. O. Idowu, 2007. *The great revival of 1930: the origin of modern-day Pentecostalism in Nigeria*, Ikeja: Divine Artillery Publications.

the activities of the church took place in these places. Also, Kwara and Kogi had earlier presence of Islam than the six states in this study. Also in contemporary Nigeria, the two states are not candidly categorised under Southwestern Nigeria.<sup>13</sup> Osogbo, Àkúré, Abeokuta and Ado-Èkiti are referred to because they accommodate many assemblies and members of Christ Apostolic Church. They are therefore the jurisdictions of Christ Apostolic Church in South-western Nigeria. The church spread to these states at her inception and had incorporated many aspects of the Yorùbá culture of these places. In addition, they have accommodated the church for many years.

The study covers the period 1970 to 2005. This range in time is important to the research as the year 1970 represents the period when Charismatic Christianity evolved and started to relate with other Christian denominations in Nigeria including Christ Apostolic Church. Charismatic Christian practices were different from the practices of the indigenous churches because of its Europe and American descent. These practices influenced the young people of Nigeria, especially in the Southwestern part, thereby luring many young and vibrant members of the Mainline and Aladura churches. Also, it was a period when Nigeria ended the civil war that threatened her unity and the nation was still grappling with the aftermath of the war. During this period, the adverse effect of the war made many people to seek spiritual solutions to their problems that ranged from insecurity to hunger. Many churches were patronised around this time and Christ Apostolic Church was inclusive. The African traditional religious elements of the Yorùbá of Southwestern Nigeria that this research identified were popularly used as from the 70s and 80s to 2005. The elements that have been identified by this study were very popular at that time because during that period, Nigeria experienced accumulated economic and political instabilities, which made everyone to look for ways of solving their problems. The major way out for Christians was by patronizing churches that included Christ Apostolic Church that promised solutions to their different problems.

The thirty-five years that the research covers represented the period when the indigenous churches had related robustly with different versions of Pentecostal practices, and Christ Apostolic Church had exhibited the Yorùbá elements, which the research focuses. While the 70s witnessed the period when charismatic Christianity began in Nigeria, the 80s and 90s represented the times when Nigeria experienced uncontrolled

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<sup>13</sup> *African Yorùbá religion* from <http://www.amazingpsychicreading.com/af.html> and *Yorùbá people* from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yorùbá\\_people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yorùbá_people). Both retrieved on 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2009.

economic and political downturn, which made many Nigerians to devise alternative means of breaking even socially, economically and spiritually. At this time, neo-Pentecostal churches thrived considerably because they continuously assured Christians of solutions to their problems. As a result, they gained membership from existing church denominations.<sup>14</sup> Yorùbá culture and worldview feature considerably in the research as they influenced the liturgy of Christ Apostolic Church. This was possible because the church developed in Yorùbáland and mainly governed by the Yorùbá people of Southwestern Nigeria.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This research is important in examining the extent the Christ Apostolic Church is regarded as an indigenous church. Some features are subtly borrowed from Yorùbá traditional religion and indigenous culture so as to enhance the church's practices. It further ascertained the reasons underlying the church's preference for African traditional religious elements in the practice of its Christianity. The research further determined the impact that Christ Apostolic Church's type of Christianity made on the spiritual, socio-cultural, and economic life of its adherents and the society.

This research is relevant at this time when neo-Pentecostal culture and ideologies are entering the churches in Nigeria, thereby influencing the home-grown traditional values and encouraging western culture than indigenous culture in Christianity. Such discovery may be useful in addressing the menace of unworthy foreign cultures in the churches in the Southwestern part of Nigeria, Nigeria as a nation, and the global world, and thus enhance clarity, relevance, and passion in church liturgy and practice. This work is also important as it attempts to identify the problems associated with the use of African elements in the church and the prospects that their engagement mean for the Christ Apostolic Church in particular and Christianity in general.

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<sup>14</sup> Such church denominations included the Catholic, Mainline and Protestant denominations. Christ Apostolic Church at this time was slightly affected because some of her youths went out of the church to be part of the vibrant worship styles of the neo-Pentecostal churches. However, this was curbed as from the 90s when some of her assemblies began to operate English Service where such vibrant modern characteristics could be exercised. In such services, English language was used as the language of liturgy. This was against the use of Yorùbá language for liturgy in Southwestern Nigeria and the conservative stance maintained by the church from inception.



## 1.6 Research Methodology

Since this research is a historical study of Christ Apostolic Church vis-à-vis its liturgical practices in a particular geographical region, ethnographical and bibliographical methods were employed. In the fieldwork, interviews, and participatory observation methods were used. Sixty CAC branches were purposively selected in Ibadan, Lagos, Abéòkúta, Àkúrè, Adó-Èkiti and Òsogbo. Unstructured interviews were conducted with purposively and randomly sampled 60 pastors (10 from each city) and 120 laity (20 from each city). Those interviewed were those who were members of the church within the thirty-five years that the research studied. It was believed that these categories of people could offer relevant information to the researcher, as they were members of the church at the period. A total of 360 copies of a questionnaire were administered to the same number of respondents in the following order: 120 to pastors (15 in each city except Ìbàdàn and Lagos where 35 and 25 copies were distributed in each city respectively), 120 copies to non-ordained workers (20 copies in each city) and 120 copies to members (20 copies in each city), while 236 copies were retrieved and processed. A ten-week participant observation monitoring was also conducted in some selected assemblies in the study areas. Data were subjected to content analysis and percentages. The secondary sources for the research were gathered through bibliographical search. This involved consultation of relevant literature such as books, articles in journals, church magazines and bulletins and other literary materials in libraries.

The questionnaire contains 20 questions on African worldview and elements of African traditional religion in Christ Apostolic Church in Southwestern Nigeria. Some of the questionnaire results are discussed in chapter four of this work. The data collected were subjected to content analysis and percentages using frequency tables and cross tabulations. Each of the data was calculated by simple percentage using the formula:

$$\frac{N}{TN} \times 100/1$$

While “N” stands for ‘Respondents’, “TN” stands for ‘Total Number of Respondents’ per statement. Responses of the respondents are analyzed and discussed under appropriate paragraphs in chapter four. Logical reasoning and historical method were used in treating our findings in this work. Logical reasoning was employed in reconciling the information and evidence got in the field.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of works on African indigenous churches and Christ Apostolic Church respectively. They are works of such scholars as C. O. Òshun, A. Oṣómóyájowó, D. Ayégbóyìn and S. Adeṣemola Ìshoṣṣola, O. U. Kalu, E. Isichei, S.A. Fátókun, T.A. Faṣṣalaye, and others are reviewed. Besides the introductory part, this review is divided into two parts namely: African Indigenous Churches and Christ Apostolic Church. The conclusion constitutes a brief summary of the views of scholars whose ideas have been reviewed.

#### 2.1 History, Beliefs and Doctrinal Emphasis of African Indigenous Churches

D. Ayégbóyìn and S. A. Ìshoṣṣola, A. Aloṣkaṣn, A. Adogame and J. Lizo and A. Omoṣyaṣjowo describe African indigenous churches as simply founded by Africans for themselves without dependence on foreign aids and assistance. They further portray them as self-governing and self-financing and self-propagating with a mandate to propagate Christianity that seriously considers and respects African opinion and mindset.<sup>1</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn and S. A. Ìshoṣṣola in their own opinion say that they are known to be self-supporting, self-governing and self-financing. We also support these claims because the indigenous churches as much as possible managed to maintain this independence, to the amazement of the foreign missionaries. They were surprised that churches that were founded, funded, and administered by Africans could survive without any recourse to them for assistance.<sup>2</sup> However, when considered critically, it is quite impossible to think and believe that the African church founders did not benefit from the

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<sup>1</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Ìshoṣṣola, 1997. *African indigenous churches: an historical perspective*. Lagos: Greater Height Publications. 19.

19. A. Aloṣkaṣn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church. (1928-1988)*, Ìbàdàn: Ìbùkúnoṣlá Printing Nig. Ltd. 23 & 24. A. A. Adogame, and J. Lizo, 2005. *Zionist, Aladura and Roho, African instituted churches*. O. U. Kalu, Ed. *African Christianity: An African story*. Pretoria: Dept. of Church History. University of Pretoria. 309-329, 313. J. A. Oṣómóyájowó, 1978. *The Aladura churches in Nigeria since independence*. Fashole L. Ed. *Christianity in independent Africa*. Ìbàdàn: Ìbàdàn University Press. 96.

<sup>2</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn, and Ìshoṣṣola, S. A. 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 19.

missionaries. At least they gathered some experiences from the white missionaries and those experiences might have been useful in the management of the indigenous churches that they established. While they might not have benefited financially, some of them had been tutored in the mainline doctrines.

Peter Falk, in his work titled *The Growth of the Church in Africa*, sees the action of the African Christians as unnecessary and ambitious. He feels that Africans were dissatisfied and restless and that they wanted leadership.<sup>3</sup> This however shows a rather biased and shallow concept of why the indigenous churches were formed and what they represented. These churches were formed not because the Africans wanted power and leadership at all cost but for the emancipation of genuine Christian faith from the shackles of colonial influence, and the development of such faith into a type that projects the reality of African existential challenges.

About the negative effect of missionaries on the traditional culture of the people of Africa, Adrian Hasting in his work *Church and Mission in Modern Africa*<sup>4</sup> insists that the attitude of the missionary bodies and their agents towards the evangelical mission and the culture of the people they came to evangelize were harsh. He captures this behaviour vividly in the arrogant expression of a Capuchin missionary in Congo to show how the foreign missionaries grossly disregarded and scorned the culture and religion of the Africans:

On my way, I found numbers of idols, which I threw into the fire. The owner of these idols... seemed very annoyed. To calm him down by humiliating him, I let him know that if he persisted in anger, I should see that he himself {is} burnt with the idol.

It is our view that foreign missionaries would have achieved more in their evangelical works if they had given their evangelism an African appeal. To comment critically on the expression of the Capuchin missionary, it can be easily deduced that the particular missionary did not put up this attitude by himself, but this manner fully had the backing of the overall missionary body that sent him.

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<sup>3</sup> P. Falk, 1997. *The growth of the church in Africa*. Jos: African Christian Textbooks. 349 -350.

<sup>4</sup> A. Hasting, 1966. *Church and mission in modern Africa*. New York: Fordham University Press. 59.

We can also say that this attitude shows the pride inherent in the mission of the foreign missionaries and the absolute humiliation and degradation of the socio-religious and cultural spaces which they came to meet. The expression wholly targeted to deflate the ego of the man in question and the totality of what the African mindset represented. Obviously, their Christianity was garbed in just the same arrogance they themselves put on.

About why the African personnel got involved in African indigenous churches, A. Adogame and J. Lizo gave some reasons as rationales for their participation. These are religious, cultural, political, economic, ethnic, and racial discriminations. Other reasons are social and psychological.<sup>5</sup> This further shows that the unending over-lord-ship of the foreign missionaries affected them. Rufus Òsítélu<sup>6</sup> in his book maintains a pragmatic view about the insurgence of the European missionaries by describing it as harmful to the African faith. He depicts their type of Christianity as a divided one that came in the form of different denominations and that Africans were forced to dangle and wobble between them. S.A. Fátókun in his work *Christianity and African Culture* also comments that the African way of life and perception were tagged as barbaric and were considered irrelevant in Christianity by the European missionaries when they brought the religion to Nigeria. He further comments that this perception to a great extent alienated the religion from the African people.<sup>7</sup> From these opinions, we presume that things were not okay for the “native Africans” and that the indigenous churches emerged in a bid to free African Christians from the shackles of socio-religious slavery in their own land.

D. Ayégbóyìn and S.A. Ìsòhòlà<sup>8</sup> argue that the indigenous churches sprouted because of the desire of African Christian leaders to reform existing mission protestant Christianity. This appears true and reasonable but the authors do not clearly state that the African Indigenous Church leaders did not actually reform the existing mission churches. Their attempts and convictions were not welcomed and so were excised from the churches to form their independent indigenous churches where

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<sup>5</sup> A. A. Adogame, and J. Lizo, 2005. *Zionist, Aladura and Roho*. 314.

<sup>6</sup> R. Òsítélu, 2002. *African instituted churches: diversities, growth, gifts, spirituality and ecumenical understanding of African initiated churches*. London: Transaction Publishers. 33.

<sup>7</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2005. *Christianity and African culture*. *Obitun*. 4:1. 112-119.

<sup>8</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Ìsòhòlà, 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 21.

doctrines, values and passions compatible with African worldview could be practised. D. Barrett<sup>9</sup> puts this better in his work *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements* by describing the desire of the African indigenous church leaders as an attempt to find a mode of religious expression, which is emotionally and sociologically pleasing. This overwhelmingly supports the fact that the indigenous churches moved out to define a better Christianity (outside the existing ones) that suits the life setting of their people. They also agree concerning the growth and proliferation of indigenous churches in Africa that the Nineteenth Century marked the period when the churches were birthed and had taken root and even proliferated considerably, especially in the sub Saharan Africa.<sup>10</sup> Our inference here is that some of the prayer groups materialised to full-blown churches that awakened the consciousness of the African identity which the foreign missionaries attempted to strangle.

R. Òsìteṣeṣe offers the reason for their growth: the injection of traditional cultural worldview in Christianity.<sup>11</sup> A. Oṣemóyáṣowó corroborates this, saying that the growth was remarkable due to the socialised Christianity, which the indigenous African church founders introduced that made the indigenous churches mix freely with the society. This enabled them to impact positively on the same society, even in the face of the prevailing hostilities that bedevilled their operations around the pre-independent milieu of Nigeria.<sup>12</sup> The views of these authors are relevant to this research. However, they did not mention how the indigenous churches go about to contextualise Christianity. Furthermore, they have not explored the indigenous elements engaged to socialise Christianity with traditional culture. This research fills this gap.

D. Barret statistically analysed the degree of this proliferation by saying that the number of different denominations that registered with the government by 1970 was over

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<sup>9</sup> Barrett, D. 1968. *Schism and renewal in Africa: an analysis of six thousand contemporary religious movements*. Nairobi: East African Publishing House. 161 & 162.

<sup>10</sup> D. Ayégbóyín, and S. A. Ìṣṣhoṣṣla 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 11.

<sup>11</sup> R. Òsìteṣeṣe, 2002. *African instituted churches*. 33. Cf. S.A. Fátókun, 2007. Christian mission in southwestern Nigeria and the response of African Traditional Religion. *International Review of Mission*. 96. 380/381. Jan./Apr.105-113.

<sup>12</sup> J. A. Oṣemóyáṣowó, 1978. The Aladura churches in Nigeria since independence. Fáshoṣṣè Luke Eds. *Christianity in independent Africa*. London: Rex Collins Ltd. 1978. 106.

760 and that the figure continued to swell each following year.<sup>13</sup> Òsìteṣeṣe Rufus expands this projection, maintaining that the figure might have exceeded 10000 by the end of the Twentieth Century.<sup>14</sup> It could be gathered from the two projections that indigenous Christianity enjoyed the support of many indigenous people and that it was a solace to the religious yearnings of the Africans and especially Nigerian indigenous Christians.

However, despite its growth and proliferation, the church suffered the problem of terminology, since a number of biased reasons had been adduced for its emergence. Additionally, a series of derogatory names and appellations had been given the movement. These include: *Separatist, Ethiopian, Zionist, Spiritual, Independent, Syncretistic, Protest, Nativistic, Tribal, Neo-pagan, Sectarian, Nationalist, Hebraic, Cultic, Messianic* and *Post-Christian* to mention a few.<sup>15</sup> A. Adogame and J. Lizo suggest that these names were on the other hand products of different levels of their developmental histories. They agree that these names seriously represent the ideological, political and religious orientations and atmosphere, which revolved around research as well as the civic arena at the time.<sup>16</sup> This insinuates that the authority in the surroundings, which hosted the emerging spirituality, initiated some degree of intolerance and hatred, which in fact reflected in the different names that the movement was labelled. The result of all the derogatory labels showered on them brought about the adoption of the names they are called today such as *African Initiated Churches, African Indigenous Churches* and *African Instituted Churches*. They were so named in a consultation organised by the World Council of Churches at Kitwe and North Rhodesia on the 6 to 13 September,

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<sup>13</sup> D. Barret, 1968. *Schism and renewal in Africa*. 78. For further information about the statistics of adherents of different religions globally, see C. D. Isizoh, (n/d). *Religions in sub-saharan Africa: working and walking together. A Christian reflection*. Retrieved from <http://www.afrikaworld.net/afrel/isizoh.htm> on the 25th August 2010.

<sup>14</sup> R. Òsìteṣeṣe, 2002. *African instituted churches*. 33.

<sup>15</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Ísṣhoṣṣeṣe, 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 12-16. A. A. Adogame, and J. Lizo, 2005. 312.

<sup>16</sup> A. A. Adogame, and J. Lizo, 2005. *Zionist, Aladura and Roho*. 312. Some early African indigenous churches' typologies in the following books can also be compared: G.C. Oosthuizen, 1968. *Post - Christianity in Africa: a theological and anthropological study*. London: C. Hurst. D. Barrett, 1968. *Schism and renewal in Africa: an analysis of six thousand contemporary religious movement*. Nairobi: East African Publishing House. H.W. Turner, 1979. *Religious innovation in Africa: collected essays on new religious movements*, Boston: J.K. Hall & Co.

1962. This gives us an impression that there is yet no scholarly consensus as to what specific name most befits the group.<sup>17</sup>

To be candid, African Christianity and churches seem to have really exhibited a number of or most of the qualities of the demeaning tags which they had been called and this, to some extent, is a minus to the movement. It is not surprising that D. Ayégbóyìn and S.A. Ìsọhoọla recognize secession as a major problem and weakness of the African Indigenous Churches. The authors on the other hand claim that secession had aided their proliferation.<sup>18</sup> We could interpret the view of these authors to mean that the strength of these churches probably lies in splintering and that despite this problem, African indigenous churches' growth had been significant. At the same time, it is our scholarly opinion that its proliferation tendency should not be celebrated at the expense of its problem, which is schism.

Some Independent Churches had evolved in West Africa in the Nineteenth Century, that is, before the Ethiopian churches began to develop. E.A. Babaloọlá<sup>19</sup> in his work *Christianity in West Africa: An Historical Analysis* reveals that a number of such churches like the first independent African church in Sierra Leone known as African Methodist Church developed in 1821. This church broke away from the Wesleyan Mission. Six other churches had seceded, all from the Wesleyan Mission by 1935. The reason for this was given as "natural desire" of Africans to control their own affairs. We deduce that the reason for the emergence of the indigenous African churches in Nigeria was not so far away from the reason why these earliest African churches seceded from the mainline church. There is however a little difference. The indigenous churches formed in the early twentieth Century were not after power or leadership as African indigenous Churches' critics had thought but after the spirituality of the people along their socio-cultural leaning.

D. Ayégbóyìn and S.A. Ìsọhoọla<sup>20</sup> describe the churches that broke away from the mainline denominations between the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as

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<sup>17</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Ìsọhoọla, 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 18.

<sup>18</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Ìsọhoọla, 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 153.

<sup>19</sup> E.O. Babaloọlá, 1988. *Christianity in West Africa: an historical analysis*. Ìbàdàn: Book Presentation and Publishing Company. 224.

<sup>20</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Ìsọhoọla, 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 35.

forerunners of Indigenous Churches in Africa. Such churches in Nigeria include: The Native Baptist Church (1888), The United Native African Church (1891), The African Church Bethel (1901), and the United African Methodist Church Eñleñja (1917). E.A. Àyáñdeñle<sup>21</sup> in his book, *The missionary impact on Modern Nigeria 1842-1914*, associates this early version of African faith to the activities of some Africans who were culturally, socially and, politically dissociated from the church. For example, the issue of polygamy, which was not tolerated by the mission churches, was one of the reasons for the secessions. Our assumption here is that Ethiopian churches in Nigeria were politically motivated than spiritual. D. Ayégbóñyìn and F.K.U. Asonzeh<sup>22</sup> in their work, *Taxonomy of churches in Nigeria: A historical perspective*, lend some support to this supposition as they gave some reasons why the United Native African Church was established. The reasons are to expunge all foreign forms of Christianity from the church and ensure that the personnel of the pastorate were entirely made up of Africans. Critically assessing these two reasons, it is of our view that the former reason given by the authors could be untenable, as it may not be possible to wipe out totally the foreign influence. The influence of the missionaries actually survived their stay in Nigeria as some of the doctrines of the Ethiopian churches were patterned after the mainline missionary denominations, especially in the area of liturgy.

About the forerunners of African indigenous church prophets, A. Aloñkañn states that they began to develop as from 1910 and their efforts greatly motivated the African indigenous Churches prophets who came after them. He proposes that the precursors such as William Wade Harris (Liberia, 1913); Garrick Sokari Braide (Nigeria, 1915); Walter Matiffa (Lesotho); Samuel Oppong (Ghana); Simon Kimbangu (Central Africa, 1918) and Alice Lenshina (Zambia, Tanzania and Malawi, 1950s) directly or indirectly initiated a spiritualised indigenous Christianity in Africa. He claims further that they generally preached one common message of the healing power of God, which made them to have many adherents.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> E.A. Àyándélé, 1966. *The missionary impact on modern Nigeria 1842-1914*. London: Longman Group Ltd. 197.

<sup>22</sup> D. Ayégbóñyìn, and F.K.U. Asonzeh, 2002 *Taxonomy of churches in Nigeria: a historical perspective*. *Oríta*. 34. 1-2. 68-86. 74.

<sup>23</sup> A. Aloñkañn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 23 - 24.



A. Adogame and J. Lizo<sup>24</sup> in their work, *Zionist, Aladura and Roho: African Instituted Churches* agree that the African indigenous churches in Yorùbáland evolved from the Precious Stone Society, a praying group formed at Ìjèbú Ode. This corresponds with D. Ayégbóyìn and S.A. Ìsòhòlálá's opinion,<sup>25</sup> only that they claim that soon after their formation, they spread like wildfire all over Nigeria.

About prayer in the Aladura churches, A. Adogame and J. Lizo say that this is emphasised and that they have a great deal of enthusiasm for healing, prophecy, vision, and dreams.<sup>26</sup> D.O. Oṣṣaláyíwólá in his paper, *The Aladura: Its Strategies for Mission and Conversion in Yorùbáland*, says that the Aladura movement believes in the power and authority of prayer (*Agbàra aṣṣe Àdurá*). He says further that they hold in great regard the belief that healing takes place through effective prayer.<sup>27</sup> Christ Apostolic Church, the denomination that this research focuses on, shares all the aforementioned attributes and these features essentially categorise the church as a Pentecostal church. E. Isichei in her work, *A History of Christianity in Africa*, says that the Aladura pray for many things ranging from material to spiritual. These include prosperity and healing from sicknesses and barrenness. She, however, does not mention how Aladura Christians go about using indigenous elements in order to bring about prosperity and healing such as this research focuses. This is why this research is important to scholarship.<sup>28</sup>

B. Ìdòwú identifies in his work, the importance of prayer among the Yorùbá saying:

Prayers are offered, not only at worship but also at any time and in any place as the worshipper feels or occasion demands. People often stop on their way at shrines to offer brief prayers; or they may speak their prayers in intimate ways to their divinity, whom they believe to be ever-present though unseen, as they walk along the road as they engaged in their work.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>24</sup> A. A. Adogame, and J. Lizo 2005. *Zionist, Aladura and Roho*. 316 - 317.

<sup>25</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Ìsòhòlálá, 1997. *African indigenous churches* 65.

<sup>26</sup> A. A. Adogame, and J. Lizo, 2005. *Zionist, Aladura and Roho*. 317.

<sup>27</sup> D.O. Oṣṣaláyíwólá, 1987. "The Aladura: its strategies for mission and conversion in Yorùbáland". *Oriṣta*. Journal of Religious Studies. 19. 1: 41.

<sup>28</sup> E. Isichei, 1995. *A history of Christianity in Africa: from antiquity to the present*. London: SPKC. 297.

<sup>29</sup> B. Ìdòwú, 1962. *Oṣṣaláyíwólá: God in Yorùbá Belief*. London: Longmans. 117.

It is viewed that the value, which the Aladura people placed on prayer, was not far fetched from their traditional Yorùbá religion that recognised and observed prayer as principal in its belief system.

Concerning the earliest Aladura Church in Nigeria, A. Omo-ya-jowo in his work, *Cherubim and Seraphim: The History of an African Independent Church*, says the Cherubim and Seraphim Church (C & S), was the first to exist as an inter-denominational society. He submits that the church upheld prayer accompanied with faith and renunciation of the devil and his work (including the worship of idols). The church further preached against the use of *jùjú* and charms and encouraged those who believed and possessed them to surrender them.<sup>30</sup> We also observe that the area of focus of the Cherubim and Seraphim was similar to that of Ayò Babalo-la in 1930 during the Great Revival at Ile-sa. We, therefore, infer that prayer, faith and Pentecostal manifestations of power of healing and deliverance were the essential weapons of conversion at this time.

D. Ayégbó-yin and S.A. Ìs-ho-la add that the Cherubim and Seraphim Church started as a prayer group in Lagos in 1925 under the leadership of Prophet Moses Orímo-ládé Tu-nola-se.<sup>31</sup> Afe Adogame and Lizo Jafta however establish that the praying society translated to a full-blown church in the same year because of the intolerance of the mission churches.<sup>32</sup> This also implies that the intolerance of the mission churches before independence contributed in no small measure to the birth and consolidation of the Indigenous Christian churches in Nigeria, apart from the fact that Africans had longed for such a freedom that would afford them the opportunity of a freer expression of their faith.

Now to the 1930 Great Revival, authors such as S.A. Fátókun, D. Ayégbó-yin and S. A. Ìs-ho-la, A. Adogame and J. Lizo C. E-ku-ndayo and E.H.L. Olu-she-ye all agree in their works that the Revival at Ile-sa was significant. Their reason was that many people were converted from their previous religions to

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<sup>30</sup> J.A. Omo-ya-jowo, 1982. *Cherubim and Seraphim: the history of an African independent church*. New York: Nok Publishers. 9.

<sup>31</sup> D. Ayégbó-yin and S. A. Ìs-ho-la 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 81.

<sup>32</sup> A. A. Adogame, and J. Lizo, 2005. *Zionist, Aladura and Roho*. 317.

Christianity.<sup>33</sup> The authors notice that the strategies used to draw the converts were healing manifestations, miracles and preaching of repentance. This research sees the relevance of contextualisation of Yorùbá worldview as a means, which the Christ Apostolic Church that evolved from the 1930 Great Revival employed to evangelise during the period that the study covers. The research notices that Christ Apostolic Church had been using the traditional tools rather unconsciously than consciously.

About the spirituality of the founders of Pentecostal movement in Nigeria, A. Adogame and R. Òsìteṣeṣeṣe agree that the churches founded by them depended so much on the individual charismata of each founder.<sup>34</sup> The case of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) which emerged from within the mission church tradition in 1930 is relevant. Prophet Josiah Olúnówò Òsìteṣeṣeṣe was suspended from the Anglican Church where he was a catechist due to his nature of demonstrating the spiritual gift, which was not compatible with the Anglican Church.

A. Adogame in his work, *Celestial Church of Christ: the politics of cultural identity in a West Africa prophetic charismatic movement*, mentions that the Celestial Church of Christ appeared to be the only African indigenous church around this time that did not sever from any existing mainline church. He says that the church emerged independently through the visionary experience and charismatic initiative of Samuel Bilehou Oshoffa in 1947.<sup>35</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn and S.A. Ìsṣhoṣṣhoṣṣho on the other hand identify that the church's distinctive traits and some unique conditions surrounding its emergence separated it from other AIC's in Yorùbáland.<sup>36</sup>

It is our supposition that generally the indigenous churches that came prior to Nigeria's independence vigorously tried to re-create the spirituality of the faith of the

<sup>33</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Ìsṣhoṣṣhoṣṣho, 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 73 & 74. A. A. Adogame, and J. Lizo, 2005. *Zionist, Aladura and Roho 317*. S.A. Fátókun, 2007. Historical sketch of Pentecostal movements in Nigeria (with emphasis on the Southwest). *christianesimo nella storia*. 609-633.

C. Ekuṣṣdayo, 2004. *History and ministerial life of Joseph Ayoṣṣ Babaloṣṣ (1904-1959)*. Ìbàdàn: United Christian Publications. 16 & 17. E.H.L. Oluṣṣheṣṣe, 1998. *Saint Joseph Ayoṣṣ Babaloṣṣláṣṣ: Africa's foremost religious revolutionary leader 1904-1959*. Ìbàdàn: Christian Overcomers Publishers. 29 & 30.

<sup>34</sup> A.A. Adogame, 1999. *Celestial Church of Christ: the politics of cultural identity in a West Africa prophetic charismatic movement*. Frankfurt am main: Peter Lang. 24. R. Osiṣteṣeṣeṣe, 2002. *African instituted churches*. 131 - 133.

<sup>35</sup> A.A. Adogame, 1999. *Celestial Church of Christ*. 24.

<sup>36</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Ìsṣhoṣṣhoṣṣho, 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 97.

indigenous people, which the foreign missionaries tried to influence. These indigenous churches had encounter with the colonial mission authorities and re-established the worldview of their people vis-à-vis existential challenges of life and emphasis on visionary re-interpretation of the Bible.

C.O. Òshun, D. Ayégbóyìn, S. A. Ìshoṣṣalá, A. Oṣómóyájowó and E.A. Àyándeṣe in their works emphasized that the African indigenous churches in Southwestern Nigeria started as a praying movement that later blossomed into full fledged churches.<sup>37</sup> This assertion shows that the founders of African Indigenous Churches reacted to the prevailing situation of the time and began a spiritual re-awakening in the mainline churches. It further shows that African Indigenous Churches in Nigeria evolved for a purpose at a specific time in the history of Christianity in Nigeria. They came at a time when Western Christianity had already registered its presence in Nigeria and had thrived appreciably. Before independence, the colonial government who considered them a threat to the smooth running of their administration did not want these churches. At this time, the mission churches captured the cream of the society, the well- to-do and the educated people as members. On the other hand, African indigenous churches especially the Aladura of the Southwestern part of Nigeria had the down- to- earth, artisans, and the low ranked civil servants as members.<sup>38</sup>

However, authors such as we have referred to above have stated different roles of the African indigenous churches to the society, the truth remains that these churches came to vitalize their society spiritually. They came to energize the Christianity of the missionaries which appeared rather too conservative for their liking. Since the founders of these churches were Africans, they were able to penetrate the mindset of their people more sharply than mission Christianity was. We shall now review the characteristic features of African indigenous churches.

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<sup>37</sup> A. Oṣómóyájowó, 1978. The Aladura churches in Nigeria. 96 – 97. D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Ìshoṣṣalá, 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 65-68, C.O. Òshun, 1986. The Aladura movement and their impact on Nigerian society. E. I. Metuh, Ed. *The gods in retreat: continuity and change in African religions, the Nigerian experience*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing Company Ltd. 195-196. E.A. Àyándélé, 1978. The Aladura among the Yorùbá: a challenge to the “orthodox” churches”. O. U. Kalu, Ed. *Christianity in West Africa: the Nigerian story*. Ìbàdàn: Daystar Press. 384-390.

<sup>38</sup> See A. O. Oṣómóyájowó, 1978. The Aladura churches in Nigeria. 97. E.A. Àyándélé, 1966. *Missionary impact on modern Nigeria*. 386.

D. Ayégbóyìn and S. A. Ìsòhòlá consider these churches as highly spiritual and that they perceive everything as having spiritual connotations.<sup>39</sup> We derive from their claim that the indigenous churches see the African world as a world of *force* and a zone where spiritual encounters take place on a daily basis. They perceive that spiritual interaction takes place. They also believe that spiritual issues are not discussed in the earthly forum where people meet face to face to sort out issues. This takes us to the deliberate and unusual stress they put on *the spiritual*. Since the African world is a world where the spirits that “drift” in the air are believed to be powerful and malevolent, a more powerful force would be required to counter their surges. African indigenous churches regard the Holy Spirit as the most powerful force to counter effectively the advances of the wicked forces.

The authors further say that the indigenous churches interpret all occurrences spiritually. It is our opinion here that these churches assume that human challenges and problems that include bad luck, disappointment, barrenness, poverty, illnesses, unemployment, prolonged pregnancy, and frustration are considered to have spiritual origin. This explains why the Holy Spirit is invoked in these churches to deal with the evil forces. The reason for their reliance on the spiritual owes to their knowledge about spirits and *the spiritual*. The African traditional society which had familiarized its people with spiritual encounters that take place in their society enabled members of African indigenous churches to rely on this notion and emphasize it in their worship.

Another feature as identified in D.O. Oṣúláyíwoṣúlá’s work is that the African Indigenous Churches, especially the Aladura depends solely on the power and authority of prayer (*agbaṣara aṣiti aṣise aṣdurara*). He argued that prayer forms the foundation of their practice and doctrine. He further said that it formed the route to blessings that any person may ever think of. He claimed that prayer was their weapon of conversion and the sole armory for battling the evil spiritual enemies.<sup>40</sup> We, however, notice that fondness for prayer among the African indigenous churches in the Southwestern part of Nigeria, among the Yorùbá had its origin from the belief of the Yorùbá people that prayer to the gods is essential before anything could be successful.

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<sup>39</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn and S. A. Ìsòhòlá, 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 28.

<sup>40</sup> D.O. Oṣúláyíwoṣúlá, 1987. *The Aladura*. 19. 1. 41.

Yorùbá people refer to prayer as their power. Consequently, members of the African indigenous churches believe that the prayers offered are accompanied with power, which enforces the sanctioning of request.

These churches cherish prayers so much, so they refer to their spiritual leaders as *Ba*□*ba*□ *Aladura* (father in prayer) and *Ìya*□ *Aladura* (mother in prayer).<sup>41</sup> They make such reference to show, appreciate, and revere their spiritual leaders as those versed in the culture of prayer. They also believe they can be relied on when spiritual warfare prayers are to be engaged to fight the enemies or enhance a benefit. There are specified hours of prayers and designated prayer mountains in the African indigenous churches. The authority of these prayer mountains at times makes it mandatory for visitors who come to the mountain to observe their personal prayers to as well abide by their prayer hours.<sup>42</sup> Some of the indigenous churches have a special place carved out of their prayer mountains as a highly consecrated place. This place is called *Mercy Ground* or *Mercy land*. The ground is usually an enclosure at a corner on the mountain laced with white sand and fenced with either iron bars or stone. The barricade is usually painted white and the area more often than not restricted. It is believed that prayers said on the ground are answered more quickly than the ones said elsewhere on the mountain. It is further believed that special spiritual warfare that requires the intervention of God and the heavenly hosts are carried out here. Other indigenous churches patronize the ocean beaches and they make use of different praying aids such as incense and candles.

African indigenous churches also stress the practice of Divine Healing, *Cura Divina*. O. U. Kalu in his book, *The History of Christianity in West Africa* notices that Divine Healing is one of the cherished practices of the African indigenous churches.<sup>43</sup> However, R. M. Cameroon in his work, *Strains and facilities in the interpretation of an African movement* clarifies that the Aladura Christians capitalized on the situation surrounding them to gain attention. He observes that prevailing socio-economic, political,

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<sup>41</sup> See D. Ayégbó□yín, and S. A. Ìs□ho□□la□, 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 28.

<sup>42</sup> The researcher visited some prayer mountains such as *Ori*□-*Òke*□ *O*□*lo*□□*runko*□*le*□ (O□lo□□*runko*□□*le*□ Mountain), *Ori*□-*Òkè*□ *Ìko*□*y*□*i* (Ìko□*y*□*i* Mountain), *Ori*□-*Òke*□ *Aki*□*nkemi*□ (Aki□*nke*□□*mi* Mountain), and *Ori*□-*Òke*□ *Oloode* (Oloode Mountain) in Oyo state. He observed that prayer hours are observed at three hours interval starting from 6:00am. At Oloode Mountain, visitors are enjoined to participate in such joint prayer sessions.

<sup>43</sup> O.U. Kalu, 1980. *The history of Christianity in West Africa*. Essex: Longman Group Ltd. 321-328.

and religious situations that surrounded Nigeria during the Great Revival of 1930 helped to display their spirituality and gain popularity.<sup>44</sup> He also noticed that scarce availability of medical facilities and the western Christianity's failure to sympathize with the plights of Nigerians popularized the indigenous churches. He further remarked that divine intervention was possible as solution to challenges of life. E.A. Ayàndélé also mentioned that the economic depression of late 1920s in Nigeria, which was blamed on Christians, intensified Aladura belief about Divine Healing. Christians were blamed for abandoning their Christian faith for dependence on the use of witchcraft, amulets, juju, and medical science.<sup>45</sup>

D. Ayégbóyìn and S. A. Ìsọhoṣọlọ agree that the prevalence of sickness in Africa and the high cost of medical care are main reasons why many patronize the African indigenous churches. They further agree that some of the ailments that were cured in these churches had been unsuccessfully managed in hospitals and traditional healing homes.<sup>46</sup> We also notice that apart from these reasons, many adherents of African Indigenous churches prefer to be healed divinely than medically because they believe that such healings are permanent and without adverse effects. However, it is baffling that some claims about Divine Healing are spurious. Also they are not medically proven in the hospitals to ascertain whether healing has actually taken place and to what extent. African indigenous churches held tenaciously to the fact that all existential challenges could be surmounted through divine intervention. The existence of malevolent forces and the afflictions that they initiate on man additionally popularized *cura divina* in the church. No wonder Mitchell reiterated that African indigenous churches especially Aladura thrive where witchcraft presence is felt.<sup>47</sup> In the 80s and early 90s in Nigeria, African indigenous churches provided Faith Healing homes where they kept the invalid

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<sup>44</sup> R.M. Cameroon, 1979. Strains and facilities in the interpretation of an African movement. *Research in Social Movement, Conflict and Change*. 2. 203-209.

<sup>45</sup> E.A. Àyàndélé, The Aladura among the Yorùbá: a challenge to the "orthodox" Churches. O. U. Kalu, Ed. *Christianity in West Africa*. 384.

<sup>46</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Ìsọhoṣọlọ, 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 29. See J. A. Oṣómóyájowó, 1978. The Aladura churches in Nigeria. 98.

<sup>47</sup> M. R. Cameroon, 1970. Towards the sociology of religious independency. *Journal of Religion in Africa*. 3. 1. 19.

and took care of them.<sup>48</sup> Some operated “Faith Homes” to keep close watch on pregnant women who suffered from pregnancy related problems in the past and needed spiritual assistance to deliver their babies. These women delivered either in the faith homes or in the hospitals depending on the degree of their problems.

A. Adogame and J. Lizo say that African indigenous churches accentuate the African worldview in their form of Christianity. They explain that they are practical in appropriating Christianity in a form that suits the African prevailing worldview. Their method of doing this is to adopt indigenous features into their liturgy. However, they claim not to share any relationship or connection with African Traditional Religion.<sup>49</sup> The Christianity they project is totally rooted in African traditional culture and responds flexibly to the demand of the African people. This makes their members to conveniently abide in the church and not seek for solution to their problems outside. They are conscious of evil, which they believe lurks everywhere. They are also aware of the havocs of the witches, wizards and other wicked forces. The African indigenous churches dispatch veritable counter measures to quell the destructive tendencies of the evil forces. Such approaches include the employment of spiritual rituals such as exorcism, prayer, fasting, bathing in flowing streams or rivers and sacrifice at crossroads.<sup>50</sup>

Before the emergence of the African indigenous churches, mission Christianity attempted to find solutions to the problems of Africans but failed. Unlike Islam and African Traditional Religion, mission Christianity prescribed long years of learning of Christian doctrine and catechism. It emphasized monogamy, frowns at the use of herbal medicine, and did not recognize the “spiritual landscape” of the African people.<sup>51</sup> It failed to agree with Africans that wicked forces greater than they were, initiated the challenges they faced in life such as barrenness, ill luck and sicknesses. The consequence of this was that some of the African Christians went back to the use of traditional medicines, observing rituals and sacrifices, while practising vague Christianity to please the

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<sup>48</sup> Christ Apostolic Church Àgbàlǎ Ìtura Ìbàdàn operated one of such healing homes for the mentally sick people. This was operated throughout the 80s but was discontinued in the 90s.

<sup>49</sup> A. Adogame, and J. Lizo, 2005. *Zionist*, Aladura and Roho. 322.

<sup>50</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Ìsòhòlǎ, 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 31 - 32.

<sup>51</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1985. *Aladura movement and their impact*. 200- 201.



missionaries.<sup>52</sup> African indigenous churches brought relief to African spirituality. They filled the vacuum created by the mission churches and connected the primal worldview of African culture and religion with Christianity.

### 2.3 Christ Apostolic Church

Many works have evolved on Christ Apostolic Church. These include works of J. O. Alókan, E.H.L. Olúshèye, A. Olówè, M. O. Ìdowú and C. O. Òshun. These works have focused on the historical origin, organisational strategies, revivals and miracles and theological interpretation of Pentecostalism. J. O. Alókan in his work describes the church as revival oriented. He claims that the 1930 Great Revival which attracted many people from all walks of life remains the greatest revival in the church and that other revivals are striving to achieve this feat.<sup>53</sup> He further says that the church's emphasis on divine healing was a legacy from the inception of the church as a praying society through the Great Revival period and the affiliation of the Faith Tabernacle Congregation, Nigeria with the Apostolic Church of Great Britain.<sup>54</sup> We could infer from this that Christ Apostolic Church was associated with revival and held tenaciously to Divine Healing as a means of solving health problems. However, the author has not shown how the church was able to practise divine healing in the light of the African elements which this work is studying. This makes this work relevant at this moment.

E.H.L. Olúshèye in his books traces the History of Christ Apostolic Church, the personality of Joseph Ayò Babalolá and his legacies.<sup>55</sup> He identifies water as an element for effective prayer and healing. He claims in one of the books, *A short history of the Christ Apostolic Church* that the use of water in the church had its origin from Joseph Ayò Babalolá whom God told that sanctified water administered with faith could

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<sup>52</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1985. Aladura movement and their impact. 202.

<sup>53</sup> A. Alókan, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 91-108.

<sup>54</sup> A. Alókan, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 293.

<sup>55</sup> E.H.L. Olúshèye, 1998. *Saint Joseph Ayò Babalolá: Africa's foremost religious revolutionary leader, 1904-1959*. Ibadan: The Christian Overcomers Publishers. E.H.L. Olúshèye, 1994. *A short history of the Christ Apostolic Church*, Ibadan: Olúshèye Publication. E.H.L. Olúshèye, 2004. *Mysterious legacies of Apostle J.A. Babalolá*, Ibadan: Olúshèye Publication. E.H.L. Olúshèye, 2006. *Who is this Joseph Ayò Babalolá?* Ibadan: Olúshèye Publication Series.

ensure healing and miracle.<sup>56</sup> He, however, fails to recognise that the use of water probably took its precedence when it was used to heal the sick during the Bubonic plague that followed the First World War in Nigeria. Miss Sophia Oṣúnlámi was the first person to provide a spiritual solution for curing those affected with the plague. She claimed that if consecrated rain water is drunk by the sick, healing would result. This is discussed in details in chapter three. The author shows water as an element in Christ Apostolic Church for achieving healing but could not identify the rationale behind its use today and whether its application in the church has any relationship with the African worldview and mindset. He further did not bring out the impact of the African traditional religious elements as featured in this work in the church.

M. O. Ìdòwú's work titled, *The Great Revival of 1930: The origin of modern-day Pentecostalism in Nigeria* traces the origin of the Great Revival of 1930 and establishes its impact on Nigeria and Christianity in general.<sup>57</sup> This work, however, played down the African society. It largely describes the society in the same way that the foreign missionaries did. The author considers the traditional Yorùbá society as barbaric and presented the revival as the creator of light in the tunnel. While we do not disagree with the fact that the revival made a lot of impact, we however wish to state that the revival could not have been successful without Ayòṣe Babaloṣe's versatile knowledge of his people's worldview about spiritual challenges and their causes. The knowledge of this must have helped him in a tremendous way to convince the people about the possibility of a more effective means of overcoming these challenges.

A. Oṣólówè's work titled, *Ibùdó isṣé-iyanu Joseph Ayòṣe Babaloṣe Ìkèji-Aràkeji: Ìtàn àtiwáyé* is based on Joseph Ayòṣe Babaloṣe Memorial Camp at Ìkèji-Aràkeji.<sup>58</sup> He describes the place as a praying camp for the church. He also mentions the miracles of healing that had taken place there. Still, the work has not mentioned the influence of the African elements identified by this research on the church.

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<sup>56</sup> E.H.L. Olúshèye, 1994. *A short history of the Christ Apostolic Church*. 19-20.

<sup>57</sup> M. O. Ìdòwú, 2007. *The great revival of 1930: the origin of modern-day Pentecostalism in Nigeria*, Ìkejì: Divine Artillery Publications.

<sup>58</sup> A. Oṣólówè, 2007. *Ibùdó isṣé-iyanu Joseph Ayòṣe Babaloṣe Ìkèji-Aràkeji: itàn àtiwáyé*, Houston: Omega Publishers.

C. O. Òshun<sup>59</sup> in his work titled *Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria: A Suggested Pentecostal Consideration of its Historical, Organisational and theological Developments, 1918 -1975* is important to our research. Òshun's work elaborately provides a base for interpreting the Christ Apostolic Church in Nigeria along its theological Pentecostal points of view. Among other things, it considers the theological interpretations of some beliefs and practices in the church such as the theologies of Hallelujah, fire, water, light, power and healing. However, our research examines the traditional tools that Christ Apostolic Church employed between 1970 and 2005 and determines whether these tools made impact in the overall development of the church at the time. If the traditional tools that this research identified are found to have enhanced the development of Christ Apostolic Church, they could be employed by the neo-Pentecostal churches in order to reduce unhealthy western practices in them. This may take care in a better way, the emotional, spiritual, physical, and material yearnings of members of such churches.

#### **2.4 Conclusion**

The works on African indigenous churches have portrayed their origin and attributes. Furthermore, works reviewed on Christ Apostolic Church have concentrated on the church's origin and spiritual evangelism. Hitherto, these works have not explored how such elements of African Traditional Religion as this research has identified have been engaged in Christ Apostolic Church.

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<sup>59</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. *Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria: a suggested Pentecostal consideration of its historical, organizational and theological developments, 1918-1975*. Ph.D Thesis. Exeter University. xvi+544.

## CHAPTER THREE

### CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH, SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter looks into the emergence of Christ Apostolic Church in Southwestern Nigeria. We shall trace the events that led to the affiliation of the Precious Stone Society with the Faith Tabernacle of Philadelphia. Then we shall consider the prophetic activities of Joseph Ayoṣṣ Babaloṣṣlaṣṣ before the 1930 Great Revival. In addition, the major events during the Revival and the significance of the Revival to Christianity in the Southwestern part of Nigeria at the time are going to be discussed. Furthermore, the main reason for the emergence of the church shall be examined. Additionally, its growth, and development from 1943 to 2005 and the doctrines that formed its bedrock will be highlighted.

#### 3.1 Precious Stone Society and its affiliation with the Faith Tabernacle of U.S.A.

Towards the close of the First World War in 1918, some members of St. Savior's Anglican Church Ìjèṣṣbú Òde came together to form a praying group. What led to this formation was that an elderly man, Daddy Alli claimed to have had a dream, which he relayed to the Vicar of the Church, Rev. S.J. Gansallo in July 1918.<sup>1</sup> According to S. A. Fátókun, Daddy Alli required that this dream should be given utmost spiritual interpretation, attention and urgency than Rev. S. J. Gansallo the Vicar of the church gave to it and due to this unserious attitude of the vicar about the revelation, he looked elsewhere for assistance. He engaged four people namely, J.B. Sadare (alias Esinsinade), E.O. Oṣṣnaṣṣbaṣṣnjoṣṣ, D.C. Oduga and E.O.W. Oluṣṣkoṣṣṣyaṣṣ and narrated the revelation to them. He alleged that he saw the whole church fragmented into two unequal halves. One-half was illuminated while the other in darkness. The first half illuminated was smaller than the other half in darkness.<sup>2</sup> The interpretation of this was that majority

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<sup>1</sup> C.O. Òṣṣshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria: a suggested Pentecostal consideration of its historical, organizational and theological developments, 1918-1975. Ph.D Thesis. Exeter University. 10.

<sup>2</sup> C.O. Òṣṣshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 10.

of the church had given themselves to worldliness while only a handful was committed to God. This group agreed to devote themselves to prayer. They started this with the permission of the Vicar in Charge.<sup>3</sup> This group started to hold its meetings under Daddy Alli as the first leader. The meeting day was first after every Sunday service and later extended to Monday evenings. Within a short period of this formation, the group swelled in membership.<sup>4</sup>

While this praying group was still establishing itself, its prowess was put to test with the upsurge of the bubonic epidemic which occurred towards the close of the First World War which claimed many lives. The ravaging effect of the epidemic made the group to be engaged in serious praying for a divine solution to this problem. As this was going on, God raised a teenager, precisely nineteen years old named Sophia Oṣúnlámi (later Mrs Àjàyí), who was a young school mistress at that time. Sophia Oṣúnlámi was previously afflicted with this disease but was healed by God and during her recuperation, she claimed to have heard a voice saying: *I shall send peace to this house and the whole world as the world war is ended.*<sup>5</sup> She claimed that God told her that continuous prayer, faith in Him, and the drinking of rainwater, which would fall at a specific time, would cure people of the disease.<sup>6</sup> Apart from this revelation, this woman corroborated the earlier vision experienced by Daddy Alli about the fact that darkness had pervaded the church. She claimed that it was revealed to her that a lot of sins were being committed in the church ranging from using both western and traditional medicine, drunkenness, wearing of gorgeous apparels to other forms of sins as celebration of feasts on Sundays. She further added that anyone who depended on the use of drugs would not survive the disease but whoever followed the earlier instruction of seeking divine cure would be healed.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria with emphasis on the Apostolic Church, 1931-2001. *Ph.D Thesis* Dept. of Religious Studies. University of Ìbàdàn. 96.

<sup>4</sup> C.O. Òṣhùn, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria 10. See also, D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Íṣhòṣàlá, 1997. *African indigenous churches: An historical perspective*, Lagos: Greater Height Publications. 66. S.A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 50. C.O. Òṣhùn, 1983. The Pentecostal perspective of the Christ Apostolic Church. *Orita*. 15. 2. 105.

<sup>5</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 96. See also J.A. Oṣómóyájowó. 1966. The independent church movement of Yorùbáland. B.A. Long Essay, Dept. of Religious Studies, University of Ibadan. 9.

<sup>6</sup> C.O. Òṣhùn, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 11.

<sup>7</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 96.

True to her revelation, many people who followed the instruction were cured of their ailments. This kind of prescription without doubt was unscientific and uncommon to the mission churches. The kind of Christianity that was building up around this time totally differed from that which the Anglican Church that accommodated the members of this society could tolerate. This spiritual revelation and solution made many in the Anglican Church, including Sophia's father to doubt her and tagged her as insane.<sup>8</sup> This experience was however the type, which the indigenous Christians had longed for. After they had tried all means to acquire cure to the epidemic (including consulting the oracles and herbalists) without any cure, spiritual solution just came through the young woman.

The white missionaries could not offer any help as they locked the gates of the churches (though at the order of the colonial government who felt that doing so would check the spread of the disease)<sup>9</sup>. They travelled back to their countries for fear of being caught in the web of the epidemic.<sup>10</sup> What manifested around this time was that God through His Pentecostal power, moved among the people without the aid of foreign missionaries. It was an evidence that African Christianity had attained a level where doctrinal and racial biases could not influence it. It showed that God could also relate with Africans as much as he did with the Europeans and Americans. It further showed the providential power of God in providing an effective alternative to replace consultation of oracles and diviners in solving their day-to-day problems.

This closure disappointed the Nigerian Christians who felt that they were forsaken by their trusted allies who should have defended them in their times of troubles. This act was considered as that of faithlessness in the ability of God to cure the sick and curb the spread of the disease. This apparent setback however, did not reduce the spiritual strength of the group as they intensified their efforts towards a more fervent devotional Christian life and prayers. They were engaged in moving in procession round the city and praying for God's deliverance and healing. As a result of this, the fame of the group increased the more. This prayer group later metamorphosed into the Precious Stone Society (Egbe Okuta Iyebiye) in 1920. J.B. Sadare who was formerly one of the five people who

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<sup>8</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 96.

<sup>9</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 97. See also, J.D.Y. Peel, 1968. *Aladura: a religious movement among the Yoruba*. Oxford: O.U.P. 62

<sup>10</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 11.

initially formed the praying group became the new leader of the society, taking over from Daddy Alli. This group also became the foremost Prophetic Healing Movement in the Southwestern part of Nigeria, attracting membership from every denomination, including the mainline churches.<sup>11</sup>

The founding fathers of the Precious Stone Society hinged their spirituality upon this basis and they were ready to uphold the culture of Divine Healing with their might. When the group began to increase in number and their conviction about devotion to prayer and emphasis on Divine Healing was becoming stronger, the mother church that housed them (that is St. Saviour's Church, Ìjèbú-Òde) began to be apprehensive.<sup>12</sup> In addition, the Precious Stone Society claimed that infant baptism was unbiblical and was the cause of the death of many infants in the church. This allegation discomfited the church the more. The subsequent excommunication of the group could further be referred to as one of the initial causes for the founding of Christ Apostolic Church. We observe that if they had not been excommunicated, the group would have existed within the Anglican Communion. In essence, we are suggesting that the inability of Anglican Church, Ìjèbú-Òde to accommodate them for their rather strange Christianity led to their excommunication. Other reasons for this emergence were the threats from the colonial government, and the various mergers that it encountered. The group experienced a series of affiliation with foreign Christian churches and one of the reasons for this was to escape the hostilities of the colonial administration that frowned at any local spiritual movement operating independently.<sup>13</sup>

Still on this issue, the pioneering leaders of the Precious Stone Society were not happy that one of the foreign groups they affiliated with namely the American Faith Tabernacle was checking their freedom about exhibiting spiritual gifts.<sup>14</sup> The American Faith Tabernacle did not adequately buy the local group's conviction about Divine Healing without the use of drugs and medicine, either western or local. C.O. Òshun claims that due to this relationship, their doctrinal positions on Divine Healing and

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<sup>11</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 97.

<sup>12</sup> D. Ayégbóyìn, and S. A. Ísọhoṣọla, 1997. *African indigenous churches*. 68.

<sup>13</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1985. The Aladura movement and their impact on Nigerian society. E.I. Metuh, Ed. *The gods in retreat: continuity and change in African religions*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing Co. 196 - 197.

<sup>14</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 26.

Pentecostalism generally were penetrated and attempts were made to contaminate them. He further says that the unflinching stand of the leaders of the Faith Tabernacle Congregation in Nigeria about Divine Healing was still abiding. The testimonies that followed the previous manifestations of the spiritual gifts among them were also sure stimulus that enhanced and energized their convictions to hold on to *Cura Divina*.<sup>15</sup> However, the futility which the subsequent affiliations brought and the dangers that they portended for the viability of the doctrine of Divine Healing (if continued) also constituted other reasons for the ultimate birth of Christ Apostolic Church.

The adventure of Joseph Ayo Babalola and his strong conviction and sense of commitment towards Divine Healing further rekindled the inherent vigour of the adherents of Nigerian Faith Tabernacle. The 1930 Great Revival that ensued and recorded many miracles and healings also brightened their belief that Divine Healing as a practice was possible. In addition, because many lives were touched, the assurance that Divine Healing was possible became meaningful. Furthermore, it showed that it was worth pursuing and defending. The staunch members and leaders of the Faith Tabernacle realized the opposition that existed in the defunct Faith Tabernacle. Therefore, they decided to establish a church where their passion could be freely expressed.

After the excommunication of the Precious Stone Society from the Anglican Church, Sadare, who was the leader of the excommunicated group was forced to resign from his office at the Anglican Synod as the People's Warden (a prestigious office), and continued to be the leader of the emerging Precious Stone Society. Anybody that had anything to do with the society was forced to either renounce association with the society or forfeit his position in the Anglican Communion. This affected a lot of people and led to a lot of loss of jobs and privileges for members of the society. Such privileges included forceful withdrawal of their children from the Anglican schools and being victimized and persecuted by the authority that only recognized the Anglican Communion.<sup>16</sup> Daddy Ali, who was the initial leader of the group, had to step down probably due to his inability to combine his role as the leader of the society which was increasing in number by the day with his sexton duty or because he felt his status could not effectively manage the high

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<sup>15</sup> C.O. Oshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 39.

<sup>16</sup> S. A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 99 & 100.



position of responsibility that the society demanded. Apart from being the People's Warden, Sadare was also an influential goldsmith and a respectable man in the society.<sup>17</sup>

D.O. Odubañjo, an Ìjèbú man who was a vibrant member of the group and also a learned person had come into contact with a magazine of the Faith Tabernacle Church of Philadelphia titled, *The Sword of the Spirit* as far back as 1917. Then he was a clerk with the Police Force in Warri. He was attracted to an article in the magazine titled, *The Seven Principles of Prevailing Prayer*. This article re-launched him into a full scale belief in the efficacy of prayer as emphasized by the praying society he was affiliated with back home<sup>18</sup>. The doctrines expressed in the article appeared similar to the Precious Stone Society's body of beliefs.<sup>19</sup> He later engaged in a close touch with the leader of the church in Philadelphia, though through correspondence.

When he returned to Ijebu-Ode, he introduced this to members and leaders of the Society and they embraced it cordially. Odùbáñjo similarly introduced this magazine to the Precious Stone Society in Lagos between 1920 and 1921 and this branch engaged in regular correspondence with Faith Tabernacle, Philadelphia.<sup>20</sup> The regular supply and the constant and effective use of this magazine by the society facilitated a formal contact with the American Faith Tabernacle. However, before this contact was negotiated with America, the Precious Stone Society had formulated its own doctrines that laid emphasis on Pentecostalism and its associated gifts and practices. These doctrines included disapproval of infant baptism, *Sola Scriptura*, (reliance in the finality and infallibility of the scripture) and (*Cura Divina*), Divine Healing. Others included dependence on dreams and vision as ways through which God bestows His grace on man and guides his footsteps. The last was total trust in God for daily supply of essential needs.<sup>21</sup>

The Precious Stone Society continually got closer to American Faith Tabernacle's doctrines through the correspondences that Pastor Clark exchanged with the Ìjèbú-Òde

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<sup>17</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 98 & 99.

<sup>18</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 100. Cf J.M. Assimeng, 1968. A sociological analysis of the impact and consequences of some Christian sects in selected African countries. Ph.D Thesis. Oxford University, Oxford. 287.

<sup>19</sup> C.O. Òshun, 2000. *Aladura revivals: Apostle Babalá's challenge to Christian missions*. 6.

<sup>20</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 100.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 25. A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church: CAC 1928-1988*. Lagos: Ìbùkúnolú Printers Nigeria Ltd. 286-294.

group and the faith they had in the messages of the tracts and correspondences.<sup>22</sup> They agreed with Pastor Clark on some of the beliefs as have been mentioned earlier, such as disapproval of infant baptism and dependence on the almightiness of God as the great provider. However, it is pertinent that we are reminded that one of the reasons why this affiliation was consummated was because they needed to be protected from the hands of the colonial administration who would not want them to operate as an indigenous group.

In 1923, the Society finally became affiliated with the Faith Tabernacle of Philadelphia, thereby making all members in the Society to be known as the Faith Tabernacle Congregation.<sup>23</sup> After this affiliation, they were under obligation to go by the doctrines of the foreign organization.<sup>24</sup> They also agreed with the foreign church on doctrines such as absolute trust and reliance on God as the sole provider. This was because these beliefs were not emphasized in the mission churches. We observed that these doctrines especially the one above replaced the strong beliefs embedded in Yorùbá religion, whereby the *Babala* (Traditional Priest among the Yorùbá people of Southwestern Nigeria) would divine and proffer solution to people's problems. He would further prescribe the necessary sacrifices that could be offered to overcome existential problems such as barrenness, poverty, ill luck, and sicknesses. Here, a lot of faith is reposed in the priest, that he possessed the know-how to consult the oracles and get potent solutions to their problems. The Nigerian group which affiliated with the Faith Tabernacle Congregation of Philadelphia further considered that Pentecostal gifts, such as vision, dream, and prophecy were means of gaining adherents of the traditional religion.

### **3.2 The Call and Ministry of Joseph Ayo Babalo before 1930 Great Revival**

The claim by Alokun that Joseph Ayo Babalo came into the ministry when the Faith Tabernacle Movement had become weak and divided cannot be sustained when we consider the eyewitness account of Adégbóyèga who claimed that the Faith

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<sup>22</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 26. See also A. Alókàn, *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 26.

<sup>23</sup> S. A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 100.

<sup>24</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2006. The Apostolic Church, Nigeria: the "metamorphosis" of an African indigenous prophetic healing movement into a classical Pentecostal denomination. *Oríta*. 38. 1-2. 49-70.

Tabernacle Nigeria was spiritually vibrant when Babalo□lá joined.<sup>25</sup> Aló□kàn's claim was probably hinged on reasons such as the controversy that surrounded Divine Healing and the optional use of western medicine for the cure of ailments. When in May 1927, Ayo□□ Babalo□lá, a native of Ìlo□fà joined the Public Works Department in Òs□ogbo as a steamroller driver;<sup>26</sup> he did not know that greater commitments were on his way. He began to encounter series of visionary experiences and theophanies especially at night in his residence at Ìpetu-I□je□□s□a□. These experiences would later lead him to take some decisive steps.<sup>27</sup>

Babalo□la□ received his call to ministry after he had received a series of theophanies<sup>28</sup> within a period of three days. He was seriously warned that if he refused to heed the call he would die.<sup>29</sup> He was promised spiritual empowerment adequate for the challenges ahead of him. C.O. Oshun accounts that Ayo□□ Babalo□la□ heard a thunderous voice on 9 October 1928 at 12 noon in a place called Ìlu□keji□, charging him to leave the work he was engaged in, and that failure would mean death. At that time, he was using the steamroller and was engaged in a road construction. His steamroller suddenly stopped working and he was trying to fix the problem before the voice spoke. When it would not work, he left the machine on one side of the road in frustration. The voice called again two days after, on 11 October 1928 warning him that the machine would not work unless he retired from his job<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> A. Aló□kàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 36&37. Cf. S.G. Adégbóyèga, 1978. Short history of The Apostolic Church in Nigeria. Ibadan: Rosprint Industrial Press Ltd. 8-23.

<sup>26</sup> Joseph Babalo□lá-faith healer. *National Archives*. File No. 1146. Class Mark Iba Div i/1. This archival materials in the National Archives, University of Ibadan portrays Babalo□lá as an employee of the Public Work Department as a steamroller. The faith-healer Babalo□lá and Faith Tabernacle. *National Archives*. File No. 662. 186.

<sup>27</sup> A. Aló□kàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 36 -38

<sup>28</sup> S.A Fátókun, 2009. The "great move of God" in an African community: a retrospect of the 1930s indigenous Pentecostal revival in Nigeria and its impact on Nigerian Pentecostalism. *Exchange Journal of Missiological and Ecumenical Research*. 38. 34-57.

<sup>29</sup> C.O. Ó□shun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 100. See also E.H.L. Olús□hè□ye, 1998. *Saint Joseph Ayò□ Babalo□lá: Africa's foremost religious revolutionary leader, 1904-1959*. Ìbàdàn: The Christian Overcomers Publishers. 20 E.H.L. Olús□hè□ye, 1994. *A short history of the Christ Apostolic Church*, Ìbàdàn: Olús□hè□ye Publication. 18. C. Ekundayo, 2004. *History and ministerial life of Joseph Ayò□ Babalo□lá (1904-1959)*. Ìbàdàn: United Christian Publications. 7. E.H.L. Olús□hè□ye, 2004. *Mysterious legacies of 'Apostle J.A. Babalo□la□*. Ìbàdàn: Olús□hè□ye Publication. 12. E.H.L. Olús□hè□ye, 2006. *Who is this Joseph Ayò□ Babalo□la□?* Ìbàdàn: Olús□hè□ye Publication Series. 9.

<sup>30</sup> C.O. Ó□shun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 100.

On the day of his final call, he had another mysterious encounter when he placed three palm fronds on his steamroller to shield it from the sun. When he came back a fortnight later, he heard the voice that spoke to him earlier telling him to look at the palm frond leaves. He found that the first palm frond was fresh and green, the second had withered, and the third completely dried out.<sup>31</sup> The voice analyzed to him that what he had seen was a parable that his ministry was to all people including those who would listen and those who would not. The voice explained further that if he entered a town and he was totally accepted, the inhabitants would be as fresh as the first leaf. The second palm frond that withered showed that if the people of the town received the message partially, they would be like the withered leaf. In the case of the third leaf that dried completely, anyone who refused his message would die. Babaloꞑlaꞑ resigned from his appointment with the Public Works Department and accepted the responsibility fully.<sup>32</sup>

His resignation amazed his boss. He returned to Ìpetu-Ìjeꞑshꞑaꞑ where he was instructed to observe a four-day fast and another three-day fast. During this period, he had two theophanies, one at the beginning and the other at the end of the seven-day fast. In the first theophany, he saw two angels shining brightly, appearing to him in turn. The first angel acknowledged Babaloꞑlaꞑ' s experience on the Ileꞑsꞑaꞑ-Àkúré road where he heard an audible voice warning him to leave the job. The second angel gave him some tasks to perform. After the first angel left, Babaloꞑlaꞑ saw about a dozen beasts coming and surrounding him. The interpretation of this was that he would visit Ìloꞑfà (situated in the present Kwara State), his hometown (where he knew very well that they would not welcome him), and preach the gospel to them. The revelation made it clear to him that unless the people accepted his message and repented, God would punish them as he saw the wild beasts in his vision. The second theophany came on the seventh day. Babaloꞑlaꞑ claimed he was awakened to see Jesus Christ as the voice that had been speaking to him in a bright and very radiant glow. He alleged that Christ asked him to put off his own oil lamp. The third person in the meeting was an angel whom Babaloꞑlaꞑ claimed was a liaison between him and Jesus Christ.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2009. The "great move of God" in an African community. 34-57.

<sup>32</sup> C.O. Òꞑshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 101. See also A. Alóꞑkàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 39.

<sup>33</sup> C.O. Òꞑshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 101-102.

Babalola claimed that three flowers were placed on his head which symbolized adornment from heaven. He further alleged that he was fed with a half piece of cooked yam, which the angel interpreted to mean half of the world's food ration. We observe that these portray that he had been adequately empowered for the spiritual ministry ahead. He further claimed that he was given four signs and they included a hand bell, signifying prayer and divine shielding. The second was an iron rod denoting destruction of all satanic powers. The remaining two are a bottle of water, which signifies life, and the fourth oil, which means spiritual medication for the sick. These appeared like his symbols of authority. He was further instructed to awaken Christians to stop making use of medicine to cure illnesses, because medicine cannot cure permanently. A significant inference here is that Babalola received a spiritual confirmation of the standpoint of the Faith Tabernacle members in Nigeria about prayer without the use of medicine. His outright ban on the use of either western or local medicine likely took its precedence from this revelation. After all these spiritual preparation and fortification, Babalola was ready for his spiritual adventure.<sup>34</sup>

His first place of visit was Ìlofà, his hometown, where God had commanded him to visit and preach messages of repentance to the people. Ìlofà was a town in Ìlorin province, now Kwara State. His visit to his hometown was remarkable. This was because he acted on the instruction of God to enter the native town naked during daytime apart from covering himself with palm frond. He was further instructed to paint his face with ashes.<sup>35</sup>

When he entered the town, his town people rejected him because he entered naked. They also rejected him because he was threatening them of imminent destruction by wild animals if they failed to heed his warnings.<sup>36</sup> The Anglican Church leaders of the Anglican Church, Oke-Ìlofà<sup>37</sup> prevented him from making use of their church. He had to lodge with one Isaiah Olúyemí and preached from there. The people of Odo-Owa at that time were quite advanced in idol worship and diabolic methods of

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<sup>34</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. *Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria*. 102.

<sup>35</sup> E.H.L. Olúshèye, 1998. *Saint Joseph Ayo Babalola*. 25. See also A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 44.

<sup>36</sup> A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 44.

<sup>37</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. *Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria*. 107.

destroying opposition. Some of them organized to kill Babaloꝛlaꝛ by consulting evil means. Others armed themselves with guns and explosives, waiting to ambush the wild animals that Babaloꝛlaꝛ prophesied would come upon the town.<sup>38</sup> At the end of the day, these means did not work against him because he was not hurt in any way. The wild animals they expected did not come as physical animals, but rather as smallpox epidemic which afflicted and led to the death of many of them. The District Officer at Ìloꝛrin who had been briefed about Babaloꝛlaꝛ's presence got involved in the issue. He made sure that Babaloꝛlaꝛ was charged for breach of public peace. He was incarcerated and discharged after two weeks for lack of evidence.<sup>39</sup> However, some of those attacked by the epidemic that came for prayer were healed. After his discharge, Babaloꝛlaꝛ continued to hold morning and evening meetings at the Anglican Church Òkè-Ìloꝛfà and attendance was very encouraging. There were evidences of spirit manifestations such as speaking in tongues, prophecy, and vision. Rev. B.P. Smith who was Anglican Bishop of Ìloꝛrin later came and disbanded this group.<sup>40</sup> This group must have been disbanded because of the characteristics of the Holy Spirit manifested by the members of this group. Also, the Bishop probably thought that the group could constitute a problem to the peace of the community.

Another account of Ìloꝛfà by Adeꝛwaꝛleꝛ Aloꝛkaꝛn was that Babaloꝛlaꝛ did not do any further work after his incarceration and release from detention at Ìloꝛfà. He claimed that he moved on to Odoꝛ-Oꝛwaꝛ, a neighboring town to Ìloꝛfà. He further recounted that at Odoꝛ-Oꝛwaꝛ he came in touch with Isaiah Oluꝛyeꝛmiꝛ who availed him (Babaloꝛlaꝛ) the use of his house for prayer and revival.<sup>41</sup> While Òꝛshun discussed only Ìloꝛfà and is silent about Odò-Oꝛwá,<sup>42</sup> Aloꝛkaꝛn maintains that Babaloꝛlaꝛ launched two different campaigns in the two areas. Those who gave him assistance at Odoꝛ-Oꝛwá included Isaiah Oluꝛyeꝛmí his host, Dorcas Boꝛlaꝛjí

<sup>38</sup> C.O. Òꝛshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 106.

<sup>39</sup> A. Alóꝛkàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 45.

<sup>40</sup> C.O. Òꝛshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 107.

<sup>41</sup> A. Alóꝛkàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 44 -45.

<sup>42</sup> C.O. Òꝛshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 106 - 107.

Atalese, John Obafeṣemi of Isare, John Komoṣaṣe and Joseph Owólabí of Òkè Ipin.<sup>43</sup>

Other areas visited included Òmù and Ejide. At Òmù, Babaloṣa delivered a woman who was carrying a pregnancy for a period of four years. He only prayed on a cup of water and gave the woman to drink. After taking the water, she delivered the baby immediately. Alokaṣan claimed that the miracle single handedly attracted about two thousand people. However, the king of the town was not happy about this development. He thought Babaloṣa was acquiring too much attention and respect that should belong to him. Babaloṣa was able to decipher the king's inner thought and scolded him and the king felt remorse for his action and asked for forgiveness.<sup>44</sup>

At Èjìdè, the king of the town did not permit him to enter the town. Babaloṣa heard the same voice that spoke to him when he received his call to ministry that the king would no more occupy the throne. Within three weeks, just eighteen days later, the British Government dethroned the king for committing an unspecified offence.<sup>45</sup>

Alóṣàn further reveals that Ayoṣ Babaloṣa was invited by a Sudan Interior Mission catechist based at Araṣoṣmi Ìyaṣgba and that Babaloṣa visited the place and many miracles and healing took place. This attracted a revival, which was a miniature of what happened at Òkè-Ooṣe in 1930. Babaloṣa went back to Ìloṣà, stayed there until June 30, and continued his preaching about holiness and divine healing.<sup>46</sup>

### **3.3 The 1930 Great Indigenous Pentecostal Revival**

#### **3.3.1 Causes of the Great Indigenous Pentecostal Revival of 1930**

The fame of Joseph Ayoṣ Babaloṣa started to grow as from the commencement of his revivals at Ìloṣà. One Daniel Ajíbóṣá who was his contemporary and a Faith Tabernacle member at Ìbàdàn was eager to introduce him to D.O. Oduṣaṣjo and other Faith Tabernacle leaders. The reason for this was that

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<sup>43</sup> A. Alóṣàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 45.

<sup>44</sup> A. Alóṣàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 45.

<sup>45</sup> A. Alóṣàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 45-46.

<sup>46</sup> A. Alóṣàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 46. See also C.O. Òṣhùn, 1981. *Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria*. 108.

Daniel Ajíboǎla believed that there was much similarity between the teachings of Faith Tabernacle and Babaloǎla, apart from the fact that Babaloǎlá had received a leading to join the Faith Tabernacle. So Daniel Ajíboǎlá helped Babaloǎlá a great deal to join the Faith Tabernacle having seen the zeal in him and convinced that God Himself needed Babaloǎlá in the Faith Tabernacle for his work.<sup>47</sup> Babaloǎla met D.O. Oduǎnjo and Pastor Esinsinadé at Oduǎnjo's house in Lagos. During the meeting, he narrated to them his call and the theme of his evangelism. After hearing his story, they were convinced about his ministry and his usefulness if he joined the Faith Tabernacle. He was taken to the Lagos lagoon to be baptized by Pastor Esinsinade.<sup>48</sup> A day was scheduled for him to address the entire Faith Tabernacle assembly at Èbuǎte-Elefun Headquarters. Babaloǎla made his *call narrative* at the forum for six hours and all the brethren were engulfed in surprise. Ìdòwú M.O., in his work, presents the account of an anonymous eyewitness at the occasion as follows

The news of Prophet Joseph Babaloǎla got to Lagos and we sent to him to visit us. The whole of Lagos and Èbuǎte-meǎta shook when he came. He preached a wonderful sermon that thrilled the heart to us. Several works of healing were brought to him when he was here and the Lord stretched forth His hands to heal many people from various churches. Since the days of the apostles, we have not seen such a manifestation full of great wonders of the power of God like this in this land.<sup>49</sup>

After this meeting, the whole assembly was convinced about Ayoǎǎ Babaloǎla's ministry and the leaders of the assembly were further convinced about his charismatic potentials. They saw him as an evidence of all they had believed in and hoped to see happen.

Daniel O. Òreǎkoǎya was another personality in the Pentecostal scene of the time. He was a native of Ìjèǎbúland and a tailor by profession and he entered the

<sup>47</sup> A. Alóǎkàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 41. M. O. Ìdoǎwu, 2007. *The great revival of 1930: the origin of modern-day Pentecostalism in Nigeria*, Ìkeǎja: Divine Artillery Publications. 56.

<sup>48</sup> A. Alóǎkàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 41. For Pastor Shadare to have baptized Babaloǎlá and not Odùbáño suggests that Pastor Shadare was fully in charge of the Faith Tabernacle Congregation. It also shows that he was probably the eldest person in the spiritual leadership rank.

<sup>49</sup> M. O. Ìdoǎwu, 2007. *The great revival of 1930*. 57.



charismatic scene of the moment through his great love for prayer. Though crippled,<sup>50</sup> he became a member of the Faith Tabernacle in Lagos. His distinguishing qualities started to manifest such that for more than four years he was the leader of Ìdí-Òro Faith Tabernacle assembly, first as a sexton and later as the caretaker of the maternity. On 17 February 1930, he saw a vision of three angels appearing to him. When he became afraid, the angels disappeared from his sight. He was hearing them clearly proclaiming that the members of the Faith Tabernacle believed strongly in Jesus Christ. They further acknowledged that the members were steadfast in the practice of Divine Healing. On the other hand, they showed their unhappiness for the sins that the members were committing.<sup>51</sup> The angels told him that the Lord was prepared to transform the church into a big tree under which all other trees would come for a shade". Òrekooya delivered this message to the Faith Tabernacle assemblies in Lagos and Èbute-Meta. After this, he asked for financial support from them to enable him travel to other places so that he could broadcast this message to other assemblies. This request was declined. Oshun identified some of the reasons why his request was not granted, that he could only read in Yorùbá language and also that he was not a talented visionary. In addition, he was berated as a man of small stature but older in age.<sup>52</sup> Òrekooya disappeared from Lagos and nobody knew his whereabouts until he was found at Ileṣa during the Òke-Ooṣe Revival. Details of Orekoya's activities during the Òke-Bólà Revival shall be discussed later in this chapter.<sup>53</sup>

A meeting was arranged to debate certain issues involving allegations levelled against Pastor Babaṭope of Faith Tabernacle, Ileṣa in 1929. This meeting did not hold until 9 July 1930 when the Faith Tabernacle leaders met in Ileṣa. Ayo Babalola was invited to this meeting to officially introduce himself to the national leaders of the Faith Tabernacle. He was however not a member of the group neither was he invited to contribute to the debate. Those that attended the meeting included Odubanjo, Akinyele, Esinsinadé, Onasinwo and elders from

<sup>50</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 110.

<sup>51</sup> A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 42.

<sup>52</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 110.

<sup>53</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 110. A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 42.

the various branches of the Faith Tabernacle. Others were four elders from the Òyá branch that levelled allegations against Babatope that his teachings at Ílesà was unscriptural and contradicted their position on polygamy, water baptism and Divine Healing. On polygamy, they were to debate whether or not polygamists should receive water baptism. After Babaloíla had introduced himself to the forum, and was permitted to narrate his evangelistic activities, he was excused for the rest of the deliberation.<sup>54</sup> Such issues slated for debate included polygamy as it reflects in (Mark 10:6ff) and optional use of western medicine as a supplement to divine healing as found in (Deut. 7:15).

### 3.3.2 The Òkè-Oòyè Revival

The commemorative miracle of 1930 at Ileísa Revival happened on the very day the issue of western medicine as a substitute for Divine Healing was debated. However, there are different accounts of this inaugural miracle vis-à-vis the day it happened. A version says that the first healing occurred on Monday 14 July, 1930. This involved a family member of the Òkè-Ìyí Faith Tabernacle assembly. Another account claims that the miracle of 19 July, 1930 was the first.<sup>55</sup> However, we shall first narrate Adeíwaíle Aloíka's account that, as discussion on Divine Healing was on, the Great Revival of 1930 erupted. Joseph Babaloíla who was in the apartment where he was lodged by the leaders of the Faith Tabernacle heard the wailing of some people over a dead person who was already wrapped for burial. Babaloíla came out and asked that the corpse be put before him. He touched the corpse with his iron rod, rang his hand-bell three times, and then prayed in the name of Jesus Christ that the dead person should become a living person. The dead man was revived. He afterward prayed into water inside his hand-bell and gave the revived man to drink.<sup>56</sup> Another version of the story centred on the miraculous raising from the dead of a child in July 1930. This achievement was described as the main reason for the eruption of the revival. It was acclaimed that the woman and sympathizers were wailing over the death of the child

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<sup>54</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 111. See also A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 48-49.

<sup>55</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 112.

<sup>56</sup> A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 49.

when Babaloṣá heard their cry and he came out of the room where he was kept after giving his account to the Faith Tabernacle leaders. He asked that the corpse be brought to him. When this was done, he prayed and jingled his bell thrice in the name of Jesus Christ and the child came alive. This miracle made the mother of the child and those around to spread the news to everywhere they went and this made crowd to gather.<sup>57</sup>

Òṣhun narrates other miracles that further gathered crowds for the revival such as when Ayoṣ Babaloṣa was in Òṣogbo on Thursday 10 July, 1930, to minister to a sick man, one Mr. Williams. This man was an employee of McIver's shop, and that this man was miraculously healed. Babaloṣa returned to Ileṣa the following day. He also mentioned the situation of one Mr. Dick Táiwò who was constantly tormented by witches. He claimed that Babaloṣa prayed for this man and he was delivered.<sup>58</sup> We observe that miraculous events such as we have mentioned above must have definitely occurred around this time. Apart from our observations, archival documents also buttressed the fact that there was a faith healer called Joseph Babaloṣá.<sup>59</sup> That is the reason for the different versions that we have mentioned above.

Moses Oluṣeṣe Ìdowú points out that the miraculous event of the raising of a person from the dead abruptly interrupted the meeting of the Faith Tabernacle leaders that commenced on the 9th of July, 1930. This meeting was convened to debate issues relating to the allegations levelled against Babatóṣé in Íṣà and other issues about polygamy (Mark 10:6ff) and optional use of western medicine as a supplement to divine healing (Deut. 7:15). We mentioned earlier that Babaloṣá was given an opportunity to present himself and his testimonies to the leader of the Faith Tabernacle on the first day of this meeting. Ìdowú claims that when the dead person was raised, a lot of people gathered to witness and testify to this. He claims further that when the F.T. leaders saw the crowd of people and the great wonders that began to manifest, they abandoned the meeting and joined Babaloṣa to minister to the crowd of people.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> See S. A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 106.

<sup>58</sup> C.O. Òṣhun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 112.

<sup>59</sup> The faith-healer Babaloṣá and Faith Tabernacle. *National Archives*. File No. 662, Class Mark-Oyo Prof.169-172.

<sup>60</sup> M. O. Ìdowú, 2007. *The great revival of 1930*. 70.

This decisive occurrence suggested a solution to one of the strong issues that occasioned the meeting which centered on Divine Healing. Babalo□la□'s miracles answered the raging question of whether to put into practice Divine Healing or not. During the first week of the revival, about two hundred sick people had come to Babalo□la□ for healing. A good number of them came back testifying to the great healing power of God. When the revival was three weeks old, about one hundred lepers, sixty blind people, fifty lame and crippled persons, and a woman with a fourteen years old pregnancy were delivered. In addition, many people with acute stomach-ache, venereal diseases, goiters, deafness, headaches, epilepsy, infertility, rheumatism, hemorrhage, backaches, and ulcers received healing to their ailments.<sup>61</sup>

Within a very short time, the population of people on the revival ground had multiplied. Many people scattered the whole area of "Oke□-Oo□ye□" (a hill) on the outskirts of Ile□s□a□. The stream very close to the hill was sanctified and called "Omi-Ìye□" (water of life).

An eyewitness says:

All roads led to Ile□s□a□. If you see any passenger vehicle passing Ibàdàn, Òs□ogbo, Edo, Ile□-Ife□□ and you ask for its destination, there is no other answer other than Ile□s□a□. The commercial motorists seemed not to have any other catch phrase to attract passengers other than come and watch cinema in Ile□s□a□. Many who had no transport fare to Ile□s□a□ took to trekking to get there to meet the prophet.<sup>62</sup>

Through this account, it is clear that the Revival was a great and powerful one. Ò□shun also captures the account of a person he refers to as an administrator in Ile□s□a□ saying:

I found a crowd of many hundreds of people, including a large contingent of the halt and lame and blind. The whole affair was orderly and the only part of the ritual in any way impressive was when everyone present stood up in a big half circle each holding his bottle high above his head to be blessed by the 'prophet Joseph' who stood on a raised dais under a powerful lamp and stretching out his hands made weird incantations. The crowds murmured their approval

<sup>61</sup> C.O. Ò□shun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 113. See also, C. Ekúndayò□ 2004. *History and ministerial life*. 16, 17& 18.

<sup>62</sup> M. O. Ìdo□wu□, 2007. *The great revival of 1930*. 70.

but there was no great excitement. There was a certain amount of hymn singing. The sick afterwards received spiritual attention inside the church.<sup>63</sup>

Joseph Ayòṣá Babaloṣá's fame spread throughout the country in a very short time. The revival was historic because it was the first in Nigeria to attract such a huge crowd. It was also the first Pentecostal Revival in the whole of West Africa sub-region. Just twenty-four years old at the time, his name became a household name that no popular Nigerian newspaper failed to report concerning the Ileṣá Revival.<sup>64</sup> We observe that the revival appeared like the Azusa Street Revival at Los Angeles in the United States of America in 1906. We further notice that throughout the period of the Great Revival, Prophet Babaloṣá ministered to the people in the fashion they understood. He brought Pentecostal Christianity to their doorsteps and interpreted the concept in the cultural way, using cultural ideas. He translated Pentecostalism to the people through the phenomenon they were conversant with. The traditional Yorùbá society of the time believed that "the spiritual" was paramount in the worldview of the people. The society held that spiritual problems were better tackled spiritually and that only a spiritual solution could solve such spiritual problems. The society further attached much attention to the existence of these spirits and their invading powers in human world. The revival of 1930 appeared to provide the spiritual solution to the spiritual problems created by malevolent spiritual causes. The revival re-invented Christianity with the aim of making the emotional, spiritual, physical, and material yearnings of the people and their society reflect in the methodology of proffering solution to their problems.

The fame of Joseph Ayòṣá Babaloṣá knew no bound around this time and beyond 1930 because the colonial administrators also commented on his activities in their reports about the revival and the person who championed its cause. For example, his arrival in Ílesá was reported by the Assistant District Officer to the District Officer in Ifèṣ, in his memorandum titled, *Faith Healing in Ílesá*. Here, he reported that Babaloṣá's arrival was met with a lot of enthusiasm and that he was associated with the

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<sup>63</sup> C.O. Òṣhùn, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 114.

<sup>64</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2009. The "great move of God" in an African community, 34-57.

Faith Tabernacle organization of Philadelphia. His method of preaching was also described as preaching from the Bible and that he claimed to have the power of faith healing. It was further reported that he would bless water in bottles and that after using such water, great healing would result.<sup>65</sup>

Babalọ́lá adopted a simple method of liturgy. It was very usual for him to commence his prayers with an invocatory phrase that describes the type of God he was calling upon. “Ni Oruko Olorun Alaa ye”<sup>66</sup> (In the name of the God of the living) or (In the name of the God that lives). This Yorùbá phraseology distinguished God from other gods as the living God. The songs sung at the revival were those that reflected the spirituality of the people and the almightiness of God to quash their spiritual problems. The songs further showed how dear Jesus Christ is and how much they would stick to him for the rest of their lives. In addition, these songs portrayed Satan (“Èsù” in Yorùbá phraseology) as a wicked and mischievous force who does not have anything good to offer man. It claimed that whatever Satan offered could not last. The songs claimed the righteousness of Christ and his friendly nature. They described the spirit of Christ as a pure force that overshadows the unrighteousness and dark intents of Satan.

Such songs are commanding in tone, telling Satan to go back for Jesus has redeemed them from his hands. These songs further describe water as an “element of life” and Jesus Christ as the only giver of such water.

Such revival songs include the following

- (i) Èsù! Pada le ìhì n mi  
Èmi kii so mo re.

Translation:

*Satan! Get thee behind me  
I am not your child.*

- (ii) Oni le Oríta Èsù mo bo lo wo re Èsu  
Apo ònnila so, Èsù mo bo lo wo re, Èsù

Translation:

Satan who builds his house at the crossroad, I have escaped  
from your clutch. You who invest one with rags and dirt,  
Satan I have escaped from you clutch.

<sup>65</sup> The faith-healer Babalọ́lá and Faith Tabernacle. 170.

<sup>66</sup> See S.A. Fátókun, 2009. The great move of God. 38. 34-57.

(iii) *Omi la o mu ye, Aladura Omi la o mu ye*

Translation:

We shall drink water and live  
Praying people, we shall drink water and live

*Je su Olo mi Iye re O*  
*Omi Iye*  
*Iye, Iye re O*  
*Omi Iye*

Translation:

Jesus the Giver of living water is here  
Living water!  
Life, Life, Life is here,  
Living water!<sup>67</sup>

These songs reflect the kind of beliefs that the people held about their society, their day-to-day challenges of life and the spiritual forces behind their problems. The songs further show the personality of the enemy as a wicked, heartless force that stands in everyone's way to waylay them. The songs then bring out the only effective solution to their problems, as Jesus.

Ayo Babalola adopted preaching as the first technique of capturing the attention of people. Oshun in his work says that Babalola preached the word of God to a state where faith (*Igba gbo*) is aroused. After the faith of the people might have clung on the expectation of the unusual, that is miracle, he displayed the second arsenal, which was serious prayer to generate a physical result. The third technique was the spiritual power (*agbara e mi*) which is the manifestation of the power and gifts of the spirit.<sup>68</sup>

The fourth is the blessing of water for healing. His preaching technique was the type that aroused power, which accompanied the words in the ears of the listeners. He began his preaching by showing to the people how helpless the herbs were and how powerful the power of God is in helping man out of difficulties. He encouraged his

<sup>67</sup> M. O. Idoju, 2007. *The great revival of 1930*. 71-72.

<sup>68</sup> C.O. Oshun, 1985. *Aladura movement and their impact on Nigerian society*. 202- 203.

audience to do away with idols and medicine and expect miracles from God. He then inspired them towards living in holiness and obedience to God's words.<sup>69</sup>

Prophet Babaloṣila's prayer technique was similar to the Ifaṣ priests'. This is because Ifaṣ priests invoked the name of the Supreme Being through the deities and they believe wholeheartedly that sanctioning of their petitions is the prerogative of the same Supreme Being. Babaloṣilaṣ meditated on God (Supreme Being) through Jesus Christ. This explains why the Aladura Christians (especially in Christ Apostolic Church)<sup>70</sup> begin or conclude their prayers with the phrases: "in the name of Jesus.

The third technique, "agbaṣra", interpreted by Oshun as charisma denotes spiritual power or authority that is above or supersedes other powers in the spiritual realms.<sup>71</sup> The "agbaṣra" or power in literal translation becomes spiritual power when referring to spiritual issues. This power is not the physical strength or ability to perform certain feats that can be understood physically. It is the capability to suppress spiritual forces with a more powerful spiritual weapon. The acquisition of this power or spirituality distinguishes a "spiritual Christian" from the one who is not. The Aladura Christians then desired this power and even now in order to counter the unseen forces that act to undermine their well-being. Aladura Christians support Paul's view about wicked powers that cannot be seen and why Christians should possess the spiritual power to stand against them. Paul says in Ephesians 6:12 that Christians fight not against the physical powers but the spiritual powers who do not make use of blood and do not need the flesh to exist. Those who possess this charisma among the Aladura leaders "divine" like the Babaloṣwo into problems of people. They access the supersensible realm through diverse charismatic gifts such as vision, and dream and prescribe panaceas to problems. However, Aladura Christianity does not have any relationship with evil forces. Babaloṣilaṣ vehemently opposed them and deployed every means to eliminate them.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> C.O. Òṣshun, 1985. Aladura movement and their impact on Nigerian society. 202- 203.

<sup>70</sup> Christ Apostolic Church assemblies in the southwestern part of Nigeria adopt this praying method today. This method describes clearly their belief system in the channel through which their prayers derive the force, power and drive that convey their requests to the ears of God and brings back the results.

<sup>71</sup> C.O. Òṣshun, 1985. Aladura movement and their impact on Nigerian society. 204.

<sup>72</sup> C. O. Òṣshun, 1985. Aladura movement and their impact on Nigerian society. 204.



The use of water (Omi-Ìye) in Aladura revivalism had its root from Prophet Babaloṣa who claimed that God instructed him to use it as a means of deploying healing to the sick.<sup>73</sup> Water is natural gift of God to humankind (Isaiah 55:1, 10, John 7:37, 4) and its main function is to sustain life. In the traditional Yorùbá society, water is used as a purification element. The usual practice of *Orí-wíwe* (head cleansing) involves the use of water to wash away bad destiny, evil and ill luck. Babaloṣa replaced the traditional belief that surrounds water with a spirituality that holds that consecrated water could bring about a much more effective healing than the traditional religion could offer. He preferred to put his trust in God and encourage his clients to do so instead of putting their trust in charms and idols. Apart from sanctifying water in bottles and containers, he sanctified big water as river and stream water for villages and towns.<sup>74</sup> In the Aladura society, sanctified water is believed to have been mixed with the blood of Jesus Christ, which changes the state of such water to a healing sacrament.

### 3.3.3 The Great Revival at Òke-Boṣa, Ìbàdàn

Earlier, we discussed Daniel Òreṣkoṣya and his disappearance from Lagos after delivering his message to the assemblies of the Faith Tabernacle in Lagos. We also said that he was later found at Ileṣa. Òreṣkoṣya participated actively in the Ileṣa Revival as he assisted Babaloṣa in his ministerial duties there. His spiritual fervour and charisma endeared him to many people because he did not leave the revival ground unnoticed. When he left Òke-Ooṣe for Lagos on 4 September, 1930, he could not reach Ìbàdàn until after two days. This was because those who had seen him at Òke-Ooṣe were intercepting him and asking him to pray for them.<sup>75</sup> When he eventually got to Ìbàdàn, he could no longer continue with the journey because the Ìbàdàn people delayed him and asked him to conduct their own revival.<sup>76</sup>

While people from Ìbàdàn were gathering to listen to Òreṣkoṣya's sermons, the invalids were also brought for prayer. Some of them were coming with bottles of water for consecration. In a short time, people with charms, amulets, and magical objects

<sup>73</sup> C. Eṣkúndayò, 2004. *History and ministerial life*. 17.

<sup>74</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1985. Aladura movement and their impact on Nigerian society. 206.

<sup>75</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2009. The "great move of God" in an African community. 34-57.

<sup>76</sup> A. Alóṣkàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 50.

started to surrender them. Such magical items included “on□de□”, and “igba□di□” (leather girdle containing magic charms). A popular scene, which lingered for a long time was that of a woman named Àjike□□ who came and surrendered her “on□de□” quietly for burning. It was acclaimed that this magical material objected to Àjike□□’s action to break the age long relationship by speaking out. The magic girdle said, “Àjike□□, are you leaving me today? What have I done to you? This was not our agreement”. Àjike□□ who had decided to do away with the object replied, “The Lord has parted us company”. The object later requested for its “ko□lo□bo□” (a small container) to be returned.<sup>77</sup>

Many miracles happened including the lepers being cleansed, the lame walking, the deaf hearing, and the blind regaining their sights. Others included the dumb and the mentally derailed receiving their healings. Other places in Ibàdàn like Oja□’ba, Òje□, Agbeni, Aye□□ye□□, Du□gbe□□, Sa□bo□, Ìta-ba□le□□, and Agodi were also touched. Òke□ Bo□□la□ was the venue of the revival and it had a feel of the itinerancy of Ayo□□ Babalo□la□ and Prophet Òsite□□lu□. Prophet Òsite□□lu□ met with Babalo□la□ at Ògè□rè□ on July 25, 1929. Other Faith Tabernacle leaders such as O□ba Aki□nye□le□□ had also visited Òge□□re□□. It was acclaimed that Akínye□le□□ stayed in Òge□□re□□ for two weeks and later sent his son to become Òsite□□lu□’s disciple. This level of relationship occasioned the involvement of Prophet Òsite□□lu□ at the Òke□-Bo□□la□ Revival. Many farm settlements around Ibàdàn also benefited from the ministry of Òre□□ko□□ya□ at Òke□-Bo□□la□. Out of all the miracles that took place at the revival, the reviving of a dead pregnant woman named Abeo (later Alice Àdisá) was outstanding. Her husband with the intention of abandoning her there brought this woman from Kute village to the revival ground. The woman died three days earlier and in order to avoid the traditional curse or stigma on a husband whose wife died during pregnancy, he considered dumping the corpse at the revival ground. When Òre□□ko□□ya□ got wind of this case and saw the body of the woman, he began to pray on the corpse. After about thirty minutes of prayer and ringing of the hand bell, the

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<sup>77</sup> C.O. Ò□shun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 121.

woman regained consciousness. She lived for about another forty years. Her name and the miracle story became popular in the whole of Ìbàdàn.<sup>78</sup>

Another version of the story claims that the ritual was normally performed on dead pregnant women to propitiate the gods and avert future occurrence. Since the ritual was compulsory and this man had no money to execute it, he was advised the second day of her death to bring the corpse to the revival ground and he consented. On the third day, they got to Òkè-Boṣola and asked Òrèkoṣya to pray that such a bad occurrence should not happen again. He was not expecting that the woman would be revived. All he wanted was that Òrèkoṣya should perform what the Babalaṣwo had wanted to do for money. However, after about thirty minutes of prayer, her heart began to thump and her legs, hands, head, and mouth started to move. The woman delivered her baby after regaining her strength and she testified before the crowd of people what God did. Another miracle was the raising from the dead of the son of a woman named Boje. She brought the corpse of her son named Adeṣoju to Òrèkoṣya, who said prayer on the dead boy and he came back to life. In two weeks alone, from September 24 to October 4, 1930, 1,981 miracles were recorded.<sup>79</sup>

The 1930 Great Revival also spilled to other places such as Abeoṣokuṣta, Ìlofà, Efoṣun-Alaaye, Ìkare, and Benin. We shall now discuss the revival activities in some of these places. Òrèkoṣya along with Babaloṣla proceeded to Abeoṣokuṣta for another revival, which started from October, 1930 and ended around March, 1931. While they were there, they met Òsíteṣlu and one Àjàyí who was his close associate. However, as we mentioned before, Òsíteṣlu's relationship with the Faith Tabernacle did not continue for long as around January 1931, the two groups parted company. This revival sent enormous signals to other places within the areas of Abeoṣokuṣta, because many Faith Tabernacle assemblies emerged there. About 2,000 people came out with testimonies of healing and deliverance before the end of the revival.<sup>80</sup> Òrèkoṣya returned to Lagos after about nine months of serious evangelical activities in March, 1931 and he continued to be relevant in revival activities

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<sup>78</sup> C. O. Òshun, Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 123.

<sup>79</sup> M. O. Ìdoṣu. 2007. *The great revival of 1930*. 206 - 207.

<sup>80</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 123 - 124.

at Ìdí-Òro, his initial base. He, however, met his death at the Delta areas of Warri after honoring an invitation of a woman who attended the Ìbàdàn Revival from that place. The woman went back to Warri with the consecrated water from Ìbàdàn and gave it to some people who claimed that they were healed after using the water. These people were however eager for a revival. During the revival, Òrèkoko<sup>81</sup> suffered a gas lamp explosion, which led to his death at his Ìjèbú-Ife<sup>82</sup> hometown.

### 3.3.4 Ìlofà Revival

After the Ileṣa<sup>83</sup> Revival, Babaloṣa<sup>84</sup>, and his aides decided to go to Ìlofà to conduct another revival there. A host of people trailed him from Ileṣa<sup>83</sup>, hoping to see the continuity of the healing and miracles they saw there. They reached Ìlofà on August 28, 1930 at ten o'clock in the night. Babaloṣa<sup>84</sup> lamented the unyielding attitude of the people of Ìlofà towards the love of God for them. About three theophanies were revealed to his aides all confirming the authenticity of his ministry.<sup>81</sup>

### 3.3.5 Efoṣun-Alaàye Revival and the Conversion of Oba Solomon Adéjàre

The mission to Efoṣun-Alaàye<sup>83</sup> was a great task embarked upon by Babaloṣa<sup>84</sup> and his companions. The task was great and daunting because of the popularity for idol-worshipping and wickedness the town had generated for long. There were many divinity cults and religious festivals in the town such as “Ipori” festival, “Ikaraka” (stick) festival, “Atita” festival and the “Adagba” cult.<sup>82</sup> There was a thick forest called “Igbo Àiwo<sup>83</sup>” or “Igbo Airo”<sup>84</sup> (forbidden forest) in the town where nobody should enter or cultivate. Babaloṣa<sup>84</sup> deliberately requested that this forest be given to him for his revival. The King of the town at first refused to grant this request, knowing fully that none who entered the groove might come back alive. However, upon the insistence of Prophet Babaloṣa<sup>84</sup>, that God would subdue every evil power in the forest, the king permitted him the use of the forest for the revival. The Oba further

<sup>81</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 126 -127.

<sup>82</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 127.

<sup>83</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 127. A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 57

<sup>84</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 128.

displayed his solidarity for the revival by vacating his official residence for the use of the prophet and his entourage.

The king was skeptical about the Aladura faith but he tolerated them and gave them support. The belief that no reigning king of the town should ever dare enter the evil forest was dispelled. It was held that any king who entered would not come out alive. This made the Oba more inquisitive about the great faith of his Aladura guests.<sup>85</sup>

At the completion of the clearing, the name of the bush changed to “Òkè-Àdu-ra” (Prayer Mountain). That was where the revival commenced. The king’s house was also re-named “Ìlè-Àdu-ra” (Prayer House).<sup>86</sup>

This revival pulled a large crowd and changed many lives that after three weeks of its commencements, the king, and a large number of people surrendered their ritual objects for burning. These objects included, “e-ku-egu-ngu” (masquerade dresses), sigidi, Ère-Ìbeji (carvings and effigies) and other ritual objects.

Oba Solomon Adeja was the first king to dare the consequence and enter the forbidden forest during the Efo-n-Alaaye Revival. He became more convinced that the God of the Aladura people was more powerful than the divinity cults. His fear was eradicated and his desire to surrender to God intensified. He accepted Christianity, gave himself for baptism, and adopted the name Solomon. With his new faith and the encouragement he received from his guests, he became unshaken and persisted in showing his subjects the benefits of becoming Christians. Many of them who saw this in him became Christians. His salvation helped Babalo’s ministry as Efo-n-Alaaye became popular in Aladura history in South-Western Nigeria.<sup>87</sup>

### 3.3.6 Ìka-re Revival

After the Efo-n-Alaaye Revival, another revival sprang in Ìka-re on 7 November, 1930. Ìka-re was a predominantly Muslim area. The Anglican Missionary in Ìka-re supported the revival because many people who attended the revival swelled the population of the church. Reverend W.A. Thompson who relieved Venerable Archdeacon L.A. Lennon, the Anglican Missionary in Ìka-re declared that the first difficulty he faced was that of taking care of the large number of people

<sup>85</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2009. The “great move of God” in an African community, 34-57.

<sup>86</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 128.

<sup>87</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 131.

attending the Church. He acclaimed that 400 converts joined the church in Ìkàrè and 250 in an out-station. In a similar vein, hundreds of converts were also made around Adó-Èkítì because of the activities of the Aladura Revival in Ìkàrè.<sup>88</sup>

### 3.4 The Significance of the 1930 Great Revival in Southwestern Nigeria

The 1930 Great Revival created a sensation and was a point of reference in the history of evangelical revivals in Nigerian Christianity. It was such a moment when mission Christianity had already dominated the whole nation. The indigenous Christians were castigated for exhibiting a rather strange Christian faith different from the type presented by the mission churches. Because of the different kinds of miracles and healing that happened during the revival, many Christians became aware that God was closer to them than the mission churches portrayed Him. They were also able to know that they could relate with God directly and not through a medium as in the traditional religious system. This made people to desire to know God the more. Reverend H. Dallimore who witnessed the flow of many people into the revival says,

I wish you could see such class gatherings of 100 to 300 people, longing to know and earnestly trying to master the elements of reading. And to understand the truths contained in the catechism and to learn the story of our Lord"... "I could wish readers of the magazines could have seen that vast crowd or could see the large classes at Ora, and read in the upturned faces that desire and longing to "know" which is so typical of changing Africa... in this case, however it is desire to know God.<sup>89</sup>

This unique spirituality awed the new converts who became increasingly excited and more dedicated in the Christian faith. This evangelism increased the commitment to ecumenism. The Revivals created spaces for cooperation and partnership, interchange of ideals and godly fellowship both in the short and the long run.<sup>90</sup> Though the revival brought together Prophet Òsítelú and the Faith Tabernacle,<sup>91</sup> the latter lost Pastor J.A Àina, one of its staunch pioneer members to him. However, many interchurch relationships also started. Prior to the revival, a catechist of the Sudan Interior Mission,

<sup>88</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 134- 135

<sup>89</sup> M. O. Ìdowu, 2007. *The great revival of 1930*. 135 - 136.

<sup>90</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1985. Aladura movement and their impact on Nigeria society. 208.

<sup>91</sup> A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 46.

K. P. Titus had invited Babaloꝓlaꝓ to Aráròꝓmí-Yàgbà and Babaloꝓlaꝓ's ministry there was successful. The Methodist Missionary based at Ìfàkì, Rev. Jones admired some elements of Aladura spirituality like strong prayers and dance. He ended up incorporating these into the liturgy of his church. Population explosion followed the revival in neighboring churches especially the mission churches. Though many members of the mission churches patronized the revival, this did not cause any misgiving between them and the revivalists in the area of losing patronage. The mission churches benefited because many of the converts came back to them thereby populating them. Apart from this, when there was shortage of personnel to take care of the teeming crowds at the revival, leaders of the mission churches rendered assistance. They assisted by releasing their church workers to assist on the revival ground. They further released their ecclesiastical officers to take charge of certain responsibilities given them by the leaders of the Faith Tabernacle. This was another drive towards encouraging ecumenism.<sup>92</sup>

The 1930 Great Revival led to revival and spiritual awakening in other churches. The churches most affected were the mission churches whose method of liturgy was formal. Mission churches made use of prayer, hymnbooks, and pamphlets, which did not carry the lots of Nigeria Christians along. Some of these mission churches observed that spontaneous prayer, vigorous clapping, emotional singing, and quick dance steps such as obtained during the revival could re-invigorate their churches. Since the mission churches inherited most of those who attended the revival, their leaders had to adopt the practice employed by the Aladura Revivalists in their churches. These practices attracted their members to the revivals in the first place. The method worked for them as evident in the manifestation of several revivals.<sup>93</sup>

The revival further created a mass movement towards Pentecostal Christianity in Nigeria. Because of miracle explosions during the revival, many people were converted from idolatry and ancestor worship such as obtained in the traditional religion. The spiritual phenomenon that the revival brought endeared it to many adherents of traditional religion who found fulfilment and solution to life's problems without consequences.

Apart from this, the revival further instigated a more spiritual commitment from people as they now gave themselves to a life of prayer, holiness, and dedication thereby abandoning their evil and immoral ways of living. This new awakening made them to

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<sup>92</sup> C.O. Òꝓshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 118 - 119.

<sup>93</sup> M. O. Ìdoꝓwuꝓ, 2007. *The great revival of 1930*. 135 - 136.

begin to attend prayer meetings regularly and renew the *koinonia* as in the Early Church. In addition, it motivated many people to serve God and in the process, many were called into the prophetic ministry. This increased the enlistment into this profession, thereby reducing the problem of personnel to attend to the increasing population of converts.<sup>94</sup>

The revival also removed the fear that the movement was after all anti-social, anti-government, and also secret society or movement of a kind as many who were outside it had propagated. These wrong theses about the Aladura people were refuted through the manifestations of miracles and healings that touched many people. These manifestations convinced those who had accepted the wrong assumptions about the Aladura that they were wrong.<sup>95</sup>

Another significance of the revival lies in the fact that it transformed the already humiliated status of the Aladura group. They were formerly referred to as clique of illiterates, low-income earners or petty artisans. Because of the revival, they became a broad society of people from all lifestyles and professions. Moses Oluodele Ìdoṣu quotes J.D Y Peel:

One important consequence of these years of revival was that Aladura Christianity from being the religion of small groups of literate clerks and traders in the towns became also the religion of a broad sweep of the population, including many illiterate farming folk who became Christians for the first time.”<sup>96</sup>

This expression shows that Aladura Revival encompassed everyone and touched the grassroots. It showed how far-reaching the revival was and how non-selective its membership was.

Another observable great and significant achievement of the revival was, making the feeling and emotion of African spirituality reflect in Christianity. It made Christianity to fit into the socio-cultural and spiritual worldview of the people. It ended the era when Christianity was categorized as European and practiced using its culture and psyche. The activities of the missionaries prior to the revival culminated in presenting a parochial, racial, and biased faith. This tremendously slighted the African perception and

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<sup>94</sup> See J.A. Alóṣkàn, 1975. *Ìdaṣíle aṣi idagbasoke Ìjo Àpóstẹl i ti Kriṣti (CAC) ni iṣe Eṣẹn Alaaṣe (1930-1975)*. Ìbàdàn: Caxton Press (W.A) Ltd., 38.

<sup>95</sup> C.O. Òshun, Aladura revivals: Apostle Babalá's challenge to Christian missions. 16.

<sup>96</sup> M. O. Ìdoṣu, 2007. *The great revival of 1930*. 138.



worldview. However, Aladura Christianity came to enact the African feeling in Christianity.

It is imperative to recall that this study is examining how Christ Apostolic Church in Southwestern Nigeria had deployed the traditional elements as identified in our statement of problem between 1970 and 2005. Modern Pentecostal and charismatic behaviours had influenced this period tremendously. The performance of Christ Apostolic Church with these elements during this historical milieu in Southwestern Nigeria shall be examined later. We shall examine the elements, in terms of the objects used, the procedures involved in their use and the functions associated with them vis-à-vis Christianity.

### **3.5 Events leading to the Emergence of Christ Apostolic Church**

#### **3.5.1 Problems arising from the Great Indigenous Pentecostal Revival of 1930**

Many problems arose from the Great Revival of 1930 which did not affect the leaders of the indigenous revival alone but other emerging indigenous denominations around this time. We shall be making use of the term *Aladura* where appropriate to refer to all of them as the problems that arose after the great indigenous Pentecostal revival did not only affect the leaders of the revival but all other Aladura movements like the Cherubim and Seraphim Society which evolved in 1925. One of the problems that arose from the revival was persecution from the mainline churches and colonial administration. The mainline churches had borne deep grudges against the emerging Aladura movement. The churches considered them as invalid religious movement. Akin Oṣṣmóyájowó in his work claims that Aladura Christianity was described as *religio illicita* (illegal religion). The Anglican Church (one of the mainline denominations) was one of the prominent churches that later rose against the Aladura movement. When the Aladura churches eventually evolved after a lot of persecutions, the mission churches at the initial period showed some acceptance in places as Ileṣṣa, Efoṣṣn, and Ìkaṣṣre. They could not have done otherwise as this led to the swelling of membership in their individual assemblies. However, the mainline churches could not but watch their exceptionally vibrant and charismatic laymen trying to experiment their conviction.

Later, their fears became real as membership of their churches started to reduce and church income reduced drastically.<sup>97</sup>

Oṣimóyájowó further quotes Captain W.A. Ross who was the Resident officer at Oyo in August, 1930 as saying “they are not recognized Christian missions and they should be regarded as enemies”. The colonial administration then was hostile to the Aladura movement thinking that their bright prospect for growth might pose many dangers to their government.<sup>98</sup> Furthermore, archival documents about this period also show that the Aladura movement was a cause for concern for the colonial administrators because they watched every bit of their activities. One of the documents was a memorandum from the Commissioner of Police, Òyó-Òndó Province, Ibadan to the District Officer, Ibadan dated 11th June, 1934, which reveals the concerns of the Commissioner of Police about the movement and his solicitation for information about the strongholds of the movement, and whether Babaloṣílá still had much influence on the people as before.<sup>99</sup>

When the great indigenous Pentecostal revival of 1930 eventually started, there was persecution by the colonial administration because of their suspicion about the great miracles and healing recorded. The administration was also mindful of the revival and its orderliness for the polity. They would not want the revival to degenerate to social unrest, lawlessness and riot.<sup>100</sup> Some of those who patronized the revivals claimed they received divine solutions to their problems. The colonial administration tried different means to exterminate the movement. The government first forbade them from staging public crusade. They were further barred from meeting in private houses. Aladura members were targeted and those captured were imprisoned. Some of those affected included the

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<sup>97</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. *Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria*. 151.

<sup>98</sup> J. A. Oṣimóyájowó, 1978. *The Aladura churches in Nigeria since independence*. L. Fashole, Ed. *Christianity in independent Africa*. Ìbàdàn: University Press. 97 - 98.

<sup>99</sup> Joseph Babaloṣílá -faith healer *National Archives*. Memorandum File No. 1146/4. Class Mark-Iba. Div. Dated 11th June, 1934. 188.

<sup>100</sup> The colonial administration was after the peace of the polity. This reflects in the letter written by the Acting Commissioner of Police to the District Officer, Ibadan enquiring about Babaloṣílá and the fact that he was charged for an offence and later discharged. (Joseph Babaloṣílá -faith healer. *National Archives*. Memorandum File No. 1146. Mark-Iba. Div. 300 dated 18<sup>th</sup> July, 1933. 185 The reply of the District Officer describes the revival as orderly and that the Aladura Christians comported themselves with respect for the law and that contrary to the information furnished the Acting Commissioner of Police, Babaloṣílá was not charged with any offence in his district. (See Joseph Babaloṣílá -faith healer. *National Archives*. Memorandum File No. 1146/2. Mark-Iba. Div. Dated 29<sup>th</sup> July, 1933. 186-187.

disciples of Ayọ̀ Babaloṣá in places as Owo.<sup>101</sup> Babaloṣá was also arrested in Odo-Owa.<sup>102</sup>

In 1932, two women in Otuo levelled an allegation against Babaloṣá. They claimed that he forced them to drink a poisonous local herb, which made them to confess their involvement in witchcraft. Among Yorùbá people, drinking of local herbs such as *Èpo-Òbo*, the bark of *Òbo* tree soaked in water is the traditional method for detecting a suspected witch. If an alleged person drinks the secretion from the *Òbo*, she confesses to the hearing of everyone present her involvements in witchcraft and all her past wickedness. Around the period Babaloṣá was accused, the Colonial Government had banned the administration of such herb on anybody alleged of involvement in witchcraft. Babaloṣá was incarcerated for six months.<sup>103</sup> Children and relatives of the Aladura members were deprived of admission into schools and colleges owned by the mission churches. Those already admitted were molested and some expelled on trivial issues. Those in public employment were treated badly. The persecution included dragging the Aladura leaders to court or to the District Officers on flimsy reasons.<sup>104</sup>

Another problem came from some leaders of Yorùbá traditional cults. It is important to discuss this particular problem because the traditional society, which cultured the spirituality and emotion of the Aladura adherents, is an area of interest to this research. The presence of Aladura revivalism in Yorùbá traditional society generated some reactions among the cult leaders.<sup>105</sup> Aladura revivalism was at first a welcomed innovation among them. However, different opinions started to generate which made Aladura activities an issue of dissention. *Òshun* identified the diviner-priests and the lawmakers such as the *Ògboṣi* in *Ègba*, *Òyomeṣi* in *Òyo*, *Òsuṣo* in *Ìjẹbú* or the *Isogan* in *Efoṣun-Alaaye* as threatened by the presence of the Aladura. Aladura presence and revival brought about the destruction of many sacred places, objects, idols, and charms, which were replaced with *Omi-Ìye*

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<sup>101</sup> A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 182.

<sup>102</sup> C. Ekúndayò, 2004. History and ministerial life of Joseph Ayọ̀ Babaloṣá. 24.

<sup>103</sup> C. Ekúndayò, 2004. History and ministerial life. 25.

<sup>104</sup> A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 184.

<sup>105</sup> C.O. *Òshun*, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 149.

“water of life”.<sup>106</sup> Due to this interference, which brought about a great departure from culture and religion of the people, the traditional leaders in the places mentioned above made efforts to quash the spread of the movement.

Aladura movement was seen as an intrusion, a threat to the existing status quo and a robbery of clientele who had been patronizing the existing traditional system for solving existential problems. The traditional spiritual personnel were usually contacted when spiritual challenges and illnesses beyond ordinary treatment faced their clients. The *Babalawo* (Ifa Priest) through the manipulation of the *Òpẹ̀lẹ̀* (Divination Beads) deciphers the causes of problems and prescribes solution as instructed by the oracles.<sup>107</sup>

The Great Revival mostly affected this class of professionals because many of their clients jettisoned them to patronize revival places. What pained the traditionalists most was that as the adherents of the Great Revival of 1930 received guidance and healings, they stopped patronizing the traditional priests. This meant a reduction of income, patronage, and popularity. The Aladura revivalists further disregarded the powers of the wicked spiritual forces by singing choruses and hymns that discredit their powers. They also preached sermons that openly proclaimed the power of Jesus as the most potent over all the evil forces. It was an aberration to the age-long system, which nobody had ever confronted with such intensity.

These traditional priests in a bid to retaliate attempted to disorganize through spiritual means, the revivals of the Aladura people. Aladura spirituality recognized the presence of the evil forces. As early as the onset of their activities, they knew that the evil forces were the enemies of their spiritual exploits. Aladura revivalism further enforced the superiority of God and the Pentecostal gifts of the Holy Spirit as a veritable means of subjugating the malevolent forces. They sang songs such as the following to belittle the wicked forces and proclaim the same to the world. Such songs are: *Osò! pa'ramo, arun! Pa'rada Je su lo lo de*<sup>108</sup> meaning: wizards and affliction! You had better go into hiding for Jesus has taken control. They also sang more daring contest

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<sup>106</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. *Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria*. 149.

<sup>107</sup> See J. O. Awólálú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. Essex: Longman Group Ltd. 25.

<sup>108</sup> A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 187.

songs like, *B'owomiba te PsaImu, Ayankasi ologun*.<sup>109</sup> This interprets: if I should get hold of the psalm, to hell with the herbalist. These songs were antagonistic to the reputation of the traditional healers. The immense trust they had built in their clients was already crumbling before them because of the assaults of the doctrine of the Aladura Christians which was strange to them.

Furthermore, there were problems from the Muslim communities. By the start of the 20th century, most Yorùbá towns had come under the influence of Islam. Christians and Muslims had co-existed meaningfully.<sup>110</sup> The presence of the Aladura Christians however brought some disaffection. Ìlọfà and Offa, which were Muslim areas, recorded some antagonism between the Muslims and the Christians. The Muslims in these areas complained that Aladura mission had abandoned its objective of spreading the gospel to insulting them. Around 1931, the mission churches and the Muslims accused the Aladura Christians especially in Ileṣa, under the leadership of Babaṭope. The Aladura Christians were dragged before the District Officer for “stealing” the members of the mission churches and deriding the Muslims respectively. Stringent measures were taken against them, which included the closure of about twenty-three Faith Tabernacle churches in and around Ileṣa. In addition, Babaṭope and his lieutenants were incarcerated. Though they were released after a while, the effect of the persecution lingered and it affected the growth of the Aladura movement in Ileṣa.<sup>111</sup>

With the above, it is clear that generally, Aladura Christianity, which gave birth to many Prophetic and Healing Movements in Nigeria underwent many difficulties. Christ Apostolic Church, which evolved from this strand of Pentecostal movement, equally underwent the travails such as we have discussed.

### **3.5.2 De-affiliation of Precious Stone Society from the Faith Tabernacle, U.S.A. and Affiliation with the Apostolic Church, Great Britain**

Before discussing the de-affiliation of Precious Stone Society (known after the affiliation as The Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria) from the Faith Tabernacle, U.S.A., we shall

<sup>109</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. *Aladura revivals: Apostle Babalola's challenge to Christian missions*. 17.

<sup>110</sup> A. Omóyájówó, 1978. *The Aladura churches in Nigeria*. 104.

<sup>111</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. *Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria*. 150 - 151.

briefly discuss the growth recorded during the affiliation in terms of the personnel engaged and the places where branches were established. The first branch of the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle was established in Lagos while other branches followed in Ìjèbú-Òde, Ileṣṣa, Ìbàdàn, and Oyan.<sup>112</sup> It further spread to other places like Ilé-Ifè, Abeoṣokuṣa, Ìyàgbà, and Benin. Faith Tabernacle got to the northern side of Nigeria in Minna through Pastor S.A. Mensah, Jos through Pastor Sankey Sam and Zaria through Messrs Panakie and Attram. Other places included Makurdi through Pastor James Oṣala Akiṣṣanya and Kano through Pastor J.A. Òkúnúgà and Mr. Konigbagbe. These personalities were full of zeal and were determined to make some changes in their immediate environment. Isaac Babaloṣala Akiṣṣanya founded the Ìbàdàn Faith Tabernacle in 1924. He was already a synod man of St. Peter's Anglican Church, Àrèmo by 1915 and was operating a house fellowship in his Alaṣara house after normal church service every Sunday.

The Faith Tabernacle group started in Òyo through some young students of Ìjèbú origin who were attending St. Andrew's College. One of their tutors Mr. J.O. Saṣanya became their leader.<sup>113</sup> The leaders gave themselves to devotion and practical spirituality. E.A. Ayaṣṣanya in his work described the group as such that esteemed fasting, prayer, vision and dreams as well as renouncing medical science totally. They made such tremendous impact in their society that the lives of many of their followers changed for the better. They were greatly popular among the Yorùbá people of Nigeria and they claimed that the Holy Spirit enabled them achieve the great feat of changing their society. They alleged that the Holy Spirit made its inroad to Yorùbáland through them. They further claimed that God made His true worship possible among the predominantly traditional people through them.<sup>114</sup>

Harold Turner said that the changes the group made were so immense that members of the mainline churches felt and appreciated it. He got the account of someone about his brother who was a member of the Faith Tabernacle:

<sup>112</sup> A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 26.

<sup>113</sup> H.W. Turner, 1967. *African independent church: The Church of the Lord (Aladura)*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 13.

<sup>114</sup> E.A. Àyándélé, 1978. The Aladura among the Yorùbá: A challenge to the "orthodox" churches. O. U. Kalu, Ed. *Christianity in West Africa: the Nigerian story*. Ìbàdàn: Daystar Press. 384.

My family had always been Methodists and objected strongly when my elder brother joined the Faith Tabernacle in Lagos. They then noticed changes for the better in him, in his character. He was less worldly and stopped going to ballroom dances, although he had been a musician in a dance band. He ceased drinking and was more loving towards us in his actions in the house. I was still a schoolboy then, but he spent more on our schooling now that we were against him than we did before. He bought my brother and myself clothes, shoes and ties which we had not had before.<sup>115</sup>

The Faith Tabernacle enjoyed maximum patronage from the society. For example, they got the patronage of the low-income earners, traders, artisans, and the downtrodden that were not engrafted into the mainline churches.

Many issues led to the de-affiliation. One of them was that the Faith Tabernacle of Philadelphia, U.S.A. (which was the mother denomination that they affiliated with was not prepared to send pastors from America to Nigeria on permanent basis to directly mentor the Nigerian churches. The relationship between them was the type that Alokañ referred to as “relating by proxy”.<sup>116</sup> The American Faith Tabernacle was relating with the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle through tracts and magazines. These materials were distributed through correspondence. This was definitely not the kind of relationship which the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle bargained. Nigerian Faith Tabernacle desired a relationship whereby pastors of the American Faith Tabernacles are sent regularly to Nigeria to mentor the group. The Nigerian Faith Tabernacle felt that the presence of the Americans would save them from constant harassments and persecution from the government, which was the order of the day. In addition, there were problems of funding and engaging full time church workers to effectively man the day to day running of church affairs. This, to a great extent, hampered the growth and consolidation of the movement.<sup>117</sup>

Another important reason why the Faith Tabernacle Nigeria had to sever relationship with the Faith Tabernacle of Philadelphia was that the colonial administration in Nigeria, being British was not favourably disposed towards American

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<sup>115</sup> H.W. Turner, 1967. *African independent church*. 11-12. See also A. Alókañ, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 32 - 33.

<sup>116</sup> A. Alókañ, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 33.

<sup>117</sup> S. A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 109.

presence in her colony. Apart from this, America was tagged a lawless nation and should not be tolerated in her colony. Therefore, the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle sensed that it would not see any favour from the government of the day if it should go on relating with America.<sup>118</sup>

Contrary to the position of Alokun that the Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria broke relationship with the Faith Tabernacle of Philadelphia over the allegation of adultery levelled against Pastor Clarke<sup>119</sup>, the Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria did not part way with their American counterpart until after the 1930 Revival. The eyewitness account of Adégbóyèga reveals that though the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle rebuffed Pastor Clarke and advised him to submit himself to church discipline, they did not as a result of this severe their relationship with Philadelphia. Rather, they declined Clarke's invitation to change the Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria to First Century Gospel Church.<sup>120</sup> This account is supported by the letter of the Commissioner of Police, Calabar Province to the Divisional Officer Ibadan where he described Babalo òlá as having connection with the Faith Tabernacle Movement as at 1931.<sup>121</sup> This shows that Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria could not have parted way with Faith Tabernacle of Philadelphia since 1928 and still retained the name till 1931 which the Commissioner of Police was referring to.

The Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria later came in contact with Faith and Truth Temple Mission through the effort of D.O. Odùbánjò ò who according to Adégbóyèga was the Presiding Pastor of the Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria.<sup>122</sup> This foreign mission was about to send six missionaries to certain parts of Africa, so Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria solicited their understanding to stop over in Lagos to pay them a visit before they proceeded to Whygauaya, Upper Volta.<sup>123</sup> This arrangement was negotiated on behalf of the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle. The Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria was enthusiastic and at the same time surprised about this mission because the Faith Tabernacle, Philadelphia had previously misled them that the Canadian mission was not interested in sending out missionaries.

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<sup>118</sup> S. A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 110.

<sup>119</sup> A. Aló òkàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 35.

<sup>120</sup> S.G. Adégbóyèga 1978. *Short history of The Apostolic Church in Nigeria*. 8&9.

<sup>121</sup> Joseph Babalo òlá -faith healer. File No. 1146. Mark-Iba. Div. 300. Dated 18<sup>th</sup> July, 1933. 185.

<sup>122</sup> S.G. Adégbóyèga, 1978. *Short history of The Apostolic Church in Nigeria*. 10.

<sup>123</sup> S.G. Adégbóyèga, 1978. *Short history of The Apostolic Church in Nigeria*. 11.



They were, however, surprised that the mission was sending out six missionaries at once.<sup>124</sup>

The six missionaries however acceded to the request of the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle as they stopped over in Lagos. The leader of this group was Pastor C.R. Myers. His entourage included his wife, daughter, and two other people. Oshun accounts that the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle carefully studied the doctrinal standpoint of this foreign group before they arrived in Nigeria and they discovered through the reading of the Faith and Truth Temple tracts and other literature that the church could not provide the expected criteria they desired in any group they would affiliate. He says further that they also discovered that the church was not so vigorous about the doctrine of Divine Healing and that this scuttled the little relationship that was about to develop between them. He added further that another reason why the relationship could not last was that the Mission was devastated by the death of two of its missionaries in Lagos.<sup>125</sup>

Contrary to this account of the experience of these missionaries in Lagos, Adégbóyèga gave a detailed account of their losses and the perception of the law about these. He claims that the team lost two of the six members namely Rev. Ralph Curlew and Miss Diazy Crawford who died in Nigeria and that these people died without being treated in the hospital. He explains further that this made their congregation to be the centre of attraction. On each of the death that was recorded, post mortem examination was performed and this made the issue worse probably because it would go into the record that people were dying in the church without being given medical attention. Adégbóyèga explains further that they were subsequently advised by an Inspector of Police that they should subsequently call in a doctor to examine a terminally ill –person before death occurred. By this there would not be any need for post-mortem and as a result, it would be easier to obtain medical certificate from the government. Myers went on with his expedition to the Upper Volta after securing some reinforcement from Lagos. He asked that Lagos should give him two people to replace the two people he lost, so J.A. Medayese and one Larsey were given to him. He also requested for some financial

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<sup>124</sup> S.G. Adégbóyèga, 1978. *Short history of The Apostolic Church in Nigeria*. 11

<sup>125</sup> C.O. Oshun, 1981. *Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria*. 34.

assistance which he got.<sup>126</sup> Alokán in his account says that it was Odùbáńjò and his “group” who donated £20 towards the success of the mission.<sup>127</sup>

However, they experienced a greater hardship during this missionary adventure such that Mrs. Myers became sick and died upon being rushed to the hospital. Even the two people that were given to him suffered as well and the mission was futile. Myers and his two children subsequently returned to Lagos in abject penury. Additionally, his relationship with the mission body in Canada turned unpleasant. He looked up to The Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria to engage him but because he would not reconcile with his mission at home and also because he did not abide with some of the doctrines of the Faith Tabernacle, it was considered unsafe to engage him.<sup>128</sup>

D.O. Odùbáńjò came across a magazine of the Apostolic Church, Great Britain through one brother at the Lagos Assembly known as E.F. Elebute. The name of the magazine was known as *Riches of Grace* which was the official bulletin of the church in Britain. He showed this magazine to the leaders of the Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria and after looking through it carefully, they found out that the doctrine of the church was richer and more Pentecostal than the one of the Faith Tabernacle of Philadelphia. A letter was unanimously written to them to come over and help them in Nigeria.<sup>129</sup> The Apostolic Church, Great Britain was under the leadership of Pastor D.P. Williams. However, according to T.N. Turnbull, Odùbáńjò had been regularly feeding the pastor and the Great Britain church generally about the Nigerian church and the reason why they should come to Nigeria before the unanimous letter was written.<sup>130</sup> In the official letter he wrote on behalf of the Faith Tabernacle of Nigeria to the Apostolic Church, Great Britain, he made known to Great Britain the successes recorded during the Revival and projected that the affiliation, if consummated, would result in more successes. Fátókun captures few of the lines of the letter of invitation Oduńbańjò wrote to the Apostolic Church, Great Britain:

The Lord has commenced a great work in this country and has stretched forth His hand on thousands of people, and the Mohammedans are coming to the fold in leaps and bounds; and

<sup>126</sup> S.G. Adégbóyègà, 1978. *Short history of The Apostolic Church in Nigeria*. 13.

<sup>127</sup> A. Alóńkàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 35.

<sup>128</sup> S.G. Adégbóyègà, 1978. *Short history of The Apostolic Church in Nigeria*. 14

<sup>129</sup> S. A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 113-114.

<sup>130</sup> T.N. Turnbull, 1959. *What God hath wrought*: Bradford: Puritan Press. 78. See also A. Alóńkàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 151.

as such, I would like your saints in Great Britain to consider the lives of perishing humanity in this country in sending some of the leaders along with a prophet to pay us a visit as early as possible, as the Lord has laid it in my heart and my associate pastors to associate our several branches to the Apostolic Church in Great Britain (...) We are sure the Lord will use your representatives to enlighten the brethren here more when they come. "Come over and help us!" is the great cry everywhere.<sup>131</sup>

There was a spiritual surge in the church before the arrival of the visitors from Britain and this served as an energizer or appetizer of what they expected to happen from the visitors. Pastor Odùbánjo organized and delivered a teaching on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit Baptism and this programme was attended by many leaders and members of the Faith Tabernacle. During the programme, conducted at Moloney Bridge Street, Lagos which housed the missionary headquarters of the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle, two members of the church namely I.G. Sakpo (later Pastor) and Silas Ògúnlàjà were baptized with the Holy Spirit and this manifested through their speaking in tongues, healing and deliverance for some people. As from this time, I.G. Sakpo was raised up as a gifted person and prominent prophetic personnel in the ministry.<sup>132</sup>

There was another story from some quarters in Lagos that the Apostolic Church coming from Great Britain did not accept nor practice the doctrine of Divine Healing devoid of the use of medicine as held by the Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria. This rumour was taken seriously and was given an official attention as a decision was reached. It was resolved at the conference of pastors of Faith Tabernacle at Ìjèbú-Òde that a message be sent to the visitors not to come again. However, this action was aborted by the Holy Spirit through the prophetic ministration of I.G. Sakpo whom God instructed to go to the venue of the meeting and deliver His prophetic oracle to guide His people aright. God revealed through Sakpo that they should allow the white missionaries to come as He was the one that sanctioned the union. This made the leaders to change their minds and stick to the old plan of inviting the missionaries.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> S.A. Fátókun, 2009. The "great move of God" in an African community. 34-57.

<sup>132</sup> S.G. Adégbóyèga, 1978. *Short history of The Apostolic Church in Nigeria*. 39. See also S. A. Fátókun, 2005. Pentecostalism in southwestern Nigeria. 114

<sup>133</sup> S.G. Adégbóyèga, 1978. *Short history of The Apostolic Church*. 39&40.

Pastor D.P. Williams and his team arrived in Lagos Wharf on the 23 September, 1931. The group comprised the President of the church, Pastor D.P. Williams, the Vice-President, Pastor Andrew Turnbull and the brother of the president, Pastor William Jones Williams. They met with the leaders of the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle and visited the branches of the church at Ijebu-Òde, Ilesha, Calabar, and some towns in the Northern part of Nigeria.<sup>134</sup> However, this claim cannot hold in the face of archival record that showed in the letter of the Commissioner of Police of Ondo Province, Ibadan to the Resident at Oyo that the commissioner warned these visitors not to travel too far. The Police chief even discouraged them against visiting Ilesha not to talk of far places as Calabar.<sup>135</sup> It is important to consider this relationship especially at its beginning to see whether there were consistency and faithfulness in the contract that was bargained later. This will be the basis of our assessment in relation to the break in relationship, which set in after a few years of union.

In the Faith Tabernacle of Nigerian, a group considered the option of affiliation with some carefulness and skepticism. This was the group that initiated the earlier rumour about the commitment of the Europeans about the doctrine of Divine Healing. They did not want a repeat of what happened in their previous affiliations to befall them. However, they considered that an affiliation well thought out could save them from the persecution at home and offer them the protection they needed.<sup>136</sup> The reason why some of the Nigerian church leaders were skeptical with the affiliation was their assessment of the spirituality of the Bradford group, which did not satisfy them. These people claimed that the white people were immature in the spirit and therefore could not be followed. Others who supported their coming claimed that the white Christian missionaries were innocent. Those who supported the former claim included Sophia Odunlami who claimed that she saw the vision of an African man holding a European baby. She interpreted the vision to mean that the European missionaries were the baby and the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle

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<sup>134</sup> Cf. A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 154. C.O. Òshun, 1981. *Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria*. 39.

<sup>135</sup> The faith-healer Babalolá and Faith Tabernacle. 180.

<sup>136</sup> T.N. Turnbull, 1959. *What God hath wrought*. 73.

the African man. The pro-European group included Odubañjo who interpreted the same dream to mean that the Europeans as baby symbolized innocence.<sup>137</sup>

The Apostolic Church, Great Britain had some of its doctrines that were similar to the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle. These include belief in Pentecostal gifts and manifestations. Some of the Pentecostal doctrines, which they shared, included baptism by immersion, baptism of the Holy Spirit and signs associated with such baptism and belief in Divine Healing. One main difference between the two organizations was that the Apostolic Church, Great Britain accepted the optional use of western drugs as a means of treating ailments. On the other hand, the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle totally relied on Divine Healing and dependence on God for the provision of all needs based on the scripture. This difference noticed at the onset of the relationship was sustained throughout the relationship and was claimed by CAC to be the basis for the separation that followed eight years later, though Adégbóyèga in his own eyewitness account said Divine Healing controversy was only used as a cover up and that the real cause of the matter was a charge of financial impropriety levelled against Pastor Odùbáñjo by Pastor George Perfect, the Resident Missionary.<sup>138</sup>

The posture of the Bradford mission about Divine Healing had its origin from the socio-cultural background under which the church grew. The western world then was a society that believed in scientific research and the utilization of its results for the betterment of human existence. Many successful empirically verified researches had been performed in human medicine. Drugs that could cure different ailments, the most common then, being malaria fever provided medical solution. Pharmacists had come out with anti-malaria drugs. The situation in Nigeria then was the “opposite”. The Yorùbá society and the Aladura Christians that we focus on in this research believed less in science and scientific research. Rather they believed much in the raw administration of herbs, supernatural and divine healing. The cause of disease or unfortunate incidence is attributed to malevolent spirit and forces such as witches, wizards, and sorcery. Other sources are linked with the past wicked deeds of the sufferer, which occasioned

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<sup>137</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 40.

<sup>138</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 40. Cf. S.G. Adegboye. 1978. *Short history of The Apostolic Church*. 90-93.

retribution. This was the reason why between 1918, 1929 and 1931, the influenza epidemic and the depression which hit Yorùbáland was interpreted by the Aladura founders as the consequence of the sins of the Yorùbá Christians.<sup>139</sup> Considering all these claims and reasons by them for the cause of the epidemic, one would wonder why the Aladura Christians had underplayed the devastation of the First World War and the consequent adverse effect of the war on the countries of the world generally and Southwestern Nigeria specifically. All the socio-economic and health challenges encountered by the people then were normal problems associated with any country affected by war.

Despite the differences that we have identified, the two parties went on with the “partnership”. Adégbóyèga lists the seven men that were ordained as pastors and they included J.B. Sàdàré (Esinsinadé) (Ìjèbú-Ode), S.G. Adegboye-ga (Èbute-Meta), D.O. Oduba-njo (Lagos) and I.B. Akinyele (Ìbàdàn). Others included J.A. Babatope (Ilesha), E.L. Macaulay (Zaria), and, S.A. Mensah (Kaduna).<sup>140</sup> The condition laid out for this ordination further demonstrated the overlord posture of the foreign ministry. The foreign ministry had probably interpreted the relationship as a suzerain type. The Apostolic Church, Great Britain demanded as a precondition the invalidation of the initial ordination of the Nigerian pastors under Clark. In addition, under this new relationship, the pastors were to put on clerical collar and they were to be issued with a licence by the British government. This would take effect after a formal agreement with the Apostolic Church, Great Britain might have been signed in triplicate. The Nigerian Faith Tabernacle leaders frowned at this. Pastor Adégbóyèga’s very strong objection to this agreement made the Apostolic Church, Great Britain to shelve the issuance of license as a condition for ordination.<sup>141</sup>

It is our opinion that at this moment, it was obvious that the relationship had translated from a mere association or partnership as Òshun refers to it<sup>142</sup> to an affiliation. This is because the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle knew quite well the differences between them both doctrinal and sociological, and still went ahead with the relationship.

<sup>139</sup> E.A. Àyándélé, 1981. The Aladura among the Yorùbá: A challenge to the “orthodox” churches. O. U. Kalu, Ed. *Christianity in West Africa: The Nigerian Story*. 384.

<sup>140</sup> S.G. Adegboye-ga. 1978. *Short history of The Apostolic Church*. 55-56. See also A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 154.

<sup>141</sup> S.G. Adegboye-ga. 1978. *Short history of The Apostolic Church*. 54.

<sup>142</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. *Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria*. 43.

The two groups were mutually benefiting from each other. The first did not want to part with the second so as not to forfeit the benefits they were mutually deriving. In addition, the Nigerian group was aware that acceptance of the ordination of the Apostolic Church, Great Britain meant consenting to accept orders from them. The Nigerian group benefited because the affiliation conferred protection from the British government on them. They considered this as an opportunity.

Concerning the denominational name that the Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria assumed after the affiliation, it is important to state that the Faith Tabernacle, Nigeria changed name to The Apostolic Church Nigeria as from 1931. That they went by different names such as *African Apostolic Church*, lacks sufficient historical proof. This is because the archival information about the name that the group assumed after the affiliation remains clear. For example, the memo written by the district Officer, Ibadan to the Commissioner of Police, Calabar, stated that the Faith Tabernacle in Nigeria solicited the assistance of the Apostolic Church, Great Britain and since this request was obliged to, the Faith Tabernacle of Nigeria had become The Apostolic Church.<sup>143</sup> This was the name that they were bearing till 1939 when some leaders of the church quarrelled with the Apostolic Church, Great Britain (the mother church they affiliated with) over the issue of Western Medicine as a complementary of Divine Healing. Those that would not support this standpoint were those who went by the name Christ Apostolic Church.

Apart from this, the account of Adégbóyèga below substantiated the fact above

The day of the ordination service was a never-to-be-forgotten date in the history of The Apostolic Church in Nigeria. It was the day when our association with Faith Tabernacle Congregation of Philadelphia in U.S.A. was finally abrogated. We afterwards finally decided to adopt the name “The Apostolic Church, Nigeria” as our denominational name, thereby dropping Diamond Society, Faith Tabernacle Congregation, and any other names with which we were then known and called<sup>144</sup>.

### 3.5.3 Emergence of Christ Apostolic Church

According to Alóṣkàn, Christ Apostolic Church had been given a number of names. One of them was Nigerian Apostolic Church in 1939<sup>145</sup> immediately after they

<sup>143</sup> National Archives, Ibadan, File No. 1146/2. Dated 29<sup>th</sup> July, 1933.

<sup>144</sup> S.G. Adeṣgboṣeyega. 1978. *Short history of The Apostolic Church*. 61.

<sup>145</sup> A. Alóṣkàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 172.

broke away from the Apostolic Church, Great Britain This name was however unacceptable to members of the church outside Nigeria, who considered the title a nationalized one. The Ghana brethren were those who gave this objection its popularity.<sup>146</sup> This title was unanimously dropped for a more definite one that would incorporate brethren from outside Nigeria. The word *Nigerian* was replaced with *United* to take care of this vacuum. Therefore, the designation *United Apostolic Church* was adopted in February 1940. Later, it was discovered that the initials of the new name U.A.C. was shared by United African Company and mails for the church might be mistakenly taken to the company and vice-versa. In 1941, the title Christ Apostolic Church (C.A.C.) was finally adopted and registered in May 1943 under Land Registration Ordinance of 1924.<sup>147</sup> This was after a divine sanction had been obtained and it was obvious that there might not be any further change of name of the church.<sup>148</sup> Its first president was Pastor I.B. Akiñyele while D.O. Odubañjo became the first Vice-President and General Superintendent. Apostle Babaloñla was the General Evangelist. These three key office holders were also the first set of trustees for Christ Apostolic Church in Nigeria and Ghana.

### **3.6 Growth and Development of Christ Apostolic Church**

The Church had made its presence known in places like Lagos, which was the general headquarters, and Ìbàdàn the missionary headquarters. Other places where Christ Apostolic Church had been operative included Abeokuta, Ìjèbú-Òde, Ile-Ife, Ilesha, Efon-Alaaye, Ìkare, and Òwo. It also had branches in Ado-Ekiti, Ìgàra, Òyan, Yagba, Kabba and Òkìtipupa.

#### **3.6.1 Christ Apostolic Church from 1943 to 1970**

Now we shall discuss the growth of Christ Apostolic Church as from 1943 to 1970. It was during this period that the church became duly recognized as a mission in Nigeria and operated as such in the face of diverse oppositions and challenges. As at 1946, the church had recorded tremendous growth in terms of the number of branches it

<sup>146</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 57.

<sup>147</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 58.

<sup>148</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1983. The Pentecostal perspective of Christ Apostolic Church. 107.



had. The growth was possible because of its dedicated pioneers and their disciples who spread throughout the Southwestern part and Nigeria as a whole. Its dedicated foremost evangelists who featured prominently in this regard championed the initial work of evangelism, which was an effective weapon of expansion, which the church used to propagate the mission. These evangelists included Joseph Ayo Babalola, Daniel Òrèkoko (during the Faith Tabernacle days), Peter Olatunji and D.O. Babaji. Through these people, the initial evangelistic work started. Later, others such as Emanuel Omotunde, Daniel Gboluwaga, James Oluwaniyi, Reuben A. Olukeyode, Jeremiah Ologun, Solomon Ukannah, Moses Ugboga and Samuel Adeleye reached the remote towns and villages of Nigeria. They helped in registering Christ Apostolic Church's presence in many places.

Apart from those mentioned above, women such as D.T. Ajayi, E.O. Ajibo, Comfort Bolajoko and Dorcas Olúwalúwè made tremendous impact. Others are Adeusi, Hannah Omojebira, Elizabeth Oluwafunmilu, M. Ademiko Abojode-rin and Sarah Dada who were prominent women evangelists. They also contributed in spreading the gospel in the church<sup>149</sup>. They were those who ploughed the land and created the avenue for pastors to have churches to administer. Evangelists were recruited and trained on in-house basis for a period of two years by the foremost evangelists of the church such as Babalo before being sent to the field. Twenty-five years later, this changed as would-be evangelists were made to undergo a more organized training at Ibàdàn as from 1954. After the death of Babalo in 1959, the headship of the evangelism unit of the church was transferred to Babaji.

The spread of the church as captured by C.O. Oshun extended beyond the southwestern Nigeria and we feel it is worthwhile to mention them here. Also, there appears to be pluralism of offices of the pastors in his account. We believe that this might have been possible due to shortage of manpower in the church during the period. The church branches and their overseers in the southern and northern provinces up to 1946 included Esinsinadé who was overseeing Ìjèbú-Ode. Odubanjo was overseeing Ìjèbú-Ode, Lagos, Ilesha, Abeokuta, Efofin-Alaaye and other places. Onasinwo was in charge of Lagos, Ebute-meta, Ipaja, Abeokuta, and

<sup>149</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 292 - 293.

Sanya took care of Ìjẹ̀bù-Òde, Òyọ̀, and Lagos. Otubusin took charge of Ìjẹ̀bù-Òde, Lagos, Ileṣṣa-Ife while Babatope was administering Ileṣṣa and environs. Àiná was making impact in Ìjẹ̀bù-Òde, Lagos and Ìbàdàn. Akiṣẹ́le a great figure in Ìbàdàn was making things work in Ìbàdàn and environs and Ileṣṣa. Adeṣina (Snr.) was overseeing Lagos, Ìbàdàn, and Ife. Òkubaṣejo was in Lagos, Òyán and Calabar. While Elebuṣe was running Lagos and Oyan, Ewedemi was in charge of Lagos and Benin and Fáyemí in charge of Lagos and Ife. Odúnnewu was in Ileṣṣa and Ife, and Ementajoh overseeing Lagos and Calabar. Udom was in Ìbàdàn and Calabar. The duo of Lucas and Eṣunṣọ́ were taking care of Elebuṣeṣeṣe and Ìdí-oṣo in Lagos while Òreṣọ́ was pasturing Lagos: Ìdí-oṣo, Ileṣṣa and so on.

Sonaiya was in charge of Ikenne, Ìdowu watching over Ìbàdàn and Ìkìrùn and Sankey Sam supervising Ghana: Winneba; and Nigeria: Minna and Jos. Mensah was taking charge of Minna and other northern stations. Òkunuga and Adeṣina were in Ìjẹ̀bù-Òde, Lagos and Kano, and Laḍipo in Zaria, Abeokuta, Ìbàdàn, Ilaro, and Ìdí-oṣo in Lagos. Other overseers included Onabiyi who was keeping an eye on Zaria and Abeokuta, Adegbeyeṣe watching over Òffà, and Èbuṣeṣeṣe, Lagos. Macaulay, Fakunmi, Ògúnjì, Jonah, Bajulaiye, were in charge of Minna and environs. Bajulaiye was in Ilorin up to Minna, while Thompson was putting things straight in Kotangora. Turkson was shepherding Jos, Olútíméḥin presiding over Ìjẹ̀bù-Òde and Jos, and finally Elias and Medan overseeing Bukuru and Bachama.<sup>150</sup> Other places that were reached apart from the above mentioned places included Warri and Sapele through Òreṣọ́, Òke-Ògu area of Saki and Ìṣeyin through Olatunji, Onitsha and Benin and environs and Ìtires in Lagos through Egabor<sup>151</sup>.

Due to the fact that Christ Apostolic Church suffered from lack of sufficient work force as observed earlier, the church leadership devised a lasting and more effective solution to this problem by providing training facilities for their personnel. This was done casually on “in house training basis”. Here, would-be workers were made to undergo the

<sup>150</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 292 -293.

<sup>151</sup> C.O. Òshun, 1981. Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. 298 -299.

training for a period of not less than two years. However, as from 1952, the church began to operate a full-fledged training programme by establishing the Bible Training College at Ede in Oyo province on 27 March, 1952. D.O. Odubaño was the first principal of this school, which was formally inaugurated by the authority of the church on 1 May, 1952. The college shifted venue severally from Ede to places like Èrìo-Èkìtì, Efoon-Alaaye, and Àkure from 1952 to 1973. Eleven years after its founding, in February, 1963, the Christ Apostolic Church Pastoral Training Institute was formed at Ibàdàn. This institute was later transferred to Lagos. Another arm of the training department of the church known for the training of the would-be evangelist was also formed at Ilesha and its first principal was D.O. Babaji. In 1979, the amalgamation and restructuring of the entire training institutes commenced. This led to the emergence of the Christ Apostolic Church Theological Seminary at Ile-Ife. Later, attention was focused on establishing more institutions of secular education. This period was between the 50s and the 60s and much consolidation took place vis-à-vis supervising the existing schools efficiently. Supervisors were appointed to superintend over the schools and a central control was further put in place so that the schools could be under one central administrative control before 1952<sup>152</sup>.

Christ Apostolic Church schools were not put on the lists of public schools that would be conducting Primary School Leaving Certificate Examinations. Rather, they were allowed to present their candidates for public schools recognized by the government. However, in 1952, the government recognized Christ Apostolic Church schools as voluntary agencies and agreed to lend some aids to some of the primary schools. Later the government took over the payment of salaries for its teachers under the *Free Education Programme* that operated in the western region under the Action Group.<sup>153</sup> By 1954, when the government introduced the *Secondary Modern Schools*, the church established its own secondary modern schools. They were established in Ibàdàn, Abeokuta, Ìkare-Àko, Oñdó, Ìpetumodù, Òsoḡbo, Èrìo-Aramoko, Ado-Èkìtì, Ilesha, Àkure, Ilogbo, Ikun-Àko,

<sup>152</sup> A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 208.

<sup>153</sup> A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 208. 212.

Epinmi-Àkoiko to mention a few. These schools were financed by the church until 1975 when the government started to finance them fully.<sup>154</sup>

Christ Apostolic Church moved a step further in 1955 by establishing the Christ Apostolic Church Teacher Training College at Efo-n-Alaaye. Candidates who enrolled could obtain the Grade III Certificate. In addition, grammar schools were established as from 1960. A number of them were opened in places as Efo-n-Alaaye (1960), Iperu (1960), Ilesia (1962), Akure (1964), and Odo-Owa (1970). Despite the fact that the government started to finance the first four schools out of the five mentioned above, the church still had problems. These problems ranged from poor financial assistance to poor staffing of the schools. The problems soon had a solution when the government formally took over the administration of schools from all private owners. In the process, 120 primary schools, 18 secondary schools, five grammar schools and a teachers college were taken over by the government. Soon when the teachers college started to turn in graduates, the shortages experienced in relation to teachers began to ease. The graduates were given employment in the church's schools.<sup>155</sup>

In the health sector, the church "invested" in taking care of its pregnant members. This was because of the divine healing posture, which the church maintained right from the outset. Christ Apostolic church forbade its members to seek medical assistance in hospitals. Under this programme, pregnant women attended their antenatal sessions in the mission houses. Here, the "Iya Aladura" (Prayer Women)<sup>156</sup> who are now referred to as "Iya Agbebi" (Midwives) administered prayers and counseling sessions on pregnant women. At inception, this programme was run from the mission houses. However, when the church expanded and the population of the pregnant women swelled considerably, Christ Apostolic Church established the Mid-wifery Centre at Ede in 1959. It was under the management of one Mrs. D.A. Olaniran. Apart from the routine praying and counseling, the place was also considered as an effective place where die-hard spiritual problems could be overwhelmed.

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<sup>154</sup> J.A. Alókàn, 1975. *Ìdásilè àti idàgbàsókè Ìjo Àpóstèlì ti Kristì (CAC) ní ilú Efo-n Alaàyè (1930-1975)*. 86- 87.

<sup>155</sup> A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church 1928-1988*. 215.

<sup>156</sup> A. Alókàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church 1928-1988*. 220.

Maternity centers still serve this function today in Christ Apostolic Church. This is because many pregnant women in the church in southwestern Nigeria testify to the fact that they experience safe delivery in the centres. In addition, many deliveries that had defied medical solution had been successfully conducted in the centres<sup>157</sup>. This “innovation” in child delivery spread beyond the southwestern part of Nigeria to other places where the church had its branches. Due to the patronage it enjoyed, there soon arose shortage of workforce to handle the different maternity centers springing up. Christ Apostolic Church embarked on training women to be midwives, which eased the shortage considerably.

Though the church cherished the use of extra-biblical materials as another means of supporting the biblical messages, it never had a printing and publicity outfit of its own. We could recall that earlier in this chapter we mentioned that tracks from overseas ministries helped the Nigerian mission to get in touch with them. For example, the relationship between the Precious Stone Society and the Faith Tabernacle of Philadelphia was facilitated through this means. For many years, oral method of disseminating messages by walking through bush paths, main roads, or riding bicycle was popular. Due to expansion, the church revived its earlier attempt at floating a newspaper magazine. D.O. Odubañjoñ formerly conceived this idea between 1933 and 1934, which did not materialize until 1966. The magazine titled “The Apostolic” was inaugurated with its maiden edition, which started to circulate in June, 1967. However, in 1970, the church established its own printing press.<sup>158</sup>

### **3.6.2 Christ Apostolic Church from 1970 to 2005**

The importance of studying the growth of Christ Apostolic Church between this period lies in the fact that this research examines this period. The year 1970 commenced the era of charismatic Christianity in Nigeria and the period onward had been influenced greatly by this phenomenon. Among other things, we shall explore the relationship that

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<sup>157</sup> The researcher toured many of these CAC churches especially in Ìbàdàn and listened to some testimonies given by women who delivered safely in these churches’ maternity centers. A typical example of such churches is Christ Apostolic Church Àgbàlá Ìtura, which has a maternity center.

<sup>158</sup> A. Alóñkàn, 1991. *The Christ Apostolic Church*. 215.

the church had with charismatic Christianity. These shall be considered vis-à-vis the establishment of revival ministries in the church, and their impacts.

The establishment of the theological seminary at Ile-Ife signified that the church was aware of the necessity of theological training for its clerics. It further showed that the church was getting more organized and stable in ecclesiastical administration. The seminary offered courses based on the qualifications of the candidates. There was the pastoral and the non-pastoral courses. Candidates for pastoral courses were holders of certificates that ranged from Primary School-leaving Certificate to university degree certificates while candidates for non-pastoral courses were holders of at least Primary School-leaving Certificate. Experienced field personnel in the church and vibrant youths could also be recruited into the college. The basis of seminary education in the church was to provide the church with “well informed” personnel to direct the affairs of the ecclesiastical functions of the church without necessarily having recourse to the mainline churches for guidance. The main source of income of the college was donation from the church’s general purse and societies and associations from within and outside the church. The seminary expanded and produced many personnel who were useful to the church’s ministerial activities and today, the seminary is still existing and relevant.

We earlier discussed that the church established some primary and secondary institutions. These institutions were later handed over to the government between 18th and 22nd September, 1976. After the handing over, the church did not keep mute on education. It became more attentive to happenings about it. It set up an enlarged Christ Apostolic Church Central Board of Education to look after the church’s schools and colleges throughout Nigeria. When the democratic regime decided to allow voluntary organizations engage in the running of education between 1979 and 1983, the church established more institutions in the southwestern Nigeria, especially in Oyo and Ondo States.<sup>159</sup> The overall effect of establishing these educational institutions in the church reflected in the boosting of its work force. This improved the morale of this ecclesiastical outfit in a period that could be regarded as its stabilizing age. Apart from the fact that the church was versatile in establishing more branches across the country, it also established a university known as Joseph Ayodele Babalola University at Ikeji-

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<sup>159</sup>A. Alókàn, *Christ Apostolic Church*. 1928-1988. 218.

Arakeji, Osun State. Though the plan for the founding of this University started before 2005, the institution was established in 2006. It is a faith-based tertiary institution which was approved by the Federal Government on the 18th of February, 2006 and received its license on 6th of March of the same year. It started to open to students as from the 2006/2007 session on the 25th of October, 2006.<sup>160</sup>

### **3.7 Organization and Administration of Christ Apostolic Church**

Christ Apostolic Church consists of categories of governing bodies that are saddled with different responsibilities that their offices empower them to carry out. These governing bodies are responsible to the overall head of the church that is the president.<sup>161</sup> The smallest geographical unit of the church is the local assembly headed by the local pastor of the church or a teacher assigned to carry out some functions of the church in the absence of a pastor.<sup>162</sup> Teachers in the church are usually put in assemblies with small membership and feeble viability. The pastors are however under the control of the District Superintendents.

There used to be the Area Unit formed by merging a group of assemblies operating in neighbouring towns and villages. The moment the assemblies were up to eight under a pastor with at least five or six junior workers and the worshippers about one thousand five hundred members, they were collectively referred to as “Area Unit”. This division is no more popular today. The area unit had the pastor-in-charge, assisted by the Area Board of Elders, comprising of reputable men as spelt out in I Timothy 3: 2-7. The pastor-in-charge presided over meetings, paid occasional visits to the assemblies and maintained peace and discipline within the assemblies. He was further acting as the bridge or link between the Area Unit and the District.<sup>163</sup> Today, the Area Unit has been replaced with the District.

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<sup>160</sup> JABU IT Team Network. 2007-2011. *Joseph Ayo Babalola University*. Retrieved on December 8, 2011 from <http://www.jabu.edu.ng/z/>

<sup>161</sup> A.O. Ogunrinade, 1999. *Schism in the Christendom: a case study of Christ Apostolic Church*. B.A. Long Essay. Department of Religious Studies. University of Ìbàdàn. viii+113.

<sup>162</sup> Christ Apostolic Church Worldwide Network. 2003-2010. *Christ Apostolic Church Organisational Structure*. Retrieved on August 20, 2009, from <http://www.cacworldwide.net/info/about.asp?idm=352>.

<sup>163</sup> A.O. Ògúnrinádé, 1999. *Schism in the Christendom*. viii+115.

The District is larger than the Area and it has submerged the Area Unit today. A district consists of about thirty assemblies with at least four pastors, fifteen church teachers and about six thousand members. This organizational set up was under the District Superintendents who liaised between the District and the Assistant General Superintendent. The “Section” in Christ Apostolic Church was formed when a group of districts came together. Today, the “Special District” comes in between the district and other upper organizational structures. The Assistant General Superintendent was the one saddled with the responsibility of administering a section, usually carved out within a state. Therefore, those who constituted the executive council of a section were the District Superintendents and representatives of the districts, who were elders in rank. A group of assemblies that outnumbers the district reasonably constitutes a Special District. A Special District is independent and has a chairman as its head. A Special District can translate into a “Zone” and into a District Coordinating Council when it splits its Districts into bits.<sup>164</sup> A Zone is a miniature of a District Coordinating Council. Its function today is to allow a group of districts that have abilities to grow and thrive. Chairmen of Zones are expected to intensify evangelism to achieve the desired growth.

A District Coordinating Council forms when about twenty districts merge. This structure is the highest level of organization of assemblies in Christ Apostolic Church and its head is also referred to as Chairman. The General Executive Council is however the overall governing council of Christ Apostolic Church. The Council comprises the Trustees, Chairmen, and some other chosen members of the church. These people include the treasurer and some leading Elders. There are more than 100 members of the General Executive Council. Its executives include the President, General Superintendent, and General Evangelist. The Trustee is the highest decision making body of the Christ Apostolic Church. It includes the Executive Council that heads the administration of the organization. The council consists of the President, General Superintendent, General Evangelist, and the General Secretary. The office of President of the Christ Apostolic Church was held by Oba I.B. Akinyele between 1943 and 1964, by Pastor J.S.B. Odusona between 1964 and 1966, and Pastor E.T. Latunde between 1966 and 1983. In relation to the office of General Superintendent, Pastor D.O. Odubanjo was in charge between 1943 and 1959, Pastor J.S.B. Odusona took over and headed the office between 1959 and

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<sup>164</sup> <http://www.cacworldwide.net/info/about.asp?idm=352>.



1966, and Pastor J.A. Medayese between 1966 and 1975. Concerning the office of General Evangelist, Apostle J.A. Babalola held the office up till 1959 when he died while Evangelist D.O. Babajide held the office from 1959 till he retired from active ministerial duties in 1994. This position was later occupied by General Evangelist J.O. Alokani in 1993. He retired from active church service in 2006.<sup>165</sup>

### **3.8 Doctrinal Emphasis of Christ Apostolic Church as reflected in the Thirteen Tenets**

According to Alokani in his work, the doctrines of Christ Apostolic Church are derived from its tenets which are also derived from various sources such as the Holy Scriptures, literatures, magazines and letters of the Faith Tabernacle of Philadelphia, and Apostolic Church of Great Britain. He further claims that other sources include the inspiring sermons of the founding fathers of the church.<sup>166</sup>

The tenets of the Christ Apostolic Church are thirteen in number and they are as follows:

(a) *The unity of the God-head and the Trinity of Persons therein:* This particular tenet portrays the church as the type that recognizes the Trinity and this serves as the body of belief of the church on which other beliefs are established. The church believes that God is composed of three persons in one namely, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and that the three possess equal divinity and they function in agreement. This implies that God first perceived that the world should be created and that His thought was expressed through the Word that He spoke at creation while the Spirit gave form to the thought of God through His Word. Christ Apostolic Church's belief in the unity of the Godhead and the Trinity reflects in their liturgy considerably as these shows in the liturgy of the church and the routine of prayers to God through the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Church believes that the Trinity directs the affairs of the church in His own way.

(b) *The utter depravity of human nature; the necessity for repentance and regeneration, and the eternal doom of the finally impenitent:* This article of faith recognizes the Original Sin which led to the fall of man and the provisions of God for humanity towards repentance and regeneration. The church holds that man was created

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<sup>165</sup> Cf. A. Alókan, 1991. Christ Apostolic Church. 1928-1988. 277.  
<http://www.cacworldwide.net/info/about.asp?idm=352>. A. Alókan, 2010. *Christ Apostolic Church @ 90 (1918-2008)*. Ile-Ife: Timade Ventures. 44, 45, 46, 134, 135.

<sup>166</sup> A. Alókan, 2010. *Christ Apostolic Church @ 90 (1918-2008)*. 273.

perfectly without any sin initially but that Satan came to sow the seed of sin in him and as a result, man lost his privileges before God. However, God through his graciousness sent Christ to atone for man's sins through His death on the cross. This is the reason why sin is considered in the church as an impediment to the grace of God. Members of the church are enjoined to allow the Holy Spirit to point them to the right direction and to listen to Him always. The church also believes that it is the Holy Spirit that can restore the sinners and impact new life into anyone who has genuinely repented.

(c) *The Virgin Birth, sinless life, atoning death, triumphant resurrection, ascension and abiding intercession of our lord Jesus Christ; His second coming and millennial reign on earth:* This particular tenet considers the coming into the world of Jesus Christ so as to bridge the gap that sin had created between God and man. The tenet recognizes the virgin birth of Jesus Christ through the Virgin Mary and the work of grace of Christ on earth through which man was saved from eternal doom. The tenet further emphasizes the second coming of Christ, the fact that rapture is imminent, and that there is the resurrection of the dead and the millennial reign of the saints with the Lord.

(d) *Justification and sanctification of the believers through the finished work of Christ:* This tenet acknowledges that justification is a means whereby Christians assume the righteousness of Christ so as to be restored unto God and that sanctification requires a Christian to live a life dedicated to God. Therefore the possession of good work and spiritual gifts cannot guarantee justification but that this is acquired by faith in Christ alone. Such a person should possess such spiritual qualities as humility, love and life devoid of immorality.

(e) *The Baptism of the Holy Spirit for believers with signs following:* The church teaches that the Holy Spirit, being the Third Person of the Trinity made the virgin conception of Christ to be possible. It was the same spirit that descended on the disciples in the upper room on the day of Pentecost which made the disciples to embark on the daunting missionary adventures throughout the world. The tenet further revealed the emphasis of the church concerning the spiritual gifts and its stand on the excesses that are associated with its manifestations in Christianity.

(f) *The nine gifts of the Holy Spirit for edification, exhortation, and comfort of the Church, which is the body of Christ:* This tenet identifies the belief of the church in the

nine gifts of the Holy Spirit and clearly defines the roles of the gifts as for the edification of the church. The gifts are; wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing and performance of miracles. Others are prophecy, ability to distinguish between spirits, speaking in various tongues and interpretation of tongues. The church further believes in the nine fruits of the spirit namely; love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. In addition, the church recognizes those who occupy the offices of Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, Teachers, Miracle Workers, Healers and Dreamers as fit to render spiritual guidance to the congregation.

(g) *The Sacraments of Baptism by Immersion and the Lord's Supper:* The church recognizes two sacraments such as: Baptism by Immersion and Lord's Supper. The first sacrament is administered at the point of admission into Christianity. This involves being dipped into a flowing river or a pool of water. The age for qualification for this sacrament is twelve years. It is believed that at this age, the baptismal candidate would have fully known the full implication of the ritual which simply depicts dying and rising with Christ. Ordained pastors, evangelists and prophets have the prerogative of administering this sacrament. The second sacrament known as the Lord's Supper cannot be taken without first experiencing the first, which is baptism. Other conditions attached for qualification includes; being a monogamist, and those under church discipline are not entitled to partake throughout the period of reprimand. The feast is celebrated once in a month with bread and wine. It is a period when members of the church remember the death of Christ and the vital importance of His coming which is the free gift of full salvation to mankind. The service, which is headed by only ordained ministers and evangelists makes the members to come together to re-dedicate their lives and thank God for the gift.

(h) *The divine inspiration and authority of the Holy Scriptures:* This tenet identifies the belief of the church in the two testaments of the Bible and the authority of both books as inspired by God. This tenet justifies the church's practice of using the two testaments as books of teaching and instructions.

(i) *Church Government by Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, Elders, and Deacons/Deaconesses:* the above offices are distinguished offices in the church. These offices are the core offices that engage in the administration of the church and people who occupy them are considered as those of reputable characters as stipulated by the scripture.

(j) *The possibility of falling from Grace:* The Christ Apostolic Church believes that it is possible for a person to abandon the faith. The church also gives the provision for such a person to retrace his steps back into the faith that is to be restored back into the faith.

(k) *The obligatory nature of tithes and offerings:* This tenet spells out the obligatory nature of paying tithes and offerings. This belief is predicated on the vow that Jacob made to God at Bethel and its fulfilment thereafter. The practice of tithing involves paying one-tenth of ones income weekly or monthly. The proceeds from tithes and offerings are used in paying workers salaries and the upkeep of the church respectively.

(l) *Divine healing through obedience to the command of our lord Jesus Christ and faith in His Name and Merit of His Blood for all sicknesses, diseases and infirmities:* This tenet forms the foundation upon which the church establishes its doctrine of Divine Healing. Here, for the actualization of healing, the church believes that God can heal all ailments no matter how serious and hopeless it may be. This belief is premised on the teaching of the scripture that whosoever believes in Christ and the potency of His name would place his hands on the sick and heal them. As a result of this, members of the church are discouraged from going to the hospital for orthodox medical care. Divine healing is realized in the church through engaging in fervent prayers. These prayers could be said individually. In a situation where the problem persists, prayers could be said collectively whereby people come together in the Prayer House or Power House (*Ile Agbara Adura*) or on Prayer Mountain (*Ori Oke Adura*).

(m) *Faith in God, "Jehovah Jireh" to supply all financial needs without going into debt or borrowing on interest; and to be content with having food and raiment:* The tenet portrays the church's absolute dependence on God as the sole provider of their needs, especially material needs. This dependence was premised on having an incontestable faith in God that He would provide for their needs just as Abraham had faith in God and obeyed Him when God instructed him to sacrifice Isaac his only son. Abraham obeyed without knowing that God would provide a replacement for the life of his son whom he was about to sacrifice. Consequently, the church therefore frowns at borrowing and lending out money with interest. The church teaches its members that since God feeds for the beasts in the jungle, birds in the air and fishes in the sea, no matter the situation and

no matter how difficult, God would provide for his own. The church also teaches its adherents not to be anxious for anything as God would provide for their needs.<sup>167</sup>

It is observed that the first eleven tenets of Christ Apostolic Church is a replica of the first eleven tenets of The Apostolic Church, Great Britain word for word. The twelfth tenet which centers on divine Healing was added by the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle leaders while Christ Apostolic Church only added the thirteenth tenet. This shows that Christ Apostolic Church inherited a lot from the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle and The Apostolic Church, Great Britain.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

From the above, it could be seen that the Christ Apostolic Church shot into public glare because of the 1930 Great Revival through the instrumentality of Apostle Ayo Babalola. Also, the crises, which existed in the Faith Tabernacle Nigeria, which defined Christ Apostolic Church's identity as a full-fledged church under the law as from 1943 have been discussed. This chapter has further discussed the growth of the movement in Southwestern Nigeria from 1943 to 2005 and the different opposition and challenges it faced. In addition, the organizational and administrative set-ups of the church which afforded it the opportunity to stretch its tentacles have been reviewed. Finally, the doctrines of the church as reflected in its thirteen tenets have been highlighted.

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<sup>167</sup> A. Alokun. 1991. Christ Apostolic Church: 1928-1988. 286-295. A.O.Ogunrinade. 1999. Schism in the Christendom. viii+97-98. Cf. Christ Apostolic Church, South Holland Mountain of Grace. 2006. Retrieved August 20, 2009 from <http://cacsouthholland.com>. Christ Apostolic Church Worldwide Network.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS IN CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH, SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, we shall examine some of the main Yorùbá religious and cultural beliefs. Our knowledge of these will enhance our understanding of the traditional elements and how effective or otherwise these elements are when incorporated into the context of worship in Christ Apostolic Church. We shall then examine the identified African religious elements in Christ Apostolic Church. The positions of our questionnaire and interview respondents, and our observations during participation observations in the churches visited shall be discussed. We shall examine the African traditional religious elements appropriated in CAC in terms of the objects used, the procedures involved in their use and the functions associated with them. This will largely determine whether the identified African elements engaged by the church around the period of our research aided in enhancing members' welfare.

The African elements identified are from the Southwestern part of Nigeria. They are Yorùbá religious elements, which reflect in the daily religious and social experiences of the people. These include among others; spiritualization of the head (*Ori*); pregnancy conception; photograph/object; and, the earth.

#### **4.1 An Overview of Yorùbá Religious Belief System**

Yorùbá religion has been referred to as the religious beliefs and practices of the Yorùbá people who are found in Africa, mainly in Nigeria and Benin Republic, Togo, and areas around the Savannah belt of West Africa. The religion is also found in several other places and has assumed different names among different peoples. It has given birth to or influenced more than a few Afro-American religions. Examples of such are Santeria in Cuba and Candomblé in Brazil. Yorùbá religion is perhaps the leading African born religion in the world. Despite the fact that assertions are made about Judaism as having

links with North Africa, it remains the religion of the Hebrew people. In the same vein, Christianity and Islam cannot be said to have evolved in Africa as Yorùbá religion.<sup>1</sup>

Yorùbá religion is described by G.E. Simpson as a mixed bag of individual cults.<sup>2</sup> *Oloṣṣunmare*, also known as *Oṣṣun* is at the centre of the cult and He holds the cult together. This religion believes that God, known as *Oloṣṣunmare* is the one who has the comprehensiveness of everything. *Oloṣṣunmare* is also referred to as *Oṣṣun*, the possessor of heaven and the one who dwells in the heaven above. There are other names that God is called that reflect the Yorùbá conviction that God has all the possible characteristics of a human being. At the same time, the Supreme Being created the heaven and the earth, and the divinities and the spirits such as *Òrìṣà*, or *Imòlè*, and *Eṣṣunra*. He made *Òrìṣà-ńlá*, the arch-divinity the head of all the divinities. Therefore he is the primordial divinity. Historical figures such as monarchs, traditional brave men, founders of cities, and ancestors and so on were deified by their people. They are consequently referred to as deified divinities. Natural forces such as earth, wind, trees, river, lagoon, sea, rock, hills and mountains are referred to as natural divinities.<sup>3</sup>

There is no exact number of divinities in Yorùbá Religion but the numbers vary from between 200 and 1440. They include nature gods as *Sàngò*, *Òṣun*, *Sàṣṣunna*. There are as well *Òṣunmìlàn*, *Òṣun* and *Oṣṣunlàn* among others. *Oloṣṣunmare* occupies a very remote position in the scheme of things though whatever transpires between the people and the deities get to him. He is the one that gives final approval on anything that the consulters of the deities request. He however answers through the deities.<sup>4</sup> The reason for this is that the relationship between *Oloṣṣunmare*, the creator and those He created is like that between a young person and an elder. In view of the fact that it will be rude to talk directly to an elder, especially when seeking special favour from them in Yorùbá culture, such a communication should

<sup>1</sup> See *African Yorùbá religion* from <http://www.amazingpsychicreading.com/af.html> and *Yorùbá people* from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yorùbá\\_people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yorùbá_people). Both retrieved on 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> G.E. Simpson, 1980. *Yorùbá religion and medicine in Ìbàdàn*. Ìbàdàn: Ìbàdàn University Press. 1. For more on Yorùbá people and their cosmology, see G. Adérìbigbé, 1999. Yorùbá cosmology as a theory of creation: limits and assets. *Asia Journal of Theology* 13: 328-338. E.D. Adélowó 1986. A comparative study of creation stories in Yorùbá religion, Islam and Judaeo-Christianity. *African Theological Journal* 15: 29-53

<sup>3</sup> Ifá religion, from <http://www.neworleansmistic.com/spells/primer/ifa.htm>. Retrieved on 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> J.A.I. Bèwàjì. Olódùmarè: God in Yorùbá belief and the theistic problem of evil. Retrieved on 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2009, from <http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v2/v2i1a1.htm>.

go through somebody who can approach the elder directly. The same thing applies here as the divinities are the intermediaries between *Oloṣṣuṣuṣu* and those He created. This does not preclude the fact that individuals could pray directly to *Oloṣṣuṣuṣu*. This is why the worship of *Òrìṣṣa* is paramount among the Yorùbá. They believe that when they worship *Òrìṣṣa*, their messages will be transmitted to *Oloṣṣuṣuṣu*.

The belief in the Supreme Being is very important in Yorùbá religion. Awoṣṣuṣuṣu contends that a Yorùbá man who claims not to know the Supreme Being or recognizes Him as God has probably romanced with non-African cultural beliefs considerably. He says further that this accounts for why it is hard to come across a Yorùbá who is an atheist.<sup>5</sup> This insinuates that every Yorùbá has conviction that a being mightier than every created being creates the world, everything in it and controls it. The Supreme Being is called by different names in Yorùbá such as *Oloṣṣuṣuṣu*, *Oṣṣuṣuṣuṣu*, *Eṣṣuṣuṣuṣu*, *Alaaṣṣuṣuṣu*, *Eṣṣuṣuṣuṣuṣu*, *Oṣṣuṣuṣuṣuṣu*-*oṣṣuṣuṣuṣu* and so on. Apart from this, the Supreme Being in Yorùbá concept has some attributes that distinguish Him. These attributes serve as different names by which He is called. He is referred to as God the: creator, immortal, omnipotent, omniscient, king and judge and the transcendental. He as the creator created all things and those things include the rain to water the earth and give drink to humanity.

The divinities and spirits serve God as they are instrumental in the dispatch of duties that God assigns to them. Though we have said a few things about them in our previous discussion, it is significant to point out that the divinities and the spirits are considered together since the Yorùbá tradition does not distinguish them. They are both considered as divine and residents of the spirit-world.<sup>6</sup> Among them, there are those classified as Primordial Divinities because they had been with the Supreme Being before the earth and living beings were created. Others are historical figures and personified natural figures such as we mentioned earlier in this section. Primordial divinities are such as *Oṣṣuṣuṣuṣu* (*Òrìṣṣaṣṣuṣuṣu*) and *Òṣṣuṣuṣuṣuṣu*. There are the deified ancestors among who are *Sango*, *Òrìṣṣaṣṣuṣuṣu*-*oko* and *Ayeṣṣuṣuṣuṣu*. The third in this category is the personified natural figures as earth (*Ileṣṣuṣuṣu*), rivers, lagoon and sea, mountains and hills, trees and wind. We shall only briefly discuss three of the primordial

<sup>5</sup> J.O. Awólàlú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. Essex: Longman Group Ltd. 3.

<sup>6</sup> J.O. Awólàlú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. 20. G. E. Simpson, 1980. *Yorùbá religion and medicine in Ìbàdàn*. 3.



divinities listed above, as they are important to our work. They are *Oba□ta□la□*, *Ò□ru□nm□ila□* and *Ès□u□*. According to Bo□□la□jí Ìdo□wu□, these are the ministers of Olódùmarè.<sup>7</sup>

*O□ba□ta□la□* is rated as one of the earliest divinities to be brought into being by the Supreme Being as the Arch-divinity. He was also known as *Òrìs□a□-ńlá* and was saddled with the responsibility of moulding of human form. He is famous for giving children to barren women and moulding the shape of the child in the womb. *O□ba□ta□la□* is associated with purity and cleanness. This is the reason why its worshippers wear white apparel while worshipping him.<sup>8</sup>

*Ò□ru□nm□ila□* is another primordial divinity who served as assistant to *O□ba□ta□la□* and acts in the capacity of counsellor of heavenly and earthly beings. Because of this responsibility, he was called *Gb'a□ye□-gb'o□□run*, meaning a person who lives on the earth and in heaven. He was believed to be endowed with knowledge and wisdom and was engaged in teaching these to man. He was endowed with the capability of knowing what will befall man on earth and had the expertise of rectifying it. This is because he was present at the apportioning and sealing of each person's destiny. Yorùbá religion holds that each man chooses his destiny in heaven and the destinies were sealed there. Whatever becomes of anybody on earth is a result of the destiny he chose in heaven. Since *Ò□ru□nm□ila□* was present at creation when choosing and sealing of destiny of everyman took place, he could interfere in changing a bad destiny to good one if consulted. He is referred to as *E□le□□rì□ipi□n* that is the one who bears witness to fate because he was witness between the creator and man about the destiny that man chose before coming to the world. He is further endowed with the ability to know the mind and tastes of the divinities in that he can speak their wishes and communicate with them to human beings. He also communicates the wishes of man to the divinities. He interprets the wishes of *Olo□du□mare□* to people through *Ifa□*. *Ò□ru□nm□ila□* is closely connected with *Ifa□*, as *Ifa□* is the means of engaging in consultation with *Ò□ru□nm□ila□*.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> B. Ìdo□wu□, 1962. *Olódùmarè.: God in Yorùbá belief*. London: Longmans. 70.

<sup>8</sup> J.O. Awólàlú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. 21.

<sup>9</sup> B. Ìdo□wu□, 1962. *Olódùmarè*. 76. G. E. Simpson, 1980. *Yorùbá religion and medicine in Ìbàdàn*. 7.

Èsù is important among the divinities as he is referred to earlier as the Inspector General of *Oloḍumare*. He is portrayed as an all-round personality; this is why he has been called by many names. Though he is referred to as the Devil in Christianity and *Shaitan* in Islam, Ìdoḥuwu claims that Èsù is not what the two religions have portrayed him to be. He alleges that his responsibility could be likened to what Satan did in the book of Job in the Bible.<sup>10</sup> Here, Satan was allowed to put to test the faith and sense of devotion of Job. Èsù in Islam and Christianity is conceived as evil while in Yorùbá Religion, he is one of the functionaries of *Oloḍumare* responsible for maintaining special relations between heaven and earth. He preserves relationship between the spiritual world and earth and because of this he is in close relationship with *Òruṣnmila*. Legend has it that there was a contract between Èsù and *Òruṣnmila*, which necessitated that one-tenth of every sacrifice offered to *Òruṣnmila*, was for Èsù. This is because Èsù was responsible for carrying the messages from *Òruṣnmila* to the spiritual world. Ìdoḥuwu maintains that Èsù would see to it that the orders of the divinities are carried out and dealt with anybody who failed to carry them out.

Awoḥalu describes Èsù as ubiquitous and found everywhere from the market to the house. He runs errand for *Oloḍumare* to deliver justice to the oppressed and dispense punishment on the wicked. He could initiate a disagreement between father and son and make the husband to be suspicious of the wife.<sup>11</sup> He could cause antagonism between two once friendly towns and make them engage in wars. Adherents of Yorùbá Religion and other divinities dread Èsù because they believe that by virtue of his office, he holds the power of life and death. They believe that *Oloḍumare* blesses or curses them based on the assessment report of Èsù, whom *Oloḍumare* holds in high esteem. Everyone tries to meet his condition and be in good term with him. That is why the people say: *Bí a ba ruḥo ki a mu t'esu kuḥo*, that is, when sacrifices are offered, Èsù's portion should be kept aside.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> B. Ìdoḥuwu, 1962. *Olódumarè* 79.

<sup>11</sup> G. E. Simpson, 1980. *Yorùbá religion and medicine in Ìbàdàn*. 17.

<sup>12</sup> B. Ìdoḥuwu, 1962. *Olódumarè*. 80.

On the belief of the Yorùbá about ancestors, they are referred to as predecessor, that is the person or people from whom one owns his lineage. Ancestors among the Yorùbá are the departed spirits of parents with whom they share filial and warm relationship.<sup>13</sup> Ancestors in Yorùbá Religion are further referred to as the living dead. To a Yorùbá person, the dead are not actually dead but live on in the spiritual world and they interact with the living. Death to the people is not the end to life but the transition from this world to the world beneath. Ancestors are referred to as those who, though dead, are still living.<sup>14</sup> In Yorùbá religion, the father is referred to as the most important figure of a man in the spiritual world. Others in the lineage who had died before one's father are still relevant while tracing the genealogy in the spirit world. This may sound confusing, especially when the fact remains that death is the final end of man. However, Yorùbá Religion holds a philosophy about life and death that cannot be surpassed. This idea is that the body of man (*ara*) is that physical structure moulded of clay by *Oṣṣaṣtaṣlaṣ* whom we discussed earlier. After the moulding, *Oloṣduṣmareṣ* breathed into man His spirit, what is known in Yorùbá parlance as *Èmiṣ*, and implanted the soul, that is, *Oṣkaṣn* into him. Yorùbá Religion holds that the heart that pumps blood in the body is the tangible and physical *Oṣkaṣn*, an organ of the body, while the intangible and invisible *Oṣkaṣn* is the soul. This part pre-existed and chose the fate of a person from *Oṣṣaṣtaṣlaṣ* at creation. Another word for *Oṣkaṣn* is *Oriṣ-inuṣ*, inner head. This inner head is the essence of man and the most significant aspect to consider when determining the success or failure of a man. Man is endowed with these three parts at creation. At the demise of a man, the body decomposes after burial but the spirit and soul go to *Oloṣduṣmareṣ* who decides what to do with them since He created them in the first place.<sup>15</sup>

On mysterious powers, Yorùbá people believe that the powers exist and they influence human affairs. The precision with which these powers operate cannot be explained when they are controlled by those who have the know-how of manipulating them. These powers manifest themselves in different ways as in the form of incantations, medicine, magic, sorcery, and witchcraft. We shall shortly discuss them briefly. Our knowledge of these powers is important to our work. This is because adherents of Christ

<sup>13</sup> O. Dáramóṣlá, and A. Jéṣjéṣ, 1970. *Àwoṣn asṣà àti orìṣṣ à Ilè Yorùbá*. Ìbàdàn: Oníboṣṣnòjé Press. 199-202. J.O. Awólálú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. 54.

<sup>14</sup> J.O. Awólálú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. 53.

<sup>15</sup> J.O. Awólálú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. 54.

Apostolic Church are mainly Yorùbá people who were mainly from traditional background before they became Christians.

Incantation is employed to bring about a change in the natural course of things. In making sure that a curse is successfully inflicted on a person, incantation is employed. Here, it involves the chanting or uttering of words that have magical power. Items such as ring (*Òruka*), amulet, (*Ìfunpa*), girdle (*Ìgba di*), small gourd (*a do*) and needle (*abe re*) are employed. These are medicinally prepared. When such incantations are recited, changes in the natural course of events are made. For example, they are engaged when trying to escape imminent and inevitable death or stupefying dangerous people.<sup>16</sup> The first examples of what such mysterious powers could do include shortening distances that could have taken days or months to cover ordinarily. This is done through a preparation called *ka na ko*, which translates as “shorten the distance”. The second is *egbe* which means carrier or removal. This makes those who use it to disappear and appear elsewhere they command the charm to take them. The third is *Gbe tugbe tu* which is simply used to dismiss the enemies who have planned to waylay their victim. The wearer of *Gbe tugbe tu* only needs to say a few words and the enemies will obey him. From the following, one may believe that incantation is only used for harnessing favour for a few to the detriment of the majority. It can as well be used to dispel evil for the benefit of the majority.

*Awo la lu* describes medicine in Yorùbá worldview as any substance or substances that are used in treating or preventing disease or illness.<sup>17</sup> Adémilókun M.K. in his work also describes a medicine man in Yorùbá Religion as someone professionally competent in curing, assuaging and averting diseases and making sure that everyone is in good state of health.<sup>18</sup> He could serve as a diviner, a priest and also a producer of traditional medicine. He divines and ascertains the causes of ailments, ill-luck and death and engages in forestalling them. *Awo la lu* lists the items for doing these, as herbs,

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<sup>16</sup> J.O. Awólálú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. 69.

<sup>17</sup> J.O. Awólálú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. 72.

<sup>18</sup> M.K. Adémilókun, 1995. The contribution of traditional healers to the healthcare delivery system among the Yorùbá. *Religion, Medicine and Healing*. G. Adérìbigbé, and D. Ayégbó yin, Eds. NASRED. Ìke ja: Free Enterprise Publishers. 127-132. See also: A. Dò pá mú 1985. Health and healing within traditional African religious context. *Orita*. 17: 66-80.

plants, leaves, barks, animals, birds, skins, bones, rings, brooms, pieces of thread, needles and minerals<sup>19</sup>

Medicine personnel in Yorùbá religion are like medical doctors in modern hospitals. They listen to the complaints of the patients and conduct diagnosis based on the complaints. They also prescribe the relevant drugs necessary for the cure of ailments. They further monitor the responses of their patients as to whether they are responding to treatment or not. However, medicine in Yorùbá is not prepared like a pharmacist would do. This is because there are stringent steps to follow different from what obtains in the pharmacy in preparing Yorùbá medicine. This starts right from the collection of the herbs such as the root of plants, barks of trees and leaves. There are some of these materials that cannot be got unless certain incantations are made to pave way for their collection. Others may involve invoking the spirits overseeing the particular herb to be used. After preparing the medicine, incantations may be chanted on them to activate their power. There are some medicines that are prepared and rendered inactive until they are needed. This is when incantations are chanted on them to activate them.

Other medicines are prepared on rings and amulet and they are worn anytime they want to be put to use. There are some that are made in the horn of animals and incantations are chanted when they are to be used. After preparing the medicine, there are specified precautions to follow to retain their potency. For example, certain medicines should not be handled in a state of uncleanness. A woman undergoing menstruation in Yorùbá worldview is considered to be unclean. If such a woman handles some of these medicines during this period, the potency might be lost. This is because the fluid released during the process could contaminate the potency of the medicine. Also, certain medicines should not be touched after sexual intercourse. It is believed that if a person has not cleaned up after intercourse and he touches or puts on certain Yorùbá medicines, his state of uncleanness would render the medicine useless.<sup>20</sup>

Mysterious powers also manifest through magic. According to *Oxford Advanced Learners English Dictionary*, magic is the means of apparently using supernatural forces to change the form of things or influence events.<sup>21</sup> This means that magic involves a

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<sup>19</sup> J.O. Awólálú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. 73.

<sup>20</sup> J.O. Awólálú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. 74.

<sup>21</sup> Oxford advanced learners English-Chinese dictionary. Fourth Edition. 1995. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 891.

technique of manipulating individual or ordinary occurrences through access to an external spiritual power outside the everyday human activities. It entails the manipulation of the forces of nature and making them to obey man's will in relation to bettering his existence. Since man's abilities about getting certain resources are limited, he explores the method of magic to harness these resources. He engages magic to tap the basic forces that are already created in the universe by the Supreme Being to get those things he could not get with his own capability. Basically, he engages the philosophy of magic which is getting one's will done. Magic, however, is not suppression or gaining control over the power of the Supreme Being. It is using magical techniques to harness the already existing resources that God created. The objects that magicians use to facilitate their tapping into these existing opportunities are many. They include incantations, amulets, spells, enchanted rings, horns, small gourds, padlocks, alligator pepper and others numerous to mention.

There are different kinds of magical preparations such as *Maṣguṣn*, which literally translates as do not climb or mount. *Maṣguṣn* is a means of controlling sexual promiscuity and maintaining sexual morality in Yorùbá society. The husband engages the charm in order to make it impossible for the wife to engage in promiscuity. It is additionally used to expose a woman who is suspected of perpetrating such an act by placing the charm on the woman without her knowledge. The charm is placed on her way and as she crosses over the charm, she becomes infected. During the period of infection, the person who places the charm on her refrains from having sexual intercourse with her. The effect of the charm is noticed when her concubine engages in sexual intercourse with her. There are different types of *Maṣguṣn* depending on their ways of dealing with their victims. There is the type that makes the man to somersault thrice, another makes its victim to crow like hen, and others make the genitals of both people to glue together so as to make them face untold ridicule. Another one is *Sṣisṣeṣṣ Osṣoṣ* or *sṣeṣṣ'sṣoṣ* or *sṣe ooṣguṣn owoṣ*, which is a means of getting rich by making "money rituals". Here, magic is employed to make the person for which the ritual is meant to get rich suddenly. This may involve killing a human for the purpose or making use of a part of the body like the genitalia, breast, head or hairs in the pubic parts of the body. These are ritually prepared and incantations are chanted to make them effective.

There are instances where magic is performed when the intended victim is far away from where the magic is being performed. If a person is to be killed by the enemy

through this means, a basin of water and the instrument that would be used to perpetrate the act may be got. It may be a cudgel, gun, knife and so on. After the victim's name is called three times, the picture of the victim would appear on the surface of the water. This picture is then stabbed or shot as the case may be. Immediately this is done, the victim experiences the real impact of the enemy's action wherever he is. This is because he would sustain real gunshot or wound from the shooting or stabbing. This would then lead to death. There are also those called rain-makers. They possess the expertise to make rain fall by sprinkling water on the ground and making the relevant incantations. Rain could also be prevented by knotting some seeds of alligator pepper and several additional items in a hankie or making palm-frond into a bond and rippling these in the cloud rapidly as chants are spoken.<sup>22</sup>

Other methods of disrupting nature magically are: fixing needle into a charmed horn or spewing out saliva ritually on a magical mixture. Others are sticking needles into the statue of an adversary to cause continual pain or locking a charmed padlock so as to make it impossible for a petitioner or a witness to speak against one in the law court. It also prevents somebody who knows one's secrets and intends to expose them. There are magical wears that are found on people who wish to be favoured and protected by them. These include copper rings (*oṣuṣka bàbà*), amulets (*iṣfuṣnpaṣ*), and leather belt (*onṣdeṣ*). Another one is the protection charm hung at the entrances of the house. These include, brooms hung on the doorpost of the house, small gourds containing some liquid that drip at intervals. Incision is also made on the body and rubbed with enchanted black powder. Magical spells are made as the incision is carried out. This is known as *aṣjeṣsaṣra*, which is fortification against the evil days.

Witchcraft is another method of engaging in magic. According to Oluṣ Daṣramoṣṣlaṣ and Adeṣbaṣyoṣṣ Jeṣṣjeṣṣ, witchcraft is a very secret society that nobody can claim to know anything about.<sup>23</sup> They describe a witch as a person possessing supernatural power as a result of forming alliance with the devil or evil spirit and making use of such power to cause destruction. Boṣṣlaṣjiṣ Ṙdoṣwuṣ described

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<sup>22</sup> J.O. Awólàlú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. 78.

<sup>23</sup> O. Dáramóṣlá, and A. Jéṣjéṣ, 1970. *Áwoṣn àsṣà àti òrìsṣà ilèṣ Yorùbá*. 170.

them as extremely wicked band of enchanters. Witches are not only old women as many believed. Young women are also associated with this craft.<sup>24</sup>

Men could also be members of the witchcraft but they belong to an order called *Oso* or wizard order. Therefore a male-witch is called *oso*. The witches cannot be recognized by their physical characteristics or their obvious behaviours. Most people cannot tell who the witches are. However, anybody who monitors closely would perceive through the way they speak and their attitude towards others. Traditional belief holds that witches do not receive training or undergo apprenticeship. Rather, the craft may be inherited from one person to another and from parents to children but not biologically. It could be contacted through eating enchanted food offered by the witch to an innocent person. It is usually common to hear that witchcraft is transferred from a woman to her daughter when she is about to die.

Witches have the ability to see what others cannot see with ordinary eyes. They can see the intestine, liver and other internal parts of the body. They can cause women to be temporarily or permanently barren. They can see the foetuses in the wombs of pregnant women and also elongate the duration of the foetuses from the normal nine months to years. They further have the ability to make a person have frightening dreams, sleeplessness, and weight loss. They are also associated with ailments as headache, stomach ache, and eventual death. They can initiate miscarriage, make delivery difficult, cause poverty and ill-luck, joblessness, and suck human blood. A witch may impersonate a friend or close relative to perpetrate evil. She does this by putting on the appearance of the person she intends to impersonate so that the person impersonated would be considered evil in the eyes of others.<sup>25</sup> It is important to note that witchcraft at times is used to carry out good deeds. However, this may not be verified practically but it is believed that some witches use their crafts to protect their children from attack, elongate life and make their loved ones to be prosperous.

## 4.2 Spiritualization of the Head

The physical head, popularly known as *Orí* in Yorùbá parlance, which is believed to possess spiritual capacity to harbour evil or fortune, is also believed in Christ

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<sup>24</sup> G.E. Simpson, 1980. *Yorùbá religion and medicine in Ìbàdàn*. 75. See also J.A. Oṣómóyájowó, 1983. What is witchcraft? E.A. Adégbolá, Ed. *Traditional religion in West Africa*. Ibadan. 317-337.

<sup>25</sup> G.E. Simpson, 1980. *Yorùbá religion and medicine*. 76.



Apostolic Church to possess the same ability. The head is further considered in the church to possess the ability to ensure the realization of the evil or fortune it harbours in the life of the person who possesses it. It is thought additionally that if *Orí* is prayed upon, the evil that it harbours may be averted or the good facilitated into reality.

Consecration and fortification of the head against misfortune is done in the church through the use of consecrated water and olive oil. This procedure could also be carried out privately by individuals who so wish. When performed in the church, members are asked to come with bottles or containers of water and prayers are offered to consecrate them. At times, specified Psalms that deal with specified problems are read into them for specified number of times such as 3 and 7 times. Psalms for protection are 5, 23, 44, 46, 61 and 91 while Psalms for engaging in spiritual warfare with the enemy are 20, 60 and 74. There are other Psalms such as exalts the spiritual splendour of God and hails the creation of God in the heavens and His mightiness on earth. These are psalms 19 and 76. Psalm 24 is for fertility while Psalms 47, 75, 82, 94 and 96 showcase the supremacy of God. Other Psalms are 56, 57, 48, 27, 59 and 121 and they cater for different problems such as protection and divine help. The water could be drunk instantly. It could also be applied to specified parts of the body. In the case of consecration of the head, the water is sprinkled or rubbed on the head. It could also be mixed with water for bath and used to have a thorough bathing either in the day or specified time of the night.

In addition, water could be used to wash the head alone believing that such washing could cure misfortune. When this is done privately in the house, the person involved may be asked to use the water at a particular time of the night to wash the head or to bathe. It is discovered that time is important for offering such prayers. Such time of the night when such prayers are offered include 12:00a.m. and 1:00a.m. The reason adduced for such timing is that total privacy is obtainable at these times and also that the silence of the night could aid the efficacy of the prayer. Another reason is that by these hours of the night, the evil ones are already actively engaged in their evil ploys and that waking up to pray at such a time means countering their attacks.<sup>26</sup> Olive oil is also used to consecrate the head using the same procedure as given above. In its own case, it is

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<sup>26</sup> This is the summary of opinions of many members of the church interviewed as in relation to praying at night.

smear on the head in a way that the sign of the cross is created on the forehead. The result envisaged is that cure is achieved through the use of these consecrated objects.

One of our interview respondents Pastor Olúwajuyítán J.O. says that the physical head is physical in the ordinary sense because it is the visible part. He, however, states that the non-physical part is responsible in defining what we are and what we will be; hence it should be jealously guarded against evil through prayer.<sup>27</sup> He claims that the spiritual and non-physical part of the head could be fortified against evil through prayers for the head to abhor evil and attract goodness.

Another respondent, Adéwoyè E.S., claims that he saw in his dream that his head was severely battered by machet cuts and produced stinking odour with cowry shells tied into a string which was put on it. He further alleged that he saw some spiritual hosts that appeared like angels, descending from the sky and severing his head from the entire body. He said that this act though carefully executed was however painless. He continued that one of them dipped his hand into a white bag strapped on his shoulder and brought a replica of his head and placed it on his body. He added that the new head placed on him was clean, without any cut and with no foul odour. He explained that prior to this dream, he had suffered series of misfortunes in his business which resulted in the closure of his shop and being permanently sent out of business. This made him to attempt to solve his problem spiritually. He held that after several weeks of prayer, he met a man of God on a prayer mountain who consecrated a bottle of water for him and asked him to wash his head with it at exactly 12: 00a.m. It was after administering the water that he had the dream narrated above. He said that this experience changed his economic life, as he was able to get back to business and was breaking even.<sup>28</sup> The views of our interview respondents are shown below:

**Table 4.1: Respondents' reaction to research statement 4- The physical head has spiritual capacity to harbour evil or fortune.**

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<sup>27</sup> J.O. Olúwajuyítán, *Interview Respondent*. Pastor, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Alábùkúnfún, 28, Gbogi Street, Àkùré. Aged 50. Interviewed on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2009.

<sup>28</sup> E.S. Adéwoyè, *Interview Respondent*. Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Alábùkúnfún, 28, Gbogi Street, Àkùré. Aged 45. Interviewed on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2009.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	166	70.3
Disagree	40	17.0
No Comment	30	12.7
Total	236	100%

The responses of the respondents in Table 7.1 reveal that 166 (70.3%) of the respondents agree that the physical head has the capacity to harbour evil or fortune, 40 (17.0%) disagree while 30 (12.7%) have no comment. This shows that majority of the respondents hold that *Orí*, though a corporal part of the body possesses invisible attributes that could influence the day-to-day activities of its bearer. This result further reflects the enormity of this Yorùbá religious belief among adherents of the church. We shall come across more of *Orí* later in this chapter. The head is known to have certain attributes and capabilities in relation to harbouring misfortune (*ibòdè*), among the Yorùbá people and in Christ Apostolic Church. These shall be analysed below.

Here, we shall discuss the Yorùbá belief about *Orí* which literally means, a part of the body called head. *Orí* among the Yorùbá is analyzed in two forms that are the physical and the spiritual forms and the “visible” and the “invisible”. Bòlòlájì Ìdowu in his work claimed that the visible *Orí* is a symbol of *Orí-inu*. *Orí-inu*, literally means the “inner head” while figuratively, it means the inner person which forms the very essence of the personality. Yorùbá believe that *Orí* rules and guides the existence and activities of the person possessing the physical head. *Orí* chooses the destiny of a person and determines whether the person will be successful or unfortunate in life. If a man is unfortunate in his endeavour, he may be advised to sacrifice to his *Orí* to influence or change his destiny. Destiny means; *ipín Orí or aya nmo*. *Orí* is considered most important than other parts of the body because it determines the success or failure of the person who possesses it. It is *Orí* that kneels down and chooses what it will be or achieve on earth. In order to make it stand the test of time and not be compromised by evil doers, *Orí* is sacrificed to.<sup>29</sup> Ìdowu said that the Yorùbá believe that it is better to sacrifice to *Orí* for better performance than adoring beauty because it is *Orí* that brings good fortune to a person. *Orí la ba bo ta a ba*

<sup>29</sup> B. Ìdowu, 1962. *Olódùmarè*. Ikeja: Longman Nigeria. 180.

*f'Òrìs a si le, t'orí orí lo n gbe'ni, Òrìs a ko*. This means that it is better to make sacrifice to *Orí* than *Òrìs a* because it is *Orí* that favours one, not *Òrìs a*.<sup>30</sup> In addition, Yorùbá people say: *Orí lo da ni, e nikan o d'Órì o* (It is the inner head that created us; nobody created the inner head) and *Orí eni, l'E le da e ni* (One's head is one's creator).<sup>31</sup> *Orí* however holds a significant place in Yorùbá worldview.

Christ Apostolic Church also believes that *Orí* is a vital part of the body. Though this belief is not official, it is evident in the worldview of the members and in the prayers offered in the church. The church believes that the evil ones or the enemies could influence *Orí* by infesting it with *Ìbo de*, which means ill luck or misfortune. There exists the practice whereby members are asked to lay their hands on their heads when prayers about fortune, progress and prosperity are prayed. Another practice is the use of miracle water (*Omi-Ìyanu*) which is water sanctified by the church's ministers. This is used to wash the head. It is believed that through this, misfortune is washed away and replaced with good luck. Songs such as the following are sung:

*Orí mi gbo o Ori mi gba, 2ce*  
*Oníwa n gba're e le yi n n gba're*  
*Gbogbo Ori lo n gba're*  
*Nile Je su mi*  
*Ori 'mi te te gba're ma s e k'a du ra*

Translates as: Hearken! My *Orí*, Accept it! My inner head, 2ce  
 Every Dick and Harry is receiving their goodness  
 In Jesus' house  
 Hearken! My *Orí*, Accept goodness!  
 Do not reject prayer  
*Orí 'Mi! ma gba'bode, Eleda Mi! ma gba'bode 2ce*  
*B'aráyé fún O má mà gbá o*  
*Orí Mi! má gbà'bò de*

Translates as: My *Orí*! Do not accept misfortune  
 My inner head! Reject misfortune

<sup>30</sup> B. Ìdo wu, 1962. *Olódùmarè*. 180-181.

<sup>31</sup> Dos Santos, E. Juana and Descoredes Dos Santos. 1971. Esu Bara: Principle of individual life in the Nago system. *La Notion de Personne en Afrique Noire*. Paris: Colloques Internatinaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. 544. See also, B. Lawal, 2002. *Orilonise: The hermeneutics of the head and hairstyles among the Yorùbá*. Retrieved from <http://www.tribalarts.com/feature/lawal/> on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2009.

If the wicked ones give it to you, take it not,  
My *Ori*! Do not accept misfortune<sup>32</sup>

Research Statement 19 of our questionnaire determines the views of members of the church about this as follows:

**Table 4.2: Respondents Reactions to Research Statement 16- *Ori* (Destiny) and *Ìbo* (Ill-luck/misfortune) are paramount themes in Yorùbá indigenous religion and Christ Apostolic Church.**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	133	56.4
Disagree	44	18.6
No Comment	59	25.0
Total	236	100%

The responses of our respondents in Table 4.2 show that 133 (56.4%) are of the notion that *Ori* and *Ìbo* are common to both Yorùbá religion and Christ Apostolic Church. 44 (18.4%) disagree while 59 (25%) are mute on the issue. These two elements feature in the prayers offered in Christ Apostolic Church. *Ori* is associated with the inner man that wishes goodness to the possessor and determines what a man becomes. *Ìbo* is seen as the adversary of *Ori*. Therefore, prayers are offered to fortify *Ori* against accepting *Ìbo* from the evil ones. At times when prayers are said, members of the church are told to lay their hands on their heads and pray to empower their inner head to reject misfortune. These themes also reflect in the songs offered in the church as shown above.

At times, members are asked to place their hands on their heads and offer prayers of success and protection<sup>33</sup>. It is believed that addressing *Ori* as a living entity and instructing it as to what to accept or reject is a sure way of hastening the good things on the way and preventing misfortune (*Ìbo*). Through this, it is observed that church has replicated what is the case in Yorùbá religion where *Ori* is worshipped, adored and protected from misfortune. *Ori* in Yorùbá ideology is the physical head as well as the force responsible for controlling one's being. It is the personality soul capable of ruling,

<sup>32</sup> Songs as above were heard sung at some of the assemblies of Christ Apostolic Church in Ìbàdàn. They were sung with enthusiasm and passion usually with hands on their heads. The particular ones above were got through participation observation of Sunday Services of Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè Ìmòle Agbeni, Christ Apostolic Church Àgbàla Itura, Old Ifè Road Ìbàdàn and Christ Apostolic Church Òkè-Àláfíà, Loyola Ìbàdàn between 2nd and 9th of March, 2008.

<sup>33</sup> Participation Observation, Sunday Service at Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè Àláfíà, Loyola, Ìbàdàn on 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2008.

controlling and guiding the life and activities of man. Once *Orí* is infected with *Ìbo*, then the owner of the head is in trouble.

In relation to the cultic use of spiritualized water and oil in Christ Apostolic Church as objects for cleaning the head and freeing it from misfortune, the use of these elements could be traced to the Yorùbá society where water and oil are two elements of performing rituals. The Yorùbá saying: *Omi la bu we, Omi la bu mu, e nikan kii b'o mi s'ota*, which means: *We bathe with water and we drink it, no one plays enmity with water* explains it all. Water is used for sanctification and consecration in Yorùbá religion. It is one important ingredient for performing rituals of cleanliness and fertility. As we discussed earlier that *Ìbo* (ill luck) could be inflicted on the head, its treatment is sacrificing to the *Orí* to change the ill luck to fortune. *Orí* could be bathed to wash away *Ìbo*. This is called *Orí-wiwe*, literally meaning, “head washing” but metaphorically, it means to wash or clean the *inner man*. Sanctified water was very popular in the church and is still till today. The use of water in Christ Apostolic Church is traceable to the encounter that Prophet Ayo Babalo la had in 1928. This was when he claimed that he saw Christ in a revelation giving him a bottle of water and asking him to drink.<sup>34</sup> He alleged that after drinking, God told him that water would serve the purpose of healing the sick from all sicknesses in the church.

Water could be drunk by the sick, applied on the affected part of the body or used for bathing in Christ Apostolic Church. Members of the church were at times told to wash their heads with consecrated water. It is believed that doing this would make curse to be wiped away and usher in good fortune. They could also be instructed to add some quantity of the sanctified water to their bathing water. By this, it is believed that curses could be erased and fortune ushered in. The Joseph Ayo Babalo la Centre at *Ìkeji-Arákeji* has a flowing river that dates back to the time of Ayo Babalo la. Apart from the river, there are two different pools for both sexes and an adjunct of the flowing river for drinking. Many testimonies have followed the use of this water.<sup>35</sup> According to

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<sup>34</sup> E.H.L. Olúshèye, 2004. *Mysterious legacies of Apostle J.A. Babalo lá*. Ìbàdàn: Olúshèye Publication. 32 - 33.

<sup>35</sup> S. O. Obaseki, *Interview Respondent*. Resident BIM Camp, Joseph Ayò Babalo lá Memorial Camp, Ìkeji-Arákeji, Òsùn State, Aged 75. Interviewed on 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2009.

Abío□□du□n O□ló□wè<sup>36</sup> in his work, this river was noticed as from the late 80s and 90s. At this time, many miracles were recorded using the water. These include the healing of a man from Òs□ogbo who was cured of insanity and the healing of a woman called Moró□láyò. Moró□láyò□ had been insane for the past thirty-three years.

Some assemblies of Christ Apostolic Church have specially designated places for getting water for the use of members. One of them is Christ Apostolic Church Àgba□la□ Ìtura that had a well called *Ka□n□ga Ìyanu* (Miracle Well). This well was prayed on every month and the water distributed to members of the church. In addition, our interview with Pastor P.A. Àyánbò□yé of the church reveals that there is a place in the middle of the church auditorium of Christ Apostolic Church, Old Ife Road, O□ló□de that has water coming up from the ground. The founder of the church claimed that God entered into a covenant with him that whoever drinks the water with faith, would have his requests granted.<sup>37</sup>

Consecrated water in Christ Apostolic Church is a medium of transferring healing virtues on the sick. It is what drugs are to doctors. This is because members of the church could be asked to come to the church with their bottles of water for consecration just like doctors could prescribe drugs for patients. However, using the water is not a guarantee that prayers would be answered. Pastor S. O. Obaseki<sup>38</sup> disclosed that none who used the water without the necessary faith in the ability of Christ Jesus to grant his requests would get the required results. To get the views of members of the church as to whether the cleansing and healing roles of water in the church correlate with its roles in Yorùbá religion, the following responses are got from our questionnaire respondents:

**Table 4.3: Respondents’ Reactions on Research Statement 11- Water performs cleansing and healing functions**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agree	205	86.9

<sup>36</sup> A. O□ló□wè 2007. *Ibùdó Is□é□-Ìyanu Joseph Ayò□ Babalo□lá Ìkeji-Aràkeji: itàn atiwayé*. Houston: Omega Publishers. 64-73.

<sup>37</sup> P.A. Àyánbòyé, *Interview Respondent*. Assembly Pastor. Christ Apostolic Church Àgba□la□ I□tura, Old Ife□ Road Ìbàdàn. Aged 48. Interviewed on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August 2008.

<sup>38</sup> S. O. Obaseki, *Interview Respondent*.

Disagree	24	10.1
No Comment	07	3.0
Total	236	100%

Table 4.3 shows that 205 (86.9%) of the respondents agree that water performs cleansing and healing functions in Christ Apostolic Church as in traditional Yorùbá ritual practices. 24 (10.1%) disagree while 07 (3.0%) reserve their comments. This result demonstrates that water is a “ritual” element in Yorùbá religion and in Christ Apostolic Church. Some Yorùbá religious rituals entail the use of water as a material for cleaning or wiping away evil. Prescription may be given that the client/patient should wash his/her head to remove evil or to eradicate the possibility of having things going wrong. This may involve going to a flowing stream with a specially concocted soap and reciting specific incantation as the client washes the head.

Though the use of water in the church has its precedence from the instruction passed on to Ayoṣṣ Babaloṣṣlaṣṣ as we have noted earlier, its use during the period which this research covers has been diversified. Water in Christ Apostolic Church now serves different functions such as cleansing and healing. Prophets in the church could prescribe that water specially prayed upon be used at a specific time of the day or night. Some prophets instruct that the water be administered on the head, stomach or feet only at specific times, like 12:00am or 2:00am. Some prophets may instruct their clients to use the water to bathe while others prescribe that the water be sprinkled on their property such as car, house, work implement and land. This replicates what obtains in Yorùbá religion about the use of water for consecration purpose.

Healing of the sick with oil has its origin in the Bible (James 5:13-16). Prophet Ayoṣṣ Babaloṣṣlaṣṣ also taught it that there was limitless power and blessing in the use of anointing oil for healing and consecration. Babaloṣṣlaṣṣ gave some precautions that should be considered while using oil as a tool for consecration and healing. First, anointed oil should not be sold like items are sold in the market. That is, it should not be a means of generating income. Rather, it should be given freely. Anybody who indulges



in such is considered as a robber.<sup>39</sup> Anointing with oil is not an innovation in Christ Apostolic Church, but giving importance to an existing practice.

Anointing oil could be administered in the church using two methods. The first method entails the church providing the oil. After prayers are said on it, the church ministers administer the oil on members. The second method required every member to provide the oil. They would be asked to lift the oil and prayers would be said on it. Most of the times, Psalms are read on the oil before elaborate prayers are offered. Many people have testified to the efficiency of this method. A woman interviewed testified to the efficacy of the anointed oil during the delivery of her third baby. She professed that the baby was maintaining a breech position and she had been advised to prepare for Caesarean section. She alleged that when she was being prepared for the theatre, she anointed herself with the oil. She claimed that the foetus immediately turned to the right position after administering the oil. When she noticed this turning, she notified the nurses who examined her and saw that the baby had actually turned and that she had started to experience contractions. She professed that she was immediately wheeled to the labour room where she delivered the baby safely.<sup>40</sup>

Another person interviewed alleged that he was divinely protected in his dream through the administration of the anointing oil on himself. He claimed that he saw in a revelation that he should anoint himself with consecrated oil before going to bed and that he did so. He testified that he was able to subject the evil forces that came to torment him in his dream. He declared that when he woke up he was tired, and gasping for breath. This to him meant that he could have been overpowered if he had not anointed himself the previous night.<sup>41</sup> The use of the anointing oil in the above cases could be said to have replaced the herbs and medicines, charms and amulets that herbalists and priests prescribe for their patients for protection before the Missionary era in Nigeria. Also, the currency and popularity that anointing oil assumed in Christ Apostolic Church within the

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<sup>39</sup> E.H.L. Olúshèye, 2004. *Mysterious legacies*. 33, 34.

<sup>40</sup> A.O. Sóbógun, *Interview Respondent*. Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàlǎ Ìtura. Interviewed 14<sup>th</sup> of June, 2007.

<sup>41</sup> O. Òjó, *Interview Respondent*. Member, Christ Apostolic Church Àgbàlǎ Ìtura, Ìbàdàn. Interviewed 4<sup>th</sup> August, 2007.

thirty five-years that this research covers show that it was an effective means of promoting deliverance and efficient healthcare method in the church.

To get the perception of members of the church about the use of consecrated water and anointing oil in Christ Apostolic Church, Research Statement 18 is deployed and the results are as follow:

**Table 4.4: Respondents Reactions to Research Statement 13: Effective healing results from using sanctified water and oil in Christ Apostolic Church**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agree	208	88.1
Disagree	23	9.8
No Comment	05	2.1
Total	236	100%

In the table above, 208 (88.1%) of our respondents agree that effective healing results from using sanctified water and oil in Christ Apostolic Church. While 23 (9.8%) disagree, 05 (2.1%) have no comment. From the following, water and oil serve as useful ingredients of healing in the church. Water and oil in Christ Apostolic Church have replaced the medicine or concoction that herbalists give their clients to use to cure ailments. Members of the church are told to come with these items to be sanctified, which could later be applied to the affected parts of the body to cure their ailments or sprinkled on items to sanctify them. While they apply these elements, they are often asked to be reciting some Psalms or saying some prayers to facilitate quick results. The result above, therefore, shows that this system works in the church.

### **4.3 Spiritualization of Pregnancy Conception**

The human reproductive parts, which constitute both the external and internal organs, are purely biological in nature. Furthermore, the study of Biology has revealed how these internal organs work and medicine has shown how they could be healed when diagnosed to be malfunctioning. These studies consider the organs as physical, without attaching any spiritual significance to their existence and works.<sup>42</sup> A medical doctor's

<sup>42</sup> Researches in Biology, Anatomy, Physiology and Medicine have shown how these organs work and are taken care of when observed to be sick or malfunctioning.

view about the reproductive part of the human female reveals that the ovary, ovum, fallopian tube, vagina, uterus, sex hormones, the developing foetus and the process of reproduction are all physical. He further states that the penis and the testis in the male are corporeal. He claimed that these parts could malfunction due to a reason or the other and they could be medically diagnosed and treated.<sup>43</sup> However, in Yorùbá religion, human reproductive organs are considered perfect at creation and they are believed to have been infected by spiritual capacity when they are unable to perform the functions for which the creator created them, which is procreation. When this is discovered, solutions are sought through various means ranging from rituals to administration of herbs and medicine as prescribed, therefore, when barrenness or impotence results, treatment is administered both physically and spiritually.<sup>44</sup>

This belief is reflected in Christ Apostolic Church where the malfunctioning womb of a woman and the inability of the human sperm and other male reproductive organs to be functional are given spiritual explanations. The church holds that illnesses that manifest physically are put on the victim in the spiritual realm.

Concerning the procedure involved in the cure of barrenness, consecrated water is the main object used. Water is consecrated in the church through prayer and the reading of particular Psalms that deal with fruitfulness and procreation. The water could be drunk in the church immediately after the prayer, or applied by the women on their tummies privately in their individual houses. The water could also be used to bathe. Apart from this, pregnant women may be instructed to pray naked at night in their individual homes privately. The reasons for saying prayer naked are: to portray to God that they are approaching Him submissively and with utmost humility. The significance of nakedness here is simply to show that the supplicant is not hiding anything from God, that she was praying naked just as she was given birth to and that God would visit her in her state of barrenness and make her fruitful. Some Christ Apostolic Church branches in Ibadan and Lagos would conduct child dedication service for those praying so as to be pregnant. This was done like the normal child dedication would be done on Sunday whereby everyone of them would come with a dummy or symbolic babies. Consecrated water and oil would

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<sup>43</sup> A. Hassan, *Interview Respondent*. Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàlá Ìtura between 1980 and 1998. Aged: 39. Interviewed 12<sup>th</sup> of April, 2008.

<sup>44</sup> Yorùbá Religion sees barrenness as purely a spiritual problem and solutions are got from the local medical practitioners. See also W. Koster-Oyekan. *Infertility among Yorùbá Women: Perception on Causes, Treatment and Consequences*. <http://www.jstor.org/pss/3583225>. Retrieved on February 4, 2009.

be sprinkled on the tummy while fervent prayers were being offered. This could be accompanied with chanting of Psalms for fertility.

During our tour of churches for participatory observation, fertility prayers were said on these organs when church members were asked to put their hands on the affected parts. It was observed that the men laid their hands on their lower abdomen and groins. The women, however, laid their hands on their tummies. In some of the churches, this type of prayer is usually offered during special prayers for men or women alone. They were then asked to speak directly to their respective reproductive organs as if these organs could hear and take their instructions. Such addresses included, *inú mi gbó*, *mú èso re jáde* which means *hear me my tummy, bring out your fruit*. This prayer addresses the tummy as a being that has locomotive and hearing attributes. One of our interview respondents, Adesola Adesuyi, claimed that she followed such instruction during a prayer session in her church, which resulted to the cure of her eight years barrenness. She alleged that during the course of the prayer, she felt a bulge in her stomach, which later disappeared. She claimed that she became pregnant afterward.<sup>45</sup>

The responses of respondents of our questionnaire on this issue are reflected below:

**Table 4.5: Respondent's Reactions to the Research Statement 5- Barrenness transcends medical reasons**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	189	80.2%
Disagree	29	12.2%
No Comment	18	7.6%
Total	236	100%

The result in the table above shows that 189 (80.2%) of the respondents agree that barrenness transcends medical reasons, 29 (12.2%) disagree while 18 (7.6%) have no comment. The result reflects the enormity of the number of members of the church on what they consider the causes and solution to barrenness. They believe that barrenness, though a biological problem, which medicine has severally provided reasons for its causes has spiritual causes and solutions. Now, we shall look into the means by which

<sup>45</sup> This practice was observed in some of the churches we visited for participatory observation. A. Adesuyi, *Interview Respondent*. Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Alábùkúnfún, 28, Gbogí Street, Àkùré. Aged 36. Interviewed on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2009.

pregnancy conception is actualized in Yorùbá religion and replicated in Christ Apostolic Church through fertility prayer otherwise known as *Ipade Onibisi/Alabiye*.

Fertility among Yorùbá people is paramount. It cuts across economic activities to marriage. Farmers sacrifice to the agricultural deities for high yield and when such a yield is achieved, sacrifices of thanksgiving are offered. During wedding ceremonies, prayers of fruitfulness are offered for the couples. This is because barrenness is a stigma to the family institution among the Yoruba people. In a situation where a woman is unable to conceive, fertility sacrifices could be offered so that the woman could conceive and bear her own child. One of such sacrifices is the type offered to the fertility deities such as *Òsun*. The groove is in Osogbo, the capital of Osun State. *Òsun* is a water goddess noted for her ability to grant the requests of barren women and give them children. Items such as hens, pigeons, female goat, vegetables, sugar cane, and kola-nuts are presented for the sacrifice. However, all the animals for sacrifice should be female. Prayers such as the following are offered during the annual ceremony, usually in the month of August:

*Òsun mo p e o o o,  
Mo pe o so wo, mo pe o so mo  
Mo pe o si a i ku, mo pe o si o ro  
E niti n wa o mo ko fu n lo mo  
E mi ko fe odi, e mi ko fe aro  
O mo da ra da ra ni ki o fu n wo n.*

Translates as: *Òsun* I call you  
I call you for money; I call you for children;  
I call you for protection against death,  
I call you for wealth  
Give children to those who ask for children  
Do not give them deaf or crippled children  
Give them healthy children.<sup>46</sup>

Apart from the annual festival, barren women could also visit the shrine anytime to offer sacrifice to the river goddess. According to S.O. Afolabi, one of the curators of the *Òsun* *Òsogbo* shrine, many devotees cannot afford to let anything jeopardise their

<sup>46</sup> G.E. Simpson, 1980. *Yorùbá religion and medicine in Ìbàdàn*. 28.

devotion to the cult. He revealed that barren women approach the festival with great devotedness.<sup>47</sup>

The church appears to see barrenness as a minus in marriage. This reflects in the prayers offered concerning procreation. However, the church holds that marriage is a sacred institution as spelt out in the scripture (Thes. 4:3-8), and members are made to realise its sanctity. It recognises that the gains of marriage are the fruits of the womb. Despite the fact that barrenness is not encouraged in the church, barren women are not disregarded. Rather, they are encouraged to continue in prayer and faith and that God will grant them their requests in due time. In order to consolidate the faith of this category of women, special prayers are organised for them. *Onibisi* and *Alaṣbiṣe* are euphemisms for women who have the problem of conceiving and having the joy of parenthood and those who have and are seeking for protection on them respectively. The first word literally means *the one who has been striving to conceive or a person who is suffering from still-birth*. The second word means *the one that gives birth to healthy and living children, or the woman who gives birth to living children*. These understatement are intentionally used as code words for those suffering from barrenness and stillbirth to make them feel that their problems are nothing to worry about and that it will get solved. The appellation *Onibisi* later came to be known as *Ìya Ḳ̀yanu* meaning *the miracle mother or the mother of the miracle baby* in some Christ Apostolic Church assemblies throughout the Southwestern Nigeria, especially in Ìbàdàn and Lagos in the 90s.

The church used to set aside a day of the week for such women. The programme usually involved counselling barren women about how to be good wives to their husbands. Humility and honour for the husband were usually stressed as necessary virtues that a good wife should possess. They were also taught to always be submissive to their husbands and show kindness to their in-laws. In other words, the church demands good conduct from barren women as prerequisites to getting pregnant through divine intervention. During such prayer sessions, faith was also emphasized. Some churches in order to enhance the faith of the expectant women asked them to come with new baby wears and materials to be prayed on. The significance of this is that they were to believe

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<sup>47</sup> S.O. Afoṣlábí, *Interview Respondent*, Curator, Oṣun Òṣogbo Sacred Groove, Òṣogbo, Òṣun State. Interviewed on 11<sup>th</sup> of June, 2009.

they would actually be pregnant and that the fruit(s) of their wombs would be the same to use the materials after giving birth to them. This practice reinforces the fact that their faith is the key to answered prayers.

Many miracles have been recorded through this means. One of them was the first miracle of the fruit of the womb in Christ Apostolic Church Àgbàlá Ìtura, of one Mrs. Margaret O. Akino-Ìlá<sup>48</sup>. She was fondly called *Mama Sínà*. According to Elder J.B. Doherty, she joined the church around 1978 and was one of the pioneer members of the church choir at the time. He claimed that she had explored many means to get pregnant without success. There was a time she patronized a native doctor who gave her a horrible concoction made of animal dung. She took it and yet there was no good result, until she joined the church. Elder Doherty further narrated that Prophet Samuel Káyòdé Abíára prayed for her and asked her to join the Choir of the church, which she did and in no time, she conceived and bore a son that was named *Olusínà*.<sup>49</sup> *Olusínà* ordinarily means, “the Lord has opened the passage”.

We need to note that the church, by so doing, has devised a means of replicating what fertility deities in Yorùbá religion do for their adherents. It however achieves this not by asking these women to offer sacrifices as in Yorùbá religion, but by making use of Pentecostal gifts. The research statement 13 tries to determine the views of members of the church about the relevance of *Ìpa-de Ala-bi-ye*. We observe that this method was an innovation for making these women get their children. This was done by replicating the traditional fertility groove with this prayer meeting in the church. The result of our questionnaire on this issue is as shown below:

**Table 4.6: Respondents’ Reactions to Research Statement 10: Special prayer for those seeking the fruit of the womb (*Ìpa-de Ala-bi-ye*) in Christ Apostolic Church brings positive results.**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	205	86.9
Disagree	28	11.9

<sup>48</sup> M. O. Akino-Ìlá was a member of the church’s choir. Her miracle of the fruit of the womb which happened to be the first in CAC Àgbàlá Ìtura became a point of focus and reference for those who desired such a miracle.

<sup>49</sup> J.B. Doherty, *Interview Respondent*. Elder, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàlá Ìtura Olóde, New Ifè Road, Ìbàdàn. Aged 60. Interviewed 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2008.

No Comment	03	1.2
Total	236	100%

Majority of our respondents (205) (86.9%) agree that *Ìpa de Ala bi ye* special prayer for those seeking the fruit of the womb brings positive results. (28) 11.9% of them disagree while (03) 1.2% reserve their comments. This is a common prayer method for women seeking the fruit of the womb. Majority of our respondents have clearly shown that the church has created a system that allows barren women to get solution to their barrenness instead of patronising the shrines of fertility deities in Yorùbá religion.

#### 4.4 Spiritualization of Photograph and Object

Photographs and objects are important means of representing the reality in the supersensible realm. Among the Yorùbá, effigies include *Sìgìdì* or *Ère* otherwise known as statue. Ige Simeon says in his work that *Sìgìdì* is categorized under *Àjògún* in Yorùbá religion. The *Ajogun* includes *Àjé* (witches) and *Sìgìdì*. He, however, categorized *Sìgìdì* as one of the *ajogun*'s that Esu (the Inspector-general of rituals) sends on errand.<sup>50</sup> In the primitive Yorùbá society, *Sìgìdì* took the place of picture. However, in contemporary Yorùbá society, photographs are used to represent the person in the picture for rituals.

It is further believed in Yorùbá religion that power travels through material items and get to the desired destination. This “power travel” phenomenon is interesting among Yorùbá people, though it is mystical in nature. It is interesting in the sense that despite the fact that it is not scientific, and cannot be subjected to scientific verification, the phenomenon is increasingly gathering popularity. Really, it is unexplainable when a few words are uttered as incantation and the words materialised in distant places that cannot be covered without maximum time and speed. It is further fascinating to find out that a few words are pronounced on material items such as the statue (*e re* or *Sìgìdì*) and the person whose name is mentioned on the statue, though thousands of miles apart, is infected with the spell. This method of infecting an opponent with spell is called by different names such as *Àra nsi*, the act of sending a spell to a target. The second is

<sup>50</sup> A. I Simeon, 2006. The roles of the divinities in African Traditional Religion. *Encyclopedia of the Arts*. 10:2. 94-97.



*Àpeṣpa*, which is the act of sending a spell that kills the target after calling the names of the target for a specified number of times. The third is *Àsaṣí*, which is the act of sending a spell that infects the target and makes him misbehave. The fourth one is *Àpeṣta*, which is the process of sending a spell that cannot be easily unravelled and whose effect is devastating on a target.

The church has adapted this method of power transfer using material object for representative prayer. It was popular in the church in the late 80s and throughout the 90s but today it has extended to other churches. In this case, pictures of people are used as means of praying for distant relatives and not for casting spell or evil on opponents as in Yorùbá traditional religion. These are pictures of distant relatives, loved ones in the hospitals or in one difficulty or the other, which are prayed upon so that the recipients could get the desired results such as healing, financial breakthrough and spiritual protection.

Another method deployed is by asking members to come with water for consecration. Such water could be sent to distant people who needed divine intervention on different challenges of life. Another means is the use of “anointing oil”. The oil could be sent to the sick in the hospital. Furthermore, those who have embarked on building project but are unable to accomplish it are asked to come to the church with the sand from the site. This is prayed on and returned to the site. In other instances, those who have distant relatives could be asked to come to the church with the photographs of these relatives for prayers of protection. Besides, those whose businesses are retrogressing could be asked to come to the church with their work tools. At such gatherings, tools like shovels for builders, scissors for fashion designers, mechanical tools for garage men, stethoscopes for doctors and writing materials for students and civil servants are brought. Another way is asking members to bring money of different denominations for prayer. After praying on the money, members are asked to return the money to their houses and businesses. It is observed that this method of prayer is result oriented because some members claimed that they had been spiritually blessed.

The research statements 6, 9 and 7 of the questionnaire show the following results:

**Table 4.7 Respondents’ Reactions to Research Statement 6- Material items convey spiritual messages to recipients**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agree	186	78.8
Disagree	30	12.7
No Comment	20	8.5
Total	236	100%

The responses of the respondents in the table above show that 186 (78.8%) of the respondents are of the view that material items convey spiritual messages to recipients. 30 (12.7%) of them disagree while 20 (8.5%) of them are silent. This result shows that many members of the church believe that this method is effective. The results further show that the objects brought forward to be prayed on could act as means of contacting the person they represent and influence their wellbeing.

**Table 4.8: Respondents' Reactions to Research Statement 9- Praying on pictures and other items brings desired results on those who own them in reality.**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agree	188	79.7
Disagree	34	14.4
No Comment	14	5.9
Total	236	100%

Table 4.8 shows that 188 (79.8%) of our respondents agree, 34 (14.4%) disagree while 14 (5.9%) are silent. The table reflects that the practice such as obtains in Christ Apostolic Church whereby prayers are said on items such as money, pictures of far away relations, sand from an abandoned landed property, equipment and instruments from a business about to get bankrupt, are result oriented. Such material items are prayed upon in Christ Apostolic Church and desired results are achieved. This resembles the prescriptions of the oracles and gods in Yorùbá religion that power could be transferred from the material

items brought to the shrines for representative prayer. It further shows that such power could have perpetual effect on the person the prayer was offered for.

**Table 4.9: Respondents' Reactions to Research Statement 7- Prayer said on pictures of people in spiritual bondage provides quick solution.**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	187	79.4%
Disagree	34	14.4%
No Comment	16	6.2%
Total	236	100%

Table 4.9 shows that 187 (79.4%) of the respondents agree that prayers said on pictures provide quick solution to spiritual problems. 39 (16.4%) of the respondents disagree while 4.2% of them are silent on this issue. This shows that this means of prayer is preferred because it enhances their prayers towards achieving the required solution.

#### 4.5 Spiritualization of the Earth

The Babalawo or the *ifá* priest enquired from *Ile*, “earth”, by making his divination chain touch it. He sacrificed unto it and entreated it. The earth is an object of veneration in Yorùbá land because it is believed to be inhabited by spirits. Because the earth accommodates man and provides the necessary condition for him to cultivate farmland, rear animals, performs other activities, and further serve as his resting place when he dies, it becomes an object of worship for him. It is believed among Yorùbá people that good and evil are on earth.<sup>51</sup>

Yorùbá worldview holds that in order to achieve a good life, prosperity and convenience, good work is required. This implies that an evil doer may not reward good but evil. This is why the people say: *e ni bá da' mi si wa ju a te ile tu tu*, which literally means he who sprinkles the ground with water, will tread on wet earth. The culture further holds that the earth could be in favour of one or otherwise. That is

<sup>51</sup> J.O. Awólálú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. 45.

why a prayer as *ile a gbe wa o*, that is, may we be blessed/favoured by the earth is offered. Yorùbá culture seems to agree with the Biblical passage that because the earth is the Lord's, everything is filled with His fullness (Psalm 24:1), including man, animals, plants and the resources under the earth. All these are put there for the benefit of man.

Yorùbá people also believe in the fact that the world (*aye*) which harbours the earth (*Ile*) has four major corners just as Geography makes us understand that there is the north, south, east and west poles. Yorùbá religion holds that all the corners are occupied by spirits and they hover on the air space. When sacrifices are to be offered, each of the items of sacrifice is lifted up to the sky for the acknowledgement of the deities.<sup>52</sup> When a Babala<sup>wo</sup> is divining, he divines round the four corners with his *Òpe le* that is Divination-Chain, trying to inform all the necessary agents/messengers of the Supreme Being about the case at hand. The act of these points while standing on the earth during prayer significantly means conducting a search or a spying escapade in every direction, even though no specific direction is intentionally targeted. This clue is probably derived from the worldview of Yorùbá, which recognizes that there are four walls cornering the world. This is also the reason why Yorùbá people say; *Ire l'o tu n, ire l'o si, ire ni'wa, ire l'e hin* which means, *may I experience goodness from my left and right, front and rear*.

Christ Apostolic Church reflects Yorùbá beliefs about *Ile* (earth) and *Origin-me rin Aye* (four corners of the world) by reflecting and interpreting these beliefs in its liturgy. Also, prayers offered in the church reflect these beliefs. Concerning the earth, members may be asked to sing while stamping their feet on the ground and speaking directly to the earth to bring forth its goodness. In addition, faith statements addressing *Ile* directly, to release the age-long overdue benefits that it had denied them are made. The earth is also addressed not to suck blood and not to swallow human beings in rage. It is also addressed through songs to hear the voice of man and bring fruitfulness. One of such songs is *Ile Gbo'ro Oluwa, Ile Gbo'ro Oluwa, La t'o n i lo ma gorí re ma sohun rere*. This song is a direct address to *Ile* to listen to the words of the Lord and act in one's favour. Here, *Ile* is personified as a being holding what someone has been looking for. This is the reason for addressing

<sup>52</sup> J.O. Awólálú, 1979. *Yorùbá beliefs and sacrificial rites*. 172.

*Ile* directly as if it has ears to listen. Some of the Christ Apostolic Church assemblies would ask their members who had found it difficult to complete their housing projects to scoop some sand from the property and bring it to the church for consecration with water and oil. Members were made to believe that there were some evil forces that were hindering them from completing the construction of their houses. After such prayers, they would be asked to return the sand to the land. Some testified to the efficacy of this style of prayer.<sup>53</sup>

The church believes that in every corner of the earth, there are heavenly hosts and blessings. This is why specific prayers are said facing these four corners. The congregation may be asked to face the corners in turn and say prayers. Prayers said in this formation include praying for prosperity, protection, favour and so on. At times members may be asked to point the Bible at these corners to say their prayers. When prayers are offered, direct addresses are made to *Ile* to listen to their voices and grant their biddings. This is not to say that the church reveres or worships *Ile* and the “corners of the world” as gods of a kind. Rather, the inherent Yorùbá beliefs about them have eaten into the church and influenced its liturgy. However, there is the concern that this may initiate slipping into syncretism. Yorùbá culture holds that the Supreme Being has bestowed on the earth blessings; so does Christ Apostolic Church. Also as in Yorùbá religion, it is believed that the four corners of the world have goodies waiting to be claimed, (though these goodies may or may not be visible to the ordinary eyes).

Prayer has been a common factor in the liturgy of Christ Apostolic Church. In relation to the four elements and the associated objects used in treating them, prayer has been noticed to be common to them all. It is the weapon used to carry out attacks on the enemy. Though this practice is traceable to every religion of the world it is carried out differently as demanded by the culture of the people and the dictates of the religion. Prayer in Yorùbá religion is indispensable as it is a very important part of worship. It is

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<sup>53</sup> One of them was a man from one of the assemblies who claimed that he bought a landed property for the past twelve years and could not develop it. He claimed that he could not buy a bag of cement when he was fully engaged with the government as a teacher where he served for thirty-five years. He professed that though he was not a member of Christ Apostolic Church; a friend invited him to a crusade organized by one of the assemblies of Christ Apostolic Church. He alleged that he heeded to the instruction of the organizers of the programme that those who were finding it difficult to develop their landed properties should come with some sand from their lands. He said after praying on the sand, he returned it to the land. This man said he completed his building project of four flats within a year without borrowing money.

through it that the pious supplications of devotees get to the object of worship. Just as prayer occupies vital position in every religion, such as Judaism and Islam, prayer is also vital in Yorùbá religion. While offering prayer in Yorùbá religion, devotees pour out their minds to the Supreme Being who grants the requests. However, when prayers are offered, some forces may also be at work to make sure that prayers offered are not answered. They may want to see to it that instead of deriving blessings from prayers offered, losses and misfortune are got. Also, some for some reasons known to them may employ the services of evil forces such as witches and wizards to torment their victims. Others employ the service of Babalaṣwo to lay potent curses on enemies. Èpe (curse) could be referred to as the reverse of prayer in the sense that the Supreme Being is the one that prayers are offered to, while the evil forces are the ones who make sure that curses become potent on their victims. Therefore, Èpe is ordinarily attributed to the enemies or the evil ones while blessing to the benevolent forces. It is believed in Yorùbá religion that it is easier to place a curse on somebody than to remove it and that it is usually an enemy who invokes curses on others. Curses could also be used as a form of defence and retaliation. It could be employed to render the enemy impotent. It could further be used to disorient the wicked people such that they would not be composed to launch any attack on one.<sup>54</sup>

Imprecation prayer in Christ Apostolic Church is a method of prayer, which resembles what Èpè is and does in Yorùbá religion. Imprecation or curse in the Bible has been interpreted to mean the following: threat (Jer. 11:3), violation of God's law (Deut. 27:15-26), insult, abuse or blasphemy (Lev. 24:11, 16). Though Christ Apostolic Church could claim that she got her idea of imprecation prayer from the Bible, the Yorùbá worldview about curse and its harms reflect richly in the prayers offered in the church. In a recent study in one of the Christ Apostolic Church assemblies in Ìbàdàn, majority of those interviewed attested to the fact that imprecation prayer is the most potent type of prayer to overcome evil forces<sup>55</sup>. The feeling that the enemy is on one side and God on the other side and the two are engaging in a tussle pervades the thinking of members of the church. They believe that to effectively gain control over the enemies, imprecation

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<sup>54</sup> G. E. Simpson, 1980. *Yorùbá religion and medicine in Ìbàdàn*. 81-83.

<sup>55</sup> A. O. Ògúnrinádé, 2008. Responses on *adura ori-okè* in Aladura church. *BELFA. Journal of the Ògbómòsó Circle*. 7. 76-85.

prayers are required. Imprecation prayer in Christ Apostolic Church is, therefore, regarded as a weapon for combating the onslaught of spiritual enemies.

Though the church preaches the Biblical injunction to love ones neighbours (Matt. 5:26, John 13:35, Rom. 13:9, Phil. 1:9), it does not frown at such a prayer and its personnel do encourage members to pray it. Members hold that anybody who sets out to do harm to them without any cause is an enemy and should not be pitied or spared. They say imprecation prayer vehemently and at times sing warlike songs during such prayer. In the song, the enemies are cursed and the power in the blood of Jesus invoked to suppress their powers. Such songs include:

*Èyin ota mi ti e parapo. Èyin ota mi ti e  
forikori*

*Ina Ori kii segun e se, lo ru ko Je su ma a bOrii yin*

Translation: All my enemies who have come together and agreed to do me evil, You shall lose the battle just as head louse cannot attack and overcome the feet

*B'ara ye ba f'ejo mi sun Ogun aye,  
e mi na a a f'ejo wo n sun Ogun o run.*

Translation: If the earthy people report me to the earthly powers  
I shall also report them to the heavenly forces.

*Oru ko ti mo ni ni mo pe, agba ra ti mo ni ni mo sa,  
èyin ota mi e f'Orí gba 'ri, l'oru ko Je su e f'Orí  
gba 'ri o.*

Translation: It is the name that I have that I invoke,  
It is the power that I possess that I enforce,  
You! My enemies are disorganized, In Jesus name get confounded.

*E ni ba da n mi wo, E ni ba da n mi wo  
Olu wa a gbe san mi la ra re  
Os o lo da n mi wo, Àje lo da n mi wo  
Olu wa a gbe san mi la ra re.*

Translation: Whoever tempts me, whoever tempts me?  
The Lord will avenge me  
Be it the wizards or the witches  
The Lord will avenge me

This shows that Christ Apostolic Church germinated in a society where much attention is given to the fact that power contest takes place in the spirit world on a daily basis and that power is needed to stay victorious. It also shows the rich translation of indigenous Yorùbá concepts about power among these people. It shows that the world is wild and fierce, that success may be determined by factors other than individual ability. One of the factors is the “enemy factor”, that is, the force inimical to one’s accomplishment. This factor, as interpreted by members of the church is the reason why the church records high membership. According to Mrs. Buḱkoḱḱlaḱ Faḱgbeḱmiḱ, some people come to the church because they already have problems that they believe are caused by enemies they cannot see or confront.

We observed that the economic problems encountered by some in the 80s and 90s, made it difficult for them to surmount some necessities. When these necessities were not met, some of them interpreted their inabilities to mean that they had been incapacitated by malevolent spiritual agencies. In addition, some ailments that could have been taken care of ordinarily if there was money to access medical care in the hospital were given spiritual origin and solution. Many people patronized the church seeking the cure of minor ailments such as headache and body pains. These ailments were believed to have originated through spells and curses inflicted by their enemies. We further observed that Yorùbá people irrespective of their religious affiliation were conversant with curse and that no one liked to be cursed.

Members of Christ Apostolic Church believe that enemies abound everywhere and that they can be found where they are least expected. They further believe that two kinds of enemies known as *Òḱtaḱ ileḱ* that is inner enemy and *Oḱḱtaḱ oḱde* that is enemy from outside exist. *Òḱtaḱ ileḱ* is known to be the most wicked, subtle and difficult to detect and overcome. This is because he or she is very close to the victim and knows every secret about him. *Oḱḱtaḱ oḱde*, however, are enemies from outside who cannot do anything serious to their victim because they do not know much about them.



Yorùbá people believe that they can never operate successfully unless they are being fed with information by enemies within.<sup>56</sup>

Research Statement 14 of our questionnaire shows the responses of our respondents about the similarity between curse in Yorùbá religion and imprecation prayer in Christ Apostolic Church.

**Table 4.10: Respondents’ Reactions on Research Statement 14- Imprecation prayers (prayers that curse the enemy and plead to God for vengeance) such as obtained in Yorùbá indigenous Religion (*Èpe* and *Àpèta*) are effective means of overcoming the enemies in Christ Apostolic Church**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	169	71.61
Disagree	41	17.37
No Comment	26	11.02
Total	236	100%

Table 7.6 shows that 169 (71.61%) of our respondents are of the opinion that imprecation prayers (prayers that curse the enemy and plead to God for vengeance) such as obtained in Yorùbá indigenous Religion (*Èpe* and *Àpèta*) are effective means of overcoming the enemies in Christ Apostolic Church. 41 (17.37%) disagree while 26 (11.02%) have no comment. It is understandable here that majority of our respondents are of the view that imprecation prayer is result oriented. Imprecation prayer is considered in the church as a non-evil prayer; rather it is a means of getting back at hardened enemies who do not wish them good. Members of the church usually justify their actions by saying that enemies that refuse to back out are wicked and as a result, they must not be spared. They even see imprecation prayer as a form of defence, that if they do not strike the enemy through this means, the enemy could get at them through it.

#### 4.6 Conclusion

<sup>56</sup> This belief is associated with Yorùbá people about enemy. They have different sayings and proverbs about enemies such as *Èhinle lo ta wa*, *ile laseni n gbe* which means, ones enemy or adversary lies at the backyard or the home. Another one says: *Bi ku ile ko pani t’o de ko le pa ni*, which means death or attack cannot come from outside if one is not betrayed from inside.

This chapter begins with an overview of the beliefs of the Yorùbá people of Southwestern Nigeria. It then discusses the four elements adopted in the church in relation to the objects used, the procedures and the results achieved. Responses of the questionnaire respondents in relation to the African elements used in the church are also reflected in the discussion. It can be seen from the result of the reactions of the respondents of the questionnaire that a large number of members of the church affirm that the elements are beneficial to them.

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# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS IN CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH, SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA**

### **5.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, we are going to identify and examine the problems associated with the engagements of the elements discussed in chapter four in Christ Apostolic Church. We shall also consider the qualities associated with the use of these elements and the future of the elements vis-à-vis the survival of the church among the Yorùbá people of Southwestern Nigeria. We shall assess the impacts from the socio-cultural, spiritual, economic and ecumenical standpoints.

### **5.1 Problems associated with the use of African Traditional Religious Elements in Christ Apostolic Church, Southwestern Nigeria**

We observe that engaging African elements in liturgy and teachings in the Church could generate some problems which we are going to identify and examine presently. The first problem occurs when the messenger of the word fails to determine how much he could incorporate or how far he could change in order to get the gospel message passed appropriately. Though this research has shown the importance of these African elements in Christ Apostolic Church, the amount of African elements and the degree with which they could be employed are important. We observe that if a church or mission is not careful in its bid to utilize some of these African elements, such might degenerate into syncretism.

The missiological definition of contextualisation as offered by J. M Terry, Ebbie Smith and Justice Anderson in their work explained what every mission should aim at achieving in the course of contextualizing. They define it as “enabling the message of God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ to become alive as it addresses the vital issues of a socio-cultural context and transforms its worldview, its values, and its goals.”<sup>1</sup> Going by

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<sup>1</sup> J. M. Terry, E. Smith, and J. Anderson, 1998. *Missiology: an introduction to the foundations, history, and strategies of world missions*. Nashville TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers. 318.

this definition, a mission should not take more than it could conveniently accommodate to influence positively in the mission and its members vis-à-vis contextualization, engaging African elements, and the adaptation of African traditional religious elements otherwise, syncretism could set in. In the case of this work, a mission should be careful as to what African element to engage and how to go about its use. Taking note of this will enable the mission to determine how effective those elements are and how to check excessive engagement of the elements so as not to sink the mission into syncretism. It is important to note that the elements should be seen as means to achieving the end and not the end. In the light of the above, we observe that some adherents of Christ Apostolic Church believed much in the efficacy of traditional objects such as mantle and spiritualized water and oil.

In the course of our research, we discovered that the faith that members of Christ Apostolic Church put in these in order to overcome their life challenges was enormous. We further noticed that some of the adherents have unconsciously allowed themselves to be overwhelmed by the prayer items, aids and the Yorùbá traditional beliefs about the concepts we have identified in the research. They allowed the tools to serve as end and not means to get their problems solved. We shall consider some of them and describe how they have been wrongfully engaged and abused.

First, the consecrated water and anointed oil were believed by some to be more potent than prayer. They rather relied on the potency of the items to heal and deliver them from problems than on God. This meant a shift from God to the items in relation to solving their problems. By this, we mean the items have been idolized.

The second problem occurs as a result of the inherent belief in Christ Apostolic Church that the world is a wicked spiritual environment, which should be lived with carefulness. This happens when members of the church live their lives in fear, not knowing what could happen any moment. This may make them to suspect anybody and feel quite uncomfortable with people they relate with daily. However, it is good to be careful, but the benefits in being careful could be absent when fear sets in. The Southwestern part of Nigeria mainly consists of Yorùbá people who speak Yorùbá. Yorùbá traditional society, known for core Yorùbá culture, tradition and religious

practices, is regarded by some Christians as barbaric.<sup>2</sup> It was acclaimed that many Yorùbá Christians would not want to be associated with their traditional roots.<sup>3</sup> They claimed that they might be harmed if they travelled to their home-towns or let the people at home know that they had made some accomplishments. Pastor Olu Omoota<sup>4</sup> asserts that around this period, members of his church would not travel home to celebrate the Yuletide without coming to the church for prayers of fortification. They felt that the society was wicked and that wicked forces might hunt them down through automobile accident or enchantment if they were not careful and prayerful. This feeling was based on the conviction of those living in town that practices such as magic, divination, veneration of ancestors, belief in spirits and the use of elements and symbols that are associated with Yorùbá society and religion were common in villages. These made Christians in Christ Apostolic Church to believe that the society

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<sup>2</sup> As from the 80s and 90s, awareness abounded about the fact that malevolent forces that occupy the spiritual arena of Yorùbá society could inhibit the success of a Christian who is not careful. Christians then resorted to being very careful about their day-to-day dealings with one another and the people in the general society. They would agree with the Yorùbá saying: *Bi 's u e ní ba ta, a ma a do wo bo ni*. This interprets: If your harvest is plentiful, you hide it from your neighbors. The only way of being careful was to keep your progress as secretive as possible so that enemies would not be jealous and plan evil against you. Yorùbá Christians then believed that Yorùbá religion was anti-Christianity. This was because of the various unpleasant incidences that had malevolent spiritual underpinning that had befallen Christians who make unnecessary noise about their progress. For more on Yorùbá traditional religion among Yorùbá people, see: W. Abimbóla, 1991. The place of African Traditional Religion in contemporary Africa: the Yorùbá example. Olúpòna, Ed. *Kingship, religion and rituals in a Nigerian community: a phenomenological study of Òndó Yorùbá festivals*. Stockholm. 51-58. G. Adéribigbé, 1999. African religion and Christianity in dialogue: an appraisal from the African perspective. *Africana Marburgensia* 32: 39-56. S.A. Adéwálé, 1983. The significance of traditional religion in Yorùbá traditional society. *Orita* 15:3-15. S.A. Adewale, 1988. Sacrifice in African Traditional Religion. *Orita* 20 91-106. J.O. Awólàlú, 1973. Yorùbá sacrificial practice. *Journal of Religion in Africa* 5: 81-93.

<sup>3</sup> Some of those interviewed in the course of the fieldwork claimed that Yorùbá religion is “fetish” in nature. When asked to define how fetish the religion is, they claimed that it is associated with the use of charm, idol, image and amulet to institute a reaction (mostly bad reaction), inimical to the well being of the enemy. Adéola Olásùpò, one of those interviewed claimed that in 1985 when she finished her secondary school education and made good grades in the West African Examination Council “WAEC” exams, traveling to her hometown was her undoing. She alleged that afterward she could not gain admission to the university as envisaged, even though she was one of the best in her set. She further claimed that after much praying and waiting on God for admission, she got admission and ended up doing her four year degree programme in seven years with a Third Class grade. She believed that her progress was inhibited by malevolent spiritual forces.

<sup>4</sup> Many Christians were fond of not travelling home to celebrate festivals and major events as would bring the family together. Those who might risk their lives to travel would not go with their children nor travel in their family vehicles. If they erected a house or set up a thriving business, they dared not inform those in the village. Pastor Olu Omoota. *Interview Respondent*, (Pastor and Assistant General Superintendent.) Christ Apostolic Church, Chapel of Restoration, Ìwó-Road, Ìbàdàn. Aged 63. Interviewed 18th January, 2008.

was wicked. In the 90s up to 2005, radio and television programmes such as portrayed the Yorùbá odd world became popular.<sup>5</sup> This further increased the awareness and subsequently instilled more fear in them.

A number of church leaders and prophetic personnel take advantage of using the African elements and objects to exploit innocent people. They offer such items as consecrated water and anointed oil for money. Godspower Sunday, one of those interviewed, claimed that a sachet of pure water and a bottle of anointed oil in one of the churches very close to where he stayed could cost as much as ₦500 and ₦1000 each.<sup>6</sup> This constitutes an abuse in the church. It is sheer exploitation and deliberate attempt at enriching the purse at the expense of church members who would stop at nothing to get their problems solved.

Some churches now make use of ritual items as used in Yorùbá rituals like egg and broom to aid prayer in their assemblies. Another method included having spiritual bath in church premises. Here, members of the congregation could be asked to come to the church with toiletries in order to take bath in the church vicinities. Each person would take the bath personally with water consecrated in the church for the purpose. They might be instructed to discard the sponge used immediately. The same could take place in case of head washing (*ori-wíwe* in Yorùbá phraseology) whereby the patient washes the head and discards the sponge straight away. It was held that discarding the items of sacrifice in Yorùbá religion was to completely get rid of the spiritual affliction affecting the patient. It was believed that if such was spared, traces of the ailments could remain.<sup>7</sup> If these practices are not well guarded, they may portray the church as engaging in traditional sacrifices.

The idea of engaging the African elements could entice greedy pastors and church leaders who would want to initiate and boost their proficiency in performing miracles so as to attract crowd into the church. There have been incidences of church leaders making

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<sup>5</sup> Around this time, programmes as *Iri-Aye* which was always on broadcast at Radio Nigeria, Ìbàdàn as from 8:00pm and 10:00am every Friday and Saturday respectively always presented issues and cases of people who had suffered from the hands of the wicked malevolent forces.

<sup>6</sup> G. Sunday, *Interview Respondent*. Member. Christ Apostolic Church. Aged 31. He lived at Oṣṣàlògún Area of Ìbàdàn where the church he was referring to was situated between 1992 to 2000. Interviewed on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September, 2009.

<sup>7</sup> The researcher observed some of these practices in some of the Pentecostal churches he visited.

use of African medicine that increases patronage in the church. Such a medicine is either licked with the tongue or inserted in the microphone that the person would use to preach. Others could engage in performing human sacrifice so as to achieve this. An interview respondent revealed the case of a church in Lagos where a pastor who was invited to the church to officiate in an evening programme was allegedly killed and buried at the entrance of the church. His body was exhumed by police investigators who were tipped of such a crime.<sup>8</sup>

Concerning the belief surrounding the head especially when a person is not able to achieve in time and be successful in life, the notion that the head has been infected with misfortune tend to erode the reality that there is time for everything and that there is the need to wait patiently for the right time when success will naturally come one's way. This notion could make people to be unnecessarily impatient and possibly get them to indulge in unhealthy means of getting rich such as engaging in corruption such as cheating and accepting bribe. It could also make them to indulge in robbery, adultery and other immoral means of survival.

About pregnancy conception, issues had arisen about church leaders indulging in the practice of keeping women under the guise of praying for them in the church and ending up having carnal knowledge of them and impregnating them either through rape or mutually<sup>9</sup>. This could lead to dissolution of the family concerned and stigmatization of God's name.

Now about how much should the message and the messenger change or adapt to make the meaning of the message understood and more acceptable without compromise? This is quite a difficult task. This is because some churches today have become more or less the portrayal of more of the culture and less of the gospel either out of ignorance or to exploit the innocent members of the church who are desperately looking for change in their economic and spiritual lives.

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<sup>8</sup> G. Sunday, *Interview Respondent*.

<sup>9</sup> Many issues about this had arisen in the news media such as newspapers and radio about immoral pastors impregnating their unsuspecting clients. One of our respondents added to this by saying that since she was introduced to a pastor who claimed that he could pray for her and she would be pregnant. She alleged that the pastor later asked her to agree to engage in intercourse with him which she rejected. Radio and Television programmes such as have been mentioned previously had presented issues and cases of people who had suffered in the hands of such wicked people who took advantage of their gullible victims.

## 5.2 Prospects of African Traditional Religious Elements in Christ Apostolic Church, Southwestern Nigeria

There are many benefits of engaging African worldviews in the church and Christ Apostolic Church has benefited either consciously or unconsciously from their use. One of the ways it has profited is that it showcased the world wherein the people live to them and guided them as to how to survive in the world. It is a fact that Christians at the time covered by our research vehemently opposed the fact that they had anything to do with traditional religion. They referred to adherents of traditional religion as “pagans” and idol worshippers. However, these elements of African Traditional Religion have been carefully substituted in the church. For example, the practice of magic in traditional religion and spiritual healing in the church are synonymous. This implies that the church fashioned out a proper means of interpreting its spirituality within the confines of the society in which it found itself. In Christ Apostolic Church, beliefs about power, malevolent forces, spiritual warfare, problems of life such as barrenness, poverty and sickness are presented in line with the nature of the society wherein the people live. The church interprets existential challenges as caused by the presence of many “forces” and “agents” that mingle with the society. Consequently, the society is not only perceived as the landmass that contains the people or the people that live on the land but the unseen spiritual forces that are cohabiting with them. It is from this angle that the church addresses the problems of its members. This, in a way, brought them closer to the traditional society and gave them a clearer picture of what it would take them to relate successfully with the society.

Another benefit is that conversion into the Christian faith in Christ Apostolic Church would be easier and more effective. This is because the church relates with the local people and their cultural worldview. It liaises with the Yorùbá worldview in such a way that it appealed to its members who had previously categorised the traditional religion as evil. For example, as Yorùbá society sees prosperity as good for everyone and abhors misfortune as evil for man’s wellbeing, Christ Apostolic Church as well has this notion. As *Ori-buru*  $\square$  *ku*  $\square$ , that is bad luck is cured through the observance of certain rituals in Yorùbá religion, bad luck is also addressed in the church as an anti-social omen.



The implication here is that Yorùbá interpretation of bad luck is synonymous with the church's perception of it and members of the church got the clue for the interpretation of ill-luck from Yorùbá worldview. According to A.S. Jéḡéḡdé in his work, the worldview of the Yorùbá people is expressly demonstrated through different methods such as *Odu Ifa* (Ifa Corpus) and *Ìja la* (Yorùbá poetry).<sup>10</sup> Some of the corpora and poetry reflect the social world view of Yorùbá people about oneself, the neighbours and neighbourhood, the rulers and the relationship that exists between towns and villages.

One of such poetry relating to success in work is as follows,

*Bi Ori ba n da rokoroko l'ala mu  
 Yi o da bi i pe ko le roko t'e gbe re  
 Ika ki i fe k'a r'e ru k'a so  
 Bi Ori ba n da so deso de l'ala mu  
 Yi o da bi i pe ko lee p'e ran t'e gbe re  
 A ta ri l'ala ya nmo, Ori l'e le jo  
 Ko s'òo s'a ti i -ba 'nii -ja l'e hin Ori eni  
 Ori e ni n ii wi pe k'o ye 'ni,  
 A ka nde o mo o s'ee fi ja gba.* Interpretation:

If a farmer's head is against him  
 It will appear as if he cannot work like his colleagues  
 The wicked do not want one to unburden his burden  
 If a hunter's head is against him  
 It will appear as if he cannot fish like his colleagues  
 A man's head is his most intimate deity  
 There is no *Òri s'a* working against one except one's head  
 A man's head decrees success for him  
*Àkàndé* is a difficult child to earn by quarrel.<sup>11</sup>

In the poetry above, *Orí* is portrayed as the centre force of all other activities that the body carries out. It also reflects the society as occupied with fortune and misfortune, good and bad luck and that *Orí* determines success or otherwise. The society in the poem is in addition depicted as occupied with wicked "forces" that are not happy when success comes one's way. A Yorùbá man first suspects his neighbours when he has a problem. This brings to relevance the philosophy that there cannot be external opposition if there is no internal foe. This worldview is expressed in proverbs as: *Bi 'ku ile o pani t'o de o le pani*, meaning, if there is no betrayer at home, the enemy from outside

<sup>10</sup> A.S. Jéḡéḡdé, 2002. The Yorùbá cultural construction of health and illness. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*. 11:3. 322-335. 325.

<sup>11</sup> A.S. Jéḡéḡdé 2002. The Yorùbá cultural construction of health and illness. 325.

cannot attack. *Bí oṣṣìrì oṣṣìlàn, aláṣṣàṣṣà oṣṣìlẹ̀ wòṣṣìlẹ̀*, interpreted as: if there is no crevice in the wall, the lizard cannot get in. The third proverb: *Eṣṣìhìnkúṣṣìlẹ̀ lóṣṣìtáṣṣì wá, ilẹ̀ṣṣìlẹ̀ṣṣìlẹ̀ nṣṣìgbe*, means that the enemy is so close by that they can be found in the house, the backyard and the neighbourhood. The implication of these three proverbs suggests that Yorùbá society feels that there is insecurity everywhere and that the nearest place from where attack comes is the house and the neighbourhood. These proverbs sound warning to people to be watchful about whatever they do and whoever they are relating with in the family and the neighbourhood, before suspecting enemies from outside. As a result of this tone of insecurity in the society, people become more careful. This worldview is important because it portrays values associated with good health, security and carefulness.

This consequently enhanced the church's drive towards conversion. One of our interview respondents corroborated this by stating that Christ Apostolic Church was noted for associating with the indigenous people and making converts out of them. He claimed that having relationship with this category of people made the church to be better entrenched in the people's culture.<sup>12</sup> This in no small means is facilitating the cultural integration drive that the government is trying to achieve in Nigeria.

Another advantage and potential of the accommodation of the African elements in Christ Apostolic Church is that it enhanced the promotion of hard work and productiveness. Yorùbá people of Southwestern Nigeria are engaged in various activities that promote their economic interests. Before Nigeria's independence and few years after then, Yorùbá people believed in being industrious and in promoting the advancement of wealth through working hard. The current trend is that many people, who could have been more productive in the farm, are in the cities, hunting for white collar jobs and cheap money. At that time, the gap, which existed between the rich and the poor, was meagre. Now, educated elites and the very rich in the society have widened the gap between them and the poor.<sup>13</sup> It was believed that money abounded in the rural areas and the main means of getting the money was farming and trading.<sup>14</sup> That probably gave birth

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<sup>12</sup> O. Omóṣṣìtárá, *Interview Respondent*.

<sup>13</sup> The Telematic Center, Exeter University. 2001. Contemporary Yorùbá life as seen by E. Jéṣṣìgèṣṣìdèṣṣì. Retrieved Nov. 23, 2009, from [http://www.molli.org.u/Yorùbá/aboutYorùbá/contemporary\\_life.htm](http://www.molli.org.u/Yorùbá/aboutYorùbá/contemporary_life.htm).

<sup>14</sup> The Telematic Center, Exeter University. 2001. *Political and economic life in Yorùbá*. Retrieved

to a popular saying among the people that money abounds in the bush (*Ìgbé lowó wà*). However, other vital products outside farming were also sources of income. Such crops cultivated included staple produce as yam, cassava, maize, rice and different kinds of vegetables as tomato, okra, onion and eggplants. They further cultivated cash crops including cocoa, oil palm, cola nuts and cotton. Indigenous Yorùbá people had their means of perpetuating their gains and expanding their businesses. One of such means was the offering of prayers and sacrifices to the fertility deities before the commencement of each agricultural year. They believed that by so doing, productivity would be enhanced. In addition, sacrifices and prayers against imminent drought and lack of rain were performed. During harvest, portions of different farm produce were offered as sacrifices of thanksgiving.

In relation to trading, Yorùbá people believe in being versatile in business. Yorùbá men and women engage in such businesses as buying and selling farm produce such as cola nut, palm oil and cotton. They also engage in crafts as “tie and dye”, tree carving, earth moulding, sculpture, making and selling of beads and artefacts.<sup>15</sup> All these activities are believed to contribute to the economic system of the people. Their spirit of devotion to business is enhanced by Yorùbá key words, phrases and proverbs which are put into practice. These include: *Isẹ* (work, labour), *ere* (gain, dividend, profit), *aṣẹ* (accomplishment), *aṣin* (lack, want, poverty) *aṣeyori* (successful accomplishment) and *mi mu ra sise* (working hard). When Yorùbá people want to portray God as the sole giver of accomplishment, wealth and riches, they employ proverbs as *kirakita ko mo la, ka sise bi eru ko da nkan Oluwa lo n gbe niiga*. This means that working hard does not necessarily amount to becoming rich if God has not sanctioned it. If they want to sermonise about working hard, they make use of poetry as *Isẹ l’agbe nse nile aro, Isẹ Aluko nse lale osun*. Here, they encourage the lazy to work hard and the diligent not to relent by making use of *Agbe* and *Aluko* that are birds. The first bird is

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Nov. 23, 2009, from [http://www.molli.org.uk/Yoruba/1\\_about\\_Yoruba/political\\_life.htm](http://www.molli.org.uk/Yoruba/1_about_Yoruba/political_life.htm).

<sup>15</sup> See B. Lawal, 2002. *Oṣilonise: The hermeneutics of the head and hairstyles among the Yoruba*. Retrieved 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2009 from [www.tribalarts.com/feature/lawal/7.2.A](http://www.tribalarts.com/feature/lawal/7.2.A). Phoebe Hearst Museum and Anthropology and the Regent of University of California. *Yoruba Art and Culture*. Retrieved Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009 from [http://hearstmuseum.berkeley.edu/outreach/pdfs/Yoruba\\_teaching\\_kit.pdf](http://hearstmuseum.berkeley.edu/outreach/pdfs/Yoruba_teaching_kit.pdf).

“associated” with the art of tie and dye while the second bird is “connected” with the skill of beautifying. These birds are known for working hard to attain perfection. In a way of scolding the slothful, they make use of this saying: *Sisere, isere kii pani, àisere ní pani*. This translates as “work, it does not kill, but failing to work kills”.<sup>16</sup>

Yorùbá people further believe that prosperity in economic endeavour and in day-to-day business activity is expedited through consultation of relevant divinities that catalyze the enterprise of their clients towards getting accomplished. This is because unsuccessful accomplishment in the society is attributed to the presence or influence of wicked forces, or a warning that the person in question needed to appease some angry “spiritual forces”. In order to appease them, sacrifices as prescribed by the Babalawo or Ifa Priest could be offered.

In Nigeria, especially in the 80s and 90s, when the country was under military dictatorship, there was economic meltdown in many homes. The gap between the rich and the poor was wide and the so called middle class earner category almost ceased to exist. Around this time, many churches that emerged promised heaven on earth for their members who would stop at nothing to create a better financial sustainability for their families. At this time, the various economic policies implemented by the government such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) did not respond positively to the already battered economy. The resultant adverse effect was too weighty for the already belaboured masses. Apart from this, the political instability of the time gave the churches reasons to establish their theory of divine providence.<sup>17</sup>

We determine from the responses of our interview respondents that Christ Apostolic Church at this time also responded to the myriad economic needs of its members in its own way. Though the distribution of members of the church by profession varied from the professionals to the traders and artisans, they claimed that the church managed to capture the different classes of professions adequately. We do not mean that

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<sup>16</sup> For further reading about Yorùbá arts and crafts, fashion and beauty, see, T. Olórúntóba-Oju, 2007. *Body images, beauty, culture and language in the Nigerian African context*. Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Center. Understanding human sexuality seminar series.

<sup>17</sup> See R. Hackett, 1995. The prosperity gospel in West Africa. R. Robert. Ed. *Religion and transformation of capitalism*. London: Routledge. 206 - 207.

Christ Apostolic Church was doling out money to its members to solve their problems. They claimed that the church made available spiritual resources capable of influencing change in the economic crises of the time.

Some of those interviewed recounted that the church employed the method of consecrating work tools, materials or representative items such as picture of members and loved ones. Tools as pencil and pen for student, carpentry tools for carpenters and scissors and thread for fashion designers were consecrated. Others were stethoscope and drugs for doctors and pharmacists and chalks for teachers. Apart from these, those who had experienced one hindrance or the other in relation to completing their landed property were asked to scoop out some soil on the land and bring such for consecration. By this, the church encourages its members to embrace hard work and dedication to their businesses as the main means of surviving the economic hardship of the time. These people claimed that as a result of the prayers offered on the items they brought, God assisted them to finish up their abandoned project.

The church also stands to survive comfortably through the cordial relationship it has with the lives, passion and feelings of members. Its members came from different religions like Islam and African traditional religion.<sup>18</sup> Some of the Christians who became members of the church around this time also came from the mainline churches like Anglican and Methodist churches.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The opinions of many of those interviewed reflected this. Some of our respondents who were once Muslims professed that before they became fully associated with Christ Apostolic Church, they attended church services clandestinely. We also got this view from some of the testimonies in the churches visited. Some of those testifying would introduce themselves by their Islamic names and then notify the congregation of their baptismal names. Some of those interviewed also reflected that women under purdah usually patronized their assemblies during this period. They claimed that these women would remove their veils the moment they got close to the church and put them on after church programmes. Our respondents further revealed that there were some of the converts from Islam who attended church without the knowledge of their parents, husbands, guardians and relations. There were also converts from African Traditional Religion who abandoned the religion and practices for Christianity. Further, the general opinion of most of our respondents about adherents of African traditional religion was that they all belonged to this religious background formerly before they became converted to the Christian faith. They claimed that their forefathers were believers of the Yorùbá religion.

<sup>19</sup> The researcher interviewed some people who were formerly attending the mainline churches before becoming members of Christ Apostolic Church. One of them Mrs. Adéjo òkéké Adégòkè Nee O òlá, (Aged 40), interviewed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2008 at Ìbàdàn asserted that her parents were members of the Anglican church. She alleged that she left the Anglican church in her quest for solution to some spiritual problems she encountered. Another respondent, Miss. Olúseun O mó pò, (Aged 30) interviewed on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July 2008 at Ire, Òsùn State claimed that though she was born into the Methodist Church, she

One of our respondents Pastor Oluṣṣeṣe Moṣṣeṣe narrated that between 1989 and 1998, there was proliferation of assemblies in the church.<sup>20</sup> Another respondent, Pastor J.S. Adéṣíṣí claimed that Christ Apostolic Church started to gain more membership as from 1985 when it became evident that military rule had come to stay and many infrastructural benefits that used to be rendered free started to be sold. He gave examples as education where pupils had to pay school fees and health where the sick would pay for treatment. He also claimed that as the military era was bedevilled with a lot of economic woes for the country, many families found it difficult to feed. He alleged further that people sought refuge in churches and that Christ Apostolic Church happened to provide spiritual solutions to their problems at the time.<sup>21</sup>

Another respondent Pastor I.O. Akínpeṣe luṣe claimed that the church was very vigorous in the 90s vis-à-vis organising revivals and that this attracted members to her. He claimed that many of those who patronised the church were people of low income who believed that through miracles they could make it in life.<sup>22</sup> Apart from the economic challenges that worried many people during this time, there were also other challenges believed to have spiritual causes.

Apart from the views of our interview respondents, Òṣunrìnṣe A.O. in his work noted that Christ Apostolic Church introduced some selected methods of dispensing Divine Healing in the 80s and 90s which led to increment and retention of members. They include the use of sanctified water, anointing oil, prayer for barren women (*Ìpaṣe Alaṣíyè* and *Onibisi*), activities of the faith homes (*Ile Agbeṣeṣe*), and economic/financial healings. He claimed that Christ Apostolic Church used these means to draw membership and retain them conveniently. According to him, the most prominent problem then was barrenness which the church challenged with the organising of *Ìpaṣe Alaṣíyè* and *Onibisi* which simply means prayer for those seeking protection on their children and for the barren to conceive. He alleged that the church

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opted for Christ Apostolic Church because she needed admission into a higher institution which had eluded her previously.

<sup>20</sup> O. Mòṣṣeṣe, *Interview Respondent*. Pastor, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè Alafia, Abà-eṣeṣe, Ìbàdàn. Aged 50. Interviewed 6<sup>th</sup> of September, 2009.

<sup>21</sup> J.S. Adéṣíṣí, *Interview Respondent*. Pastor. Christ Apostolic Church Oke-Ibukun Asegun Alakia, Ìbàdàn. Aged 52. Interviewed 17<sup>th</sup> of September, 2009.

<sup>22</sup> I.O. Akínpeṣe luṣe, *Interview Respondent*. Pastor Christ Apostolic Church, Oṣeṣe-Agbarṣe Odo-Oṣeṣe, Ìbàdàn. Aged 55. Interviewed 22<sup>nd</sup> of September, 2009.

established *Ile Agbebi* (Faith Homes) where pregnant women could deliver their babies<sup>23</sup>. As a result of this establishment, many mostly from the established churches and other religions became members. This also increased in no small means the women and children's population. The use of effigy and pictures attracted adherents of traditional religion and those desiring deliverance from evil. Its use was also important to enhance prayer and faith of the barren apart from its use in facilitating prayers that addressed other problems. When the church discovered that its membership had increased, they saw that there was the need to establish more assemblies to take care of the increase.<sup>24</sup>

This leads us to discussing the impact of this means of solving the problem of barrenness in the church. We felt that this means of solving barrenness replaced the traditional method in Yorùbá religion of consulting fertility deities for babies conveniently. It was also observed that barren women in the church attended the programme religiously as the women at the fertility shrines would do. In the 90s, some Christ Apostolic Church assemblies would invite pregnant women to come with baby wares as part of the requirements for becoming pregnant. An interview with Pastor Abraham Akiñpeṣelu revealed that such a practice was in place in some Christ Apostolic Church assemblies which included his assembly. He claimed that the practice was instituted to generate and maintain the faith of the expectant women who would do anything in order to get pregnant. He alleged that such programmes usually took place quarterly in his assembly and would last for three days. He professed that the attendees would come promptly and observed the three days prayers with seriousness. He alleged that this means of solving barrenness worked as many babies were delivered. He further

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<sup>23</sup> A.O. Ogúnrinádé, 2009. Christ Apostolic Church and healthcare delivery in southwestern Nigeria with reference to divine healing in the 80s and 90s. Paper presented for discussion at conference on Religion, politics and national development at Faculty of Education conference room, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. 26<sup>th</sup> -29<sup>th</sup> October, 2009. 1-14.

<sup>24</sup> E.O. Olájídé, *Interview Respondent*. Personnel of the Department of Church Registration, Christ Apostolic Church Headquarters Anlugbua, Basorun, Ibadan. Former Director of Publicity. (Aged 60). Interviewed 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2009. S.O. Owolabi. Pastor. *Interview Respondent*. Personnel of the Department of Church Registration, Christ Apostolic Church Headquarters Anlugbua, Basorun, Ibadan. Aged 58. Interviewed 3<sup>rd</sup> June. O. Olúsesí, *Interview Respondent*. Director of Publicity Department, Christ Apostolic Church Headquarters Anlugbua, Basorun, Ibadan. (Aged 48). Interviewed 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2009. These respondents claimed that the increase through fertility prayer constituted 65% of membership between 1990 and 2000.

claimed that this led to increment in attendance in the church and that the population of women in the church swelled tremendously.<sup>25</sup>

We observed that it was at this period that babies were given such names as *Ìyanu-Jesu* (Jesus' Miracle) or simply *Ìyanu* (Miracle). Other names associated with the moment included *Ayomiku* meaning my joy is full and *Ayomidé* that is my joy has come. Our observation was confirmed by those interviewed in the course of the field work. One of our interview respondents, Pèkun Owóye claimed that this period could be regarded as children's harvest in the church. His reason was that many of those seeking babies then were blessed with children<sup>26</sup> and an overall huge increase in membership population.<sup>27</sup>

Though imprecation prayer may be unacceptable in some churches, Christ Apostolic Church made use of this means to attract members. Although some are of the opinion that the church encourages its members to curse their enemies, we got to know that the church does not believe in cursing neither does it encourage it. These are prayers that recognise that the enemies are wicked and always trying to destroy their adversaries. The church made its members to believe that imprecation prayers are targeted toward both physical and spiritual enemies who are continually aiming at hurting Christians. Members of the church, therefore, believed that imprecation prayers should not be regarded as curses since they believed that cursing is devilish. This type of prayer was able to win the patronage of many people because the church taught its members that the world was evil and that Christians needed prayer to fortify themselves. This position was based on the fact that the world was evil and that some wicked forces were at work perpetrating the evil. The church made its members to believe that if David who was known as one of the writers of the book of Psalms engaged imprecation prayers and God did not hesitate to hear him, then imprecation prayers are good for Christians.<sup>28</sup> We asked some members of the church whether they felt comfortable saying imprecation prayer

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<sup>25</sup> A. Akinpèlú, *Interview Respondent*. Assembly Pastor. Christ Apostolic Church, Àgba-la Itura, Headquarters Olode, Ìbàdàn. Aged 48. Interviewed 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2008.

<sup>26</sup> P. Owoye, *Interview Respondent*. Chorister in the 80s and 90s at Christ Apostolic Church, Àgba-la Itura. Old Ifè Road, Ìbàdàn. Interviewed 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2008.

<sup>27</sup> J. Jacob, *Interview Respondent*. Pastor and Youth Officer for Christ Apostolic Church Worldwide, Anlugbua, Basòrun, Ibadan. Aged 48. Interviewed 3<sup>rd</sup> of June, 2009.

<sup>28</sup> We gathered the opinions of members and clergy of the church about imprecation prayers. Their responses are positive towards it as reflected here.



and whether it was result oriented. Their response was that there was no harm if they attacked an enemy of progress as long as they did not engage in diabolical means like the enemies. They claimed that the only way of knowing whether it was good to pray such a prayer was to judge whether God answered such a prayer. And whether it was result oriented, they alleged that it was. One of them Miss. Nainot Akínye òlé claimed that the prayer was warlike and efficient in positioning one against the enemies and making one overcome them. She, however, said that imprecation prayer should only be prayed when there was need for it. She advised that it should be offered when an imminent attack was evidently ahead.<sup>29</sup> A recent study also complemented this. In the study, majority of those interviewed agreed that imprecation prayers were potent in surmounting evil forces.<sup>30</sup>

From this, we notice that the church had sensitised the members about the need to fortify themselves with prayers and to be wary of the enemies just as the Yorùbá traditional society believed. Members were put on alert to suspect anybody and to query any event that happened around them to see whether such happenings could pose any threat to their individual or corporate existence. This corresponds with the Yorùbá ideology about safety and precaution that says: *E fura o, Ìfura loo gu n Àgba. Pa sa o fura Pa sa ja 'na Àja o fura, Àja ji n. Bo ni le o fura Ole ni o gbe lo.* This simply interprets as: Be suspicious for it is the watchword of elders and if the landlord of a house is not careful, robbers would rob the household. We also observe that the concept of members about imprecation prayer in Christ Apostolic Church revealed that revenge was possible in Christendom. We got to know that such revenge is not achieved physically but spiritually and that God would not frown at such a step. However, the church believed that revenge was achieved when enemies got suppressed and Christians triumphed over them.

On the Yorùbá idea about *Orí* and *Ìbo ò de*, we observe that Christ Apostolic Church consciously or otherwise recognised *Orí* as an integral part of the body responsible for bringing good and evil to its carrier. Members of the church, however,

<sup>29</sup> N. Akínye òlé, *Interview Respondent*. Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàlá Ìtura, Òkè-Odò, Lagos. Aged 35. Interviewed the 30<sup>th</sup> of January, 2008.

<sup>30</sup> A. O. Ògúnrinádé, 2008. Responses on adùrà orí-okè in Aladura Church. *BETFA. Journal of the Ògbómò s ó Circle*. 7. 76-85.

protect this visible part carefully thinking that doing so meant protecting the invisible part. As observed in some of the services we attended during the field work, members were asked to place their hands on their heads and pray that *Ìbo* (misfortune) should not infest the heads. This practice extended beyond the church because the leaders of some of the assemblies we visited would instruct their members not to allow strangers or people they did not know their spiritual standards to touch their heads. Adherents of the church already share the belief such as obtained in Yorùbá religion that the first place through which *Ìbo* (misfortune) could penetrate is the *Ori*.

In addition to the above, we notice that the church and her members believe that there is cure for *Ori* if infested with *Ìbo* as in Yorùbá religion. This is because members could be asked to wash their heads with consecrated water in order to remove ill luck and evil. As revealed in chapter seven, prayers and songs which they believed could send away misfortune could be offered. Here *Ori* could be addressed or warned that *Ìbo* was an adversary to it and that it should not accommodate *Ìbo* at all. *Ori* is also fortified against evil as in Yorùbá religion where incantations and magical items that could ward evil and misfortune off could be put on the body of the person seeking protection. We observed that members of the church were constantly encouraged by the leaders of their assemblies to pray vigorously about their individual *Ori* not to fall prey to their enemies.

Now to the use of water and oil, we observed from the reply offered by our questionnaire respondents and those interviewed that water and oil have become medicine of a sort in Christ Apostolic Church. The two items have replaced pills and tablets that medical practitioners and pharmacists prescribe and dispense respectively. Adherents of the church reposed immense trust in taking consecrated water and administering anointed oil rather than go to hospitals to see the doctor and receive medication. They believed that the two items, if consecrated, could have the efficacy of healing different kinds of diseases if applied with faith in God. Apart from this, they also believed that the items could be used by Christians and non-Christians alike.

As we gathered from our respondents, spiritualized water and oil were used to fortify property like house, car and work tools. We observed that the church made her members to believe that when these items were put on property, they would send away evil and robbers from stealing the property. This resembles the system of *Aa□le□* in Yorùbá culture. This system was put in place to protect property from strangers. When *Aa□le□* is put on a property, everybody would be warned that such a property should not be touched till the owner would be around to take possession of it. This was a means of protecting any property left in the open from being stolen or tampered with. We gathered from the testimony given by a member of Christ Apostolic Church in one of the assemblies that members refer to consecrated water and oil as *Aa□le□* of a kind. The person claimed that they were once instructed to anoint their cars with anointed oil consecrated in the church and he did so. He alleged that his car was not stolen by car snatchers who snatched a number of vehicles at gunpoint on a highway he was plying because he heeded the instruction by anointing his car. He claimed that the robbers who came en masse made away with six vehicles including the one in front of his own but did not bother to touch his car. He professed that the robbers claimed that they had run out of time and needed to hurry up before being caught.<sup>31</sup>

One of our interview respondents Àya□ns□o□la□ Olu□sína□ claimed that he could not afford to be without the water and oil as there could be need for them anytime. He described it as analgesic for every ailment in his family. He claimed that there was a time one of his neighbours fell into coma and as the person was about to be taken to the hospital, he took the anointing oil and sanctified the person. He claimed that to the amazement of everybody, the man sneezed at first and later moved his feet. After this, he opened his eyes and attempted to rise to his feet. He alleged that everyone including himself experienced unquantifiable surprise at what happened. He concluded that since

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<sup>31</sup> This testimony was given in one of the assemblies of Christ Apostolic Church

then he believed the more in the efficacy of the Pentecostal power to heal and even raise the dead if these items of faith could be applied with faith.<sup>32</sup>

We infer from this that members of the church put a lot of confidence in the efficacy of consecrated water and oil to perform miracle and healing. This method was acclaimed the best for wooing non-Christians into the church. This was because non-Christians found it convenient to take the water and oil from their Christian neighbours and use without the knowledge of members of their religious society who might persecute them. Pastor S.O. Obaseki acclaimed that adherents of other religions especially Islam were coming to the camp where he worked to offer prayers. He said further that they would come to the *Odo Ìwoṣaṣaṣa* (Divine River) situated in the camp to draw water for curing divers ailments.<sup>33</sup> By this means, protection is enhanced for members and new members are enticed into the church.

Christ Apostolic Church also relate with other denominations in the Southwestern part of Nigeria. These denominations include the mainline churches and other African indigenous denominations. Its relationship with the mainline churches started as far as the 1930 Great revival which was patronised by many people from different parts of the country. This was mentioned in details in chapter four of this work. Between 1970 and 2005, Christ Apostolic Church related more often indirectly than directly with the mainline churches. This was obvious in terms of membership gain from the mainline churches to Christ Apostolic Church and vice-versa.<sup>34</sup> Members of Christ Apostolic Church were gained into the mainline churches through different means. One of them includes marriage. This occurs when a man who belongs to the mainline church gets married to a woman from Christ Apostolic Church and vice-versa. However, the reasons why members of the mainline churches patronize Christ Apostolic Church vary.

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<sup>32</sup> O. Àyánsọlá, *Interview Respondent*. Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Olorunda, Ìbàdàn. Aged 45. Interviewed on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June, 2009.

<sup>33</sup> S. O. Obaseki, *Interview Respondent*. Pastor. Resident BIM Camp, Joseph Ayo Babalola Memorial Camp, Ikeji-Aràkẹ̀jẹ̀, Òṣun State, Aged 75. Interviewed on 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2009.

<sup>34</sup> We observed that the ecumenical relationship between the mainline denominations and Christ Apostolic Church at this time in terms of loss and gain of members from these respective denominations was unofficial. This was as a result of the means through which the flow of membership from one to the other was taking place. It was an irreversible flow whereby the mainline denominations lost members to Christ Apostolic Church massively.

They include quest for solution to their day to day life problems, opportunity to worship in a free atmosphere and interest in trying the available prayer tools which could enhance their faith. These include among others objects as we have discussed previously as water and oil and spiritual solution to barrenness.<sup>35</sup> These enhance ecumenism in no small means.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This chapter has appraised the problems and prospects of engaging the African elements in Christ Apostolic Church. It has been identified that through the use of the elements and the objects such as spiritualized water and oil, certain abuses have been permitted which ranged from the idolization of the objects to corrupt and immoral practices within the rank and file of church leaders. It is also observed that the survival of the church rests on the continual use of these elements and objects as they would enhance members' sense of security and retention in the church.

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<sup>35</sup> We also noticed that the diverse tools such as we have identified in this work were employed to attract members to the church. These tools succeeded in attracting them because the people got solutions to their problems.

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY AND GENERAL CONCLUSION

#### 6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study thus far. It evaluates the issues raised in the research and makes recommendations where necessary. It then makes a general conclusion about the issues discussed so far.

#### 6.1 Summary of Study

This research has so far looked into the engagement of the identified African traditional religious elements in the Christ Apostolic Church in Southwestern Nigeria from 1970 to 2005. This was done with the view of determining how far the church in question has both attempted and managed to engage these elements and make them relevant in its liturgy without becoming syncretistic.

This study identifies that mission Christianity, through its formal liturgy, was inadequate for the satisfaction of the spiritual yearnings of the African people and that African Christians became more desirous to fashion out a Christianity which recognised the value of their culture and brought worth to their worldview. They looked forward to practising a Christianity that recognized every moment and every area of their lives under all circumstances. In addition, they wanted a Christianity that emphasized enough spirituality in their spiritually alive culture and worldview. African indigenous churches as self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating structure came to the fore to fill this vacuum. This research, however, notes that Christ Apostolic Church in Southwestern Nigeria between 1970 and 2005 has done much worthy of researching with reference to the use of certain Yorùbá religious elements in its Pentecostal practices.

A critical review of the literature consulted in chapter two reveals that mission Christianity has not done much in the area of indigenizing Christianity in Africa and Nigeria. The literature further reveals that African indigenous churches came to limelight to foster a Christianity that respects the culture of their people. It is also obvious that prayer is one main weapon which formed the bedrock of Aladura spirituality.

Chapter three discusses the call and ministry of Joseph Ayo Babalola before 1930 Great Revival. The chapter considers the events of the revivals that touched some important areas of the Southwestern part of Nigeria and determines the significance of the revivals to the overall making of Aladura Christianity among the Yorùbá people of Southwestern Nigeria. It then considers the factors that led to the emergence of Christ Apostolic Church.

Chapter four begins with an overview of Yorùbá religious and cultural worldviews, where it considers the Yorùbá beliefs in the Supreme Being, divinities and spirits, ancestors, and mysterious powers. It then examines the interaction between the selected African indigenous religious and cultural beliefs and practices among the Yorùbá of Southwestern Nigeria and Christ Apostolic Church within the period the research covers. The elements and objects have been looked into in relation to the objects used, the procedures involved in their use and the functions associated with them.

Chapter five considers the problems and prospects of using African traditional religious elements while chapter six, the concluding chapter, contains the summary, recommendations, and the general conclusion.

## **6.2 Data Assessment and Recommendations**

This research has shown that Christian religion is interpreted based on the worldview of its host and that the religion is better understood and effectively practiced when the indigenous ways of thinking of the congregation is reflected in the liturgy of the church. It has been able to examine this in the case of Christ Apostolic Church. Since the church accommodate the Yorùbá worldview in her liturgy, the adherents of the church derive many benefits in the area of managing the day-to-day challenges of life. This work recommends that other churches need to recognize that their respective cultures are tools for effective mission adventure.

This work observes that the modern Pentecostal practices as introduced and practised in the neo-Pentecostal churches in Nigeria have contributed greatly in eroding the culture of their people. It observes that the attitude of modern Pentecostal churches in Nigeria towards adopting foreign practices in their services to the neglect of the indigenous culture of the people is not good. This research, however, recommends that

neo-Pentecostals need not abandon their roots in the Christianity they practise. They should rather be conscious of the cultural atmosphere surrounding them and make it reflect in their liturgy so as to enhance greater benefits for the church and the members.

As this research has shown that Yorùbá socio-cultural and religious worldviews are good incentives to the survival of any church in general and Christ Apostolic Church specifically, other Christian churches should re-consider their earlier notion about African cultural worldviews in their domains as fetish, barbaric, anti-Christian and non-progressive.

This research observes that a number of cultural and religious practices and concepts inherent in traditional religion exist and may debase ideal Christian teachings. The question that arises is; how much should the message and the messenger adjust or adapt to make the meaning of the message understood without essentially succumbing to compromise? The work recommends that churches should employ compatible or related indigenous practices that will not compromise the Christian doctrine and practices but rather enhance them.

The research shows that through the use of the traditional elements, Christ Apostolic Church, interrelationship between churches is enhanced. This obtains in the fact that many people from other religious and church denominations patronize Christ Apostolic Church either clandestinely or openly, officially or otherwise. The patronage was due to its engagement of the traditional elements we identified and the fact that their use produced positive results in the lives of its members. We observe that ecumenism among churches in relation to direct exchange of views and good relationship between church leaders may not be consistently taking place. Misgivings may result when exodus of members from a church to another occurs. This work recommends that churches should be less mindful of amassing members of one another into their congregation. Rather, they could consider evangelism as paramount and carry out their evangelical works carefully and peacefully to attain the ultimate goal of enriching the kingdom of God.

This research shows that the traditional concepts identified and studied made adherents of the church to be careful about the world they live in. The concepts taught adherents watchfulness and caution. These concepts taught them to be careful of the ground they walk and be conscious of the malevolent beings that inhabit the airspace. They were taught to be alert and counter the onslaughts of the enemies with prayer.



### 6.3 General Conclusion

From the study so far, we can safely conclude that the incorporation of African traditional religious elements into Christ Apostolic Church's liturgy has considerably influenced membership endearment and retention in the church and made it more acceptable to the Yorùbá speaking tribe of Southwestern Nigeria. It is noted that the church had related directly with the people's traditional belief systems. The traditional elements, ideas and beliefs that our research identified (such as spiritualization of the head, earth, pregnancy conception and photograph/object and others) were regularly employed in solving many physical and spiritual challenges of adherents of the church, and this has made the church to positively respond to the existential needs of the people in Southwestern Nigeria.

Apart from meeting the existential needs of Africans, Christ Apostolic Church, through its contextualized Christianity, has to a large extent distinguished itself from the foreign based Christian practices obtainable in the Neo-Pentecostal churches today and made quite a number of its beliefs and practices foreign to African religious temperament.

However, in spite of the fact that the African elements had played immeasurable roles in retaining the members of the church and providing avenue for freer form of worship, their uses have been abused in recent times. Thus, for African elements to always be relevant in church liturgy, compromise, syncretism, corruption and immorality and their associated dangers should be avoided.

The study further shows that the increase in membership that Christ Apostolic Church in Southwestern Nigeria observed in the period we have researched was due to the fact that the spiritual practices of the church related directly with the people's traditional belief systems. The traditional elements, ideas and beliefs examined in this work were regularly employed in addressing many physical and spiritual challenges of adherents of the church during the period we studied.

It has been identified through this research that these elements were used as tools towards (apart from enhancing the membership retention and promoting freer form of worship) encouraging contextualization of African practices within the church which

missionary and neo-Pentecostal Christianity could not portray. This research showed Christ Apostolic Church as a church movement that confronted missionary Christianity in the pre-colonial era for insensitivity about the people it came to revive. The church also struggles to be distinguished from the neo-Pentecostal trend imported from Europe and America during the period under research through the encouragement of indigenous practices albeit unconsciously or otherwise in its spiritual practices.

It is evident that churches today claim not to have anything to do with African Traditional Religion, be it directly or indirectly. All of them assert that they derive their strength from God and do everything based on the teachings of the Bible and the directives of the Holy Spirit. However, Christ Apostolic Church as an indigenous denomination in the Southwestern part of Nigeria has appropriated some African Traditional Religion's elements in its liturgy which shows that there is a link between the church and the religion. These links are noticeable in relation to spiritual manipulation which is popular in African Traditional Religion to achieve expected results such as security, protection enhancement, blessing and power. In the case of the church, the African traditional religious elements such as head, pregnancy conception, picture and object and the earth that have been appropriated into the liturgy of the church shows that the church is conscious of the fact that security, power, prosperity and fertility are paramount issues in an ever growing competitive world where everybody aspires to achieve greatness by every means. This further shows that African Traditional Religion in Southwestern Nigeria plays an important role in the overall material and spiritual consciousness of the church and its members.

Finally, this research discovers that the appropriation of some natural and synthetic elements used in African Traditional Religion in Christ Apostolic Church shows a link between the church and the religion. Thus, the concepts of spiritual manipulation and protection enhancement are evident in the procedures of both African Traditional Religion and Christ Apostolic Church.

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## APPENDICES

### Questionnaire Results

#### RESPONDENTS' REACTION TO RESEARCH STATEMENT

Keys: A= Agree      D= Disagree      N= No Comment

#### Part I: African worldview and religious elements in the liturgy of Christ Apostolic Church in Southwestern Nigeria.

S/N	Research Statement	A	D	N	Total
1	You rely on divine intervention when trying to solve economic related problems	196 83%	23 9.8%	17 7.2%	236 100%
2	Members of mainline denominations also attend Christ Apostolic Church	175 74.2%	31 13.1%	30 12.7%	236 100%
3	Many people are attracted to your church owing to manifestations of spiritual gifts	190 80.5%	33 14.0%	13 5.5%	236 100%
4	The physical head had spiritual capacity to harbour evil or fortune.	166 70.3%	40 17.0%	30 12.7%	236 100%
5	Barrenness transcends medical reasons	189 80.2%	29 12.2%	18 7.6%	236 100%
6	Material items convey spiritual messages to recipients	186 78.8%	30 12.7%	20 8.5%	236 100%
7	Prayers said on pictures of people in spiritual bondage provide quick solution.	187 79.4%	34 14.4%	16 6.2%	236 100%
8	Prayers said on pictures of people in spiritual bondage had desired effects.	188 79.7%	38 16.1%	10 4.2%	236 100%
9	Praying on pictures and other items brings desired results on those who own them in reality.	186 78.8%	34 14.4%	16 6.8%	236 100%
10	Special Prayer for those seeking the fruit of the womb ( <i>Ìpa de Ala bi ye</i> ) in Christ Apostolic Church brings positive results.	205 86.9%	28 11.9%	03 1.2%	236 100%
11	Water performs cleansing and healing functions	205 86.9%	24 10.1%	07 3.0%	236 100%
12	You use sanctified water to cure ill-luck.	208 88.1%	18 7.6%	10 4.2%	236 100%
13	Effective healing results using sanctified water and oil	208 88.1%	23 9.8%	05 2.1%	236 100%



14	Imprecation prayers (prayers that curse the enemy and plead to God for vengeance) such as obtained in Yorùbá indigenous Religion ( <i>Èpe</i> and <i>Àpèta</i> ) are effective means of overcoming the enemies in Christ Apostolic Church	169 71.61%	41 17.37%	26 11.02 %	236 100%
15	There is the need to pray aggressively in order to achieve desired results.	176 74.6%	44 18.6%	16 6.8%	236 100%
16	<i>Ori</i> (Destiny) and <i>Ibo</i> (ill-luck/misfortune) are paramount themes in Yorùbá indigenous religion and Christ Apostolic Church.	133 56.4%	44 18.6%	59 25.0%	236 100%
17	<i>Ayé</i> (odd world or wicked world) is seen as a wicked place in Yorùbá religions and in Christ Apostolic Church	191 81.0%	31 13.1%	14 5.9%	236 100%
18	You engaged in aggressive prayers, night vigils, and special revival programmes to manage and even suppress the activities of evil forces	159 67.2%	42 18.0%	35 14.8%	236 100%
19	Divine Healing in the church is a better and more efficient solution to health problems.	182 77.12%	26 11.02%	28 11.86 %	236 100%
20	Evil and good forces are residing in the earth and they are manipulated for good or evil	163 69.2%	47 20%	26 10.8%	236 100%

## REFERENCES

### (A) PRIMARY SOURCES

#### I List and Particulars of Interview Respondents whose views are very important and are reflected in this work

S/No	Name	Particulars	Age	Date
1.	Aboodu nri n I.	Freelance Evangelist. Formerly an evangelist with Christ Apostolic Church, Àgba la Ìtura, Old Ife Road, Ìbàdàn.	60yrs	11th January, 2008
2.	Adebi si J.S.	Pastor, Christ Apostolic Church Òkè-Ìbùkún Asẹgun Ala ki a, Ìbàdàn.	52yrs.	17th September, 2009.
3	Ade digba A.	Chorister, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgba la Ìtura, Abùlé Ègba, Oke-Odo, Lagos.	35yrs.	6th August, 2008.
4	Ade go ke A.	Former Member, Bishop Akinyele Memorial Anglican Church, Iwo Road, Ìbàdàn.	40yrs	10th March 2008
5	Adekòjo T.	Former member, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Àla fi a, Loyola, Old Ife Road, Loyola, Ìbàdàn.	52yrs	2nd April, 2009.
6	Ade oye A.	Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Abà-E fun, O láògún , Ìbàdàn.	43yrs	23rd January, 2008.
7	Ade ro unmu K	Pastor, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgba la Ìtura, Olo do, Ìbàdàn.	34yrs	16th August, 2008.
8	Ade s o la M.	Member of Christ Apostolic Church, Are mo Ìbàdàn.	42yrs	4th December, 2009.
9	Ade tu nji A.	Member, Bishop Akinyele Memorial Anglican Church, Ìwo Road, Ìbàdàn.	67yrs	22nd August, 2009.
10	Adewoye E.A	Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Alábùkúnfún, 28, Gbogi Street, Àkùré.	45yrs	23rd June, 2009.
11	Ade ye mi A.	Deacon, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgba la Ìtura, Headquarters, O ló de, Ìbàdàn.	42yrs	22nd September, 2008.
12.	Adu no la S.	Member of Christ Apostolic Church, Àgba la Ìtura, Old Ife Road, Ìbàdàn until 2004.	38yrs	10th September, 2008.
13.	Afo la bi S.O.	Curator, Ò s un Ò s ogbo	50yrs	11th of June, 2009.

		Sacred Groove, Òsogbo, Òsun State.		
14.	Ajibola M.	Deacon, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbala Itura, Old Ife Road, Ìbàdàn.	57yrs	25th September, 2008.

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15	Akínpeṣṣluṣ A.	Assembly Pastor, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàṣlṣ Itura, Headquarters Oṣlṣdeṣṣ, Ìbàdàn.	48yrs	16th June, 2008.
16	Akínpeṣṣluṣ I.O.	Pastor Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Agbaṣra Odoṣ-Oṣbaṣ, Ìbàdàn.	55yrs	24th September, 2009.
17	Akíntóṣlá B.	Elder, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Ìsṣéṣgun, Òkè-Alà, Adó-Èkìtì.	62yrs	25th September, 2009.
18	Akínnyeṣleṣṣ E.	Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàlá Itura, Old Ifèṣ Road, Ìbàdàn, between 1982 and 1988.	58yrs	31st November, 2008.
19	Aléṣṣhinlṣṣyéṣṣ P.	Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Ìyè, Dalimoore, Adó-Èkìtì.	62yrs	25th September, 2009.
20	Amusan J.	Member. Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàṣlṣ Itura, Abuṣleṣ Èṣgbaṣ, Òkè-Odoṣ, Lagos.	40yrs	6th August, 2008.
21	Aruwaji, O.	Elder, Christ Apostolic Church, Bethel, Òkè-Alà, Bàshírì Road, Adó-Èkìtì.	52	22nd September, 2009.
22	Àyáṣnsṣoṣlṣ O.	Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Oṣloṣṣrunda, Ìbàdàn.	45yrs	16th June, 2009.
23	Babajide E.A.	Elder, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàlá Itura, Oṣlṣdeṣṣ Headquarters, New Ife Road, Ìbàdàn.	49yrs.	23rd June, 2008.
24	Baloṣgun B.	Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè Àlṣfìṣṣṣ, Ìwoṣ Road Ìbàdàn.	43yrs	23rd June, 2008.
25	Doherty J.B.	Elder, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàṣlṣ Itura Oṣlṣdeṣṣ, New Ife Road, Ìbàdàn.	60yrs	7th October, 2008.
26	Faṣdiṣpeṣṣ L.	Chorister, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè Alafia, Ìwó Road Ìbàdàn.	39yrs	16th June, 2008.
27	Faṣgbileṣ B.	Christ Apostolic Church, Kosobo Oṣṣyoṣṣ.	33yrs	7th August, 2007.
28	Faṣwaṣleṣ F.	Pastor, Christ Apostolic Church, Oke-Ibukun Asṣéṣgun, Alákíá, Ìbàdàn.	42yrs	21st August, 2008.
29	Faṣwoṣleṣ O.	Member, St. Peter Anglican	40yrs	16th July, 2009.

		Church (Cathedral) Areṣṣomṣṣ, Ìbàdàn.		
30	Hassan	Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbaṣṣlaṣṣ Ìtura between 1980 and 1998.	39yrs	12th April, 2008.
31	Jacob J.	Pastor and Youth Officer for Christ Apostolic Church Worldwide, Anlugbua, Basṣòṣrun, Ibadan.	48yrs.	3rd June, 2009

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32	Johnson O.	Chorister, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbaṣṣa Itura, Old Ifè Road, Ibàdàn.	62yrs	22nd September, 2008.
33	Moṣṣgaṣṣi O.	Pastor, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè Àláfíṣṣa, Aba-eṣṣun, Ibàdàn.	50yrs	6th September, 2009.
34	Obaseki S.O.	Resident BIM Camp, Joseph Ayoṣṣ Babaloṣṣa Memorial Camp, Ìkeji-Arákeji, Òṣṣun State.	75yrs	6th June, 2009.
35	Oṣṣgiṣṣni A.	Chorister, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàlá Itura, Old Ifè Road, Ibàdàn.	50yrs	10th September, 2008.
36	Ójoṣṣ Oluṣṣkuṣṣnleṣṣ	Member, CAC Àgbaṣṣa Itura, Ibàdàn.	35yrs	4th August, 2007.
37	Oṣṣlájídé E.O.	Pastor and Personnel of Christ Apostolic Church (Church Registration Department) Headquarters Anlugbua, Basòṣṣun, Ibadan.	60yrs	3rd June, 2009.
38	Oṣṣlaṣṣleṣṣkan A.	Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbaṣṣa Àṣeyoṣṣri, Oju-Irin, Ibàdàn.	42yrs	12th May, 2008.
39	Oṣṣlásṣùpòṣṣ A.	Formerly a member of Christ Apostolic Church.	42	13th May, 2008.
40	Oṣṣlòṣṣrunlógbóṣṣn, G.	Elder, Christ Apostolic Church, Revival Centre, Awedele Bashiri Road, Ado-Ekiti.	60yrs	13th September, 2009.
41	Oluṣṣkoṣṣtun B.	Pastor, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbaṣṣa Itura. Headquarters Oṣṣlòṣṣdeṣṣ, Ibàdàn.	59yrs	16th June, 2008.
42	Olúsṣesí O.	Director of Publicity Department, Christ Apostolic Church Headquarters Anlugbua, Basòṣṣun, Ibadan.	48yrs	3rd June, 2009.
43	Oluṣṣsṣoṣṣla ṣṣC.	Pastor, Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbaṣṣa Itura, Headquarters, Oṣṣlòṣṣdeṣṣ, Ibàdàn.	50yrs	10th September, 2008.
44	Oluṣṣyeṣṣmí O.	Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè Àláfíṣṣa, Ìwo Road, Ibàdàn.	29yrs	14th September, 2008.
45	Olúwajuyítán J.O	Pastor, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Alábùkúnfún, 28, Gbogi Street, Àkùréṣṣ.	50yrs	23rd June, 2009.
46	Oṣṣmópéṣṣ G.	Elder, Christ Apostolic Church,	50yrs	13th October, 2009.

		Oke-Itunu, Opopogboro, Adébáyò□, Adó-Èkìtì.		
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47	Oṣṣmóṣṣpòṣṣ Oluwaseun	Former member of a Methodist Church and later a member of Christ Apostolic Church Student Association of The Polytechnic, Ire. Interviewed at Irée Poly, Òṣṣṣṣṣun State.	25yrs	16th July, 2008
48	Oṣṣmoṣṣṣtaṣṣraṣṣ O.	Pastor and Assistant General Superintendent. Christ Apostolic Church, Chapel of Restoration, Ìwo-Road, Ìbàdàn.	63yrs	18th January, 2008.
49	Oṣṣmoṣṣṣtáyòṣṣ Iyanu	Elder, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Ayòṣṣ, Along Nova Road, Ado-Èkìtì.	47yrs	23rd September, 2009.
50	Òṣṣóṣṣṣ Olukunle	Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Covenant Land, Oṣṣlòṣṣrunsṣṣògo Street, Oṣṣlòṣṣrundá Nova, Adó-Èkìtì.	50yrs	24th September, 2009.
51	Owólábí S.O.	Personnel at the Department of Church Registration, Christ Apostolic Church Headquarters Anlugbua, Basṣṣòṣṣrun, Ibadan.	58yrs	3rd June, 2009.
52	Oyeṣṣdaṣṣpoṣṣṣ	Elder, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkeṣṣ-Ìmoṣṣṣleṣṣṣ Agbeni, Ìbàdàn.	50yrs	17th July, 2008.
53	Sṣóbógun A.O.	Member, Christ Apostolic Church Àgbàlá Ìtura, Old Ifèṣṣ Road.	38yrs	14th of June, 2007.
54	Sunday G.	Member of Christ Apostolic Church. Àgbàlá Ìtura Òkè-Odò, Agége, Lagos.	31yrs	12th September, 2009.
55	Timothy Ebunoluwa	Member, Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Ayòṣṣ, Along Nova Road, Ado-Èkìtì.	33yrs	16th September, 2009.



## (II) Archival Materials

Date	Particulars	Location
13th August, 1930	This document is titled “Faith-Healing in Íles□à” written and sent by the Assistant District Officer, Íles□à, to the District Officer, Ile-Ife.	National Archives, File No. 662, class Mark-Oyo Prof. 1, 304-306.
25th Aug. 1930	This document is titled “Faith-Healing in Íles□à” and was written and sent by the Resident, Oyo Province, to the Honourable, The Secretary, Southern Provinces, Enugu.	National Archives, File No. 662, class Mark-Oyo Prof. 1, 307.
25th March 1931	This document is titled “Faith Tabernacle-Íles□à” and was written and sent by the Assistant District Officer, Íles□à through the District Officer, Ife to the Honourable, the Senior Resident, Oyo Province	National Archives, File No. 662, class Mark-Oyo Prof. 1, 308-309.
3rd August, 1931	This document is titled Aladura Movement and was written by the Secretary, Southern Province, Enugu Area to the Resident, Oyo Province, Oyo.	National Archives, File No. 662, class Mark-Oyo Prof. 1, 310-312
6th October, 1931	This document is titled Aladura Movement and was written by the Assistant Commissioner of Police, Oyo-Ondo Province, Ibadan to the Resident, Oyo.	National Archives, File No. 662, class Mark-Oyo Prof. 1, 313.

23rd October, 1931	This document is titled Aladura Movement and was written by the Assistant Commissioner of Police, Oyo-Ondo Province, Ibadan to the Resident, Oyo.	National Archives, File No. 662, class Mark-Oyo Prof. 1, 314
29th October, 1931	This document is titled Aladura Movement and was written by the Assistant Commissioner of Police, Oyo-Ondo Province, Ibadan to the Resident, Oyo.	National Archives, File No. 662, class Mark-Oyo Prof. 1, 315-317
18th July, 1933	This document was written by the Commissioner of Police, Calabar Province, Calabar to the Divisional Officer, Ibadan.	National Archives, File No. 1146, IBA. DIV. 1. 300.
29th July, 1933	This document is titled "Joseph Babalo□lá -Faith Healer" and was written by the District Officer, Ibadan to the Acting Commissioner of Police, Calabar Province, Calabar	National Archives, File No. 1146, IBA. DIV. 1. 301-302.
11th June, 1934	This document is titled "Aladura Movement" and was written by the Commissioner of Police, Oyo-Ondo Province, Ibadan to the District Officer, Ibadan.	National Archives, File No. 1146, IBA. DIV. 1.

### III Magazines and Bulletins Consulted in the Archive of Christ Apostolic Church Headquarters, Ibadan

- Anon. 1980. C.A.C. Convention 1980, Commissioning of the WOSEM Secretariat. *Christ Apostolic*. November. 9 &16.
- Anon. 1985. Focus on Àgbàlá Ìtura. *Christ Apostolic*. Vol. 15, No. 4, April, 18.
- Anon. 2001. Creation of new zones. *News Bulletin of Christ Apostolic Church Worldwide*. September. 4.
- Anon. 2002. Mass Ordination of Elders. *News Bulletin of Christ Apostolic Church Worldwide*. January-February. 3.
- Anon. 2002. Decentralisation of Conferences and Conventions. *News Bulletin of Christ Apostolic Church Worldwide*. March-April 2002. 3.
- Anon. 2002. Splitting of Large DCC into Small Units. *News Bulletin of Christ Apostolic Church Worldwide*. May-June, 2002. 2.

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#### **IV Participation Observation Schedule**

##### **ÀKÚRÉ**

All Saints Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Ìtura, Òyème kùn District Headquarters,  
Àkúré Coordinating Council III

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Alábùkúnfún, 28, Gbogí Street, Àkúré.

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Igan, Cathedral Area, Àkúré.

Christ Apostolic Church Òkè-Ìpinnu, Opposite St Louis Nursery and Primary School,  
Òndó Road, Àkúré.

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Ìtura, Àkúré.

World Soul Winning Evangelistic Ministry Secretariat, Òkè Ìtura Street, Behind Christ  
Apostolic Church Grammar School.

##### **ÒSOGBO**

Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàlá Ìtunnú, 1 Fániyan Lane, off Olorunsogbo Street,  
Behind Òsun Presidential Hotel, Òsogbo .

Christ Apostolic Church, Ebenezer Assembly, Ilè-Àánú District Headquarters, Kola  
Balógun Area, Òsogbo.

Christ Apostolic Church, Fountain of Comfort II, Òsogbo.

Christ Apostolic Church, Holy Trinity, Àgbàlá Jesù tó fún mi, Òsogbo.

Christ Apostolic Church, No. 20, Latona Street, Òsogbo.

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè Àánú, Ayétòrò Zonal Headquarters III, Church Street,  
Ayétòrò, Òsogbo.

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè Ìgbàlá, Gbólami Zonal Headquarters, Gbólami Junction,  
Òsogbo.

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Ìyanu II, Costain District Headquarters, Ìtaolókan Street,  
Òsogbo.

Christ Apostolic Church, Oníbúre, Òsogbo.

Christ Apostolic Church, Oriire District Headquarters, Òkè-Oríire, Ibudó Adurá  
Àgbàyo-Orí, Fiwàs-ayé Area, off Kólá Balógun, Old Ìkírun Road, Òsogbo.

Òsun Òsogbo Sacred Groove, Òsogbo, Òsun State.

## **ABÉÒKÚTA**

Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàlá Ìtura. Mountain of Mercy, Elèwée-ran. Abéòkúta.

Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàlá Ìtura, Òbántokò, Abéòkúta.

Christ Apostolic Church, Camp Assembly, Eleweran, Abéòkúta.

Christ Apostolic Church, Egbe District Coordinating Council, Lisàbí Avenue, Ìsàlè Aké, Abéòkúta.

Christ Apostolic Church, No. I, Ilè Áánú, Eléwée-ran.

Christ Apostolic Church, Ogba Gesthemane, Adátán, Abéòkúta.

## **LAGOS**

Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàlá Ìtura, Abúlé Ègbá, Òkè-Odò, Lagos.

Christ Apostolic Church, Jesus the Deliverer, Ìkeja, Lagos.

Christ Apostolic Church, Jesus the Deliverer, Mineran, Lagos.

Christ Apostolic Church, Ilé-Ìsinmi, Agbélékalè, Lagos.

Christ Apostolic Church, Ìmólè-Ayò, Agbelekale Bus Stop, Lagos.

Christ Apostolic Church, Mercy-Land, Àkútè, Lagos.

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè Ìgbàlà, Kétu District, Lagos.

Christ Apostolic Church Rock of Salvation, Ládojà Street, Ìdímù, Lagos.

## **IBADAN**

Christ Apostolic Church, Abà-Efun, Oláògún, Ìbàdàn.

Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàlá Àsẹyọrí, Ojú-Irin, Ìbàdàn.

Christ Apostolic Church, Àgbàlá Ìtura. Headquarters Olode, Ìbàdàn.

Christ Apostolic Church, Àgba-la Ìtura, Old Ife Road, Ìbàdàn

Christ Apostolic Church, Aremo, Ibadan.

Christ Apostolic Church, Chapel of Restoration, Iwo-Road, Ìbàdàn.

Christ Apostolic Church Headquarters Anlugbua, Basòrun, Ibadan.

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Agbára Odo-Oba, Ìbàdàn.

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè Àláfíà, Ìwó Road, Ìbàdàn

Christ Apostolic Church Òkè-Àláfíà, Loyola, Ìbàdàn

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Ìbùkún Asẹgun, Alákíá, Ìbàdàn.

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Ìmólè Agbeni, Ìbàdàn.

## **ADÓ-ÈKÌTÌ**

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Ìtùnú, Òpópógbo-ro, Adébáyò, Adó-Èkìtì

Christ Apostolic Church, Revival Centre, Awedele Bàs-írí Road, Adó- Èkìtì.

Christ Apostolic Church, Bethel, Òkè-Alà, Bàs-írí Road, Adó- Èkìtì.

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Ayò, Along Nova Road, Adó- Èkìtì.

Christ Apostolic Church, Covenant Land, O-ló-runs-ògo Street, O-ló-rundá Nova, Adó- Èkìtì.

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Ìyè, Dalimoore, Adó- Èkìtì.

Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Ìs-égun, Òkè-Alà, Adó- Èkìtì.

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GOVERNMENT OF THE  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

(FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION)

# National Archives

FILE NO.	662	VOLUME No.	
SUBJECT	The Faith-Healer Babalola & Faith Terbermade. Otherwise known as the Aladura Religion Movement. Operation of in Oyo Province.		
CLASS MARK:	OYO PROF 1		
PIECE/SERIAL No.			

PCB 6101 0,500 (ADELOYO PRESS)

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

13th August, 1930.

FROM,  
THE ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER,  
I L E S H A .

TO,  
THE DISTRICT OFFICER,  
I F E .

Faith - Healing in Ilesha.

I have to report the arrival in Ilesha of a preacher who is attracting great attention and arousing considerable enthusiasm.

2. His name is Joseph and he comes from Offa (Ilorin). He is connected, how closely I do not know, with the Faith Tabernacle organisation of Philadelphia, U.S.A., from which institution he ~~receives~~ receives numerous pamphlets, which are in their subject matter harmless enough. He preaches out of the Bible and claims to have the power of faith healing, and it is this which causes his great popularity. Very large crowds of people, not only from Ilesha but from all the surrounding country and from as far afield as Ife and Ekiti; clerks, as well as bushmen; Mahomedans and pagans as well as Christians, throng the church building and compound, which are at his disposal, each night after dark. They bring with them bottles of water, which, after being blessed by Joseph, is reputed to have marvellous healing qualities. A few remarkable cures are reported.

3. Recently I have been spending much time in road work on the Ijebu-Ijesha road and I have been very struck by the extraordinary numbers of people, mostly women, who are pouring into Ilesha and returning <sup>laden</sup> ~~loaded~~ with bottles of holy water. There were many very aged cripples among them. From questions I put in Ijebu itself it would seem that the men <sup>have</sup> regard the whole thing as a nuisance as it has unsettled their women and they keep running into Ilesha. It is the same on the other roads, and the market is chock-a-block with lorries which have brought passengers in from a distance.

4. On first hearing of his arrival I sent for Joseph that I might ascertain his credentials, and he was accompanied from the town



town by a large crowd of people who welcomed his return from my house with cheers. He is a young man, semi-literate and <sup>does not</sup> seem to me <sup>to be</sup> of very striking personality. His chief supporter is one J.A. Babatope, an offcast of the C.M.S., who is well known in the town and whom Owa says is a good man.

5. I have discussed things with Owa and he is not worried by Joseph's presence in the town and I think regards him as a public benefactor. I have however explained to him that movements which are ~~is~~ innocent enough in their origins sometimes become troublesome later on, and I have impressed upon him the importance of keeping him under close observation, which I am also doing myself.

6. The prayer meetings take place at the "Stone Church" (on one of the bye-roads between the Iwara and Akure roads) and do not begin until after dark. They continue to 11 P.M. or midnight. I have been to one of these, disguised as a native, so that I might know what actually happens. I found a crowd of many hundreds of people, including a large contingent of the halt and lame and blind. The whole affair was orderly and the only part of the ritual in any way impressive was when everyone present stood up in a big half circle each holding his bottle high above his head to be blessed by the "Prophet Joseph" who stood on a raised dais under a powerful lamp and stretching out his hands made weird incantations. The crowd murmured their approval but ~~there~~ <sup>there</sup> was no great excitement. There was a certain amount of hymn singing. The sick afterwards received spiritual attention inside the Church.

7. I could not discover on this occasion the smallest reason to think that Joseph is receiving money for his trouble. I have asked from all manner of people and they invariably reject the possibility of his receiving money for his cures. I am watching this carefully.

8. I make this report for your information and in view of the possibility of more being known of the Faith Tabernacle's activities and record than I have been able to ascertain here. From the pamphlets which I have it is an appeal to faith and nothing more. I think it

think it likely that his popularity will wane as quickly as it has risen when the people come to appreciate the true value of his blessing. I am inclined to think <sup>that</sup> <sup>is</sup> this happening already among the Ileshas themselves.

9. I have written to the District Officer, Ilorin, in case he has any information of Joseph's previous activities in Offa.

H. Chads

Assistant District Officer,

I L E S H A.

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

2508/137/1921

25 AUGUST, 30

5

RESIDENT: OYO PROVINCE,

THE HONOURABLE,

OYO.

THE SECRETARY: SOUTHERN PROVINCES,

ENUGU.

*Desp 26/8/30  
Edk*

~~07-27~~  
~~662~~  
Faith-healing in Ilesha.  
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A native of Offa, Ilorin Province, named Joseph, arrived at Ilesha (Ife Division) early in August, in order to preach out the Faith Tabernacle, an institution connected with the U.S.A.

He has attracted a great deal of attention, and thousands of persons from these Western Provinces and Lagos continue to pour into Ilesha to see him.

He is a young man, a semi-literate, and an ex-motor roller driver.

2. The Owa and Chiefs and in fact, everyone to whom I have spoken on this subject, are greatly impressed by the cures he is able to effect. They say that God has come to Ilesha.

People bring water, in bottles, to him, and he blesses it; this when drunk is said to be very beneficial. I have interviewed persons who claim that they have been cured of blindness, skin diseases and several other ailments, and they were all full of enthusiasm.

3. He charges no fees and so far as can be seen he collects no money at all.

4. I have not interfered with him in any way. The crowds are quite orderly.

*(sgd) H. L. Ward*  
Resident, Oyo Province

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

9  
C/A/11  
13  
25th March, 1951

THE ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER, ILESHA.      THE HONOURABLE, THE SENIOR RESIDENT,  
CYCLOPROVINCE.  
thro' The District Officer, Ise.

FAITH TABERNACLE - ILESHA.

When you were here this morning you asked me to remind you in writing of the spread of the activities of the above institution in the Ilesha District.

2. The Faith Tabernacle is of American origin but as far as I have been able to discover, the direction of events here is the work of local men who are not controlled in any way. You told me that you would wish to inquire into the organisation and credentials of the Faith Tabernacle with a view to finding out if there is any controlling authority in Nigeria.

3. The movement began in earnest here with the rise of Joseph Babalola, the Faith-healer, who held big meetings in Ilesha last August for the purpose of faith-healing. He won great notoriety for the Faith Tabernacle in Ilesha and rising out of that the local pastor, one J.A. Babatope, has now begun a definite attempt to found a new religious society which would appear to have as one of its aims the extinction of the Mission Societies. The Wesleyan Mission feels its continued existence here to be seriously threatened and there is no doubt that considerable defections have already taken place both from them and from the C.M.S. Young preachers are going about the country making disparaging remarks about the Missions and drawing attention especially to the fact that they have to be supported by money. Part of their appeal is that the new 'religion' is a free one.

4. You have told me that the Missions must be left to fight their own battle. But that is...

of a new religious society which is not under proper control should be discouraged, and that the OWA and Chiefs should be advised not to countenance the present movement. You said that the importance of not compromising themselves in the eyes of the Mohammedans should be especially brought home to them.

As regards the attitude of the Missionaries you said that if evidence was forthcoming you might be prepared to sanction a prosecution under Section 204 Of the Criminal Code. I am confident that the Wesleyan Mission will try to find such evidence against Mr. J.A. Babatope who is the leader of the movement against them. Incidentally, he is a man who was expelled from the C.K.S.

*H. Childs.*

Assistant District Officer,  
I L E S H A.

UNIVERSITY

# Nigeria

August, 1931

Enugu

Oyo Prvince,  
Oyo.

## Aladura Movement

RY

Directed by the Acting Lieutenant-Governor to inform you that there has recently been serious opposition to the payment of tax at two towns, Akure and Iddo, in the Ekiti Divisions of the Ondo Province. Investigation into its causes has revealed the activities of the Aladura Movement, an account of which is given in the following paragraphs:

Basilio Babajida appeared as a faith healer in the Oyo Province. Aged about 30 he was trained by the C.M.S. as a teacher but did not reach their standard and was not employed. He became a steam roller driver in the Public Works Department and then abandoned this occupation in favour of preaching and healing. He preaches from the Bible and says that he has a special mission from God to heal the sick without the aid of earthly medicines. He makes no collections and no charges and is known to have refused monetary offerings when they have been offered. He has four teachers under him who are known as "Aladurans" and has a very large number of followers in the Ondo Province, including most of the clerical staff of Government and the Native Administration and many of the political Babajida figures.

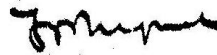
a quiet respectable man who confines his activities to the teaching of his own creed and takes no part in any form of political agitation. Unfortunately the nature of his teaching and the number of his following has afforded an opportunity to a number of unprincipled persons, mainly young men, for carrying on agitation against Government, the Native Authorities and the missions under the guise of religious teaching.

3. These persons erect platforms in the villages in imitation of those used by Babalola and, sitting on these, they read passages from the Bible and pretend to explain their meaning. They also give utterance to so-called prophecies which are, for the most part, culled from a pamphlet by Woli J.O. Ositelu of Ijebu Remo entitled "Aron Asotele" and printed at the Ilare Press, Ibadan. A translation of some passages in this pamphlet is attached. A favourite subject for the preaching of these persons is tax, and they have generally urged the people not to pay more than 5/-, while one of them fixed the limit at 1/-.

4. One of these self-styled Aladuras is a Nupe woman named Abigail, formerly the wife or mistress of Mr. J.O. George, a railway clerk at Kano, and more recently a prostitute living at Akure. For some time, it now transpires, she has been preaching to the people of Akure that they should not pay more than 3/- tax. A copy of a document addressed by her to the District Officer is attached. This was received after the disturbances. She has now left Akure by the orders of Babalola and is thought to be at Ilesha.

5. Babalola blames the pamphlet for much of the agitation. He says that it has been in circulation for some eight months in large numbers and is sold by persons representing the printer. It has nothing to do with him and he condemns its contents as bad.

6. The Assistant Inspector-General of Police has been asked to instruct his officers to watch the movement and to report any information obtained to him and to the Resident of the province. His Honour would be glad to have such information as you may obtain and your views on the movement and on any steps which might be taken to curb it.



Secretary,  
Southern Provinces.

UNIVERSITY



CONFIDENTIAL

M E M O R A N D U M

NO. 633  
6th October, 1931.

Asst. Commissioner of Police, Oyo-Ordo Province, Ibadan. To: The Resident, Oyo.

1931 43



With reference to my Telegram No. K31/18 of 5th inst. I

have been able to ascertain the following information.

2. Three European men - J.P. Williams, D.G. Williams, and A. Turnbull - arrived in Lagos from England on the mail line Adda for the purpose of holding revivalist meetings in connection with the Apostolic Church and Faith Tabernacle movements.

3. The two Williams are ex-miners from South Wales, and Turnbull is a Glasgow man. They are in possession of second class return passages and have been allowed a conditional sojourn of six months in Nigeria. They have been guaranteed by the United States of America Vice Consul in Lagos who himself at one time had a prominent connection with the Faith Tabernacle movement.

4. They propose to hold revivalist meetings in Lagos and also have an idea of touring the various Provinces for the same purpose.

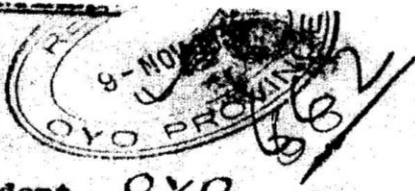
5. Nothing so far is known of the nature of their preachings and when they propose to leave Lagos. I have however arranged for them to be watched and I shall be notified if they leave for this area.

6. It is almost certain I think that they will reach Ibadan and may also get in touch with Babalola in Ordo Province.

7. I will keep you in touch with the situation.

6NR at Ibadan on 7/10/31

J.L. Garden  
Asst. Commissioner of Police.



No. 0.23/20/41.  
Resident's Office  
Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria  
... 1931

The Resident OYO Province.

Copy to Commissioner of Police, Abeokuta and Ibadan.

Messrs D.P. Williams, W.J. Williams, and A Turnbull of the "APOSTOLIC" Church, representing respectively Wales, England, and Scotland, arrived in Ijebuode on Friday Oct. 26th, and propose leaving tomorrow, Saturday 27th, for Abeokuta, and thence to Ibadan and Ilesha.

2. They came to see me on Wednesday 20th. The Williamses are typical Welsh revivalists, they have pronounced Welsh accents. D.P. states that he lives near Swansea, W.J. that he is qualified by residence to represent England because he lives at Bradford. Turnbull is a silent Scot.

3. D.P.W. stated that he had been advised by the Chief Secretary, upon whom he had called, to call on the Residents of the Provinces which they propose to visit. They expressed themselves impressed by the warmth and apparent genuineness of their reception by Africans in Lagos and Ijebuode.

They asserted that it was their desire to assist and uplift the followers of the Faith Tabernacle, for they understood that misunderstandings among the followers has caused trouble in Ilesha and the closing of some of their Churches of Africans

4. I asked them if they had any experience, and know the Yoruba language. They said they were all new comers and had no previous knowledge of the African, although

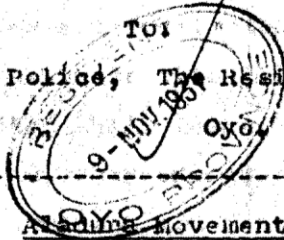
I understood that Turnbull has the reputation of having travelled extensively. I warned them to be extremely careful in their dealings with local natives no matter how serious and respectable they may appear on first acquaintance.

I asked them if they were acquainted with the Alafura

29th October, 1931.

M E M O R A N D U M.

To: Commissioner of Police, The Resident,  
Oyo-Province,  
Ibadan.



Apostolic Movement.

With reference to my previous correspondence I have to report that Messrs. D.P.Williams, W.J.Williams and A.Turnbull of the "Apostolic Church" representing Wales, England and Scotland respectively arrived in Ibadan by train from Abeokuta on 27th inst.

2. They came to my office at my request yesterday 28th inst.

3. The Williams are typical Welsh revivalists and have pronounced Welsh accents, whilst Turnbull is big built, silent, inscrutable Scot.

4. W.C.Williams is a pastor of the Apostolic Church at Bradford. D.P.Williams and A.Turnbull have churches at Swansea and Glasgow respectively, the former being President and the latter Vice President of the movement.

5. D.P.Williams stated he had been advised by the Chief Secretary upon whom he had called, to call on the Residents of the Provinces which they proposed to visit.

6. They informed me that they had been sent to Nigeria to co-ordinate the various faith healing movements and to assist and uplift the followers of the Faith Tabernacle. They were aware that misunderstandings among the followers had caused trouble in various districts.

7. They were insistent that they were very much pro government and it was their desire to preach to the people the necessity of obeying all laws and their native chiefs.

8. They denied all knowledge of Aladura. ~~They~~ admitted they were to meet Babalola with a view to absorbing him and his followers into the Apostolic Church provided Babalola accepted their teaching.

9. They expressed themselves as being much impressed by the warmth and genuineness of their reception by Africans in Lagos, Ijebuode and Abeokuta and they could not understand the difficulties they had met in Ibadan.

10. I explained very carefully that in this Province they were dealing with a different type of people and that the moslem element figured to a considerable extent.

11. I also explained that it was in the hands of the Bale and Council to decide on matters affecting the welfare of the Ibadan native.

12. They had an idea of going to Ilesha tomorrow but I strongly advised against it as I thought they would not be allowed to preach. I also informed them that, <sup>if they want</sup> they should first consult the District Officers at both Ife and Ilesha and to be very careful in their <sup>dealings</sup> dealings with local natives no matter how serious and respectable they <sup>may</sup> seem on first sight. They also had an idea of going to Kaduna and I informed them that the up limited left on Friday afternoon but, I rather fancy they will not make the journey as apparently they have to be in Lagos about the 10th of next month.

13. I informed them that so far as the Residents of Oyo and Ondo Provinces and myself as Commissioner of Police were concerned no breaches of the law would be passed over and that any tendency towards unorthodox and anti capital preaching would be strongly deprecated and checked at once.

14. The interview was pleasant throughout and we

15. The Welshmen did all the *talk* but the Scot was of the silent type. He and D.P. Williams appear to have travelled all over the world - Canada - United States of America - Egypt - Europe and India.

16. The three of them appear to be well meaning fanatics who might do *more useful* ~~better~~ work at home.

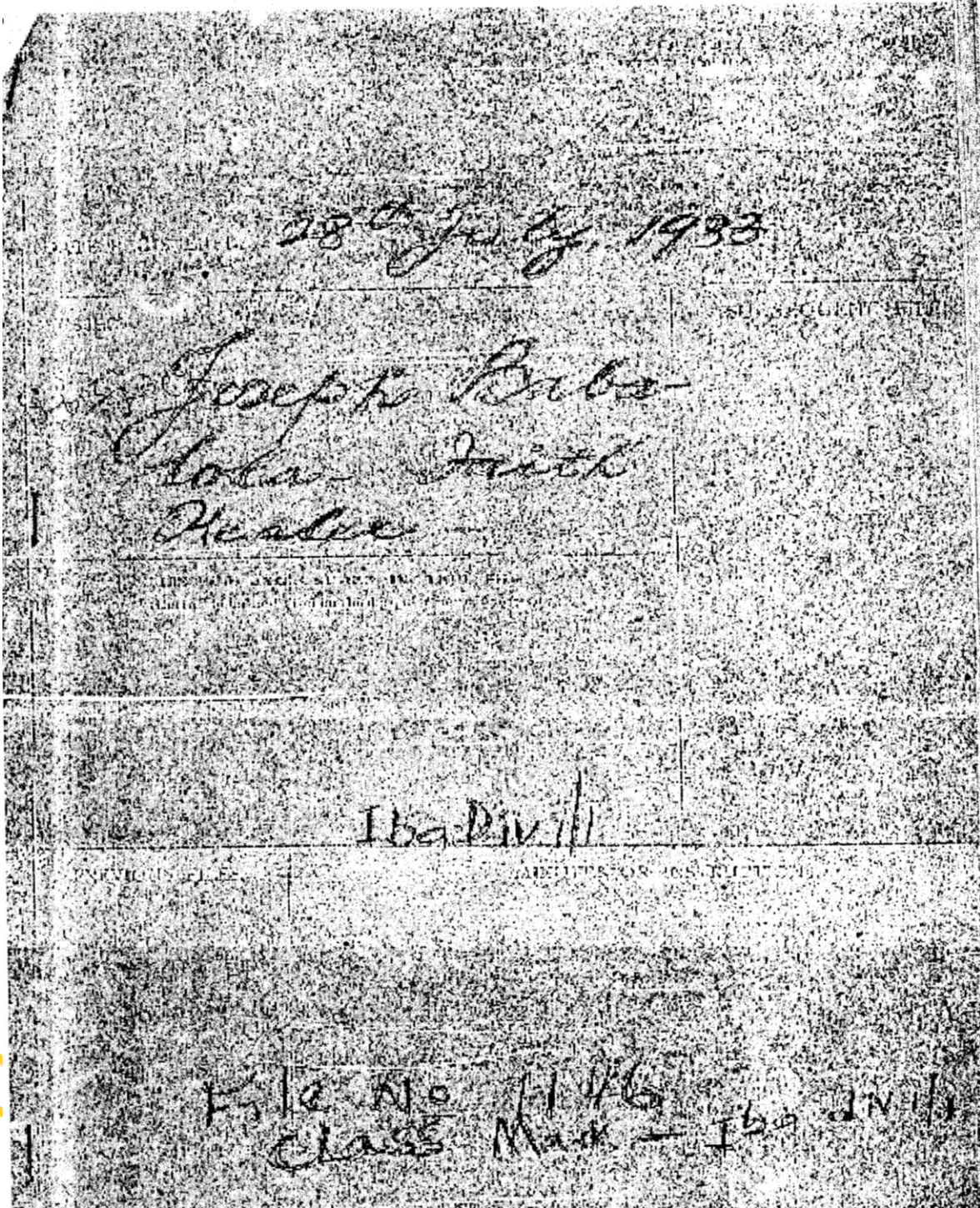
*J. W. Garden*

Asst. Commissioner of Police,  
Oyo-Unde Province: Ibadan.

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

Appendix II

Copies of Archival Material from the National Archives, University of Ibadan



18A-DIA  
1146

Confidential.

General 16.

MEMORANDUM

No. 1146

11th Feb, 1948

The Commissioner of Police,  
Calabar Province,  
Calabar.  
G.E.O., Lagos 32583

To  
THE DIVISIONAL OFFICER,  
Ibadan.

Joseph Akhalala, Faith Healer.

I shall be obliged if you will forward all possible information regarding the above person. I understand that for some years he has been connected with the Madaya and Faith Tabernacle Movements in your area and in 1931 was charged with an offence but discharged. He is now residing in Calabar and preaching for the Apostolic Church, being known as the Evangelist of this Mission.

*M. J. ...*  
Asst. Commissioner of Police.

*Inclosed*

*You have report  
knowledge of Joseph  
Ivan just from information  
at the Apostolic Church  
Please prepare a report  
on his ... activities  
E. J. ...*

UN.

29th July

33

The District Officer,  
Ibadan.

The Asst. Commissioner of Police,  
Calabar Province,  
Calabar.

JOSEPH BABALOLA - FAITH HEALER.

Your Memorandum No. CP. 489/16 of 18th July, 1939.

Joseph Babalola was a native of Offa in the Ilorin Province. For a time, he was employed by the Public Works Department as a Steam Roller driver.

2. In 1930, he had a hallucination and for the next two years, he posed as a Faith-Healer holding meetings at Ilesha, Ibadan, Offa and various centres in the Ondo Province.

3. He enjoyed great notoriety and big crowds attended his meetings at which the blessing of water was a part of the ritual. So far as this Province was concerned, the meetings were conducted in an orderly manner and he was not charged with any offence. Your information on this point may be derived from the Ondo Province where he seems to have been continually in-trouble. The Aladuras, it is understood, were responsible for some agitation concerning taxation at Akure.

4. He was closely associated with the Aladura and Faith Tabernacle Movements and it was necessary to take steps to check a campaign of misrepresentation which was begun with the object of discrediting the established Missions.

5. A West Indian, named Brown, took a prominent part in these activities and especially in the dissemination of various publications of American origin. While the contents of these did not amount to libel or sedition, they were



nevertheless considered harmful in the hands of semi-educated people, but Government policy in the matter was not to interfere and to leave the people to discover for themselves, the speciousness of their proposals. Mr. Brown controls what is called the International Bible Union which has no connection with the Aladura movement or with Babalola.

6. This policy has probably been justified. The Native Authorities were amused rather than concerned at the activities of the Aladuras and there were not wanting opportunities for making public the mercenary motives of some of the promoters of the movement.

7. The Faith Tabernacle in Nigeria appealed for help from the Apostolic Church in England, a sect which believes in faith healing. Two missionaries - Pastors Perfect and Vaughan - came to Nigeria and have visited Ibadan and Ilesha and the Faith Tabernacle has now become the Apostolic Church. Pastor Perfect, who has his headquarters in Lagos, is a reasonable missionary and is anxious to work with peace and order. While he disassociates his mission from the Aladura movement, he naturally does look then to increase his sect. In Ilesha, he has started educational work. It is understood that Pastor Perfect interviewed Babalola in this Province, probably at Ilesha, but what transpired is not known.

8. I hope this information is of some use.

133.  
District Officer,  
Ibadan Division.

MEMORANDUM.

1146  
No. 1A/81.  
11th June, 1934.

FROM THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, OYO-ONDO PROVINCE, IBADAN.

TO

THE DISTRICT OFFICER, IBADAN

Aladura Movement.

I should be grateful if you would furnish me with a report concerning the present activities of the above named Movement.

2. Could you also inform me (1) where the principal strongholds of the movements are (2) the hold, if any, it has on the people (3) ~~where Joseph Begaioke is now~~ <sup>Babalola</sup> and whether he still retains his old influence (4) the doings of a European called Myers in connection with this Movement?

*Thomas K. Gony*

Commissioner of Police,  
Oyo-Ondo Province.