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Pentecostal Challenges in Africa and Latin America: A Comparative Focus on Nigeria and Brazil

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Abstract

Latin America and Africa are among the continents that have experienced a Pentecostal explosion within the last half century. In fact, each of the case studies for this paper, Nigeria and Brazil, has a very vibrant and visible, though small, Pentecostal component in its population. This paper compares the contemporary challenges faced by Pentecostals in both countries, and argues that these challenges, to a large extent, are reflective of wider socio-political and economic issues faced by the nations as they grapple with the realities of nation building and related economic issues. A visible impact of this on the Pentecostal movement in both nations is a gradual reduction in the 'other-worldly' focus that had characterized earlier manifestations of Pentecostalism; and a corresponding rise in the engagement with temporal or 'this-worldly' concerns. It is in this sense that the shift from classical or traditional Pentecostalism characterized by the holiness doctrine, to what has been dubbed 'neo-Pentecostalism', characterized, among other things, by the 'prosperity gospel' becomes understandable. In these two countries, there also appears to be an unrelenting negotiation between Pentecostals, who espouse the biblical position of spiritual warfare and deliverance on the one hand, and their respective traditional cosmologies, which emphasize the role of spiritual agents on the other hand. Despite the differences in the socio-political contexts and historical backgrounds of the two countries, it is remarkable that similar processes are discernible in the transformation of the Pentecostal movement and the reaction it has engendered in the larger society.

Résumé

L'Amérique Latine et l'Afrique font partie des continents ayant connu une véritable explosion pentecôtiste au cours de la dernière moitié du siècle. En réalité, chacune des études de cas de cette contribution, en l'occurrence le Nigeria et le Brésil, dispose d'une communauté pentecôtiste très dynamique et très

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visible au sein de sa population. Cet article compare les défis contemporains auxquels sont confrontés les Pentecôtistes dans ces deux pays, et soutient que dans une large mesure, ces défis reflètent des questions sociopolitiques et économiques plus vastes surgissant en même temps que le processus de construction de la nation et d'autres questions économiques connexes, comme en attestent, la réduction progressive de l'«intemporel» qui caractérisait les premiers temps du pentecôtisme, et l'engagement croissant pour les choses temporelles ou «de ce monde». C'est dans ce contexte que l'on doit situer l'évolution du pentecôtisme classique ou traditionnel caractérisé par la doctrine de la sainteté, à ce que l'on a surnommé le «néo-pentecôtisme», caractérisé, entre autres, par le «prosperity gospel» (l'évangile de la prospérité). Dans ces deux pays, il semble également y avoir une négociation acharnée chez les Pentecôtistes, qui épousent la position biblique relative à la guerre et à la délivrance spirituelles, d'une part, et les cosmologies traditionnelles respectives de ces derniers, qui mettent l'accent sur le rôle des agents spirituels, d'autre part. Malgré les différences de contexte sociopolitique et historique de ces deux pays, il est impressionnant d'observer que des processus similaires sont en train de s'y dérouler, au niveau de la transformation du mouvement pentecôtiste et de la réaction que ce dernier a engendrée au sein de la société.

Introduction

There has been a massive explosion of Pentecostalism globally within the last half-century. In Latin America, the explosion could be traced to the 1960s while the African experience has been dated to the 1970s. Different waves of Pentecostal activity have also been identified within the two continents; the trend has been a shift from classical or traditional Pentecostalism to a new Pentecostal experience or what has been dubbed 'neo-Pentecostalism'.¹ Whether 'classical' or 'neo-Pentecostalism', a common thread that runs through Pentecostal Christianity is the experience of a new life articulated in personal narratives of conversion, and the transition from an 'old' life to a 'new' one. This 'new' life is controlled by the Holy Spirit, which is manifested in glossolalia, pneumatic gifts, charismata, and in diverse miracles. Again, the distinctions between 'classical', 'modern' or 'neo-Pentecostalism' illustrate the responsiveness of the movement not only to local changes but also to processes of 'modernity' and the globalization of Christianity.

The comparison attempted here is both spatial and thematic while the choice of case studies is informed by certain similarities between them. Africa and Latin America both belong to the global South. This implies that they face similar problems of underdevelopment, poverty, and sharp social inequalities, though with varying nuances. Added to the Brazilian case is the racial factor, and all these have a bearing on societal response to Pentecostalism. While the central focus of this paper is on Pentecostal challenges,

there is also a discussion of origins, personnel and changes in the Pentecostal movement and these are all situated within specific socio-cultural milieux and historical contexts. Brazil and Nigeria are large nations, each with a population of over 100 million people (Brazil 184 million, Nigeria 137 million) and with a very visible and active Pentecostal component. Brazilian Pentecostals are known as *crentes* locally while their Nigerian counterparts are called ‘born-again’ Christians.² It is the view of this paper that the peculiar socio-economic challenges of the global South have indirectly affected the development of the Pentecostal movement. Its original ‘other-worldly’ focus of holiness and ‘shunning the world’ is being gradually replaced by a more temporal concern with material prosperity, healing and other existential issues. The comparative approach adopted here thus show remarkable similar processes in the transformation of the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria and Brazil.

This paper is divided into three sections. The first looks at the historical background of the Pentecostal movement, first at a global level and then in Brazil and Nigeria. The second section discusses the five Pentecostal challenges identified in the two countries. These are: opposition from other faiths; the challenge of Christian ethics and church strategy; the challenge of political participation and public involvement; the challenge of transnationalism; and the challenge of Christian unity. The last section concludes by drawing out the implication of all these challenges and attempting some generalizations about the Pentecostal experience in the global South.

The Historical Background of the Pentecostal Movement

Global Pentecostalism

The task of establishing an exact origin for the global Pentecostal movement is not an easy one. While some scholars believe that the experience of Pentecost in the Upper Room as recorded in the Bible (Acts 2:1-4) should mark the beginning of Pentecostalism, others see the movement as being an offshoot of the powerful revivals (or Awakenings) of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the Anglo-Saxon world. In the former group is Allan Anderson, who identifies the experience of being ‘filled’ or ‘baptized’ with the Holy Spirit, which Jerusalem believers had on the Day of Pentecost, as the distinguishing ‘proof text’ of Pentecostalism.³ J.M. Bonino, in addition, speaks of a modern Pentecostal movement thus implying an old or ancient brand of Pentecostalism. According to him, “it seems clear that what we find in the Pentecostal movement of the last ninety years reflects a persistent tradition attested throughout the history of Christianity”.⁴ He further cites the argument of a Peruvian Pentecostal theologian, Fernando Campos, that a

certain Pentecostalism is a permanent dimension of the Christian faith, and that the Pentecostal movement of our times is an expression of that 'Pentecostalism' under the condition of modern culture and religious life.⁵

On the other hand, scholars like David Martin see Pentecostalism as an extension of Methodism spearheaded by John Wesley in the eighteenth century.⁶ This Methodism has been interpreted not just as a religious movement, but also as a cultural revolution. According to Martin, its primary concern was finding the supernatural in the fabric of everyday life.⁷ He also emphasizes the ways in which Pentecostalism replicated Methodism; in its entrepreneurship and enthusiasm, and in its splintering and fractiousness.

There is yet another body of scholars who emphasize the American origins of the Pentecostal movement. They write of the great revivals in the opening decade of the twentieth century led by Charles Parham and William Seymour. Parham is acclaimed as the pioneer of Pentecostalism among North American whites among whom he ministered at Topeka, Kansas; William Seymour, on the other, is seen as the champion of the movement among American blacks through the Azusa Street Revival of 1906 in Los Angeles. In addition, recent Pentecostal historiography emphasizes the black origins of the movement and seems to recognize Seymour as playing a more crucial role than Parham in the early days of Pentecostalism.⁸ However, given the many beginnings of the movement in different geographical locations, it might be more productive to look at its rise within particular localities such as Nigeria and Brazil with which we are concerned here.

In terms of belief, Pentecostal doctrines are generally encapsulated in narratives of conversion, Holy Spirit baptism, and spiritual warfare. The conversion experience deals with a change from an 'old life' to a 'new' one. This produces a change of conduct in the converts, who now consciously try not to return to their 'old life' represented by their pre-conversion years. The next experience for the Pentecostal convert is the baptism of the Holy Spirit reminiscent of the Pentecost experience earlier discussed. The convert receives the power of the Holy Spirit with the physical evidence of speaking in tongues (glossolalia). Endowment of other spiritual gifts could also follow. This prepares converts for a more effective service for God and enables them to live a victorious Christian life that is above sin. It also empowers them to confront the devil and other 'evil forces', and enlist on the side of God in the ongoing 'spiritual warfare' between God and the devil. In addition to all these, the convert is obliged to share the good news of the gospel with others who have not been converted (referred to as 'unbelievers' in Pentecostal discourses). This good news contains the saving power of Jesus Christ and the benefits of a 'new life' in Christ. These benefits range from miracles of

healing and deliverance from both physical and psychological ailments to material blessings and prosperity. The ultimate benefit, however, is everlasting life with Jesus in heaven, which the believers are promised at the end of their lives.

Brazilian Pentecostalism

Brazil is a traditional Catholic nation. However, German Lutherans introduced Protestantism to it in 1823 and the religion gradually expanded among the local people. Scholars of Brazilian Pentecostalism speak of three successive waves of Pentecostal expansion.⁹ The first was from the 1910s to the 1940s. It saw the arrival from the United States of Churches such as the Christian Congregation (1910) and the Assemblies of God (1911). An Italian immigrant, Luigi Francescon, who had been converted in Chicago, founded the Christian Congregation in Sao Paulo. The Assemblies of God was established in Belem, State of Para, northern Brazil by two Swedish Baptists immigrants from Chicago named Gunnar Vingren and Daniel Berg.¹⁰ The Assemblies of God (hereafter AG) drew its early members from the poor working classes in the rubber plantations in Para. The collapse of the rubber industry in 1912 was believed to have sent many of the people back to their native lands in the northeast thus spreading the Pentecostal message in hitherto Catholic strongholds.¹¹ The Christian Congregation in Sao Paulo expanded at a quicker pace than the AG before World War II because Sao Paulo was densely populated.

Altogether, during this first wave, which has been described as the 'Classical phase' of Brazilian Pentecostalism, the early converts were drawn from the lower classes. There was also considerable emphasis on faith healing. In addition, members' conduct was regulated by the church through strict rules of dressing and behaviour, and there were clear boundaries that separated members from the 'world'.¹² In 1930, the AG was nationalized and the headquarters moved to Rio de Janeiro.¹³

The second wave took place from the 1950s to the 1960s during which time the Pentecostal movement fragmented and the first national churches emerged, namely, Brazil for Christ (1955) and God is Love (1962). However, the pioneer of the second Pentecostal wave was the Church of the Foursquare Gospel, which incidentally was a foreign church from the USA. It later gained independence from the Americans in the 1980s.¹⁴ This second phase has been dubbed the modern period of Brazilian Pentecostalism. According to Andrew Chestnut, state emphasis on industrialization attracted many rural dwellers to the big cities.¹⁵ Unfortunately these people could not be employed because they were unskilled. They were therefore constrained to sell their labour cheaply in the informal sector and to inhabit the slums in the big cities. It was

this group of low-income earners that responded to the Pentecostal message. Moreover, this period coincided with the era of 'populist nationalism' as Brazilian leaders sought to develop their country by looking inwards and reducing ties to the global market.¹⁶ It is within this context of local nationalism that the development of a totally Brazilian Church becomes understandable.

The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel brought several innovations to Brazilian Pentecostalism. It introduced large tent meetings, healing crusades and the use of the mass media for evangelism. Manoel de Mello, the first Brazilian to establish a major Pentecostal Church, founded Brazil for Christ. He adopted Foursquare-proselytising strategies and added his own local flavour.¹⁷ He is presented in Brazilian Pentecostal historiography as a very shrewd man who got involved in politics for the purpose of group survival. God is Love Pentecostal Church is believed to have broken away from Brazil for Christ while exhibiting elements of classical and modern Pentecostalism.

The third wave began in the late 1970s and subsequently became strengthened in the 1980s. This last wave was exemplified by churches such as the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (hereafter UCKG) founded in 1977 by Edir Macedo and the International Church of the Grace of God established in 1980. This period in Brazil was characterized by a debt crisis, inflation and unemployment, which affected the middle as well as the lower classes. It is thus claimed that those alienated by the exclusive modernization process, and neglected by the Catholic Church, found solace in the Pentecostal churches.¹⁸ This third wave, also called the neo-Pentecostal phase, is epitomized by the UCKG with its doctrinal tripod of exorcism, prosperity gospel and faith healing. The special emphasis on exorcism is said to be reflective of the 'enchanted' worldview of Brazilians.¹⁹ 'In traditional Pentecostalism, the demons are kept at a distance; in the IURD [Portuguese acronym for the UCKG], they are sought out and confronted'.²⁰ This dispensation also permits a liberalization of Pentecostal dressing and conduct.

Of all the Pentecostal churches, the Assemblies of God is the largest, representing a third of all Brazilian Protestants. The UCKG ranks as the next in line with almost 4 million members. Behind all these is the historic Roman Catholic Church, which traditionally was the foremost Church in Brazil with tremendous socio-political influence. It makes up 74 per cent of the total population, while Pentecostals constitute less than ten per cent. The local religious landscape also comprised Afro-Brazilian religions whose worshippers make up about 5 per cent of the population.²¹

Nigerian Pentecostalism

Christianity took root in Nigeria in the nineteenth century. The main missionary groups then were the Church Missionary Society (CMS), the Wesleyans (Methodists), the Roman Catholic Mission, the America Baptists and the Presbyterian Mission. Their initial spheres of influence were Badagri, Lagos, Abeokuta and Calabar from where they gradually moved into the interior.²² The Pentecostal movement started only in the twentieth century. Again, just like the Brazilian case, three distinct phases could be discerned in the development of the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria. The first phase could be dated from the 1930s when the movement originated, up till the late 1960s. This phase was characterized by interactions between indigenous Pentecostal forms called the *Aladura* and foreign denominational Pentecostal Churches from the USA (the Faith Tabernacle) and Britain (the Apostolic Church).²³ The *Aladura* (lit. practitioners of prayer) movement had started in the early 1920s as a result of the longing in certain Christians for deeper spirituality and reawakening which the mainline churches could not offer. This has been interpreted by Ogbu Kalu as the ‘power question’ in the African cosmology to which earlier mission Christianity had no answer.²⁴

Examples of *Aladura* bodies include the Cherubim and Seraphim founded around 1925 and the Church of the Lord established in 1929. Most of the founders of these bodies were individual prophets who claimed to have seen heavenly visions and received a divine call to preach the gospel.²⁵ Their activities include fervent prayers, spirit possession (which many observers believed was influenced by traditional religious practices) and public evangelism. Some shunned the use of traditional medicine and the services of modern doctors, believing in divine healing. The contact of the leaders of the *Aladura* movement and the doctrines and practices of the Apostolic Church, which they found agreeable, led to a warm relationship between the two. The result of this was the emergence of a group of churches distinguished by the practices of ‘tarrying’ for the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues, as well as by a concern for effective prayer, visionary guidance, and of a more spontaneous African style of music and worship.²⁶ All these were not new to the *Aladura* movement; they were indeed the original *Aladura* trademarks. What the Apostolic Church connection did was to reinforce the tenets and inclinations of the *Aladura* and to give it a more Pentecostal twist. Indigenous Pentecostal churches such as the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) and the Redeemed Christian Church of God (hereafter RCCG) clearly epitomized this dialogue with their emphasis on miracles, healings, glossolalia and fervent prayers. Meanwhile, as indigenous churches were springing up in the Pentecostal mould after 1931, more denominational Pentecostal churches from the USA and Britain were spreading into Nigeria. Such ministries

included the Assemblies of God (1940), which became very popular in the eastern part of Nigeria, the Full Gospel Apostolic Church (1949), the Apostolic Faith and the Foursquare Gospel Church (1955).

The second phase covered two decades: the 1970s and 1980s. It saw the rise of interdenominational campus Fellowships, the amplification of the holiness message and a strong emphasis on biblical inerrancy.²⁷ This development was not peculiar to Nigeria. It also characterized the Pentecostal transformation in other parts of Africa²⁸ and was in fact led by a new elite of graduates whose identification with the movement seemed to have enhanced its social rating. The Deeper Life Christian Ministry founded by W. F. Kumuyi is a product of this phase, which was also characterized by an evangelistic fervour. At the other end of the spectrum is the ministry of Benson Idahosa whose activities seem to have straddled the second and third phases of Nigerian Pentecostal expansion. These and other Pentecostal churches of this period became increasingly intolerant not only of the mainline churches, which were considered 'cold', but also of the Aladura churches for accommodating elements of traditional African religions.²⁹

The third phase is the contemporary period, which could be dated from the early 1990s till date. This neo-Pentecostal move features a relaxation of the classical 'holiness doctrine'. The emphasis is now on the prosperity gospel and faith. A few of the churches also emphasize deliverance and healing. New churches were established such as Mountain of Fire and Miracles (1989), Sword of the Spirit Ministries (1989), Christ Embassy (1991), Fountain of Life Church (1992), House on the Rock (1994) and Daystar Christian Center (1995). These churches are led by young, upwardly mobile, educated professionals who appropriated modern marketing techniques in their evangelism. Some of these new churches have also taken over public space hitherto considered unconventional for worship purposes. Such spaces include stadia, cinemas, theatres, nightclubs and conference halls of hotels. Older churches such as the RCCG also began to expand and incorporate aspects of this neo-Pentecostalism. All these produced a visible explosion in the Pentecostal movement. Meanwhile, the socio-political context within which this explosion took place was characterized by tremendous tension occasioned by the oppressive military regimes of General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida (1985–1993) and General Sani Abacha (1993–1998).³⁰ The untold hardships, impoverishment and sufferings experienced by the masses in the wake of the Structural Adjustment Programme drove them into the Pentecostal churches that promised prosperity, 'breakthroughs', and healing of physical and other types of psychosomatic ailments. The failure of the state as an agent of modernization thus enlarged 'the political space for religious actors' who

minister not only to individual needs, but also diagnose and prescribe spiritual remedies for the political and economic problems of the nation³¹.

The Nigerian religious landscape also comprises other groups. However, it is difficult to give authoritative demographic statistics because census figures have always been contested in the nation for political reasons. The 2000 edition of Patrick Johnstone's *Operation World* in which Christians are said to be 52.6 per cent and Muslims 41 per cent of the Nigerian population has been faulted because it is a Christian source. The US State Department, however, estimate that Muslims outnumber Christians. According to this source, Muslims make up 50 per cent of the population and traditional religious adherents (and those with no religion at all) constitute about 10 per cent. The remaining 40 per cent are Christians. Pentecostals constitute 9.2 per cent of the total population while Roman Catholics are the largest Christian denomination in the country.³²

Pentecostal Challenges

Opposition from Other Faiths: The Challenge of Pluralism

In Brazil, Pentecostals face stiff opposition from Roman Catholics who regard them as 'wolves', stealing sheep, and who classify their activities as fundamentalism, denigrating Pentecostalism as a religion of the underclass. This rivalry is also carried over into the political realm, as Pentecostals seek an active political role and opportunities to ensconce themselves in leadership positions, in order to break the Catholic hegemony and put an end to the discrimination they are suffering in the hands of Catholics. First the AG in the mid 1980s and later the UCKG in the 1990s mobilized their members in corporate political contests against the Catholics.³³

Another belief system with which Brazilian Pentecostalism has had to contend, though not as tensely as Catholicism, is the Afro-Brazilian religion of Umbanda. This is a popular traditional religion that places healing and spirit-possession at the core of its practice. That is why some scholars consider the Pentecostal practice of exorcism ('deliverance') and divine healing as adaptations from Umbanda.³⁴ In fact, research has shown that, before converting to Pentecostalism, many Brazilians would have visited one *Umbanda terreiro* (centre) or the other in search of healing and solution to other personal problems. It was only when relief was not forthcoming from the *Umbanda terreiro* that they resorted to the Pentecostal temple.¹⁵ The fact that Umbanda still remains the first resort of the people continues to make the religion a rival of some sort to Pentecostalism, and, of course, to other Christian forms. David Lehmann, however, offers interesting perspectives on these issues which imply that the religious rivalries are not as serious as

they seem, at least at the cultural level. He warns against the erection of cultural boundaries between Catholicism and Pentecostalism due to some convergence between Catholic and Pentecostal forms.³⁶ The UCKG, for instance borrows from popular Catholic practices in its adoption of prayer petitions, called *pedidos de oracao*. This, according to Lehmann ‘evidently echoes the petitions to saints left by the faithful in Catholic churches, as in the use of Holy Oil, in anointing and a multiplicity of derivative purification rites’.³⁷ He makes a similar observation on the cultural space between Brazilian neo-Pentecostalism and the traditional religion against which it preaches:

.... the preachers use gestures, imprecations and other paraphernalia reminiscent of—or indirectly borrowed from—the cults to overcome and expel the spirits in which the cults and their practitioners believe. This is a particularly high-profile, spectacular example, and involves a measure of caricature which the cult practitioners find highly offensive, but others are more subtle.³⁸

Miriam Rabelo also made similar discoveries in her study of what she terms ‘religious confluence’ among Afro-Brazilian religion, ‘progressive Catholicism’ and Pentecostalism in northeast Brazil.³⁹

A remarkable effect of the Catholic/Pentecostal tussle, especially in the religious sphere is the development of charismatic Catholicism or what has been called a ‘Catholic Awakening’.⁴⁰ In Africa, Kwame Bediako has also described a parallel ‘Pentecostalization’ occurring in the Anglican Churches.⁴¹ However, the most important opposition to Nigerian Pentecostals is from Islam and the dividing line is drawn not just between Muslims and Pentecostals, but also between Muslims and Christians generally. The most recent religious crisis in Jos and Kano areas of Nigeria in May 2004 testify to this. The militancy of Islamic fundamentalists in northern Nigeria is thus matched by the uncompromising disposition of southern Pentecostals, bent on ‘winning the country for Christ’,⁴² as they demonize all Muslims and other ‘unbelievers’.

While traditional religion does not appear to pose so much threat to Nigerian Pentecostalism, scholars have expressed some concern about the increasing tension between Muslims and Pentecostals in the country, and about the implications of such hostility for national unity. This particularly has to do with the increasing politicization of the Pentecostal identity vis á vis the Islamist politics of Northern Nigeria.⁴³ The Brazilian situation does not in any way compare with this. There is thus the need for peculiar remedies to be sought. The solution might be found in the promotion of ecumenical dialogue among the different religious stakeholders, enthronement of religious tolerance as a principal democratic virtue, and the eradication of the ‘winner-

takes-all' syndrome in Nigerian politics, which always makes some section of the population complain incessantly of being marginalized.

The Challenge of Christian Ethics and Church Strategy

A number of the internal ambiguities of Pentecostal churches are subsumed under this heading. First is the issue of conversion. Scholars of Brazilian Pentecostalism point to differences in conversions. The distinction is generally made between once for all/complete conversions, which involve self-exclusion from full social engagement, and a continuing, instalmental form of conversion.⁴⁴ These conversion types have important implications for society and politics. While a few Pentecostals have 'abdicated' their citizenship due to their otherworldly focus, others have jumped indiscriminately into politics. To mediate these extremes, there is the need for a spirituality that addresses socio-political issues through a more pragmatic theology.

Andrew Chestnut has also shown in his study of Brazilian Pentecostals, how their conversion challenges the traditional masculine prestige complex on the one hand, and economically 'empowers' the men, on the other hand. This male prestige complex has been described as "a pattern of conduct characterized by aggression and intransigence in interpersonal relationships".⁴⁵ Bars, brothels and soccer stadia are identified as the social space within which men collectively reaffirm their 'masculine persona' through drinking, sex and sports. What Pentecostalism does is to remove men from this social space, which Chestnut also characterizes generally as the 'street' (*rua*), and to construct a new identity for them within the family and the church, which are presented as sacrosanct spaces.⁴⁶ The result of this change on the personal economy of the convert is that he is more buoyant, and the prosperity of the family increases. However, Brian Smith is quick to point out that because this economic improvement is not based on "new economic opportunities that ... [the men] are better able to exploit nor [on] material aid from outside, but from their own changed personal consumption patterns", it does not lead to a significant advance in social mobility for the individuals concerned.⁴⁷ The challenge here thus lies in the fact that the onus for upward mobility is again returned to the average crente who has to contend with the harsh economic conditions of Brazil.

There is also the issue of the pitfalls inherent in the Faith gospel, especially its emphasis on materialism. The Faith gospel is a global doctrine of Pentecostalism (though with local nuances), which preaches the right of the believer to material prosperity and divine health.⁴⁸ This element of material prosperity has, however, been singled out for special emphasis by some Pentecostal preachers. The resulting 'prosperity doctrine' thus claims that material wealth is not only desirable but is indeed the natural heritage of the

‘born-again’ Christian. This prosperity doctrine thus served, in the words of Ruth Marshall, to ‘integrate the born-again experience of redemption with social mobility, conspicuous consumption and the legitimation of wealth in a time of scarcity’.⁴⁹ The Christ Embassy in Nigeria, for instance, has been involved in scandals in which members embezzled funds from their workplaces and were alleged to have donated large chunks of it to the church.⁵⁰ Even the Redeemed Christian Church of God has had its own share of such scandals.⁵¹ This has negatively affected the image of the neo-Pentecostal churches whose Pastors are largely considered as religious entrepreneurs.⁵² Nevertheless, the prosperity doctrine has been identified by some scholars as part of the efforts at reconstruction and innovation made by neo-Pentecostals in adapting to a hostile and increasingly difficult environment.⁵³ In other words, the new Pentecostal churches are increasingly responding to the needs and aspirations of Nigerians amid the prevailing socio-economic uncertainties in the society.⁵⁴ Shorn of its abuses, the prosperity doctrine thus reflects Pentecostal reaction to the exigencies of a harsh environment.

In Brazil as well as in Nigeria, the issue of the training of Pastors has generated tensions. While the more denominational Pentecostal Churches have seminaries and Bible Colleges where their clergy are trained, the neo-Pentecostals emphasize charismatic and pneumatic gifts above formal training. And the tendency among the latter is to regard seminary-trained pastors as ‘overeducated’ and lacking in evangelical zeal and devotional fervour.⁵⁵ So while the Pastors may be educated (many of such neo-Pentecostal Pastors in Nigeria are in fact University graduates) they lack professional pastoral training and grooming, they only learn on the job. Such pastors ‘graduate’ by establishing their own congregations, and they insist they have been equipped by the ‘divine call’, which they had in a dream, vision, prophecy, or through some inner illumination. They therefore consider this call to be more important than formal training. This explains their inadequacies. This also describes the situation in most one-branch ministries in Nigeria. In Brazil, the UCKG unlike the AG, which has its own seminary, presents a situation in which the laity is made up of individuals that are more educated than those in the clergy.⁵⁶ This created a social distance between them. Again, where younger pastors are more educated than the older ones, there is friction and palpable tension within the church political circles. This holds true for Africa as for Latin America.

Another ethical challenge faced by Pentecostals is the issue of how to maintain their distance from the world system, which is considered corrupt, and at the same time utilize its technology to proselytize. A case in point is the appropriation of media technology by Pentecostals for evangelism. But

while doing this, they are also aware of ‘the corrupting influence’ of the media. More interesting is the ambivalence demonstrated in the disposition of Pentecostal leaders to the society. On the one hand they condemn the world for its hedonistic pleasures and pursuits, while on the other hand they adopt the very entrepreneurial techniques and aggressions of the world to promote themselves in the religious market place. For example in Brazil, the UCKG has a television network (Rede Record de Televisao with thirty channels), which is considered the third largest in the nation, about thirty radio stations, recording studios, a newspaper, a magazine, and several other business ventures with which it finances its mission activities.⁵⁷ In Nigeria too, some Pentecostal churches are beginning to own television stations. For instance, the RCCG owns Dove TV while the Loveworld Christian Television Network belongs to Christ Embassy. This is in addition to the fact that several other Pentecostals regularly buy airtime on other private and public television and radio stations to broadcast their programmes to a mass audience. In addition, they have also taken over several public spaces such as stadia, hotels, cinemas, school halls, civic centres, restaurants, nightclubs etc, which they regularly hire for their worship services. Hence spaces hitherto ‘criminalized’ by Pentecostals as the ‘abode of sin’ are now being appropriated for religious purposes. This ambiguity and seeming inconsistency has generated considerable tension in relations between Pentecostals and other religious groups, which feel the latter are using all possible avenues to ‘entice’ their own members and also to encroach on public spaces to which everybody is expected to have equal access.

The Challenge of Political Participation and Public Involvement

The initial Pentecostal attitude to politics both in Brazil and Nigeria is that believers should not be involved in order for them not to soil their ‘testimonies’. But with time, this attitude has been displaced by a more favourable disposition to politics. In Brazil and indeed in the whole of Latin America, there is increasing Pentecostal participation in politics. This change of attitude is attributable in part to the desire to break Catholic hegemony and put an end to the discrimination suffered by Pentecostals generally. Pentecostal entry into politics has also been explained as an act of cultural defence, ‘as a reaction to changes in the social milieu threatening to undermine the group’s capacity to maintain its culture’.⁵⁸ Since 1986, the AG and the UCKG have played important roles in Brazilian politics. The churches fielded candidates for electoral contests and supported other evangelical candidates. Pastors actively mobilized electoral support for members and some-

times, such support was 'divinely' buttressed by prophecies. In the general elections of 1994, the UCKG elected 12 deputies. In 1998, it had 28, and by 2001 was already trying to form a political party.⁵⁹ However, this growing Pentecostal enthusiasm for politics has been criticized as not being qualitative enough. According to Brian Smith, Brazilian Pentecostals have no overarching political ideology to guide them other than a desire to make society reflect biblical values. Added to this is a lack of intellectual underpinning with which to articulate a 'social ethic that is comprehensive and flexible enough to guide them and other policy makers (including non-Pentecostals) facing complex political, economic and social problems'.⁶⁰ To make matters worse, some Brazilian Pentecostal politicians have not also lived above board in their conduct in public office. Many of them have been accused of corruption, and are said to have reneged on the promises they made before the elections. There is also a general concern that Pentecostals are not supportive of public policy decisions 'reached by consensus if the moral values they hold as absolute are at stake'.⁶¹

The Nigerian case is very different. During the struggle for democracy in the 1990s (which scholars have dubbed the 'Second Liberation Struggle') leaders of mainline churches, together with human rights activists, were at the forefront of the campaign against corruption and military dictatorship. Individuals like Olubunmi Okogie (now Catholic Cardinal), Matthew Hassan Kukah (Secretary of the Catholic Secretariat) as well as Bolanle Gbonigi (a retired Anglican Bishop) became popular as unrelenting critics of the military government. The Catholic Church even had a Justice, Development and Peace Commission, which coordinated its activities in defending human rights. Drawing from Catholic social doctrine, the Commission maintained that the church had a duty to oppose undemocratic government and protest the violation of human rights.⁶² However, Pentecostal churches did not join in this struggle. Instead, they characterized their own intervention as a spiritual offensive aimed, not at an oppressive socio-political system, but at the devil and other malevolent forces ('powers and principalities') who must be dealt with through prayers. This Pentecostal reaction made the human rights movement to accuse it not only of social insensitivity, but also of complicity with the military dictators.

However, it appears the problem lies in the different perception of the situation by the Pentecostal movement, on the one hand, and the human rights movement, on the other hand. The Pentecostal focus has always been on evangelization and personal salvation. In terms of public involvement, Pentecostals are generally interested in social work—schools, orphanages, health institutions; outreaches to drug addicts, 'area boys' (street urchins),

prostitutes and lately, HIV/AIDS victims—than in politics. This gives the impression that Pentecostals would rather seek to nurse and rehabilitate the victims of a predatory socio-political system than to directly challenge the oppressive structures of such a society. In fact, the recent growing interest of Nigerian Pentecostals in politics is a reaction to the Muslim agenda, or to the Pentecostal perception of what the agenda is.

There is thus a need for Nigerian Pentecostals to create a public role for themselves, which goes beyond social work by intervening in political issues. This is because Pentecostal churches not only have an enormous potential to influence public morality, they might also be able to impart some democratic skills given their internal democratization of access to spiritual power, and the manner in which they have engendered tolerance and love among members of diverse origins. Paradoxically, there is also the need for them to reform their internal authority structures, which are more authoritarian than democratic, and preach by example if they are to be taken seriously by the rest of the society. This internal authoritarian structure is similar to the Brazilian case, which has been described by Chestnut as ‘participatory authoritarianism’.⁶³ Another vital contribution, which the churches could make to the political development of the nation, is to re-orientate their members by emphasizing personal responsibility and de-emphasizing the miraculous. This would go a long way in making individuals accountable for their choices and actions.⁶⁴ All the above recommendations could be summed up by Paul Freston’s words that ‘at the institutional level in Africa, Pentecostal Churches may be better in their overall effect on democratic *consolidation* even if less important for democratic *inauguration* than mainline churches’ (emphasis mine).⁶⁵

The Challenge of Transnationalism

Pentecostal churches have the vision to evangelize the whole world. In fact, the world is their parish.⁶⁶ To this effect; they finance missionary outreaches to other countries both within and beyond their own vicinity. According to Karl-Wilhelm Westmeier, for the Latin American Pentecostal, the regions in need of mission also include the United States, where they had quite a number of missions, thus taking the gospel back to ‘the lands from where they were first missionized’.⁶⁷ This observation equally holds true for African Pentecostalism with regards to their mission outreaches in Europe and the United States. In Brazil, the UCKG has established several transnational branches (225 as of 2001). Its first foreign mission was to the USA in the 1980s.⁶⁸ By 1993, it had established branches in several Latin American, African and European nations. By late 1998, the church had spread to at least 52 coun-

tries outside Brazil.⁶⁹ Similarly, in Nigeria, the RCCG established its first transnational branch in Ghana in 1981 and by 2003 it had branches in over 50 nations (30 of these are in Africa).⁷⁰

The main challenge of this transnational expansion is the relatively poor reception these Pentecostal churches encounter in areas outside their culture zones. The UCKG for instance, found it easier to proselytize in areas with which it had cultural affinities, e.g., in other Latin American countries, among Hispanics in the USA, in Portugal and other Lusophone African countries, and among West Indian and West African migrant communities in Europe. In the latter case, the UCKG is simply regarded as a 'black' church.⁷¹ In the same vein, the RCCG has not been able to attract the nationals among whom its transnational branches are established. In the US, Europe and in Asia, it is identified as a 'Nigerian' or 'black' church popular among Nigerian diasporic communities and other migrant groups.

Three factors could be held responsible for this alienation, which cuts across Latin American and African transnational churches planted in the global North. One is the emphasis on demons and other supernatural explanations for events and various human predicaments. Ogbu Kalu describes this as an attempt by Pentecostals to preserve the African configuration of the spiritual universe. He identifies several similarities in Pentecostal beliefs and those of African traditional religion in respect to the knowledge of the spiritual world. This, to him, is not syncretism, but represents elements of continuity in the religious lives of Africans.⁷² Again, this has been described by Gifford as an 'enchanted' worldview, which incidentally is prevalent, not only in Africa, but also in Latin America (via the Afro-Brazilian religion).⁷³ It is this same worldview that underpins the 'deliverance theology of many of the Pentecostal churches. The problem lies in the fact that these Pentecostal churches have been unable to adapt to cultures in which people do not share the same worldview that emphasize the activities of witches, demons and other spiritual agents. There is therefore little common discursive ground between these Pentecostals and their host nations. The second factor has to do with the boisterous worship style and aggressive evangelical strategies of the Pentecostal churches, which also need to be adapted to suit the receiving societies.

The third factor is the practice described by Paul Freston as 'direct ecclesiastical transplant' according to which 'the UCKG and most other Brazilian Pentecostal denominations' employ in their trans-national outreaches, virtually the same techniques that have served them well in Brazil.⁷⁴ This practice is also to be found among African Pentecostal denominations. While its failure rate is high, this doctrine works well in

areas with some similarities with the Pentecostal home nation. A case in point is the success of the UCKG in South Africa. The reasons for this success, according to Freston are: similarity of context—‘considerable urbanization, good infrastructure and a certain cosmopolitanism and racial diversity’.⁷⁵ The second reason is the fact that the UCKG was able to take advantage of the frustrations of unmet hopes and aspirations in the wake of the inauguration of South African democracy. Thus the UCKG ‘... [appealed] both to the disappointed as well as to those who need moral reinforcement to take advantage of the new opportunities’.⁷⁶ He however offers no explanation for the paucity of white South Africans in the UCKG, which interestingly reflects the preponderance of blacks and coloured peoples in mainstream Brazilian Pentecostalism. Meanwhile, other studies of African Pentecostal transnationalism show that this policy of direct ecclesiastical transplant is mostly counter-productive.⁷⁷ All these boil down to the issue of effectively translating the Pentecostal package from one culture to another.⁷⁸

The Challenge of Christian Unity

The fragmentation of the Pentecostal movement both in Africa and Latin America has posed a great challenge to Christian unity, not only within Pentecostal circles, but also within the larger Christian body. Ecumenical bodies such as the Evangelical Association (AEVB) and the National Council of Pastors of Brazil; and, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) have not been able to impose overall unity on the different groups.⁷⁹ The existence of more than one ecumenical body within the same region itself gives room for ample politicking and inter-group tussles. Even within a single group there are cleavages. The high incidence of splinter groups (break-away churches) has not helped matters either. And it appears that the Pentecostal democratization of access to spiritual power earlier discussed, sometimes backfires when individual Pentecostals kick against the authority of their spiritual mentors by claiming they also have enough ‘spiritual capital’ to start their own ministries.⁸⁰ It is necessary that unity be consciously pursued among Pentecostal churches. This would serve as a stepping-stone not only for greater Christian unity but also for inter-religious ecumenism. And according to Kingsley Larbi, this unity should not only be pursued horizontally but also vertically. There should be cooperation between Pentecostals from the global South and their counterparts in the North. Such networks and rapprochement should not be one in which the South is always looking up to the North for help, but one of mutual dependency, where one considers the other as vital and necessary for its progress and development.⁸¹

Conclusion

The Pentecostal challenges examined above are by no means exhaustive. They represent some of the core issues facing Pentecostal Christianity. A major question often asked in the Nigerian case is why the vitality of the Pentecostal movement has not been translated into a moral reform of the society. The Nigerian society still remains very corrupt despite the intensity of the Pentecostal campaign. The reason for this could partly be found in the failure of Nigerian Pentecostals to reform their own institutional structures. They need to abide by their own constitutions, exercise power accountably and generally embody good political practices. It is only then that they can positively affect the nation. It is sad that the crop of self-avowed 'Christian' leaders that Nigeria has had, both at the national and state levels have not lived up to the expectation of the populace in terms of personal integrity and accountability.⁸² Ironically, the 'models' of integrity and transparency eulogized in popular discourses have not been Pentecostals but individuals like the late Tai Solarin (an agnostic), Gani Fawehinmi (a Muslim), the late Professor Olikoye Ransome-Kuti (a mainline Christian) and Professor Wole Soyinka. Similarly, in Brazil, Pentecostals politicians often fall short of societal expectations; though a large section of the lower strata of the congregations still maintain the reputation of being honest and hard working people. There is thus the need for the churches in both Africa and Latin America to live according to what they preach and reform their structures. If one considers the Pentecostal churches merely as a reflection of the contradictions that exist in the larger society, then such a reform may not be feasible. After all, the churches are cultural products of particular milieux and thus cannot be radically different from the society that spawned them. However, considering Pentecostal claims that they are the 'salt' and 'light' of the world, the onus is thus on them to be different from the larger society, which difference would place them in a position from where they could positively affect their environment.

It is also important to note that the Pentecostal movement in both Nigeria and Brazil has carved a niche for itself as a religion of the lower and middle classes; as an urban phenomenon (it usually spreads from the urban to the rural areas); and, as a movement that appeals more to youth and women than to older men.⁸³ In many Pentecostal congregations, women constitute up to two thirds of the total membership. The feminization of poverty and the fact that women are always at the receiving end of socio-cultural oppression are partly responsible for this. While the gospel of prosperity and its promise of social mobility appeal more to the youth and young at heart, women, regardless of their age category, are particularly drawn to Pentecostal congregations

that emphasize deliverance and healing miracles. Another interesting observation about Pentecostalism is its ability to provoke parallel reforms in other religious systems. We have already mentioned the ‘pentecostalization’ of Anglican churches in Nigeria, and the growth of the Catholic Charismatic movement. Similar developments also occurred in Brazil. But more remarkable is the fact that even Muslim youth groups in southern Nigeria are becoming ‘charismatic’. The NASFAT (Nasir-Lahi-l Fathi), for instance, organizes night vigils, prayer camps, fasts, and prescribe rituals similar to those of Pentecostals. More research is still needed on such Muslim ‘charismatic’ groups.

In some Latin American countries i.e. El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Mexico, scholars have found out that the Pentecostal upsurge is gradually approaching an anti-climax.⁸⁴ Several factors are held accountable for this. These include dissatisfaction with the inability of women to become full pastors, poor quality of preaching and teaching by uneducated ministers, clerical financial scandals, and ‘burnout’ from efforts to live up to the rigorous moral demands of Pentecostalism. Others are: the attraction of materialism among better-off converts, uneasiness with a life of ‘isolation’ from ones non-Pentecostal neighbours, ‘poaching’ of members by other Pentecostal churches, and new aggressive evangelization campaigns by Catholics. Given the contextual similarities in many of the Latin American countries, it is likely that this downward trend may also spread to Brazil if some of the above issues are not addressed urgently. But could the same be said of Nigeria? Some of these symptoms are already manifesting in Nigerian Pentecostalism, though with some variations. What some pastors lack in pastoral training, they have been able to cover up with the performance of miracles. Disgusted with the magical and manipulative nature of some of the miracles, the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission early in 2004 banned Pentecostal pastors from airing miracle services on national television. Discrimination against women from attaining clerical posts exists in Nigeria too. But many women are now ‘breaking away’ from their mother churches to found their own ‘ministries’, while several others partner with their husbands as co-pastors in the church; and on the death of such husbands succeed them as Presidents of the ministries. Only a few of the Pentecostal churches e.g. the RCCG has given full clergy rights to women.⁸⁵ The possibility of a ‘burnout’ due to the rigorous moral demands of Pentecostalism is also remote because it is only the older Pentecostal churches that make such demands. Most of the neo-Pentecostal churches are regarded as being liberal and even permissive by the older ones. They do not shun the world in the same way as the older churches but maintain that the believer should navigate through the world system to get the best that it has to offer.

However, a serious cause for concern is the increasing rate of clerical scandals reported in the media. This has the potential of discouraging serious-minded members if the church does not arrest the situation immediately. Moreover, as most mainline churches (Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Catholic-Charismatic) are also 'pentecostalizing' their proselytization methods—they now have open-air 'revivals' (crusades), healing services, and emphasize the Holy Spirit—many disillusioned Pentecostals may go back to their former mainline churches. After all, what attracted them to the Pentecostal movement is now available in the mainline churches. Again, the issue of 'poaching' of members equally applies to Nigeria but with another interesting dimension. The seeming specialization of churches in the spiritual products they offer in the religious marketplace has made it relatively easy for prospective clients to move freely from one church to the other depending on their individual needs and preferences. Thus people know where to go for deliverance ministrations, for healing, for prosperity messages, and, of course, for the 'old-time' preaching on holiness. Apart from the stable nucleus of permanent members of particular churches, there is also a larger crop of 'affiliates' who move freely from one church to the other.

The big lesson for Nigerian Pentecostals from the Latin American example is that the Pentecostal explosion should not be taken for granted. Even where socio-political conditions remain hostile, solace is now available in other churches apart from the Pentecostals. And if care is not taken to reform the Pentecostal church and make it more responsive to socio-political issues, it may begin to lose its cutting edge and popular appeal. Brazilian female Pentecostals also have a lot to learn from their Nigerian counterparts, particularly those who have broken through gender barriers in the churches to found their own ministries thus creating alternative spaces of operation for themselves. Finally, the ecumenical bodies or umbrella associations of Pentecostals also have a big role to play in ensuring high moral standards in the churches, and promoting unity, not only among Pentecostals, but also within the entire Christian community. That would give Pentecostals the necessary leverage to enter into inter-religious dialogue with other faiths, thus paving way for the much-needed peace in all the communities and nations concerned.

Notes

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2. Chestnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, 3, 7-9.

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4. J.M. Bonino, 'Changing Paradigms: A Response' in M.W. Dempster, B.D. Klaus and D. Petersen (eds.), *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel* (Oxford: Regnum, 1999), 123.
5. Ibid.
6. Martin, *Pentecostalism*, 7-11.
7. Ibid, 7.
8. L. Lovett, 'Black Origins of the Pentecostal Movement' in V. Synan (ed.), *Aspects of Pentecostal-Charismatic Origins* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos Books International, 1975), 125-140; J.S. Tinney, 'William Seymour: Father of Modern-Day Pentecostalism', *Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Society*, 4 (Fall 1977), 34-44; I. MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1988).
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10. Freston, 'Pentecostalism in Brazil', 121-124.
11. Chestnut, *Born-Again in Brazil*, 31-32.
12. Ibid, 32
13. Freston, 'Pentecostalism in Brazil', 122-123.
14. Ibid, 126.
15. Chestnut, *Born-Again in Brazil*, 35-36.
16. Ibid, 36.
17. Ibid, 37.
18. Ibid, 48.
19. Freston, 'Pentecostalism in Brazil', 130.
20. Ibid.
21. These statistics are available on *Wikipedia Encyclopedia* at <http://www.casimiro.com/wiki/en/wikipedia/b/br/brazil.html> Accessed on May 30, 2006.
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23. J.D.Y. Peel, *Aladura: A Religious Movement among the Yoruba* (London: International African Institute and Oxford University Press, 1968), 55.
24. Ogbu U. Kalu, 'Preserving a Worldview: Pentecostalism in the African Maps of the Universe', *PNEUMA: Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, 24:2 (Fall 2002), 122.

25. Examples of such prophets (prophetesses) are Daniel Orekoya, Joseph Babalola, Moses Orimolade, Christiana Abiodun and Josiah Ositelu.
26. J.D.Y. Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 314.
27. Matthews A. Ojo, 'Deeper Life Bible Church of Nigeria' in P. Gifford (ed.), *New Dimensions in African Christianity* (Ibadan: Sefer, 1993), 161.
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30. For details see T. Falola, *The History of Nigeria* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1999), pp. 183-204.
31. Kalu, 'Preserving a Worldview', 127.
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34. Chestnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, pp. 44-46. See also G.N. Howe, 'Capitalism and Religion at the Periphery: Pentecostalism and Umbanda in Brazil' in S.D. Glazier (ed.), *Perspectives on Pentecostalism: Case Studies from the Caribbean and Latin America* (Lanham: University Press of America, Inc., 1980), pp. 125-141.
35. Chestnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, pp. 44-46.
36. David Lehmann, 'Charisma and Possession in Africa and Brazil', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 18:5 (2001), 54.
37. Ibid, 61.
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39. Miriam C.M. Rabelo, 'Afro-Brazilian Religion, Progressive Catholicism, and Pentecostalism in Northeastern Brazil: Notes on Confluence' in Toyin Falola (ed.), *Christianity and Social Change in Africa: Essays in Honor of J.D.Y. Peel* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2005), 361-388.
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44. Cleary, 'Latin American Pentecostalism', 140.
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46. Ibid, 113.

47. Brian H. Smith, *Religious Politics in Latin America: Pentecostals Vs Catholics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 28.
48. Paul Gifford, 'The Complex Provenance of Some Elements of African Pentecostal Theology' in Cohen and Marshall-Fratani (eds.), *Between Babel and Pentecost*, 62-65.
49. R. Marshall, 'God is not a Democrat: Pentecostalism and Democratization in Nigeria' in P. Gifford (ed.), *The Christian Churches and the Democratization of Africa* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 239-260.
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54. Matthews A. Ojo, 'The Church in the African State: The Charismatic/Pentecostal Experience in Nigeria', *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 1:2 (1998), 25.
55. K. Westmeier, *Protestant Pentecostalism in Latin America: A Study in the Dynamics of Missions* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1999), 68.
56. Cleary, 'Latin American Pentecostalism', 141.
57. Oro and Seman, 'Brazilian Pentecostalism', 183.
58. Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics*, 23.
59. Oro and Seman, 'Brazilian Pentecostalism', 183, n.10.
60. Smith, *Religious Politics in Latin America*, 49.
61. Ibid.
62. M.H. Kukah, 'Christians and Nigeria's Aborted Transition' in Gifford (ed.), *The Christian Churches and the Democratization of Africa*, 225-238.
63. Chestnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, pp. 130 and 171.
64. Paul Gifford has already studied this 'reorientation' in *Ghana through the Preaching of Mensa Otabil*. See P. Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity* (London: Hurst & Co., 2004), 113-39.
65. Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics*, 112.
66. This is the central theme in David Martin, *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002)
67. Westmeier, *Protestant Pentecostalism*, 21.
68. Freston, 'Pentecostalism in Brazil', 39.
69. P. Freston, 'The Transnationalisation of Brazilian Pentecostalism: The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God' in Corten and Marshall-Fratani (eds.), *Between Babel and Pentecost*, 200.
70. O.A. Adeboye, 'Transnational Pentecostalism in Africa: The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Nigeria' in L. Fourchard, A. Mary and R. Otayek (eds.) *Enterprises religieuses transnationales en Afrique de l'Ouest* (Paris: Karthala, 2005), 439-465.
71. Freston, 'The Transnationalization of Brazilian Pentecostalism', 198-215.
72. Kalu, 'Preserving a Worldview', 116, 131.

73. Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role*, (London: Hurst & Co., 1998), 328.
74. Paul Freston, 'The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God: A Brazilian Church Finds Success in Southern Africa', *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 35: 1 (2005), 36.
75. Ibid, 54.
76. Ibid.
77. Adeboye, 'Transnational Pentecostalism in Africa', 439-465; Olufunke Adeboye, 'Running with the Prophecy: The Redeemed Christian Church of God in North America', Paper Presented at the International Conference on Movements, Migrations and Displacements in Africa at the University of Texas at Austin, USA, March 2006.
78. This theme of translation is pursued vigorously in Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe of Ghana* (London: International African Institute, 1999).
79. Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics*, 44-51, 188-190.
80. For more on the concept of 'spiritual capital' see: Olufunke Adeboye, 'Dispensing Spiritual Capital: Faith-based Responses to the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in Nigeria', Paper Presented at the African Scholars Colloquium, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA., April 2006.
81. Larbi, 'African Pentecostalism', 166.
82. Dr Chinwoke Mbadinuju, governor of Anambra State of Nigeria from 1999 to 2003, who regularly made a public show of his 'deep' Christian commitments, led a government that was characterized by grand corruption, extra-judicial killings and administrative ineptitude. Even at the federal level, large-scale corruption and insensitivity to the suffering of the masses characterize the present administration of Olusegun Obasanjo, who has made no secret of his Christian conversion experience.
83. Freston, 'The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God', 62.
84. Smith, *Religious Politics in Latin America*, 98-99.
85. O.A. Adeboye, 'Breaking Through Gender Barriers: Religion and Female Leadership in Nigeria', *Journal of History and Diplomatic Studies*, 2:2 (2005).