

**NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS AND CHARISMATIC MINISTRIES
IN GHANA:
A BIOGRAPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS**

**BY
BERNARD SALLAH**

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY, THEOLOGY AND RELIGION
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LAW

THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

DECEMBER, 2020

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

University of Birmingham Research Archive

e-theses repository

This unpublished thesis/dissertation is copyright of the author and/or third parties. The intellectual property rights of the author or third parties in respect of this work are as defined by The Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 or as modified by any successor legislation.

Any use made of information contained in this thesis/dissertation must be in accordance with that legislation and must be properly acknowledged. Further distribution or reproduction in any format is prohibited without the permission of the copyright holder.

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a historical and theological research to elucidate understanding of the nature of the Charismatic Ministries in Ghana from the perspective of the life and ministry of Nicholas Duncan-Williams, one of its pioneers. The main question this thesis seeks to address is to ascertain the nature of the influence and contribution of Duncan-Williams to the Charismatic Ministries in Ghana.

Using a biographical research approach, this research examines the history of involvement in the Charismatic Ministries by Nicholas Duncan-Williams. The founding of the Action Chapel International, a local church initiative of Duncan-Williams became the rallying point for most of the leaders of Charismatic Ministries in Ghana and the resultant effect on most of these young people was the proliferation of many Charismatic Ministries in Ghana. The rise of the Charismatic Ministries has subsequently impacted the nature of Christianity in Ghana and by extension public life. The thesis shows that the Charismatic movement is a local initiative that has resulted in the growth of Ghanaian Christianity. It also shows that Duncan-Williams is a key player and influence for most of the present leaders of these ministries and that, to a large extent, he spearheaded many of their innovative local practices. Thus, the outcome of his life and ministry has led directly or indirectly to the emphasis on the preaching of prosperity and in a positive sense to the ‘pentecostalisation’ or ‘charismatisation’ of Ghanaian Christianity.

**DEDICATED TO
BERNARD SALLAH SENIOR**

Acknowledgements

The writing of this thesis has been made possible by the immense help and support of many people. Since space and time will not allow me to mention all of them, I will mention but a few here.

I am grateful to Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams for his audience and for enduring long hours of interviews.

To Professor Allan Anderson, my Supervisor, who has been very helpful with critical insight and guidance throughout my research, and to Professor Wolfgang Vondey, my second supervisor, for his invaluable contribution in shaping my thesis, I express immense gratitude.

I am also grateful to Mr. Gideon Akrofi and his family; Charles Prempeh and his family; Dr. Victoria A.A. Osei-Bonsu; Rev. Sammy Agyepong of Alpha Beta School and his family; and my colleagues at the Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, University of Birmingham for their support and encouragement.

My gratitude goes to my church family in Action Chapel International, Worldwide and my gorgeous Akpene and our children.

Ultimately, I give glory to God for the great things HE has done.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	<i>ii</i>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	<i>iv</i>
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	<i>x</i>
CHAPTER ONE	<i>1</i>
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	1
1.2 CHARISMATIC MINISTRIES EXPLAINED	4
1.3 THESIS FOCUS AND AIMS	8
1.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	10
1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	11
1.7 HISTORICAL CONTEXT	13
1.7.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN GHANA.....	13
1.7.2 PENTECOSTALISM IN GHANA	18
1.7.2.1 THE AFRICAN INITIATED CHURCHES (AICS).....	19
1.7.2.2 THE CLASSICAL PENTECOSTALS	23
1.7.2.3 THE NEO-PENTECOSTAL/CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT	25
1.7.3 KNOWLEDGE GAP	29
1.8 METHODOLOGY	33
1.8.1 PRESUPPOSITIONS	36
1.8.1.1 GAINING ACCESS	38
1.8.1.2 PRE-UNDERSTANDING	39
1.9 DATA COLLECTION	42
1.9.1 POPULATION	42
1.9.2 RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS	43
1.9.3 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION	43
1.9.3.1 PRIMARY DATA	44
1.9.3.2 SECONDARY DATA	46
1.9.4 DATA ANALYSIS	46
1.10 LIMITATIONS	47
1.11. ETHICS	48
CHAPTER TWO	49
THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT IN GHANA: THE POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS AND ECONOMIC MATRICES	49
1.2 INTRODUCTION	49
2.2 GHANA’S ENGAGEMENT WITH POLITICS AND RELIGION	49
2.3 GHANA, THE WORLD BANK AND THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND ...	57

2.4 THE SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT IN GHANA.....	66
CHAPTER THREE	69
<i>THE EARLY LIFE OF NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS.....</i>	69
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	69
3.1 BIRTH NARRATIVE OF NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS	69
3.2.2 MOTHER OF NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS	71
3.2.4 FATHER OF NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS.....	73
3.3 GROWING UP AND TEENAGE YEARS.....	74
3.3.1 BOLGATANGA MARKET	75
3.3.2 RETURN TO ACCRA	76
3.3.3 STOWAWAY AND STRUGGLES FOR SURVIVAL	79
3.4 CONVERSION NARRATIVE OF NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS.....	80
3.4.1 THE INFLUENCE OF THE NIGERIAN CHARISMATIC PIONEER, BENSON IDAHOSA	82
3.5 INDIGENOUS PENTECOSTAL PARACHURCH EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIPS: PRECURSORS TO NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS' MINISTRY	84
CONCLUSION	87
CHAPTER FOUR.....	89
<i>HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF ACTION CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL</i>	89
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	89
4.1 THE EARLY BEGINNINGS OF NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS' MINISTRY	90
4.3 NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS, THE YOUTH AND ACTION CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL	99
4.4 THE EARLY BEGINNINGS AND MIGRATIONS OF ACTION CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL	103
4.5 SOME CHALLENGES DURING THE INITIAL STAGES OF ACTION CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL	105
4.5.1 FINANCIAL CHALLENGES	106
4.5.2 LACK OF ACCEPTANCE	107
4.5.3 CONSTANT EVICTION FROM RENTED PLACES OF WORSHIP	107
4.5.4 COMPLAINT BY NEIGHBOURS AT THE AIRPORT RESIDENTIAL AREA.....	108
4.6 MARRIAGE AND ROLE OF WOMEN IN ACTION CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL ...	112
4.7 GROWTH, EXPANSION AND BRANCH FORMATION	115
4.8 CONVOCATIONS	116
4.8.1 SUNDAY SERVICES	116
4.8.2 WEDNESDAY SERVICE.....	117
4.8.3 THURSDAYS PRAYER MEETING (DOMINION HOUR FORMERLY JERICHO HOUR)	117
4.8.4 IMPACT CONVENTION	117
4.8.5 EASTER CONVENTIONS	118
4.9 EPISCOPACY AND GOVERNANCE OF ACI	118
4.9.1 COLLEGE OF BISHOPS (COB)	120

4.9.2 RESOURCES OPERATIONS CENTER (ROC)	120
4.10 BIBLE COLLEGE/ LIBERAL ARTS UNIVERSITY	121
4.10.1 VOICE OF INSPIRATION	121
4.11 FACTORS THAT PROMOTED THE GROWTH AND EXPANSION OF ACI	122
4.11.1 INSPIRED PREACHING AND THE MESSAGE OF PROSPERITY	122
4.11.2 TESTIMONIES OF TRANSFORMED LIVES AND BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT	122
4.11.3 VIBRANT WORSHIP AND PRAISE.....	123
4.12 THE CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP QUALITIES OF NICHOLAS DUNCAN- WILLIAMS	123
4.13 SCHISMS.....	125
4.14 MEDIA AND NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS	128
4.15 NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS AND MIGRATION TO AMERICA	129
4.15.1 JERICHO HOUR	130
4.16 NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS RETURNS TO GHANA.....	130
4.16.1 DIVORCE OF FRANCESCA DUNCAN-WILLIAMS	132
4.17 TRIALS AND PERSECUTIONS	133
4.18 THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHARISMATIC AND CHRISTIAN CHURCHES (NACCC).....	134
4.19 THE INITIAL INTERNATIONALISATION OF ACTION CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL	135
CONCLUSION	136
CHAPTER FIVE	138
THE THEOLOGY OF DUNCAN-WILLIAMS.....	138
5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	138
5.1.1 SOURCES OF THEOLOGY	138
5.1.2 EXPERIENCE INFORMED THEOLOGY OF DUNCAN-WILLIAMS.....	143
5.2 CHARISMATIC THEOLOGY: FOCUS ON NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS	143
5.2.1. ORALITY OF CHARISMATIC THEOLOGY	144
5.2.2 NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS AND THE BIBLE	151
5.2.3 THE HERMENEUTICS AND LITURGICAL ORDER OF NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS	154
5.2.3 NDW’S TEACHING ON ANCESTRAL SPIRITS	157
5.2.4 OTHER SOURCES	160
5.3 THE SPIRITUALITY AND THEOLOGY OF NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS.....	166
5.3.1 BELIEF	168
5.3.2 PRACTICES	175
5.3.3 SENSIBILITIES	177
5.3.4 VALUES.....	178
5.4 NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS’ THEOLOGY ON PRAYER	180
5.5 NDW’S PRAYER AS A REFLECTION OF HOLISTIC WORLDVIEW	186
5.5.1 PRAYER AND THE CHRISTIAN EMPOWERMENT	187

5.5.2. PRAYER AS TRANSFORMATION IN THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN	188
5.5.3 NDW'S THEOLOGY OF HEALING AND PRAYER	190
5.6. SALVATION IN THE THEOLOGY OF NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS .	191
5.6.1. Ghanaian Charismatic soteriology	194
5.6.2 Nicholas Duncan-Williams soteriological teaching	195
5.6.3 Salvation from the point of view of prosperity theology	199
5.6.4 Salvation as an articulation of power	202
5.7. SALVATION AS DELIVERANCE	203
5.7.1 Engaging Nicholas Duncan-Williams' theology of salvation	205
CHAPTER SIX	209
<i>NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS, HIS PROSPERITY GOSPEL AND RELATION WITH THE STATE</i>	209
6.1. INTRODUCTION	209
6.6.1. Nicholas Duncan-Williams' prosperity gospel and a critical assessment.....	209
6.6.2 NDW'S TEACHING ON WITCHCRAFT AND SPIRITUAL PRAXIS	213
6.6.2.1 NDW'S TEACHING ON WITCHCRAFT AND PRAYER PRACTICES	215
6.6.2.2 CRITIQUING NDW'S WORLDVIEW ON PROSPERITY GOSPEL	217
6.6.3. The media and the prosperity gospel	220
6.6.4. Empire building and the charismatic ministries in Ghana	224
6.6.5. Networking globally to extend the prosperity gospel	225
6.4. Nicholas Duncan-Williams and economic issues in Ghana	226
6.6. Conclusion	231
CHAPTER SEVEN	233
CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS	233
7.1. Summary and main arguments	233
7.2 Findings	234
7.2 Reflections	235
7.3 Conclusion	236
<i>Bibliography and Oral Sources</i>	236
1.0 Primary Sources	236
1.1 Interviews	236
1.2 Nicholas Duncan-Williams and family	236
1.1.2 Ministerial friends and Associates of Nicholas Duncan-Williams.....	237
1.1.3 Selected Leaders of Charismatic Ministries in Ghana with association with Nicholas Duncan-Williams.....	237
1.2 Church Documents and Other reports	238
1.3 Internet Sources	238
Audio – Visual Sources	240

Secondary sources.....	241
APPENDIX I.....	255
APPENDIX II.....	256
APPENDIX III.....	257
APPENDIX IV.....	259
APPENDIX V.....	265

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACI	-	Action Chapel International
AFRC	-	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AIC	-	Africa Independent Churches
CAFMI	-	Christian Action Faith Ministries International
CCG	-	Christian Council of Ghana
COB	-	College of Bishops
CPP	-	Convention Peoples Party
ERP	-	Economic Recovery Programme
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	-	Gross National Product
IMF	-	International Monetary Fund
NACCC	-	National Association of Christian Charismatic Churches
NDW	-	Nicholas Duncan-Williams
NLC	-	National Liberation Council
NRC	-	National Redemption Council
PAMSCAD	-	Programme of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment
PNDC	-	Provisional National Defence Council
PNP	-	Peoples National Party
ROC	-	Resources Operation Centre
SAP	-	Structural Adjustment Programme
UGCC	-	United Gold Coast Convention

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The relatively small number of scholarly biographical works on pioneering founders of Ghanaian charismatic ministries, despite the rise in Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity as a catalyst for change, testifies to the need to examine this phenomenon as a viable area for research in the study of religion. Since the turn of the twentieth century, the explosion and growth of the Pentecostal movement has been ‘the single most important development that has occurred within Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa.’¹ Besides, there has also been a significant shift in the growth of Christianity from the global north to the global south. Thus, whereas Christianity is receding in the western world, it is burgeoning in other areas such as Latin America, Asia and Africa. The growth of ‘Pentecostalism has changed the face of Christianity in both ecclesiological and practical terms.’² Harvey Cox postulates that the growth of Pentecostalism worldwide ‘holds within it a host of significant clues to the meaning of the general global spiritual resurgence we are now witnessing.’³

Africa’s neo-Pentecostal churches burgeoned in the late 1970s and saw an exponential growth in the early 1990s.⁴ Allan Anderson observes that all over Africa in the 1970s, new

¹ J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, ‘I will Put my Breath in You, and You Will Come to Life’: Charismatic Renewal in Ghanaian Mainline Churches and its Implications for African Diasporan Christianity’ In Afe Adogame, Roswith Gerloff and Klaus Hock, (eds.), *Christianity in Africa and the African Diaspora: The Appropriation of a sacred Heritage*, (NY: Continuum Int. Publishing Group 2008), 193.

² J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit: Ghanaian Perspective on Pentecostalism and Renewal in Africa*. (Oxford: Regnum International; Akropong-Akuapem, Regnum Africa, 2015), 24.

³ Harvey Cox, ‘Foreword’ in Allan H. Anderson, Walter J. Hollenweger (eds.), *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspective on a Movement in Transition*. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 8.

⁴ Mathews Ojo, “Transnational Religious Networks and indigenous Pentecostal Missionary Enterprises in the West African Coast Region” In Afe Adogame, Roswith Gerloff and Klaus Hock, *Christianity in African and the African Diaspora: The Appropriation of a Scattered Heritage*. (London/New York: Continuum International Pub. Group, 2008), 168.

independent Pentecostal and charismatic churches began to emerge, most of which were influenced by the ‘Pentecostal and charismatic movement in Europe and North America and by established Pentecostal churches in Africa.’⁵ However, most of these churches were indigenous with an African foundation and independent of foreign control.⁶

Most scholars attribute the emergence of the charismatic movement to inter-denominational and evangelical campus fellowships and para-church organisations from which young charismatic leaders emerged and built up followings. Eventually, some of these newly-emerged charismatic churches overshadowed the former ‘inter-denominational movements’,⁷ or ‘breakaway’⁸ from the main denominational group. In Ghana, scholars like Samuel B. Adubofour⁹, Emmanuel K. Larbi¹⁰, Johnson Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu¹¹, Cephas Omenyo¹² and others have linked this form of Christianity to young secondary school and university students who were organized around the Scripture Union (SU) and the Ghana Fellowship of Evangelical Students (GHAFES) but not forgetting the influence of North American

⁵ Allan H. Anderson, ‘The Newer Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches: The Shape of Future Christianity in Africa’ *Pneuma* 24(2) (2002), 167.

⁶ See Philomina N. Mwaura, ‘The Role of Charismatic Christianity in Reshaping the Religious Scene in Africa: The Case of Kenya’ in Afe Adogame, Roswith Gerloff and Klaus Hock, *Christianity in Africa and the African Diaspora: The Appropriation of a Scattered Heritage*. (London/NY: Continuum Int. Pub. Group, 2008), 185.

⁷ J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, ‘Traditional Missionary Christianity and New Religious Movements in Ghana’ (MPhil thesis, University of Ghana, 1996), 56. See also Samuel B. Adubofour, *The Evangelical Para-church Movement in Ghanaian Christianity: 1950 -1990s*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1994). See, for instance, the case of Nigeria in Mathews Ojo, ‘The Growth of Charismatic Movements in Northern Nigeria’ *Ogbomoso Journal of Theology* 13(2) (2008), 83-121.

⁸ Breakaway is a term popularly used in Ghana to express the seceding of a younger religious group from an older and a more established group to start a new church and is usually due to strong disagreements and doctrine or finances.

⁹ Samuel B. Adubofour, *The Evangelical Para-church Movement in Ghanaian Christianity: 1950 -1990s*. PhD thesis, (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1994).

¹⁰ Emmanuel K. Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, (Accra: Blessed Publication, 2001), 28.

¹¹ J Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Development within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

¹² Cephas Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum 2002).

televangelists such as Oral Roberts, Kenneth Hagin and Morris Cerullo amongst others.¹³ Likewise in Nigeria, Mathews Ojo,¹⁴ Ogbu Kalu¹⁵ and Asonzeh Ukah¹⁶ have linked this form of Christianity to the same Scripture Union which was introduced into Nigerian Protestant secondary schools from Britain in the 1950s.¹⁷ However, Paul Gifford argues that the more recent success of the Charismatic movement in Ghana found an important breeding ground in the political and economic crisis of the 1970s and 1980s, and the subsequent submission to structural adjustment programs imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.¹⁸

Charismatic churches emphasize the importance of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the life of every ‘born again’ Christian. Jacob Olupona argues that these charismatic churches emphasize speaking in tongues, divine healing, and miracles, alongside material prosperity.¹⁹

¹³ See Adubofour, *The Evangelical Para-church Movement in Ghanaian Christianity*. Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 95 -96. Emmanuel K. Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, (Accra: Blessed Publication, 2001), 88 – 89. See also Cephas Omenyo, “Agenda for a Discussion of African Initiatives in Christianity: The West African/Ghanaian case”, *In Missiology: An Intercultural Review*, XXXIX(3) (2011).

¹⁴ Mathews Ojo, “Transnational Religious Networks and indigenous Pentecostal Missionary Enterprises in the West African Coast Region” In Afe Adogame, Roswith Gerloff and Klaus Hock, *Christianity in African and the African Diaspora: The Appropriation of a Scattered Heritage*. (London/New York: Continuum International Pub. Group, 2008).

¹⁵ Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

¹⁶ Asonzeh Ukah, *A New Paradigm of Pentecostal Power: A Study of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Nigeria*. (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc, 2008).

¹⁷ See for example Okorocho, C., *The Meaning of Religious Conversion in Africa*. (Aldershot: Avebury, 1987).

¹⁷ Mathew Ojo, “The church in the African State: The Charismatic/Pentecostal Experience in Nigeria”, *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol.1, (1999), 25-32. See also Mathew Ojo, *The End -Time Army: Charismatic Movements in Modern Nigeria*, (Asmara: Africa World Press, 2006). Asonzeh Ukah, *A New Paradigm of Pentecostal Power: A Study of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Nigeria*. (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc, 2008).

¹⁸ Paul Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity, Pentecostalism in a Global African Economy*. (London: Hurst & Company, 2004.) 3-4.

¹⁹ Jacob, Olupona, “Africa, West (Survey),” In Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Mass (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*. Revised and Expanded Edition. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 11-21.

A distinctive characteristic of the Charismatic churches is their emphasis on the need for one to be ‘born again’ and the appropriation and innovative use of modern media technologies that feature a predominantly youth membership, the use of English language for worship services, vibrant and live music in worship and the strong emphasis on faith to appropriate Wealth, Health and Salvation.²⁰

1.2 Charismatic Ministries explained

The hybridity and heterogeneous nature of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement globally has made it very difficult, if not entirely confusing, to attempt a categorisation of the movement into different taxonomies. In this study, I use the term Charismatic Ministries (CM) to refer to Pentecostalist movements that burgeoned in Africa in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This strand of Pentecostalism has mostly been categorized as the fifth strand of the Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal in Ghana.²¹ Cephas Omenyo categorised the movement in terms of chronology and period of dominant occurrence into five groups.²² First, there is the group of African Independent Churches (AICs) that originated in Ghana and other African countries, most of them beginning before 1906 or before the American Pentecostal movement reached most of Africa. Second, we have Classical Pentecostal churches which began in the West in 1906 and appeared on the Ghanaian religious scene in the 1920s. These churches include the Church of Pentecost, Apostolic churches and the Prayer Camps.²³ Third, there are the Neo-Pentecostal or Charismatic non-denominational fellowships like the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship International and Women’s Aglow Fellowship International. Fourth, there are the Charismatic Renewal Groups in the mainline Churches

²⁰ Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 96.

²¹ Cephas Omenyo, Emmanuel K Larbi among others have categorized Ghanaian renewal Christianity into five strands according to chronology and time of dominate occurrence in Ghana.

²² Cephas Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism: A study of the development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Uitgeverij Boekencentrum: Zoetermeer, 2002), 94.

²³ The Prayer Camps were Pentecostalist fellowships that emphasise the idea of deliverance and intense prayer with fasting as means of dealing with problems of congregants.

like the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, and Bible study and Prayer Groups of the Protestant denominations. Finally, we have independent Pentecostalist/Charismatic ministries that broadly defined to include the new prophetic ministries which emerged in the early 1990s.²⁴ As in the title of his seminal book, J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu refers to them as the ‘African Charismatics’.²⁵ Paul Gifford has described them as the ‘newcomers in Ghanaian Christianity.’²⁶ They are indigenous ministries that have had a lot of influence from their North American counterparts in terms of style of worship and use of mass media, particularly with regard to televangelism. My attempt to categorize the charismatic movement in Ghana after observing them reveals three strands. Firstly, there are the first-generation charismatics led by Nicholas Duncan-Williams and Mensa Otabil that emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s characterized by teachings of prosperity and practices of the word of faith movement. Secondly, the second-generation charismatics led by Elisha Salifu Amoaku and Owusu Bempah are characterized by the emphasis on the gift of prophecy and supernatural signs. The third-generation charismatics, which could be properly referred to as neo-prophetic movements, are led by such men like Obinim Daniel and Kweku Agyei Antwi (popularly known as Oboufour) and are characterized by miracles and the use of traditional methods of religiosity that emphasise dreams, visions, and prophecies.

Looking at the factors behind the upsurge of charismatic movements, scholars, including Stewart Hoover, have posited that new religious movements of any kind ‘have their sources

²⁴ Cephas Omenyo, N. and Abamfo Ofori Atiemo, “Claiming Religious Space: The Case of Neo-Propheticism in Ghana”, *Ghana Bulletin of Theology*, 1(1) (2006), 55 – 68.

²⁵ J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*. (Boston: Brill, 2005).

²⁶ Paul Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalising African Economy*. (London: Hurst & Company, 2004), 23.

in crises in traditional, social and religious institutions brought on by modern life.’²⁷ Rodney Stark has also noted that in response to failures of traditional faiths, societies have frequently evolved or adopted new faiths.²⁸ In Ghana, for instance, the emergence of new religious forms can be seen in the light of some of these factors. The charismatic ministries cannot be totally isolated from certain historical and sociological trends. A look at the prevalent historical and socio-economic situation in Ghana at the time throws some light on this.

Charismatic ministries in Ghana emerged within a specific historical and socio-economic context. This implies that whereas some of the charismatic figures may attribute the rise of the movement to part of God’s intervention in the history of the Christian Church, it could be said that to some extent and in the Ghanaian context, the economic challenges and political morass of the country in the late 1970s and the 1980s partly contributed to the spontaneous growth of the movement. This is not the same as saying that the economic and political reasons were necessarily the very reasons for the rise of the movement, as it is to argue that the socio-economic and political milieu of Ghana was significant in sustaining the emergence of the movement. Some of the factors which constituted the upsurge and growth of the charismatic churches can be situated in a social, economic, theological, and political context. Scholars such as Philomena Njeri Mwaura argue that ‘modern charismatic churches and new religious movements, generally, can be linked to current economic, theological, cultural and political trends.’²⁹ Gifford has also argued that the upsurge of charismatic Churches can be

²⁷ Stewart M. Hoover, *Mass Media Religion: The Social Sources of the Electronic Church*. (London: Sage Publication, 1988), 24. See also Mwaura, *The Role of Charismatic Christianity in Reshaping the Religious Scene in Africa*, 186.

²⁸ Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity*, (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1997), 54.

²⁹ Philomena N. Mwaura, “The Role of Charismatic Christianity in Reshaping the Religious Scene in Africa: The Case of Kenya” in Afe Adogame, Roswith Gerloff and Klaus Hock, (eds.), *Christianity in Africa and the African Diaspora: The Appropriation of a sacred Heritage*, (NY: Continuum Int. Publishing Group 2008), 186.

linked to economic situations in Africa since the 1980s.³⁰ Again, Mwaura argues that “economic deprivation occasioned by poverty, bad governance and abuse of human rights in Africa of the 1980s led to people seeking solace and welfare in the churches for they provided material, spiritual and social support.”³¹ This is because these ministries were seen to be very pragmatic in finding solutions to life debilitating issues such as hunger and poverty. Kingsley Larbi³² corroborates the above by arguing that the rise of the CM is due to anomie. The period in which the charismatic churches emerged in Ghana was one of political and economic difficulty in the history of Ghana which was the first sub-Saharan African country to gain independence from colonial Britain in 1957.

This study is a contribution to research on the charismatic movement in Ghana because it focuses on the life and ministry of Nicholas Duncan-Williams (hereinafter NDW) and his contribution to the development of CM in Ghana, which has received much research attention to date. NDW founded what is considered the first charismatic church in Ghana, the Christian Action Faith Ministries International or Action Chapel International (ACI) in 1979.³³ Some have contested that the first charismatic church in Ghana is the Redemption Hour church which was founded by the Nigerian pioneer charismatic leader Benson Idahosa

³⁰ Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role*, (London: Hurst and Co., 1998), 324.

³¹ Mwaura, “The Role of Charismatic Christianity,” 186.

³² Kingsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism: Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra: CPCS, 2001), 89.

³³ Paul, Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, (London: Hurst & Company, 2004), 24. Benson Idahosa of the Church of God Mission in Nigeria, out of a crusade in 1978 in Accra, planted a charismatic church called Redemption Hour Church, and then got some of his students to pastor it. However, in terms of an indigenous Ghanaian initiative to plant an indigenous charismatic church, Nicholas Duncan-Williams is credited to have established the first indigenous Charismatic church in Ghana.

out of a crusade in 1978 and pastored by Anokyi, a Ghanaian past student of his Christ for All Nations Bible College.³⁴

1.3 Thesis Focus and Aims

This thesis is focused on the life and ministry of Nicholas Duncan-Williams. The aim is to investigate his contribution to the rise of the Charismatic Ministries in Ghana. In Ghana, the nature of Christianity today is described as ‘charismatic’ and scholars like Omenyo, Larbi, and Asamoah-Gyadu have written a great deal about this development. Nicholas Duncan-Williams (NDW) is a foremost name and figure associated with the charismatic ministries since its inception in the late 1970s and the early 1980s. He seems to be a major influencer on the movement and appears to have great impact on most of its leaders. With most of these leaders referring to him as “Papa,”³⁵ it could well be an indication that he is considered as the “father” of the charismatic movement in Ghana. This study looks into the life and ministry of NDW with the view of identifying from the analysis of his biography and theology, the nature of his contribution to the Charismatic Ministries.

The focus of this study using the biographical approach is to uncover and unpack the life, ministry, and contribution of Nicholas Duncan-Williams (NDW) to the Charismatic movement in Ghana. NDW has been an active player on the Charismatic scene in Ghana since the late 1970s. According to Paul Gifford, his involvement in the National Thanksgiving of the Fourth Republican inauguration is evidence of his significance in both religious and public life.³⁶ Many present day Charismatic leaders, such as Dag Heward-Mills of the Light House Chapel, Robert Ampiah Kwofie of the Global Revival Ministry, Joseph

³⁴ Idahosa’s Christ for all Nations Bible College is significant in the emergence of the charismatic movement in Ghana in that most of the foremost charismatic leaders and churches were products of the college and were all sponsored by Idahosa.

³⁵ ‘Papa’ is a term use locally to address a father or a paternal figure. Addressing NDW as Papa may as well create the impression that he is the father of the charismatic movement in Ghana.

³⁶ Paul, Gifford, Ghana’s New Christianity, 65

Eastwood Anaba of the Fountain Gate, and many others, refer to him as their ‘spiritual father.’³⁷ This signifies his patriarchal role in their emergence within the Charismatic movement in Ghana. There is not enough academic research that focuses entirely on the life and ministry of the pioneering founder of the Charismatic Ministry in Ghana, in a single study. This lacuna in research has implications for understanding the charismatic movement in Ghana, specifically, and in the West African sub-region in general.

In relation to the above, the main question driving this study is: What multiple factors have coalesced to influence the life and ministry of NDW and his contribution to the Charismatic ministries (CM) in Ghana? Sub-questions that arise in addressing the main question are:

1. How did the early life experiences of NDW and the socio-politico-economic and religious milieu of Ghana in the 1970s and 1980s contribute to his rise? This is answered in Chapter Three of the thesis.
2. How are charismatic ministries started, operated and sustained by an enquiry into the Action Chapel International (ACI)? This is answered in Chapter Four.
3. How has NDW’s religious experiences, associations and environment shaped his theological understanding and ministry? This is answered in Chapters Five and Six

Interrogating the above questions helps us analyse the place of NDW in the Charismatic movement in Ghana. This helps us to draw implications for global studies on the charismatic movement.

³⁷ A kind of paternal relationship within the charismatic movement which makes Duncan-Williams a father and the others sons who look up to the father for guidance and support.

1.5 Conceptual framework

This study is based on the premise that an individual's actions, beliefs, and ideas are never generated out of a vacuum. As social beings, actions of individuals are better understood if they are contextualized. Against this background, the study employs situational interaction theory and personal inherent powers to provide a comprehensive account of NDW. Situational interaction theory argues that an individual is a product of his environment. Through one's interactions with other persons, one develops a worldview that emerges as a confluence of such interactions. In other words, contextualization is necessary in any attempt to understand the narratives that have been developed about a person who is a subject of biographical study. Similarly, the theory posits that the historical circumstances surrounding a person should be closely considered. In sum, de-contextualisation and ahistorical analyses would rob any biographical work of the flavour that makes such a work an academic piece. Thus, in relation to the biographical work on NDW, due attention would be paid to some key socio-economic and historical circumstances that shape his theology and praxis. But all these theories could be condensed in the Weberian charisma leadership theory. With the charisma theory, Weber argued that charismatic authority is made possible when an individual lays claim to having a supernatural or exceptional power to affect socio-economic and political conditions.³⁸ While it is complex to necessarily connect the rise of charismatic leadership to external socio-political conditions, charismatic leaders take advantage of difficult socio-economic conditions to launch their assumed powers to shape human history. It is this perspective that I discuss. This is precisely because as Ghana's economic condition had taken a nosedive in the late 1970s and 80s, NDW claimed to be able to turn Ghana's fortunes around spiritually. This, inter alia, made him quite popular with despondent Ghanaians, particularly university graduates who face the grim realities of post-graduate joblessness. The

³⁸ Weber, Max, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. Translated by A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967).

research will be interested in examining how circumstances surrounding NDW's birth as well as the political matrix in Ghana in the early stages of his ministry shaped his theological persuasions on a wide variety of issues. In the same vein, the personal inherent theory would also help us to appreciate inherent personal qualities in the life and ministry of NDW. Here, the study will seek to identify the role of personal qualities within the personality of NDW. It is largely argued that individuals have some inherent traits that influence their lives. In other words, individuals have genetic predispositions that shape their actions and beliefs. The study will, therefore, observe and analyse the particular traits that have shaped him as a person. In sum, the study would be contextualized as well as historicised to capture the multiple factors that come to play in defining the person of NDW.

1.6 Significance of the study

Generally, there is a dearth of academic biographical study on leading figures within Ghanaian charismatic ministries. This is also the case regarding the charismatic movement in Ghana. In the few instances where some biographical works have been done, the focus has been on politicians and pioneering Ghanaian nationalists and Pan-Africanists who contributed to the struggle against colonialism in Ghana and the West African sub-region. This results in a knowledge gap within the study of Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement in Ghana. This research is significant in that it uncovers the main issues that have shaped the charismatic movement, by focusing on the life and ministry of NDW. It provides knowledge on the charismatic movement in Ghana and creates understanding of the movement's praxis and theological stance by focusing on NDW. This is to the extent that religion permeates virtually all socio-economic and political ventures in the country. Also, the Charismatic movement in Ghana has been significantly involved in the development agenda of Ghana. In Ghana today, all the major charismatic churches, including that of NDW, have universities. The growing edge of Christianity today in Ghana has been described as charismatic by

Larbi³⁹, and thus, an understanding of the charismatic movement through a study of one of its foremost leaders provides knowledge on understanding the current nature of Christianity in Ghana.

The research focuses on the contributions of indigenous Ghanaians to the shifting of the centre of gravity of the Christian faith from the Global North to the Global South. Many African scholars such as Ogbu Kalu, have lamented the skewed and Eurocentric nature of African historiography which only recorded events in the mission field from the perspective of the European with very little or no attention on local contributions.⁴⁰ This research is an attempt to highlight the essential role of locals in missions and historiography.

This study therefore fills the research gap by contributing to knowledge on the global charismatic movement. Also, since the rise of the charismatic movement in Ghana coincides with Ghana's blanket implementation of neoliberal policies in the 1980s, the study brings to the fore the contributions the charismatic movements have made and continue to make to building the Ghanaian economy. In other words, the study provides information on how the rise of the charismatic movement feeds into the political economy of Ghana. Finally, the study contributes to the development and reshaping of charismatic theology to synchronise with the resurgence of Christianity in the Global South.

³⁹ Kingsley, Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra: Center for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, 2001).

⁴⁰ Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

1.7 Historical context

In order to ground the discussion within the right theoretical context, the following areas of Christianity and Pentecostalism have been discussed to prepare us for the research. This review of literature is limited to a survey of Ghanaian Christianity, Pentecostalism and its autumnal child the charismatic movement.

1.7.1 A brief history of Christianity in Ghana

In this section, I argue that the history of Pentecostalism sits in a long history of the beginning of Christianity in the Gold Coast since the fifteenth century. It is, therefore, meant to situate the discussion in a broader historical context. Christianity has been in Ghana, previously Gold Coast, for centuries. Several authors have provided a detailed historical trajectory of Christianity in Ghana, and how the early European missionaries engaged different ethnic groups in Ghana.⁴¹ The Portuguese who landed on the shores of the Gold Coast in the fifteenth Century were Catholics, and were credited for introducing Christianity to the Gold Coast.⁴² Initially, these Portuguese were primarily interested in commerce and later slavery, while the proselytization of the indigenes was considered a secondary objective. So, in the early years of the Europeans, the church remained confined to the castles and forts.⁴³ The first attempt to rescue Christianity from its imprisonment in the castles was triggered by the desire on the part of the missionaries to Christianise the mulattoes who were the products of miscegenation between Europeans and indigenous women. Indeed, all this was against the backdrop that the early Europeans who explored Ghana were motivated by

⁴¹ Hans H. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana* (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1967). Christian G. Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*. (S.C.M.: Deaville Walker, F. 1962.) Baeta, C.G. 'General Introduction.' In Baeta, C.G (Ed.). *Christianity in Tropical Africa*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1968). Agbeti, K.J. *West African Church History: Christian Missions and Church Foundations: 1482-1919*. (Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1986.) Clark, P. *West Africa and Christianity*. (London: Edward Arnold, 1986.)

⁴² Kpobi N.A.D. *African Chaplains in Seventeenth Century West Africa*. In Kalu, U.O. (Ed.) *African Christianity: An African Story*. (Pretoria: University of Pretoria, 2005), 140-170.

⁴³ Agbeti, K.J. *West African Church History: Christian Missions and Church Foundations: 1482-1919*. (Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1986). Debrunner, W.H. *A History of Christianity in Ghana*. (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1967).

what scholars have referred to as the three Cs: Christianisation, Civilisation, and Commerce.⁴⁴ But, as I have alluded to, from hindsight we could adduce evidence to the fact that the Europeans who engaged the people of the Gold Coast were motivated primarily by commerce. Thus, in the fifteenth Century, Christian missionary activities did not do so well. Several authors have provided reasons to explain the unsuccessfulness of the attempt by the early missionaries.⁴⁵ Aside unfettered commercial interest, which interfered with missionary activity, the ravaging effect of malaria, financial difficulties, and hostility from the indigenes have been identified as factors that undermined the success of propagating the Christian religion in Ghana.

The story, however, changed in the nineteenth century when there was a resurgence of Christian missionary activities in the Gold Coast. In the early part of the nineteenth Century, the Basel missionaries led the frontline in reintroducing the gospel to the people of the Gold Coast. They were responsible for spreading the gospel in the Eastern Region of Ghana.⁴⁶ The Wesleyans, around the same period, also introduced the gospel to the Fante people in the Central Region of Ghana. The Catholics, Anglicans, Seventh-day Adventists, and the Bremen missionaries also followed suit, spreading the gospel to different parts of Ghana. To sustain the missionary drive, the missionaries built schools and hospitals. Since Christianity was seen as the harbinger of civilization, the constructed schools and hospitals represented the missionaries' efforts to bring the long-proclaimed civilization to Ghanaians. The fact that there was no separation between the classroom and the church boosted missionary activity in

⁴⁴ Baeta C.G. 'General Introduction.' In Baeta, C.G (ed.). *Christianity in Tropical Africa*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).

⁴⁵ Debrunner, 1967, Baeta,1968 Agbeti, 1986, Clark, P. *West Africa and Christianity* (London: Edward Arnold, 1986). Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.)

⁴⁶ Peter, Clark, *West Africa and Christianity* (London: Edward Arnold, 1986). Kofi Agbeti, *West African Church History*,1986.

Ghana. Also, the quest by some indigenes to receive western medication drove such indigenes to Christianity.

The Ghanaian community had mixed responses to the Christian faith. In the early instances, curiosity was the main factor that drove some Ghanaians to the Christian faith. Some of the indigenes wanted to know what the missionaries had to offer them. Since the Ghanaian geo-cultural landscape was religiously charged, it was no difficulty for the early missionaries to have a waiting audience for their message. The fact that the notion of ‘God’ was not lost on Ghanaians provided an advantage to the missionaries as they engaged indigenous Ghanaians.⁴⁷ I surmise that the multiplicity of deities on the Ghanaian religious landscape initially made the indigenes favourably predisposed towards the early missionaries. But as the early missionaries got a foothold in Ghana, their messages incurred the ire of the indigenes. The uncompromising attitudes and the condescending views the missionaries had about Ghanaian indigenous culture brought the early missionaries into direct confrontation with the indigenes, who felt the need to defend their culture.⁴⁸ The disparaging of indigenous cultures by the early European missionaries came to a head when the missionaries established Salem “*Bronikrom*”⁴⁹ and “*Kpodzie*” where Ghanaian converts of the Christian religion were encouraged to stay.⁵⁰ The epiphenomenon of this was the deepening of the hostility between the missionaries and the indigenous people. The use of stereotypical terms such as fetishism,

⁴⁷ Mbiti, J.S. *African Religions and Philosophy*. (London: Heinemann. 1969). Opoku, A. K., *West African Traditional Religion* (Accra: FEP International Private Ltd., 1978) Gyekye, Kwame, *African Cultural Values: An Introduction*. (Accra: Sankofa Publishers, 1996).

⁴⁸ Baeta, 1968.

⁴⁹ Bronikrom literally means the Whiteman’s territory or enclave.

⁵⁰ Birgit Meyer, 1999.

paganism, and magic to designate Ghanaian indigenous religions further estranged the indigenous religions from the missionaries.⁵¹

The attempt to deculturalise the Ghanaian Christian from his/her roots was important in prompting the rise of the African Initiated/Independent Churches, hereafter AICs,⁵² known in the Akan parlance as *Sumsum Sore* (spiritual churches). But perhaps the most important factor in the rise of the AICs was the religious factor – the resolve of the indigenous population to seek religious succour and freedom from the dominance of European missionaries. This resonates with Turner’s observation that the AICs were primarily a religious movement.⁵³ Several writers⁵⁴ have proposed multiple reasons to explain the rise of the AICs, but what I consider crucial and consistent with the history of missionary activity in Ghana was the attempt by Ghanaian Christians, who were dissatisfied with western culture, which the missionaries paraded as Christian culture, to find a point of confluence between Christianity and Ghanaian culture. The de-emphasis on drumming and dancing, two important features of Ghanaian culture, by the missionaries, for example, contributed to the rise of the AICs. Also, the notion of salvation, which was essentially metaphysical, and which had to do essentially with the liberation of the soul/spirit from hell, did not sync well with the existential cultural realities of most Ghanaian Christians, which emphasised the unity of the metaphysical and material worlds. Also, the scathing attacks on polygyny by the European missionaries provided the impetus for some Ghanaian Christians to question the relevance of

⁵¹ Asare, Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*. (Accra: FEP International Private Publisher Ltd, 1978).

⁵² Baeta, 1968, Pobee, J. & Ositelu, G. *African Initiatives in Christianity: The growth, gifts and diversities of indigenous African churches: a challenge to the ecumenical movement*. (Geneva: WCC Publications, World Council of Churches, 1998).

⁵³ Turner, H.W. *History of an African Independent Church: The Church of the Lord (Aladura)*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), xiii.

⁵⁴ Baeta, 1968 Pobee et al, 1998.

“Western” Christianity to the Ghanaian cultural matrix. While all the above factors played significant roles in bringing into vogue the AICs, I conjecture that the translation of the Bible from European to Ghanaian languages was an important factor that propelled the AICs into existence.⁵⁵ Following the spirit of the reformation, which emphasized the linguistic plurality of the Bible, the early missionaries undertook the onerous task of translating the Bible into the various languages of Ghana. The translation work helped Ghanaian Christians to relate and engage with the Bible on their own terms.

The above factors contributed significantly to the rise of some key figures, including Grace Tani, who sowed the seed for the rise of AICs in Ghana. There were foremost itinerant African prophets, such as Wade Harris, John Swatson, and Sampson Opong, who spearheaded the spread of AICs in Ghana with a strong proclivity towards Ghanaian cultures. Some permitted polygyny, spirit possession, and speaking in ‘unknown’ tongues. They also emphasized divine healing and rigorous drumming and dancing. There is a parallelism between the notion of salvation in African traditional religion and the AICs. Both religious traditions place emphasis on material prosperity – good health, childbearing abilities, good harvest, minimum incidence of premature death, and absence of natural disasters – as part of the package of salvation. In Ghana, examples of AICs include the Musama Disco Christo Church, Twelve Apostles, the ‘Spiritual Churches’, and Faith Tabernacle Church.

The theology of AICs did was not always in line with the teachings of other Ghanaian Christians. So, in response to the AICs, the Pentecostal movement emerged. Several scholars

⁵⁵ Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The renewal of non-Western Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995); Baeta, 1968.

have pointed out the multivocality of the sources of Pentecostalism in Ghana.⁵⁶ But what I consider relevant to my study is the engagement some Ghanaian Christians had with AICs. Some of the pioneers of Pentecostalism considered the practices of AICs to be too similar to those of African traditional religions. They opposed spirit possession, libation, polygamy, and veneration of ancestors, which characterized some AICs. In response, the Pentecostal movement provided a theology that critiqued the fundamental teachings of AICs. In Ghana, classical Pentecostal churches include the Assemblies of God Church, The Church of Pentecost, The Christ Apostolic Church, and The Apostolic Church of Ghana. But it is important to point out that there are some similarities that run through AICs and the classical Pentecostals. For example, both AICs and classical Pentecostals emphasise speaking in an “unknown” tongues, divine healing, and rigorous drumming and dancing.

1.7.2 Pentecostalism in Ghana

Notwithstanding the assertion that not every global upsurge of Pentecostal renewal phenomenon may be linked to North American initiatives,⁵⁷ it will, however, be appropriate to place Pentecostalism or Charismatic Christianity, (as it is popularly referred to in Ghana), within context in order to have a closer look at how the phenomenon emerged within Ghanaian Christianity. Pentecostalism or Charismatic Christianity in Ghana is part of the broad global phenomenon of Pentecostalism. In this study, I adopt an intercultural definition of Pentecostalism. This definition is applied because it offers a general overview, which helps to depart from approaches to the study of Pentecostalism that present “African participants as mere clones, consumers or imitators of innovations that originated outside their context.”⁵⁸ I, therefore, agree with other leading scholars that Pentecostal phenomena in Ghana and

⁵⁶ Baeta, 1968; Kpobi, 2005; Debrunner, 1967; Clark, 1986.

⁵⁷ Ojo, *The Growth of Charismatic Movements*, 94.

⁵⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 12.

elsewhere in Africa emerged strongly out of indigenous initiatives.⁵⁹ According to Asamoah-Gyadu,⁶⁰ the intercultural perspective has implications for what it means to be Pentecostal because it calls for a broader, more inclusive definition of Pentecostalism than one finds in the thinking of some Western authors.⁶¹ Asamoah-Gyadu gives a working definition of Pentecostalism in his book *African Charismatics*:

Pentecostalism refers to Christian groups which emphasize salvation in Christ as a transformative experience wrought by the Holy Spirit and in which pneumatic phenomena including ‘speaking in tongues’, prophecies, visions, healing and miracles in general, perceived as standing in historic continuity with the experience of the early church as found especially in the Acts of the Apostles, are sought, accepted, valued, and consciously encouraged among members as signifying the presence of God and experiences of his Spirit.⁶²

Pentecostalism, as it manifested in Ghana, is broadly defined to embrace the African Independent Churches (AICs), the Classical Pentecostals and a third strand which is the “Charismatic Renewal movement or the neo-Pentecostal movement.”⁶³ These three strands of Pentecostal manifestation will be examined below to show the evolution and continuity in the Pentecostal experience and spirituality.

1.7.2.1 The African Initiated Churches (AICs)

In this section, I discuss the AICs as Pentecostal not in the sense of falling seamlessly into the categorisation of the so-named classical Pentecostalism that I discuss later in this chapter. Rather, I designate the AICs as Pentecostals in the sense that they share some of the basic pneumatic experiences of the classical Pentecostals such as speaking in tongues, prophecies, and divine healing. It is in this sense of shared pneumatic that I discuss the AICs as precursors to the Pentecostal movement in Ghana, then the Gold Coast. The African

⁵⁹ Some of these scholars include, Ogbu Kalu, Kwame Bediako, Cephas Omenyo, Asamoah-Gyadu, and Mathews Ojo among many others.

⁶⁰ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 15.

⁶¹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 12.

⁶² Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 12.

⁶³ Larbi, *Pentecostalism: Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, 57.

Independent Churches (AICs), the first strand of Pentecostalism in Ghana was a phenomenon that was not restricted to Ghana but emerged as part of a continental religious stirring. The emergence of African Instituted Churches (AICs) on the religious terrain of Africa and other parts of the world has attracted a lot of attention from scholars and this is evinced by the sheer number of research and publications on AICs both in and outside Africa.⁶⁴

These churches were designated variously in different parts of Africa. Scholars interpret the abbreviation differently as “African Instituted Churches”, “African Initiated Churches” or “African Independent Churches”. Before 1998, Pobee and Ositelu added to the list “African Initiatives in Christianity.”⁶⁵ The AICs were also initially labelled as “sects”, “nativistic”, “messianic”, “separatist”, “schismatic”, and “syncretistic” movements.⁶⁶ Some scholars have also categorized them into, “African/Ethiopian Churches”, “Zionist”, “Pentecostal”, “Spiritual”, “Prophet-healing Churches”, “Charismatic”, “Evangelical”, “Revivalist”, etc.

According to Omenyo and Atiemo, the difficulty is further exacerbated by attempts at delineating clearly the major strands of African Instituted Churches.⁶⁷ According to them, this is mainly due to a variety of origin, leadership style, theology and organizational ethos.⁶⁸ The leaders and members of AICs were always bent on doing theology the African way. The phenomenon of prophecy and healing were a trademark of the AICs. Gerrie ter Haar attests to

⁶⁴ J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “Pentecostalism in Context: An Intercultural Perspective on 20th Century ‘Waves of Renewal’ within West African Christianity”, In *African Journal of Pentecostal Studies*, vol. 1, Dec. 2002, 4–33. See also J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 21. See Andrew Walls, “The Evangelical Revival, The Missionary Movement, and Africa”, in Mark Noll et al (eds.) *Evangelism: Comparative studies of popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700 – 1990* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994), 319.

⁶⁵ John S. Pobee and Ositelu Gabriel II., *African Initiatives in Christianity*, 3-4.

⁶⁶ Anderson, *African Reformation*, 10.

⁶⁷ Cephas Omenyo and Abamfo O. Atiemo, “Claiming Religious Space: The Case of Neo-Propheticism in Ghana”, *Ghana Bulletin of Theology*, Vol. No. 1 (2006), 56. See “Allan Anderson, African Independent Churches and Pentecostalism: Historical Connections and Common Identities”, *Ogbomosho Journal of Theology*, Vol. XIII (I) (2008), 22 – 42. See also B.G.M. Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).

⁶⁸ Omenyo and Atiemo, *Claiming Religious Space*, 56.

the fact that “these churches are characterized by their prophetic leadership and, particularly, their emphasis on healing, thus obeying the injunction of the Bible to heal by prayer and anointing.”⁶⁹

The name as it is designated in Ghana is of historical significance in the sense that the churches as defined by the terminology did not have links with western missions, at least not in their early formations. They are often seen as distinguishing themselves by their African indigenous origins as they express themselves in their rituals and doctrines. Asamoah-Gyadu argues that AICs ‘led an African reformation by emphasizing the non-rational aspects of religion and the pursuit of an interventionist theology in a context in which religion was essentially a survival strategy.’⁷⁰ He adds that their stress on practical salvation, the ability to work with an indigenous worldview of mystical causality, integration of charismatic experiences into Christian worship, the use of oral theological discourses, and the innovative ways in which the spiritual gifts of women were recognized and used undoubtedly saved Christianity from suffering a moribund fate in Africa.⁷¹

From this background, it can be argued that AICs offered Christianity a cutting edge by giving emphasis to vital components that are central to African religiosity. These include healing and prophecy. Andrew F. Walls has observed how these churches present healing, for instance, as an integral element of Christian salvation building on the indigenous worldviews.⁷² In Ghana, the AICs are also called “Spiritual Churches (*sunsum sore*).”⁷³ They

⁶⁹ Gerrie ter Haar, “Standing up for Jesus: A survey of new developments in Christianity in Ghana”, In *Exchange*, (23)3 (1994), 221 – 240.

⁷⁰ J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “Spirit of Elijah: Reinvention of the Prophetism in African Initiated Christianity”, *Ogbomosho Journal of Theology*, XIII (1), (2008), 44.

⁷¹ Asamoah-Gyadu, “Spirit of Elijah,” 44.

⁷² Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 117.

are of the same phenomenological types as “Aladura” (“owners of prayer) in Nigeria and Zionist churches in South Africa.⁷⁴ William Wade Harris, a Liberian acclaimed prophet of God, is said to be the ‘progenitor of the spiritual church movement in Ghana.’⁷⁵ Harris is said to have made very significant inroads in mission work because he had a God-given ability to operate in the realm of the supernatural. Larbi lists a number of spiritual gifts that Harris had or possessed.⁷⁶ Harris’ emphasis on the supernatural was not at the expense of the traditional forms of doing things. For instance, he did not discourage the use of traditional herbal medicine, which the earlier European missionaries had completely condemned and discarded as animism. He, however, “placed its potency in the context of prayer to the High God.”⁷⁷ He used liturgical forms which the people were familiar with in their traditional worship but insisted on a radical turn away from fetishism.⁷⁸ One can argue that Harris, though well acclaimed for his genuine efforts at the conversion of the people, played a part in the blend of Christianity and the traditional worldview that emerged in Ghana, especially in the AICs.

Against this backdrop, Elom Dovlo rightly describes the AICs as churches that bridged the gap between the African Traditional worldview and Christianity by using the Gospel to make suitable responses to the needs of adherents and clients.⁷⁹ Attesting to Harris’ prophetic calling, Walls cites Shanks as saying that Harris was a prophet of modern times who was

⁷³ Asamoah-Gyadu, *Pentecostalism in Context*, 4 – 33.

⁷⁴ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 21. See Andrew Walls, *The Evangelical Revival, The Missionary Movement, and Africa*, 319.

⁷⁵ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 58.

⁷⁶ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 58.

⁷⁷ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 61.

⁷⁸ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 62.

⁷⁹ Elom Dovlo, “New Religious Movements in Ghana”, *Journal of Religion and Theology in Namibia*, 4(2002), 1-34.

convinced of his prophetic call.⁸⁰ He is said to have pointed people to the God of the scriptures, baptized with water and, by prayer and exorcism, triumphed over the spirits.⁸¹ The influence of Harris' work prevailed in Ghanaian Christianity and served as a precursor to the formation of some spiritual churches. The AICs, despite their decline, have left an indelible theological imprint on other mainstream churches and African Christianity in general.

1.7.2.2 The Classical Pentecostals

The emergence of the second strand of Ghanaian Pentecostalism has, however, not been directly linked to the AICs. It seems rather to have been linked to Western Pentecostal influences. They are the Western mission-related Pentecostal denominations. This is because even though they have their root in indigenous initiatives, they are often linked with early foreign Pentecostal missions. Larbi calls them “the mainline” or “evangelical Pentecostal denominations.”⁸² They are also called the “classical Pentecostal churches.” The origin of Ghanaian Classical Pentecostalism is often traced to Peter Anim and his Faith Tabernacle Church. Out of this organization emerged three of the four leading classical Pentecostals in Ghana; the Apostolic Church, the Church of Pentecost and the Christ Apostolic Church.⁸³ These were also of indigenous initiatives but were linked up with foreign Pentecostal missions early in their formation.⁸⁴ For instance, Ghana's Church of Pentecost (CoP), one of the foremost classical Pentecostal churches, was established in the 1930s and had links with

⁸⁰Andrew Walls, *The Evangelical Revival, The Missionary Movement, and Africa*, 319. Walls recalls how Harris read the Bible in a way quite different from the missionaries but could make it intelligible within his own frame of reference. He called people to repentance and persuaded many to abandon their traditional African religious practice. I can attest to the influence of Harris on Ghanaian Pentecostal Christianity by the number of Churches in the Central and Western region of Ghana that bear his name, Harris Church.

⁸¹ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 62.

⁸² Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 69

⁸³ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 23-26.

⁸⁴ Asamoah- Gyadu, *Pentecostalism in Context*, 2002, 7.

foreign missions like Faith Tabernacle in Philadelphia for a short period and a more lasting link with the United Kingdom's (UK) Apostolic Church.⁸⁵

Generally, Peter Newman Anim is regarded as the father of classical Pentecostalism in Ghana.⁸⁶ In 1917, he 'had come to believe in the efficacy of "prevailing prayer" for the healing of diseases through *The Sword of the Spirit*, the periodical of a Philadelphia-based Faith Tabernacle movement based in Portland, Oregon, USA.⁸⁷ Through the principles of prevailing prayer, Anim was healed of a chronic ulcer and guinea worm disease. In 1922, Anim brought together a group of followers to establish a branch of the Faith Tabernacle Church in the Gold Coast. Anim in 1930 severed relations with the Faith Tabernacle Church having come under Pentecostal influence upon reading a magazine on the Apostolic Faith.⁸⁸

Anim in 1931 established contact with Pastor David O. Odubanjo of Nigeria who, like Anim, had separated himself from the Faith Tabernacle, USA. Pastor George Perfect, one of the two missionaries sent by the UK Apostolic Church to Nigeria in 1932, visited Asamankese in 1935 for two weeks. Perfect's ministry impressed Anim and his church so much that they decided to affiliate themselves with the UK Apostolic Church. When the Missionary Secretary of the Apostolic Church visited Asamankese in October 1936, he promised recommending a missionary to be sent to them. In fulfilment of the promise, James McKeown arrived as the first resident missionary of the Apostolic Church in the Gold Coast in 1937 to work with Anim and his group.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 175.

⁸⁶ Emmanuel I. K. Addo, *Worldview, Way of Life and Worship: The Continuing Encounter between the Christian Faith and Ga Religion and Culture*, (Zoetermeer, Boekencentrum Pub. House, 2009), 147.

⁸⁷ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 24.

⁸⁸ The Faith Tabernacle movement was not Pentecostal. They abhorred "speaking in tongues" but pursued a strong millennialist teaching and emphasized personal holiness and the sufficiency of prayer for healing.

⁸⁹ Addo, *Worldview*, 147.

Two years later in the face of further developments and misunderstanding on the issue of doctrines and praxis, Anim and McKeown parted company. The faction that remained with Anim became known as the Christ Apostolic Church as against the Apostolic Church led by McKeown. On May 1953, a section of the Apostolic Church in the Gold Coast also broke away from the UK mainly over matters of church government in the mission field where McKeown was working and his reservation over the Apostolic Church's belief in "directive prophecy."⁹⁰ McKeown was dismissed from the UK Apostolic Church and he later formed the Gold Coast (Ghana) Apostolic Church. The section that remained loyal to the UK maintained the original name, The Apostolic Church of Gold Coast. In view of the confusion that the adopted names generated, McKeown's group finally adopted the name the Church of Pentecost in August 1962.⁹¹ One other Pentecostal organization that also worked in Ghana is the Assemblies of God. Aside the Assemblies of God, other Pentecostal bodies that have worked in Ghana at different times are the Four Square Gospel Church.

1.7.2.3 The Neo-Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement

In the late 1970s and early 80s, the Charismatic movement became a predominant feature of the Ghanaian religious landscape. The rise of the Charismatic movement coincided with Ghana's implementation of neoliberal policies, mandated by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.⁹² The neoliberal policies which significantly reduced government intervention in the running of the state through the removal of subsidies on education, health, and agriculture, exacerbated the already ailing economy of Ghana. The nosedive of the Ghanaian economy coincided with widespread famine in Ghana. The net effect of this situation was that the Ghanaian social landscape needed a religious movement

⁹⁰ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 24.

⁹¹ Addo, *Worldview*, 147.

⁹² Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*.

that would inspire hope in Ghanaians. It was, therefore, more than sheer luck that the charismatic movement emerged on the Ghanaian landscape. The charismatic movements emphasize salvation, with material prosperity as part of its package.⁹³ Historically, the charismatic churches also emerged from evangelical revivals and town fellowships, Student Unions, classroom gatherings, et cetera.⁹⁴ There were also prophetic initiatives that run concurrently with evangelistic fellowships, which contributed to the popularization of the charismatic movement. The rise of the charismatic movement was given a boost by leading American tele-evangelists including Oral Roberts,⁹⁵ Kenneth Copeland, and Kenneth Hagin. Benson Idahosa⁹⁶ was influential in preparing the grounds for the charismatic movement in Ghana by providing training to leading Ghanaian charismatic leaders including NDW, Christie Doe Tetteh⁹⁷, and Agyin Asare⁹⁸. Other leaders in the charismatic front, including Mensah Otabil⁹⁹, Eastwood Anaba¹⁰⁰, Sam Korankye Ankrah, Steve Mensah and Dag Heward-Mills,¹⁰¹ to mention but a few, have been very influential in sustaining the steam of the charismatic movement in Ghana.¹⁰²

⁹³ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*. Larbi, *Pentecostalism*.

⁹⁴ Dovlo, "New Religious Movements in Ghana," 1-34.

⁹⁵ Oral Roberts visited Ghana for a crusade with Benson Idahosa and Duncan-Williams.

⁹⁶ Benson Idahosa is the spiritual father of Nicholas Duncan-Williams.

⁹⁷ Christie Doe Tette is the founder of Solid Rock Church and is the foremost female charismatic leader in Ghana. Prior to founding her church, she lived and worked in Benin City with Benson Idahosa as his secretary.

⁹⁸ Charles Agyin Asare is recorded to have attributed his healing gift to an impartation he received from Morris Cerullo in a school of ministry conference in Accra.

⁹⁹ Mensah Otabil is the founder of the Central Gospel Church International. His church is one of the biggest and he is respected as an exemplary leader. One of the few prominent charismatic founders who did not attend Benson Idahosa's "All Nations for Christ Bible college."

¹⁰⁰ Eastwood Anaba is the founder of the Fountain Gate Churches and is a spiritual son of Nicholas Duncan-Williams.

¹⁰¹ Sam Korankye Ankrah, Steve Mensah and Dag Heward Mills are all founders of large charismatic churches with branches in Ghana and abroad. They are all spiritual son of Nicholas Duncan-Williams.

¹⁰² Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 2001.

The neo-Pentecostal or charismatic movement constitutes the third strand of Pentecostalism in Ghana. Scholars have noted that there are two ways in which these movements can be distinguished from mainline missionary established churches and classical Pentecostal churches. Walter Ihejirika opines that the prefixes ‘new wave’ and ‘neo’ are used to distinguish these new churches from established classical Pentecostal denominations like the Church of Pentecost and the Assemblies of God, and to underscore the fact that they are historically younger and have remained autochthonous founder-led congregations.”¹⁰³ In another sense, the term ‘new-wave Pentecostalism’ or ‘neo-Pentecostalism’ is also used to “designate the indigenous protestant Christian denominations that emphasize salvation by faith in the atoning death of Jesus Christ through personal conversion, the authority of scripture in matters of faith healing, and the speaking in tongues.”¹⁰⁴ Olupuna and Asamoah-Gyadu have observed that neo-Pentecostals emphasize the importance of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the life of every “born again” Christian.¹⁰⁵

The neo-Pentecostal Churches have a theological distinctiveness that is not as evident, at least not to the same degree, in the other versions of Pentecostalism. They are also distinguished from the classical Pentecostal churches and the independent churches by features such as their predominantly youth membership, their use of the English language, the use of live music and the media.¹⁰⁶ In practice, the neo-Pentecostal churches emphasize ‘every-member-

¹⁰³ Walter C. Ihejirika, “From Televisuality to Social Activism: Nigerian Televangelists and their Socio-Political Agenda” in Pradip Ninan Thomas and Philip Lee (eds.), *Global and Televangelism*, (NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 173. See also Asamoah-Gyadu, “Pentecostal Media Images and Religious Globalization in Sub-Saharan Africa”, 65.

¹⁰⁴ Ihejirika, “From Televisuality to Social Activism,” 174.

¹⁰⁵ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 12. Asamoah-Gyadu deals with the rise and nature of charismatic ministries, beginning with their roots in the conservative evangelical movement and the basic theological differences between this fresh wave of Pentecostalism and their older counterparts, the *sumsum sore*; Jacob, Olupuna, “Africa, West (Survey),” in Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Mass (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements. Revised and Expanded Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 11-21.

¹⁰⁶ Omenyo, *Pentecost*, 96.

ministry much than the other Pentecostals. Ghanaian neo-Pentecostals, make “personal spiritual power for every believer” the hallmark of their theology and pastoral endeavours.¹⁰⁷ The charismatic churches have attained much social prominence in Ghana because of their adroit use of the media. Asamoah-Gyadu has argued that “this new type of Christianity, as a result of its media presence, continues to have a much more diffused impact on African Christianity in particular and popular culture in general.”¹⁰⁸ The presence of the new Pentecostal/Charismatic movements has transformed the religious culture of Christianity in Africa, leading to what may be referred to as religious “Pentecostalization” and “Charismaticization”¹⁰⁹ of African Christianity. This charismatic renewal has, at the same time, impacted other strands of Christianity in both Nigeria and Ghana.¹¹⁰

This strand manifests in three forms, the first being the Independent Charismatic Ministries or Churches (this group is the focus of this study). The non-denominational or trans-denominational fellowships like the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship International (FGBMFI) and Women’s Aglow, also referred to as the Para-church Movement, makes up the second form.¹¹¹ The third are the renewal groups within the traditional Western missionary churches. An example is the Charismatic Renewal Movement.¹¹² Larbi adds a

¹⁰⁷ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 12.

¹⁰⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, *Pentecostal Media Images*, 66.

¹⁰⁹ “Pentecostalization” and “Charismaticization” are used to refer to situations in which non-Pentecostal or non-charismatic churches are affected by this renewal movement especially in the mainline churches. See also, for example, Cephias Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2002).

¹¹⁰ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism* 2006. See Rosalind I. J. Hackett, “Charismatic/Pentecostal Appropriation of Media Technologies in Nigeria and Ghana,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28(3) (1998), 265.

¹¹¹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *Pentecostalism in Context*, 11. Asamoah-Gyadu categorizes them in terms of waves, a metaphor likening the emergence of Pentecostal innovation and creativity in Africa in terms of waves on the seashore.

¹¹² Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 2006. See also, Cephias Omenyo, “From the Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalization of the Mainline Churches in Ghana” *Exchange*, 34(1) (2005), 38 – 60.

fourth which consists of the Prophet/Healer-centred Pentecostalist Prayer Camps. This is currently designated as Neo-prophetic or deliverance ministries in Ghana.¹¹³

The neo-Pentecostal/charismatic movement emerged in Ghana in the late 1970s. Larbi places its emergence as the aftermath of the evangelical/charismatic renewal in the 1960s and the 1970s.¹¹⁴ Most of the CM have developed into independent churches with some becoming very popular in less than a decade. Pentecostalism/ Charismatics generally is the area in which the phenomenal growth in African Christianity has been most conspicuous.¹¹⁵ The boom and expansion of Pentecostal movements are increasingly making Pentecostalism the dominant characteristic form of Christianity on the African continent.

1.7.3 Knowledge Gap

Scholars such as Paul Gifford, Emmanuel K. Larbi, Cephas Omenyo, J Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, Opoku Onyinah among many others have written extensively and from different perspectives on the Charismatic movement in Ghana.¹¹⁶ These scholars have provided a historical trajectory of the charismatic movement in Ghana. Their works provide insight into the multiple factors that have contributed to the emergence of the movement, their theological strands, their social and public roles, and their missiological activities. Paul Gifford,¹¹⁷ in his book *Ghana's New Christianity* analyses the Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in

¹¹³ Omenyo and Atiemo, "Claiming Religious Space: The Case of Neo-Propheticism in Ghana", *Ghana Bulletin of Theology*, Vol. 1. No.1 (2006), 55-68.

¹¹⁴ Kingsley, Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 89.

¹¹⁵ Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004).

¹¹⁶ Asamoah-Gyadu, *Pentecostalism in Context*, 13; Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004); Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, 2001; Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, 2004; Asamoah Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 2013; Opoku Onyinah, "Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost." (PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 2002).

¹¹⁷ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 67.

Ghana. He furnishes us with a cursory view into the growth and development of the new Christian wave that emerged in the 1970s. Most importantly, he conducts a brief comparison of the recurring themes and public engagement of, Mensa Otabil, and Salifu Amoako to provide a glimpse of the varied emphases of the charismatic churches. He, thus, points to the fact that the perceived homogeneity of the charismatic churches reveals varied emphases if given closer attention. However, apart from brief discussions of some key individuals within the charismatic movement, his book does not pay attention to the life and ministry of any of the charismatic leaders, which is the focus of this study. For instance, in the case of NDW, he provides a brief narrative of his religious journey, describing the faith/prosperity/health Wealth focus of 's church. He also sheds some light on the public role of NDW as a means of assessing his influence within Ghana's religious sphere. He specifically credits NDW for leading the first wave of Charismatic Christianity in Ghana and further discusses his evangelistic drive. However, since Gifford's work is not particularly about NDW, it fails to respond to many questions that one would like to ask about NDW. For instance, how did the socio-cultural and economic context and matrix influence the theology of NDW? Or, what are the theological proclivities of NDW in relation to soteriology, eschatology, and social action? Also, while Gifford avers that NDW is influential in that he has influenced many contemporary leaders of the charismatic movement, he does not discuss the man's life and ministry with a focus on the nature of his influence on these other leaders.

Asamoah-Gyadu in his book *African Charismatics* provides an important discussion of the CM in Ghana.¹¹⁸ He opines that we cannot wholly attribute the emergence of the Charismatic Ministries (CM) to external influences only. In his opinion, while there is no denying the fact

¹¹⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 103.

that external factors had a place in the formation of the charismatic movement in Ghana, it would be wrong to deny Ghanaian Christians the agency in the rise of the CM. He, however, credits technology particularly the radio and television for diffusing some peculiar teachings of the CM abroad in Ghana. This gives the charismatic movement a transnational characterization. Asamoah-Gyadu argues that the charismatic movement synchronises with the emotionality of African religiosity. He asserts that the rise of CM in Ghana was a result of the conservativeness of the older protestant/evangelical churches on some teachings of Christianity.¹¹⁹ The older protestant/evangelical churches in Ghana placed less emphasis on the gifts of the Spirit and they did not emphasise much on the baptism of the Holy Spirit, evidenced by the speaking in tongues, a major emphasis within the charismatic movement. As NDW emphasised the gifts of the Spirit, he appealed to young men and women who had experienced the Holy Spirit while on university campuses. The difficulty on the part of the older evangelical churches to accommodate the new religious experiences of such young men and women drew a wedge between them and their churches. The seeming tension that ensued between these youths and their churches paved the way for NDW to begin the Charismatic movement in Ghana, which emphasised a demonstration of the gifts of the Spirit. Asamoah-Gyadu mentions , but since the focus of his work is primarily not on NDW , he leaves a knowledge gap that new research has to fill.¹²⁰ For instance, he does not provide a detailed account of the early beginnings and development of the life and ministry of NDW Unlike Paul Gifford, Asamoah-Gyadu does not dwell much on the history of the socio-economic and political state of Ghana under which the charismatic movement emerged.¹²¹ These new areas evident in the studies of Gifford and Asamoah-Gyadu justifies the importance of carrying out further research to unpack the contributions of NDW to the charismatic movement in Ghana

¹¹⁹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 103.

¹²⁰ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 2005.

¹²¹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 2005.

as a compliment to the great work of the above scholars. This study is germane to the current wave of the charismatic ministries because it would provide a new perspective and insight into the changing dimensions in Ghanaian Christianity in particular and global Christianity as a whole.

Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi, in his book, *Pentecostalism: Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, provides an overview of some of the key players within the charismatic movement.¹²² He, however, spends considerable time on the International Central Gospel Church, and analyses Mensa Otabil's ministry, which he does not do for other charismatic leaders. He remarkably provides a survey of how other religious strands such as the mainline churches, the classical Pentecostals, and the AICs perceive charismatic churches in Ghana. He did not research the life and ministry of NDW, though he mentions him in relation to factors that promoted the rise of the charismatic movement in Ghana.

Thus, notwithstanding the significance of these scholarly works, they retain moderate information on certain individuals who have provided the foundational basis for the charismatic movement. This study, therefore, seeks to fill this research gap by providing a biographical account of the life and ministry of NDW, founder of the Christian Action Faith Ministries International, also known as Action Chapel International (ACI) which is one of the earliest charismatic ministries in Ghana. The decision to focus on NDW for this study is justifiably informed by the fact that apart from being a visible figure within the charismatic

¹²²Kingsley, Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 2001.

movement, over the last four decades, he is seen to be mentoring most of the contemporary leaders of the movement and these protégés seem to copy his approach to ministry.

Therefore, this study seeks to contribute to knowledge on charismatic ministries in Ghana by examining the life and ministry of NDW and how his ministry impinges on the movement in Ghana. The study will explore several factors that have constituted his personal and ministerial formation and how these factors play out in his theology, charismatic leadership, ecumenism, globalisation and public role. The effort will be to ascertain his contribution to the development and future of the charismatic movement in Ghana.

1.8 Methodology

In line with the topic and the research questions posed, a qualitative research approach is the interpretative paradigm used. According to Monique Hennink et al.:

The qualitative approach allows you to examine people's experiences in detail, by using a specific set of research methods such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observation, content analysis, visual methods, and life histories or biographies. It allows the researcher to identify and understand issues from the perspective of participants and the interpretations they give to behaviour, events or objects. Qualitative researchers also study in the natural setting of participants to identify how their experiences and behaviour are shaped by the context of their lives.¹²³

The biographical research method is the specific method within the qualitative approach employed in this study, which Brian Robert¹²⁴ considers an exciting, stimulating and fast moving field which seeks to understand the changing experiences and outlooks of individuals in their daily lives, what they see as important and how to provide interpretations of the

¹²³Monique Hennink, Inge Hutter and Ajay Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*, (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2011), 6.

¹²⁴ Robert Brian, *Biographical Research*, 1.

accounts they give of their past, present and future. The biographical approach helps to reveal certain characteristics in viewing history and provides a unique lens through which the researcher can assess the issues relating to the person under study.¹²⁵

In this regard, the biographical approach is the right methodology for telling life history and writing narrative. Welch¹²⁶ argues that within Pentecostal historiography, scholars such as Spittler¹²⁷ and others have long affirmed the merit of using biography as a valuable tool for uncovering and corroborating much more of the Pentecostal storyline. I understand the biographical method as one that deploys a universalistic and encompassing approach to encourage an analytical interpretation of experiences across national, cultural and traditional boundaries so as to facilitate a better understanding of individual action and engagement in society.¹²⁸ Thus, from this perspective, the lens is focused on an individual and their personal experience. “Biographical methods” is an umbrella term for an assembly of loosely related, variously titled activities, including narrative, life history, oral history, biographical interpretive methods, storytelling, auto/biography, ethnography, and reminiscence. These activities tend to operate in parallel, often not recognizing each other’s existence, some characterised by disciplinary purity while others demonstrate a deliberate interdisciplinarity.¹²⁹ The biographical research assumes that the link between structure and

¹²⁵ Barbara Finkelstein, “Revealing Human Agency: The Uses of Biography in the Study of Educational History” in Craig Kridel, *Writing Educational Biography: Exploration in Qualitative Research*, (New York: Garland, 1998), 44.

¹²⁶ Timothy Bernard Welch, ‘God Found His Moses: A Biographical and Theological Analysis of the life of Joseph Smale (1867-1926).’ (PhD, University of Birmingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 2009).

¹²⁷ Spittler R.P. “Suggested Areas for Further Research in Pentecostal Studies,” *Pneuma*, 5(2), (Fall, 1983).

¹²⁸ Joanna Bornat, “Biographical Methods” in Pertti Alasuutari, Leonard Bickman and Julia Brannen, (eds.), *the Sage Handbook of Social Research Methods* (London UK: Sage, 2008), 344–356.

¹²⁹ Joanna Bornat et. al., “Biographical Methods,” 344–356.

individuals could only be understood sufficiently by analysing the development of the individual personality in his or her life course.¹³⁰

Since this thesis aims to examine the life and ministry of and how his experiences and engagements have impacted the charismatic movement in Ghana, the biographical method appears to be the best for such a study. Life story and life history are the two main biography research sources that will be used. According to Robert a life story is the story a person chooses to tell about the life he or she has lived, told as completely and honestly as possible, what is remembered of it.¹³¹

Robert cites Miller's outline of three approaches to the study of life stories and family histories. First, the realist approach uses induction, among other procedures, employs "saturation" (cf. grounded theory) and unfocused interviews, and considers reliability as important. Second, the neo-positivist approach is deductive, theory testing, uses focused interviews and places importance on validity. Finally, the narrative approach sees 'fact' as secondary to an exploration of the on-going construction of an individual's unique standpoint, uses life or family stories and emphasizes the interplay between interviewer and interviewee in structuring reality.¹³²

These approaches overlap, according to Miller,¹³³ and I intend to use the first and the third approaches to realize the objectives of this study.

¹³⁰ Wolfram Rosenthal-Fischer, "Biographical Work and Biographical Structuring in Present-day Societies," in Chamberlayne, Prue, Bornat, Joanna, Wengraf, Tom (eds.), *The Turn to Biographical Methods in Social Science* (London: Routledge, 2000).

¹³¹ Robert Brain, *Biographical Research* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2002), 3.

¹³² Robert Brain, *Biographical Research*, 15; R. L. Miller, *Researching Life Stories and Family Histories* (London: Sage, 2000).

¹³³ R. L. Miller, *Researching Life Stories and Family Histories* (London: Sage, 2000), 56.

1.8.1 Presuppositions

A major concern for me as a researcher on NDW and the charismatic movement in Ghana is whether I will be able to maintain the critical distance needed for the necessary objectivity and validation of this study. In other words, as a researcher, I have the burden of objectively, balancing the etic and emic perspectives in my study of NDW. This is because I am a consecrated Bishop of Nicholas Duncan-Williams' Church, and I have a cordial relationship with him. Unlike many biographies, which may be written after the death of the subject, is alive and my aim of being critical might be tainted by my unwillingness to offend him. Also, due to my involvement as a Bishop in the ACI ('s Church) and a member of the Charismatic movement, there exists the tendency to be apologetic and sympathetic in my discussions and even the possibility of writing a hagiographical account.

I acknowledge the fact that my subjective biases as an insider may have an effect on the study, and I will therefore make the necessary effort to keep these biases from interfering in this study.

In order to minimize my personal biases, as a member of the charismatic movement in Ghana, and to attain the objectivity necessary for an academic endeavour of this nature, I will be guided by Robeck's helpful pointers to avoid hagiography. These pointers indicate that:

1. The biography must be critical with renewed objectivity
2. It must provide more than a mere chronology of events
3. It needs to take seriously the original *sitz-im-leben* of the figure involved
4. The work should probe the subject's self-understanding
5. Recognition of the genera of each source used should be recorded, assessing its particular strength and weakness.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ Cecil M. Robeck, "The Use of Biography in Pentecostal historiography". *Pneuma: The Journal of the society for Pentecostal Studies*. (Fall 1986).

With reference to Anderson's view of reconstruction of Pentecostal historiography and the biases of top-down history as against bottom-up results, I will sometimes advocate for an insider perspective as necessary in trying to understand some of the events within the historical account.¹³⁵ According to Alversson, research is primarily focused on theory development and may or may not be concerned about action or practices.¹³⁶ Insider research is typically seen as problematic and is indeed frequently disqualified because it is perceived as not conforming to standards of intellectual rigor because of the insider's personal stake and substantive emotional investment in the setting. As native to the setting, insider researchers are considered to have the advantage of insight and the lived experience. Rather than these being considered benefits, insiders often risk being charged with bias – being too close and thereby, not attaining the distance and objectivity deemed for valid research.

In relation to this, Alversson argues that we are all insiders of many systems – our families, communities and organizations – and the knowledge we have of these systems is rich and complex.¹³⁷ From such insider positions, we employ the process of reflexive awareness to articulate tacit knowledge that has become deeply segmented because of socialization in our organizational systems. Taking such knowledge and reframing it as theoretical, we make a strong appeal that because we are close to something or know it well, we are better able to research it. Enquiry from the inside and enquiry from the outside are two models of enquiry presented by Evered and Louis.¹³⁸ Enquiry from the outside refers to traditional positivism

¹³⁵ Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

¹³⁶ Mats Alversson, "Methodology for Close Up Studies: Struggling with Closeness and Closure," *In Higher Education*, (Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003), 167-193.

¹³⁷ Mats Alversson, "Methodology," 167-193.

¹³⁸ R. Evered, and M. R. Louis, 'Alternative perspectives in the organizational Science: "Inquiry from the Inside" and "Inquiry from the Outside,"' *Academy of management Review*, 6, 385-395.

science in which the researcher's relationship to the setting is detached and natural. From such a positioning, the basis for validity is measurement and logic. Researchers act as onlookers and they apply a priori categories to create universal, contest-free knowledge.

In contrast, enquires from the inside involve researchers as actors immersed in local situations generating contextually-embedded knowledge that emerges from experience.

Adler and Adler describe three type of membership roles in ethnographic field research: peripheral member, active member, and complete member.¹³⁹ The complete member embraces the native experience and this enhances the data gathering process. Data gathering does not occur only through the detached observational role but through the subjectively immersed role as well.

An insider researcher has an opportunity to acquire understanding in use rather than reconstituted understanding. Riemer argues that neglecting at-hand knowledge or expertise, researchers should turn familiar situations, timely events, or special expertise into objects of study.¹⁴⁰ According to Coghlan and Brannick, insider research has its own dynamics that distinguish it from an external research approach. The researchers are already immersed in the organization and have built up knowledge of the organization or community from being an actor in the process being studied.¹⁴¹ From the foregoing, I outline the following areas of advantage and disadvantage that an insider researcher must address him/herself, and of which I am keenly aware.

1.8.1.1 Gaining Access

Primary and secondary access is the ability to get into the organizational system or community to undertake research. Gaining access is the main concern for outsider

¹³⁹ P. A. Adler, and P. Adler, *Membership Role in Field Research*. (Treasury Oaks, CA: Sage 1987), 11.

¹⁴⁰ J. Riemer *Varieties of Opportunities Research*. (New York: Urban Life, 1977), 467-477.

¹⁴¹ D. Coghlan and T. Brannick, *Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization*. (London: Sage. 2005), 56.

researchers. An insider researcher by virtue of already being a member has primary and secondary access and acceptance with participants. The higher the status of the researcher, the more access and the more networks he/she creates for a richer collection of data. As the researcher in question here, my long involvement in the charismatic movement has given me the advantage of easy access to both primary and secondary sources which otherwise may not be available to an outsider. Many of the leaders within the charismatic movement who shy away from academic interviews for this sort of study and who would not normally grant access to an outside researcher will openly participate in an interview with me out of trust and because they consider me a member of the movement. I am also, however, aware that by my membership and insider status some participants may not be very open with some information.

1.8.1.2 Pre-understanding

Gummesson refers to such things as people's knowledge, insights and experience before they engage in a research project as pre-understanding.¹⁴² Insiders' knowledge, insight and experiences apply to both theoretical understanding and lived experiences. Stephenson and Greer, in their reflection on ethnographers' researching their own communities, point to three sets of issues related to pre-understanding.¹⁴³

First, insider researchers are in a better position to elucidate meaning from events with which they are already familiar. Second, insiders will seek out participants who are most likely to cover all the full range of different sources of information needed. Third, they know the legitimate and taboo phenomena of what can be talked about and what cannot. They know

¹⁴² E. Gummesson, *Qualitative Methods in Management Research*, 2nd ed, (Thousand Oaks. CA: Sage.2000), 55.

¹⁴³ J. B. Stephenson and L. S. Greer, "Ethnographers in Their Own Cultures: Two Appalachian Cases," *Human Organisation*. 40 (1981), 123-130.

what occupies colleagues' mind. They know how the informal organization works and to whom to turn to for information and gossip. They know the critical events and what they mean within the organization. They are able to see beyond objectives that are merely window dressing. When they are inquiring, they can use the internal jargons, draw on their own experiences in asking questions and interviewing, and follow up on replies, ultimately obtaining richer data. Besides, they are able to participate in discussions or merely observe what is going on without others being necessarily aware of their presence. Additionally, they can participate freely without drawing attention to themselves and creating suspicion.

In the same vein, there are disadvantages. When insider researchers are interviewing, they may assume too much and so not probe as much as if they were outsiders or ignorant of the situation. They may think they know the answer and not expose their current thinking to alternative reframing.

In considering the insider researcher through process reflexivity, there is the need to be aware of the strength and limits of their pre-understanding so that they can use their experiential and theoretical knowledge to reframe their understanding of situations to which they are close.

Merton posits that insiders and outsiders in the domain of knowledge unite.¹⁴⁴

As an insider, I am very much aware of the essentialist and normative approach to the study of Pentecostalism which definitely play a decisive role in the issues that come up for discussion in this study. As argued by André Droogers, “essentialist and normative tendencies may appear in any research effort in the study of Pentecostalism.”¹⁴⁵ This, according to him, is a result of the movement's idiosyncratic and characteristic forms.¹⁴⁶ The

¹⁴⁴ R. Merton, “Insider and Outsider: New Concepts for New Forms,” *California Management Review*, 29, 62-73.

¹⁴⁵ André Droogers, “Essentialist and Normative Approaches” in Allan Anderson et.al (eds.), *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 31.

¹⁴⁶ Droogers, “Essentialist and Normative Approaches,” 31.

tendency is that, “insiders may take an apologetic position, experiencing their religion as ultimate, whereas outsiders may have their own biases, encountering difficulties understanding and appreciating what happens in Pentecostal practice.”¹⁴⁷ In understanding these approaches to the study of Pentecostalism, I acknowledge that my own personal experience, as a Bishop of the ACI, and also my personal experience of the subject under study will come into play in the collection of data. These might all have some negative and positive influences on the thesis. The negative side will be my familiarity and personal relationship with NDW, which might lead to my own personal biases. Also, some participants in the research may not be able to speak out because of my perceived position of power.

However, as an insider, I enjoy the benefit of using my position to gather the right kind of participants from the church for a focus group discussion. The positive side, however, is my involvement in the development and growth of the church. I have been part of the ministry of NDW for close to three decades as a pastor and now a Regional bishop. I, therefore, enter the research space as an insider with all the advantages and disadvantages associated with writing from the emic point of view. To minimize the extent of my biases influencing the credibility of my study, I approach the study first as a researcher and secondly as a religious person. While it is difficult to split myself between these two positions, it is possible for me to keep the line of demarcation between a researcher and a believer. Hannink et al,¹⁴⁸ describes reflexivity as a process that involves conscious self-reflection on the part of researchers to make explicit their potential influence on the research process. Through reflexivity, qualitative researchers reflect on their subjectivity, on how their social background,

¹⁴⁷ Droogers, “Essentialist and Normative Approaches,” 31.

¹⁴⁸ Monique Hennink, Inge Hutter and Ajay Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*. (London: Sage Publication Ltd, 2011), 131.

assumptions, positioning and behaviour impact the research. This researcher will thus take the path of reflexivity throughout this study.

The interpretative nature of qualitative research is better achieved with a researcher who is fully aware of his biases and prepared to uphold the standards of objectivity to keep the research valid.

1.9 Data Collection

The study follows Monique Hannink et. al's model of qualitative research.¹⁴⁹ This consists of three interlinked cycles; the Design Cycle, the Ethnographic Cycle and the Analytic Cycle. This model is preferred because it combines inductive and deductive reasoning effectively in a research process. This section of the research is the second component of the qualitative research cycle known as the ethnographic cycle.

1.9.1 Population

Aside NDW, who is the key subject and informant, I used my knowledge of ACI to purposeful sample participants from ACI, other CM in Ghana, the Christian community in Ghana and selected individuals who have had some involvement with NDW in the past. This included, for example, people who used to be his friends but are not any longer, and those who used to be in his church but who are not any longer for contrasting views with those in good terms with him. Other participants include close friends, children and relatives of NDW, key Charismatic leaders in Ghana, political leaders, pastors, and academics. A total of 120 individuals and groups made up the target population. The population is categorised as follows:

1. Nicholas Duncan-Williams
2. close relatives, siblings and children

¹⁴⁹ Monique Hennink, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 132.

3. Keys leaders and members of the clergy of ACI
4. Selected leaders of the CM in Ghana
5. Selected members of Nicholas Duncan-Williams' church and members of other charismatic churches
6. Selected members of other Christian denominations
7. Civil society, Political leaders and members of other religious persuasions

1.9.2 Recruitment of Participants

The purposeful sampling technique is what I used. I identify a gate keeper in the person of Bishop Ebenezer Obodai who is the Senior Pastor of the Prayer Cathedral. The Prayer Cathedral is the Headquarters church of NDW and it is his seat and biggest branch worldwide. Bishop Obodai has been with NDW for over 35 years and knows many who fit into the category of participants for data collection for the study. I also employed the snowball strategy so participants helped me to identify other key informants. The principle of diversity and saturation guided the recruitment. The recruitments were done mainly through telephone calls, emails and personal contacts with the participants. The time and venue were agreed on and in cases where a participant could not honour the invitation we rescheduled and agreed on a later date, time and venue. I invited 3 people who declined outright for personal reasons and I respected it. Others also wanted confirmation from NDW before they could agree to be respondents and I did by discussing it with NDW and then assuring them of his approval.

1.9.3 Methods of Data collection

I employed three different types of data collection methods, namely, Primary data, Secondary Data and informal conversations.

1.9.3.1 Primary data

I used the following three methods as the means of collecting the primary data: in-depth interviews, focus groups, and participant observation.

An in-depth interview is a one-to-one method of data collection that involves an interviewer and an interviewee having a detailed discussion on specific topics. The purpose is to gain insight into certain issues using a semi-structured interview guide.¹⁵⁰ It involves establishing rapport with the interviewee, asking questions in an open, empathetic way and motivating the interviewee to tell their story by probing. The question guide is modified due to an inductive reasoning after the first interview and used to elicit a richer insight into the issues. The session is recorded for transcription and analysis.

For the primary data, I had 10 different sessions of 2 hours a session of in-depth interviews with NDW between December 2017 and December 2019. The interviews were guided by a total of 25 questions covering five different areas of his life and ministry. These questions were emailed to him ahead of the scheduled interviews and we agreed on some areas he did not want to talk about before commencement of the Interviews. For example, he did not want to talk about his divorce and remarriage. He also declined my request for approval to interview his former wife. Other in-depth interviews with his family, close associates and friends and others were conducted within the period. All the interviews were preceded by a clear explanation of the research and the ethical practices of the university including anonymity. I received verbal and signed consents with each interview and the right of respondents to withdraw at any time during the interview or the course of the research. I recorded all interviews for ease and accuracy of transcription of views of respondents.

¹⁵⁰ Monique Hennink, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 135.

A focus group discussion is an interactive discussion between six to eight pre-selected participants, led by a moderator and an assistant focusing on a specific set of issues. The aim is to gain a broad range of views on the research topic over a period of 60-90 minutes and to create an environment where participants feel comfortable to express their views. Focus group discussions promote dialogue and debate around the issue and can serve as a rich source of data. The session is recorded electronically and by writing in a field notebook. The transcribed recording is analysed for historical and doctrinal data pertinent to the subject. Within the period from December 2017 to December 2019, I conducted 3 focus group discussions of 8 participants in each group in Accra. Participants were carefully selected from ACI for two groups from various age ranges to ascertain a unique perspective of participants over the four decades of the existence of the church and the ministry of NDW. The principle of saturation and triangulation was employed, and all sessions were recorded for accuracy of transcription. Like all other interviews, I obtained verbal and signed consents from all participants and assured them of anonymity and the University ethical requirements. After explaining the research to each group, I facilitated the discussion by pre-prepared questions.

Observation is a research method that enables researchers to systematically observe and record people's behaviour, actions and interactions. It allows researchers to obtain a detailed description of social settings or events in order to situate people's behaviour within their own socio-cultural context. It involves watching and recording what people do and say. The observation could be participatory or non-participatory. I participated in several worship services led by NDW and other worship services by CM to be in a position to identify variations and unique approaches of the CM. I observed the behaviour of the congregants within and outside the church. My particular attention was on the behaviour of NDW in the discharge of his spiritual functions and when he was in his office receiving guests. I spent

time at his secretariat observing how it is run and listening in to some of the gossips on how he is perceived by his staff and how he wanted things done. During the period between December 2017 and December 2019 I had the privilege to participate and observe the Impact Convention, Sunday worship services, Prayer meetings and several other occasions of smaller group meeting with NDW and his pastors. I took notes of all these observations and the effect of participation.

1.9.3.2 Secondary data

I depended on secondary data from existing literature on Pentecostalism, Theology, CM, church materials and documents, newspapers, published books and booklets by NDW, Audio-visuals and CD recordings, reports of important annual religious gatherings, and reports of the College of Bishops. I also depended on relevant literature on Pentecostal/ CM in Ghana and the world. NDW has authored fourteen devotional books.¹⁵¹ These books and a huge volume of recorded sermons, YouTube videos and online resources were analysed for information on history, doctrine and other views of NDW

1.9.4 Data analysis

Data analysis involves a process of immersion in data, through which one identifies and interprets the experiences of study participants. The main technique for data analysis employed in this study is grounded theory. Grounded theory, according to Monique Hannink,

¹⁵¹ "Don't Fight the Process: Yielding Totally to God's Plan to Make You Great, (Accra: ACI. 2018); "Providence and Destiny: The Nicholas Duncan-Williams Story," (Accra: Prayer Summit Publishing, 2017); "Powers Behind the Scene" (Accra: Prayer Summit Publishing, 2017); "Prayer Moves God" (Accra: Prayer Summit Publishing, 2015); "Binding the Strong Man" (Accra: Salem Author Services, 2012); "The Supernatural Power of a Praying Man" (Accra: Salem Author Services, 2012); "Turning Pain to Power" (Accra: Prayer Summit Publishing, 2012); "Enforcing Prophetic Decrees" (Accra: Digital in Q, 2012); "Destined to Make an Impact," (Accra: Pneuma Life Publishing Inc., 2002); "Divine Timing: Avoiding the Dangers of Premature Exposure" (Accra: Life Publishing Inc., 2002); "The Incredible Power of the Praying Woman" (Accra: Pneuma Life Publishing Inc., 2002); "Divine Timing: Avoiding the Dangers of Premature Exposure," (Accra: Life Publishing Inc., 2002); "Destined to Make an Impact" (Accra: Pneuma Life Publishing Inc.,2002); "The Incredible Power of the Praying Woman" (Accra: Pneuma Life Publishing Inc., 2002) "Understanding the Father Factor" (Accra: CreateSpace Publishing, 200); "Nicholas Duncan-Williams, Praying through the Promises of God" (Accra: Bishop House, 1999); "The Price of Greatness: Understanding the Power of Preserving Greatness" (Accra: Salem Author services, 1998).

provides a set of flexible guidelines and a process for textual data analysis that is well suited to understanding human behaviour and identifying social processes and cultural norms.¹⁵² It also provides analytic rigour in interpreting qualitative data and developing empirical theory. Grounded theory involves a series of tasks, and these tasks would ensure the critical and analytical presentation of my data. Here, I employ the following principles of grounded theory: prepare verbatim transcripts, anonymize data, develop codes, define codes in a codebook, code data, describe (thick description), compare, categorize, conceptualize, and develop theory.

I used thick description to narrate and present all the data that I transcribed and categorised into themes. Using the core principles of the grounded theory, the data was categorised into broader themes and sub themes. The broader themes constituted the chapters and the sub themes made up the various sub discussions within the chapters. I used existing literature and current discussions on Pentecostalism and Charismatic movements, theology and social theories to analyse the viewpoints presented by the respondents. Historical and Theological analysis of the data teased out the core objectives of the study.

1.10 Limitations

The study is limited to the life and ministry of NDW and the extent to which he has contributed to the charismatic movement in Ghana. Though many such ministries exist outside Accra, the focus of this study will be on Accra. It will look into the history and the theology of NDW as a window to peep into CM in Ghana. Many key leaders of CM interviewed were cautious of making “injurious” comments about NDW so the study was limited by teasing out perspectives from that viewpoint.

¹⁵² Monique Hennink, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 75.

1.11. Ethics

The study was guided by the ethical requirement of the University of Birmingham for postgraduate research as evident by ethical review clearance. All the participants were properly briefed about the aim of the research and appropriate verbal and signed consent was sought. Pseudonyms were used except in the cases where participants had agreed on the use of their names. The views of NDW on some areas of his life that must not be explored was respected.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT IN GHANA: THE POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS AND ECONOMIC MATRICES

1.2 Introduction

This chapter will provide an overview of the political, socio-religious and economic atmosphere in the late 1970s and the 1980s. I argue in this chapter that the ensuing socio-economic challenges and the political corruption that affected overall public wellbeing had an impact on the rise of the charismatic movement. This is precisely because as the state failed to provide adequate social welfare schemes to support its citizens and as the economy continued to atrophy, some Ghanaians resorted to prayer and other forms of religious activities to seek the intervention of God and to find alternative answers to the socio-economic and political challenges they faced. This contributed to a surge in religion, as many charismatic leaders with oratorical skills and who demonstrated the ability to provide hope and some relief emerged on the scene, giving rise to the charismatic movement. It is in this climate that Nicholas Duncan-Williams started in the late 1970s as a new ministry, unique and different in its praxis and message from the existing Pentecostal and historic churches.

2.2 Ghana's engagement with politics and religion

In this section, I discuss the intermeshing between religion and politics in Ghana. I argue that since precolonial times, religion and politics have interacted to shape and model beliefs and practices in many societies in Ghana. Beginning with Nkrumah, it is important to state that he deployed religion as a formidable tool to build unity among Ghanaians. Following the logic of Antonio Gramsci's hegemony and counter-hegemony, Nkrumah used Christianity, which he believed had been a formidable weapon and harbinger in the colonial enterprise, to

legitimise his political administration, and also to endear himself to a largely Christian nation.¹⁵³

Nkrumah's claim that "Ghanaians should seek first the political kingdom and all other things shall be added" had a material dimension. It was generally believed that material prosperity would follow after political independence. He, therefore, appropriated that biblical text on the eve of independence to psyche Ghanaians up for a better life after independence. Nkrumah had a degree in divinity and was very religious. He considered himself a non-denominational Christian and a Marxist socialist,¹⁵⁴ and he had a good relationship with Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass, a Senegalese itinerant preacher.¹⁵⁵ It is alleged that he devoted Fridays to fast and meditate upon the Bible.

Nevertheless, Kwame Nkrumah is known to have also consulted and solicited the assistance of ritual experts to achieve his socio-political ends. A case in point is his invitation of Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass, a Senegalese Tijaniyyah religious leader, to perform some rituals to expel the evil forces that were believed to be militating against the successful construction of the Akosombo Dam in 1963. It is alleged that but for the intervention of the Tijaniyyah Sheikh, the construction of the Akosombo Dam would not have been possible. Nkrumah also flirted with African Traditional Religion. For example, upon his release from imprisonment in 1951, he participated in a traditional rite, during which he cleansed his feet in the blood of a

¹⁵³ Rupe Simms, "I Am a Non-denominational Christian and a Marxist Socialist": A Gramscian analysis of the Convention People's Party and Kwame Nkrumah's Use of Religion,' *Sociology of Religion*, 64(6) (2003), 463-477.

¹⁵⁴ Ebenezer Obiri Addo, *Kwame Nkrumah: A Case of Religion and Politics in Ghana*. (New York: University Press of America Inc., 1999).

¹⁵⁵ Yunus Dumbe, "Islamic Polarisation and the Politics of Exclusion in Ghana: Tijaniyya and Salafist struggles over Muslim Orthodoxy," 10 (2019), 153-180.

sacrificial sheep in the presence of his rallied followers.¹⁵⁶ Besides, he is believed to have solicited for spiritual assistance from Alhaji Iwa of Kankan in Guinea. According to Pobee, Alhaji Iwa provided Nkrumah with spiritual assistance; and upon the death of the former, Nkrumah travelled to Guinea to perform rituals on his grave. Nkrumah's dependence on Alhaji Iwa popularised the idea of Nkrumah's Kankan Nyame in Ghana (Kankan was deity Nkrumah was believed to have imported to Ghana from Guinea).¹⁵⁷ The use of the title Osagyefo by Nkrumah also has some religious connotation. Osagyefo¹⁵⁸ in Akan means redeemer. This title, from the Christian perspective, belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. Nkrumah possibly used the term to inform Ghanaians of his contribution to freeing the country from colonialism. In fact, immortality was even associated with Nkrumah. After he survived an assassination attempt on his life, he was alleged to be immortal. The Evening News, the official paper of the Convention Peoples Party (CPP), comparing Nkrumah to Jesus, once read, "Angels were singing 'the Messiah is coming' when, in 1909, at Nkroful, a woman was labouring to bring forth the Apostle of Freedom."¹⁵⁹

Also,

Nkrumah is all right.

Nkrumah is our Messiah.

Nkrumah never dies; if you follow him, he will make you fishers of men.¹⁶⁰

David Burnett summarises the logic of Nkrumah's use of religious symbols as follows:

¹⁵⁶ Darrell Reeck, "The Castle and the Umbrella: Some Religious Dimensions of Kwame Nkrumah's Leadership Role in Ghana," *Africa Today*, 23(4), Civil Religion in Africa (Oct.-Dec., 1976), 7-27.

¹⁵⁷ John S. Pobee. *Religion and Politics in Ghana* (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1991).

¹⁵⁸ Osagyefo is a contraction of two Akan words, 'Osa' which means war and 'Ogyefo' which means redeemer. So, Osagyefo means someone who redeems his people from war.

¹⁵⁹ John S. Pobee. *Religion and Politics in Ghana*.

¹⁶⁰ Clarke, R.C. "African Indigenous Churches in Ghana: Past, Present and Future," *Journal of African Instituted Church Theology*, II(1), 2006.

The use of clear Christian symbolism illustrated the widespread influence of Christian ideas among the people of the Gold Coast, and Nkrumah, as an astute politician, realised the value of biblical imitation for slogans in his political campaigns. The biblical imagery provided ready-made metaphors to communicate his message to people, who had, at least, heard the preaching of a Christian evangelist, even if only a minority were Christians.¹⁶¹

Nkrumah's appropriation of religious symbols could be interpreted to mean that he tried to make Christianity meaningful to the liberation struggle of Ghanaian Christians against colonial rule. Nkrumah was also very critical of the historic mission churches – Presbyterian, Methodist, Catholic, and Anglican. He saw the historic mission churches as collaborating and abetting with the colonial administration. In response to that he courted the friendship of some of the leadership of the African Independent Churches (AICs).¹⁶² Since the AICs were challenging some of the teachings of the historic churches that presented some African cultural practices in a bad light, Nkrumah saw the AICs as close to the liberation struggle of Ghanaians in particular and Africans as a whole. Nkrumah's flirtation with the AICs and his appropriation of Christian symbols for political gains brought him into further antagonism with the historic churches.¹⁶³ He was severely criticised by some of the leaders of the historic churches. One of such critics of Nkrumah was the Rt. Rev. Richard Roseveare, the Anglican Bishop of Accra, who criticised Nkrumah for distorting Christian teaching and promoting atheism in the Young Pioneers Movement.¹⁶⁴ Reeck recounts that Roseveare was expelled from the country but allowed to return after three months after the Christian Council had protested his expulsion.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ David Barrett, *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements*, (London: Oxford University Press. 1968).

¹⁶² John S. Pobee. *Kwame Nkrumah and the Church in Ghana, 1949-1966*. (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1988).

¹⁶³ K.A. Dickson. "Religion and Society: A Study of Church and State Relations in the First Republic," in Kwame Arhin (ed.), *The Life and Work of Kwame Nkrumah*. (New Jersey: Africa World Press, Inc. 1993), 129-146.

¹⁶⁴ The Young Pioneers Movement was a predominantly a youth movement founded by Nkrumah to inculcate a spirit of nationalism, discipline and those attributes needed in moving a nascent country towards prosperity.

¹⁶⁵ Darrell Reeck, "The Castle and the Umbrella," 7-27.

Nkrumah was certainly not an atheist; he encouraged the representation of religious leaders from Christianity, Islam, and African Traditional Religion, at all state functions, especially Independence Day.¹⁶⁶ His only concern was that he saw the potential for religion to polarise the new born nation, and so he passed the Avoidance Discrimination Act of 1957, which rendered it illegal for political groups to be organised on religious, ethnic, and regional basis. It is possible that Nkrumah dabbled in religion to establish legitimacy for his administration.¹⁶⁷ Coming from a cultural background where the chief's power was derived from religion,¹⁶⁸ it could be concluded that Nkrumah saw in religion the potential to establish his legitimacy as a leader.

Nkrumah's fear of polarisation within the country remained unabated, and one of the means he devised to bridge the wedge in the Ghanaian society which was predicated on ethnicity and religion was to declare Ghana a one-party state.¹⁶⁹ This strategy of declaring Ghana a one-party state was also Nkrumah's way of silencing political opponents, who were dreaded as fronting the interest of the neo-colonialist. Thus, as part of the solution, Nkrumah declared Ghana, which until 1964 was a *de facto* one-party state, a *de jure* one party state.¹⁷⁰ Oquaye captures what became of Ghana, after Nkrumah had declared the country a *de jure* one party state, as follows:

¹⁶⁶ Kwame Botwe-Asamoah. *Kwame Nkrumah's Politico-cultural Thought and Policies: An African-centered Paradigm for the Second Phase of African Revolution*. (New York: London: Routledge, 2005)

¹⁶⁷ S. Roger Gocking, *The History of Ghana*. (London: Greenwood Press, 2005)

¹⁶⁸ K. A. Busia, *The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti: A Study of the Influence of Contemporary Social Changes on Ashanti Political Institutions*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1951).

¹⁶⁹ Zolberg R, Aristide, *Creating Political Order: The Party-states of West Africa*, (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1966).

¹⁷⁰ Aristide, *Creating Political Order*, 34.

But within this very framework of otherwise enviable achievements, corruption and dictatorship soon reared their ugly heads. Nkrumah's over-reaching expenditure on the continent depleted resources at home and in the midst of poverty and want, his "socialist boys" lived privately like lords – even though they were supposed to propagate the ideals of Socialism as interpreted by him. Opponents of the regime – political ones at first and subsequently competitors in private rivalries – were arbitrarily detained. Every conceivable freedom – academic, press, speech and association – was strangled. Judges were arbitrarily dismissed, a One-Party State was declared and Members of Parliament were subsequently hand-picked by the C.P.P., i.e., Nkrumah¹⁷¹.

The real or imagined dictatorial tendencies of Nkrumah resulted in the first coup in the country's history on February 24, 1966 by a group of officers and men of the Ghana army, led by the late Lt. General Emmanuel Kwasi Kotoka and the late Lt. General Akwasi Amankwa Afrifa. The National Liberation Council (NLC) was set up to rule the country. One of the admirable achievements of the NLC was the handing over of power peacefully after general elections to a civilian government, headed by Kofi Abrefa Busia (Prime Minister) and Edward Akufo Addo (Ceremonial President). The Busia administration pursued a *laissez-faire* policy. The major achievement of Busia's administration was rural development, which was considered cardinal for ensuring self-sufficiency in food production.¹⁷²

Other leaders, who came after Nkrumah, also used religion partly to achieve their political ends. Kofi Abrefa Busia's administration, which spanned from 1969-1972, according to Max Assimeng, saw a resurgence in religious activities.¹⁷³ Church attendance became the order of the day among public office holders. Busia, a lay preacher of the Methodist church, unlike

¹⁷¹ Mike Oquaye, *Politics in Ghana: 1972-1979*, (Accra: Tornado Publications, 1980), 2-3.

¹⁷² Oquaye, *Politics in Ghana*, 10.

¹⁷³ Max, Assimeng, *Religion and Social Change in West Africa: An Introduction to the Sociology of Religion*. (Accra: Woeli Publication Services, 2000).

Nkrumah, promoted the historic churches at the expense of the African Independent Churches.¹⁷⁴

Busia's administration had its own challenges, but while they were solving these challenges, Lt-Colonel I.K. Acheampong, then Commanding Officer of the Fifth Battalion of the Ghana Army, led a coup against Busia. The key argument against Busia, and which was used to rationalise the coup, was that Busia's government was corrupt.¹⁷⁵ As Lt.-Colonel Acheampong gained power through the gun, he formed the National Redemption Council (NRC), and named himself as Chairman. One of the remarkable achievements of Acheampong's regime was the revolution of agriculture.

Acheampong's government (1972-1978) marked the re-emergence of spiritual churches in the country. Though a Catholic, Acheampong courted the friendship of the spiritual churches. In 1977, when there was a long period of drought, Acheampong's government organised a national week of repentance and prayer. Known for his sarcastic responses to situations, it is relayed that when he was pressured by Ghanaians to do something to reverse the drought, he answered, "Am I God to cause rain?"¹⁷⁶

The Acheampong government was engulfed in corruption, hoarding and profiteering, a situation that inspired a bloodless palace coup led by General Fred Akuffo, who was the chief of defense staff and second in command to General Acheampong. Akuffo's government did not last long as there was another coup in 1979, led by Ft. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings. After

¹⁷⁴ Assimeng, *Religion and Social Change*, 2000.

¹⁷⁵ Maxwell Owusu, "The search for solvency: Background to the fall of Ghana's second republic", 1969-1972," *Africa Today*, 19(1) (1972), 52-60.

¹⁷⁶ Pobee, *Religion and Politics in Ghana*, 1991.

what appeared to be a clean-up exercise,¹⁷⁷ an election was held in June 22, 1979 and Dr. Hilla Limann, representing the People's National Party (PNP) became president. When Dr. Limann took over, the economy of Ghana was in shambles. Cocoa production had significantly declined, while the country's industries performed poorly. The challenges that bedevilled Limann's government beckoned the military to intervene in the country's democratic experimentation on December 31, 1981.

Under the Rawlings' military regime in 1981, several Christians perceived Rawlings' revolution as an anti-Christian revolution.¹⁷⁸ According to Atiemo, Christian programmes were not aired on national television and radios.¹⁷⁹ The regime also witnessed vicious attacks on Christianity by Vincent Damuah,¹⁸⁰ who was an ally of the Provisional National Defence Council¹⁸¹ (PNDC) government and sought to revitalize indigenous religions in Ghana through the religion he had formed,¹⁸² known as the Afrikania Movement. Under this new political leadership, Christians were compelled to work on Sunday mornings instead of going to church. The regime's perceived anti-Christian stance came to a head with the passing of the PNDC Law 211 (1989), which required all religious groups to register with the National Commission on Culture.¹⁸³ When the law came into effect, two religious groups were immediately banned: the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day

¹⁷⁷ The cleanup exercise was the execution of some military generals and civilians who were seen as responsible for the problems of the country.

¹⁷⁸ Rawlings seized power through a coup in 1979 and eventually returned the country to civilian rule.

¹⁷⁹ Atiemo A. Abamfo, "Deliverance in the Charismatic Churches in Ghana," *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, 2 (1994-95), 39-49.

¹⁸⁰ Vincent Damuah was a former Catholic priest who founded the Afrikania mission after his encounter with civil rights and racial inequality in the United States. Afrikania is a renaissance of African traditional religion.

¹⁸¹ PNDC is the government of Jerry John Rawlings.

¹⁸² Marleen de Witte, "The Spectacular and the Spirits: Charismatics and Neo-traditionalists on Ghanaian Television," *Material Religion*, 1(3) (2005), 314-334.

¹⁸³ Kevin Shillington, *Ghana and the Rawlings Factor* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 70

Saints (also known as Mormons).¹⁸⁴ Members of the Christian Council and the Catholic Bishop Conference restricted their members from obeying the law.¹⁸⁵ The PNDC regime remained quiet about it, even though the law was still in effect until the promulgation of the 1992 Constitution, which gave more rights to religious affiliation and expression.¹⁸⁶

2.3 Ghana, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund

This section focuses on providing a brief historical survey of Ghana's engagement with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). I argue that Ghana's economic engagement with the IMF spans over the historical period of the various political regimes. The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), which was formed to rule Ghana after the coup in 1981 that ousted the Limann government, had to bring the economy from the fringes.

When Rawlings took over power in 1981, he had an anti-imperialist and anti-neo-colonialist agenda in mind. His avowed aim was to de-link Ghana's economy from western economies, mainly as a means of breaking the existing monopoly of foreign control over the economy and social life. Consequently, he was initially very reluctant to go to the IMF for any financial assistance,¹⁸⁷ believing that the country needed to be restructured along nationalistic lines leading to economic self-sufficiency, self-dependence and true economic independence.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁴ J. Haynes, "Human rights and democracy in Ghana: The records of the Rawlings' regime", *African Affairs*, 90(36) (1991), 407-425.

¹⁸⁵ Elom, Dovlo, "Religion in the Public Sphere," 629-658.

¹⁸⁶ Max, Assimeng, *Religion and Social Change in West Africa*.

¹⁸⁷ Akonor, 2006, 34.

¹⁸⁸ Akonor, 2006, 34.

Unfortunately, his nationalistic aspirations did not materialise as the country's economy started to decline. This deterioration compelled the government to form a committee to review and restructure the economy. This committee recommended that Rawlings, like other leaders before him, go to the IMF for financial assistance. To attract assistance from the IMF, the committee recommended certain measures, including: devaluing the Cedi to eliminate price distortions and provide incentives to exporters; phasing out price controls to eliminate speculation and hoarding by traders; increasing cocoa producer prices; reducing the budget deficit size; and eliminating or reducing some government subsidies.¹⁸⁹

These recommendations were rejected by some leading members of Rawlings's government out of fear that any attempt to implement these measures, particularly devaluing the Cedi, would ignite another political instability in the country. Despite their nationalistic enthusiasm, the Rawlings's government was eventually compelled by the crippling economy to go to the IMF in April 1983 for support.¹⁹⁰

Besides the economic woes in that period, the country also experienced its worst natural disasters. There were widespread bushfires and severe droughts. The effect of these disasters on the economy was devastating. Food and exportable crops, such as cocoa, were destroyed, leaving the country able to meet only two-thirds of its national food requirement.¹⁹¹ The government, therefore, had to import grain on a commercial basis at a time when the national coffers were quickly drying out. Additionally, because about 65% of Ghanaians depend on

¹⁸⁹ Akonor, 2006, 45.

¹⁹⁰ Akonor, 37-38.

¹⁹¹ J.S. Dei, "Crisis and adaptation in a Ghanaian forest community," *Anthropological Quarterly*, 62(2) (1988), 63-72.

farming, mass poverty became rife. The drought also made it impossible for the Akosombo Dam to operate at full capacity, leading to a failure to provide the required level of hydroelectric power for export of energy to neighbouring West African states, thus, further decreasing the country's export earnings.

Besides, in the same year, Nigeria deported about one million Ghanaians back to Ghana. These repatriations, representing a 10% increase in the Ghanaian population, further worsened the country's economic woes. Another major factor that pushed the Rawlings's government to solicit assistance from the IMF was the failure of socialist countries to provide the needed help to Ghana. Thus, the PNDC members who took trips to the USSR, Cuba, China, and Libya in a bid to attract economic support returned, 'empty handed'.¹⁹² It could also be argued that another determining factor that drove the then government to the IMF was the fact that it was becoming more evident that no developing country could completely decouple and wean itself from the manipulations of the West, especially not when such a country, like Ghana, depended on external sources for machinery, manufactured items, petroleum, and basic commodities. Faced, therefore, with no alternative solutions to its economic problems, the PNDC government resorted to the IMF and accepted its conditionalities.

Although structural adjustment may differ from country to country and from region to region, its basic features include the following: liberalisation of foreign exchange, import controls, withdrawal of subsidies, fiscal and budgetary discipline, and greater hospitality to foreign

¹⁹² K. Boafo-Arthur, "Ghana: Structural Adjustment, Democratization, and Politics of Continuity" *African Studies Review*, 42(2) (Sept. 1999b), 41-47.

investors through privatisation and trade liberalisation. As identified by Ibhawoh, structural adjustment is a process whereby a national economy is opened through a combination of demand and supply side policies.¹⁹³

Trade liberalisation was one of the major components of the structural adjustment package promoted by the Bretton Woods institutions. The neoliberals justify liberalization of trade on the premise that competition from imports leads to specialization and efficient allocation of resources while cleansing the economy of inefficient producers, thus removing the burden on society of sustaining entities. It is argued that with greater openness, small economies tend to have higher shares of trade in their gross national product (GNP) than do large countries and they gain more than those nations that restrict trade. Furthermore, trade liberalization is believed to enhance the welfare of consumers and reduce poverty as consumers find opportunities to choose from a wide variety of quality goods and cheaper imports.¹⁹⁴

In Ghana, the liberalisation of trade was expressed through the following measures: tariff adjustments; liberalisation of imports; liberalisation of the exchange rate; deregulation of controls on domestic market prices; and institutional reforms of revenue-generating bodies, such as Customs and Excise.¹⁹⁵ Trade liberalisation in Ghana was carried out in two phases. The first was affected under the Economic Recovery Programme I (ERP I, 1983-1986), which was aimed at economic stabilisation, while the second was implemented as part of the Economic Recovery Programme II (ERP II, 1986-1991), which was geared towards consolidation and expansion. It could be surmised that the goals of ERP I were essentially

¹⁹³ B. Ibhawoh, "Structural Adjustment, Authoritarianism and Human Rights in Africa," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and Middle East*, (19)1 (1999), 158-167.

¹⁹⁴ SAPRIN, *Structural Adjustment*, 36.

¹⁹⁵ Naomi Chazan, Peter Lewis, Robert Mortimer, Donald Rothchild and Stephen John Stedman, *Politics and society in contemporary Africa*. (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999).

aimed at stabilising the Ghanaian economy. Stabilisation was intended to halt the downhill trend in the economy, particularly in the export and industrial sectors. The stage is characterised by what Donkor describes as the PNDC's obsession with reducing inflation, exchange rate liberalisation as an incentive to export.¹⁹⁶ In all, ERP I was an effort to restore fiscal discipline, encourage savings and investments, and lessen Ghana's domestic and international imbalances.¹⁹⁷ On the other hand, ERP II focused on consolidating the gains made in ERP I. This phase attempted to integrate stabilisation and economic reform. Medium to long term goals were therefore set to achieve the following: an economic growth rate of about 5% per annum through increasing investment from about 10% of national income to 25%; increasing savings from 7% at the end of ERP I to about 15% by 1990; public sector reform through privatisation of non-performing state-owned enterprises; and establishing a programme to address the social cost of adjustment otherwise known as PAMSCAD.¹⁹⁸

Admittedly, trade liberalisation has favoured some countries in export growth, but it must be noted that such growth was very narrowly based on a few natural resources and items produced with low-skill labour. Moreover, export growth was underpinned by continued import growth and falling terms of trade. As a result, trade deficit as well as current account deficits increased, with a consequent adverse impact on the size of external debt. Furthermore, trade liberalisation was paralleled by a proliferation of informal trade, as well as by an increase in cross-border illegal trade. Finally, in many countries the benefits of export

¹⁹⁶ K. Donkor, *Structural Adjustment and Mass Poverty in Ghana*. (Brookfield: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1997), 122.

¹⁹⁷ D. Rothchild, "Ghana and Structural Adjustment: An Overview" in Rothchild, D. Ed. *Ghana: The Political Economy of Recovery*. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991), 8.

¹⁹⁸ Programme of Action to Mitigate the social Cost of Adjustment. Donkor. p.124.

growth went primarily to transnational corporations at the cost of domestic producers¹⁹⁹. Following trade liberalisation, Ghana's manufactured exports earned US\$3.5 million in 1986 and increased to US\$14.7 million in 1991. As pointed out by SAPRIN, this tends to suggest that there was dynamic growth of manufacturing in a more competitive environment in which, as expected, there was a shift of resources from inefficient to efficient enterprises. However, disaggregate data show that the growth came mainly from domestic resource-based firms that already had established markets (the leading performers were the wood and aluminium companies that already had long experience in international trade). Available information from the Ghana Export Promotion Council relating to non-traditional exports shows that the absolute value of the exports involved was extremely small.²⁰⁰

In Ghana, after the launch of the Economic Recovery Programme, under the tutelage of the structural adjustment programme, in 1983, there was an initial increase in the performance of the manufacturing sector. This was because of the availability of imported inputs. According to SAPRIN, the real annual growth rate of manufacturing value added rose from 12.9 per cent in 1984 to 24.3 per cent in 1985, but then fell back to 11 per cent in 1986 and 10 per cent in 1987. Since 1987, when domestic manufacturing accounted for 9.4 per cent of real GDP, the domestic sector's performance has been rather unimpressive in terms of growth, share of real GDP and industrial output.

Trade liberalisation forced many small industries out of existence. Faced with stiff competition from external trade, most of these small industries were compelled to either go out of existence or switch to the importation of second-hand goods in order to survive in the

¹⁹⁹ SAPRIN, *Structural Adjustment*, 48.

²⁰⁰ SAPRIN, *Structural Adjustment*, 51.

market. Firms that fared well were those with strong local resource base (wood and beverages), cheap input sources (aluminium) and high ‘natural’ protection from transport cost (cement). Also included in this group were firms that the government considered core industries, which thereby benefited from public investment in upgrading equipment (the petroleum refinery).²⁰¹ Small industries really faced the brunt of the liberalisation policy since there was no industrial policy to support domestic firms to deal with new conditions and stiff competition on the international front. Another major challenge that militated against the development of local industries was exchange rate depreciation. Exchange rate depreciation increased the price of imported inputs and raised the cost of production, which had a negative effect on the prospects of local industries.²⁰² My observation is also that in Ghana, the service sector is increasingly taking over from the manufacturing sector, following the liberalisation of the economy.

In relation to employment, most of the workers at the medium-sized firms were laid off because of the inability of such firms to stand external competition, which had been orchestrated by the liberalisation policy.²⁰³

One of the expected effects of trade liberalisation was the reduction in the prices of goods and services. This assumes that opening up the market would lead to competition among wholesalers and retailers, which would have an impact on the reduction of prices of goods. But this envisioned effect of trade liberalisation was far from being realised in the sense that the devaluation of the Cedi, which was one of the demands of the structural adjustment programme, rather raised the prices of goods and services. Related to this is the fact that

²⁰¹ SAPRIN, *Structural Adjustment*, 57.

²⁰² Enos, 49.

²⁰³ SAPRIN, *Structural Adjustment*, 66.

prices of food also went up. This was because there was a decline in the production of staple foods as more lands were devoted to the cultivation of export crops.

Trade liberalisation also had a telling effect on women. Women have been found to be the main victims of retrenchments in the formal sector and as a result have been forced to stay home or engage in informal business which yield minimal incomes and other benefits. SAPRIN reports, that in Ghana, over 50 per cent of female-owned firms, more than their male counterparts, suffered a contraction of production during the period of the implementation of the structural adjustment programme. It could be said that female-owned firms were more sensitive and vulnerable to the forces that brought about change in employment, production output and market size. In the agricultural sector, Ghanaian women who produce 60 per cent of the country's food have suffered disproportionately from the imports of cheap food and from other liberalisation measures.²⁰⁴

Much as the Bretton Woods institutions undermined the initiative of Ghana to develop industrially, it is equally important to point out that there were some individuals, particularly the national elite who benefited from the conditionality of the structural adjustment programme. In writing about the common interest underlying the Ghanaian national elite, Ofuately Kodjoe found that the national elite has similar economic motivations because they have similar economic opportunities.²⁰⁵ He concluded that the Ghanaian national elite have “a strong commitment to liberal/conservative ideologies, characterised mainly by a preference for laissez-faire economic capitalist development, liberal democratic politics

²⁰⁴ SAPRIN, *Structural Adjustment*, 67.

²⁰⁵ Kodjoe Ofuately, 1985, 65.

tinged with elitism and a modernizing ethic based on the emulation of a ‘western’ way of life.”²⁰⁶

The Ghanaian national elite who benefited from the structural adjustment programme were: top professionals in the arts and sciences (including lawyers); top echelon of the military (colonels and above); top and eminent persons in business and commerce (including large landowners and wealthy commercial farmers); senior administrators in the public and civil service, including union leaders; senior journalists (especially at the editorial level); senior members of the clergy; holders of government office (i.e. ministers and analogous positions); senior politicians, and important traditional rulers.

Structural adjustment had a telling effect on Ghanaians. It was around this time that many people felt the need to make recourse to God. God became the reference point to salvage the political and economic challenges that had burdened the country’s economy. It was during this period of political and economic turmoil that the charismatic movement in the Ghanaian religious landscape emerged and became popular. To understand the success of some charismatic pioneers, such as Nicholas Duncan-Williams, one would have to appreciate the politico-economic matrixes in postcolonial Ghana. The challenge that burdened Ghana, following the country’s implementation of neoliberal policies, coincided with the deportation of about one million Ghanaians from Nigeria to Ghana in 1983. The dire economic condition in Ghana in the 1980s became the foundation for a new religious revival, even as the politicians explored other sources of bringing hope to the ailing economy. It is in this period that Duncan-Williams emerged as pioneers of the charismatic movement capitalised on the outcry of students, workers, and the elite to call for prayer, divine intervention and provided

²⁰⁶ Kodjoe, 1985:60, cited in Akonor, 2006:51.

hope through his message of prosperity. In other words, the economic downturn of Ghana in the 1980s was an important matrix that contributed to the rise of Nicholas Duncan-Williams and the Charismatic Ministries in Ghana.

2.4 The socio-political and economic context of the charismatic movement in Ghana

In this section, I argue that the structural adjustment programmes had a debilitating impact on lives in Ghana. As the economy of Ghana deteriorated, some Ghanaians resorted to religion for a solution. This is not to argue that religion always surges as a result of economic failures.²⁰⁷ My point is to argue that the economic challenges resonated with the enchanted worldviews in Ghana. For example, the non-binaries between the sacred and the profane implied that most Ghanaians could readily appeal to religious resources to deal with mundane issues of life. It is from this perspective that I argue that the economic challenges of the late 1970s into the early 1980s had an impact on the rise of the charismatic movement. More importantly, because the indigenous worldview provides an insight into making sense of Christianity, including translating Christian idioms through the refraction of indigenous religions,²⁰⁸ the economic challenges readily found a religious worldview that enhanced the spread of the charismatic movement. I, therefore, discuss the extent to which the postcolonial political and economic situation contributed partly to the rise and popularisation of the charismatic movement in the late 1970s through to the 1980s. I argue that the blanket and uncritical implementation of neoliberal policies in postcolonial Ghana, which came to a head in the 1980s, had a very debilitating effect on the lives of many Ghanaians. For many

²⁰⁷ Karen Lauterbach, *The Craft of Pastorship in Ghana and Beyond*, (PhD. Thesis submitted to Roskilde University, 2008).

²⁰⁸ Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe in Ghana*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999).

Ghanaians, the economic morass that the country experienced, which was believed to be a result of the implementation of neoliberal policies mandated by the International Monetary Fund, necessitated divine intervention.

The recourse to religion, after solutions that are consistent to the demands of the mundane world, dovetails with the Akan, or by extension Ghanaian understanding of the close connection between religion and social reality, or the sacred and the profane. The mushrooming of prayer camps and deliverance centres across the country in the 1980s was partly an expression of the disillusionment Ghanaians had come to associate with the political administration. It is right to argue that the multiple political, economic and social challenges that had burdened the country after independence set the right milieu for the rise of the Charismatic movement. As I have indicated above, it would, however, be wrong to solely associate the emergence of the charismatic movement to the economic crisis Ghana has suffered since independence that climaxed in the 1980s. Asamoah-Gyadu talks about an Evangelical fervent in the 1960s that became a church forming movement in the late 1970s and 1980s.²⁰⁹ The para-church evangelical movement that was the immediate precursor to the charismatic movement provided the grounds for mobilizing the youth for prayers. The para-church organisations, including the Ghana Evangelical Christian Fellowship, Joyful Way Incorporated, Youth Ambassadors for Christ Association, and Youth for Christ, trained young men and women who expected divine intervention in the multiple challenges of Ghana in the 1970s. In conversation with me, one of the members of the Action Chapel stated that,

²⁰⁹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*. See Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism*. (London: SCM Press, 2007).

at the time, as members of Youth Ambassadors for Christ Association, he was poised for a spiritual revival to revamp the economic challenges of Ghana.²¹⁰

According to Kwame Bediako, “if the Christian way of life is to stay in Africa, then African Christianity should be brought to bear on the fundamental questions of African existence in such a way as to achieve a unified world-view which finally resolves the dilemma of an African uncertain of its identity, poised between the impact of the West and the pull of its indigenous tradition.”²¹¹ The life and ministry of NDW shows that his teaching and Christian activities have some resonances with the Akan socio-religious perspectives. Thus, the Akan socio-religious cosmogony gave the Charismatic churches the necessary fertile environment for their teachings on wealth, health, wellbeing, evil and prosperity to flourish.

²¹⁰ Interview with a member of Action Chapel Church on July 2019.

²¹¹ Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-western Religion*. (Edinburgh: Orbis books. 1995), 5.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EARLY LIFE OF NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS

3.1 Introduction

3.1 Birth Narrative of Nicholas Duncan-Williams

The heydays of independence saw a reaffirmation of Ghanaian cultural identity. Many Ghanaians defined their cultural pride around national symbols and emblems. It was amid such early postcolonial experiences that NDW was born on May 12, 1957 at the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital. His birth coincided with the dawn of a new era and the convergence of socio-political and religious activities in Ghana. There is a narrative around his birth that assumes the direct influence of God in NDW's conception. In his personal testimony,²¹² when he became a young adult, his mother narrated to him how she bled for four months during pregnancy and how through dilation and curettage, his twin brother was wrongly and intentionally aborted by the medical doctor who was attending to her. According to Duncan-Williams the doctor was compelled to carry out the abortion on the mother to save her life. The invocation of the divine makes it possible for NDW to put himself on the same pedestal as biblical characters like Moses, David, and Esther, whose lives reflected the intervention of the divine.

He further asserts that, "After the procedure she continued to bleed, but to the glory of God she went into labour at nine months and successfully gave birth to a healthy baby boy she named Nicholas. God has a way of covering great destinies in challenging births. Moses,

²¹² Testimonies are two booklets, first one written on his sixtieth birthday and the other very early in his ministry to tell the story of God's grace in the life of Duncan-Williams. Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Providence & Destiny: The Nicholas Duncan-Williams Story* (Accra: Action Chapel International, 2015). Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *You are Destined to Succeed* (Accra: Action Faith Publications, 1990).

David, Esther and countless others marked for greatness were born through great adversity.”²¹³

The mystery crafted around NDW’s birth is not unusual of charismatic leaders. In his own testimony, the late Nigerian charismatic pioneer, Archbishop Benson Idahosa²¹⁴ also narrates how he survived several abortion attempts, including being dumped in the refuse at the incinerator. Some have argued that such invocation of the divine to embellish mundane narratives is purposely designed and crafted to create and consolidate legitimacy. It also connects the divine and the mundane to create a sense of awe and aura around the charismatic leader. Considering that the African worldview is essentially religious, invoking the divine endears Africans to easy acceptance. Invoking divine providence in his birth narrative makes NDW see himself as being born in history to perform a divine assignment. As we shall see in later chapters, this self-conceptualisation emboldened him to challenge some of the teachings of mainline churches in Ghana. It also provided him the grounds to reinforce the notion of providence and divine legitimacy to negotiate for space within the Ghanaian religious landscape. As he intimated in an interview, this development resulted in a frosty relationship between his religious ‘revolution’ and the mainline churches.

There is lack of consensus on his early childhood family life. It is clear from his testimony that he was born in Accra, at the Korle-Bu teaching hospital,²¹⁵ but nothing is said about his

²¹³Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Providence & Destiny: The Nicholas Duncan-Williams Story*. (Accra: Action Chapel International, 2015), 9.

²¹⁴ Ruthanne Garlock, *Fire in His Bones: The Story of Benson Idahosa – Leader of the Christian Awakening in Africa*. (Lagos: Lagos International, 1981).

²¹⁵ The Korle Bu teaching hospital is the biggest single hospital in West Africa which was built by Governor Guggisberg as part of the Accra modernization project to cater for the health needs of indigenes.

family beyond his mother. The research gathered that there were some difficult moments between his mother and father, and so, he was singlehandedly raised by his mother²¹⁶ until he was about 16, when he first met his father. In his own narrative, he elides the story about his family and ethnic background. He provides no narrative at all about his ethnicity and tribal background. He also shies away from discussing his childhood engagement with his father and other members of his extended family. In one of his testimonies, which has been codified into a booklet, even the crafting of the title, *Providence & Destiny*, indicate NDW's acknowledgement of divine providence in his life. The book provides a sketchy account of the theology of pre-determination and freewill. While the point of confluence between pre-determination and freewill has informed the long-standing debate between Calvinists and Arminians and continues to be a strong force dividing some Christians, NDW freely weaves through these strong theological predilections without any sense of contradiction. He argues that while there is divine pre-determination in one's life, one must make a choice in following the divine will. The book does not engage the deeply embedded theological discussions over pre-determination and freewill. The contradiction in this very opaque theology is seen in NDW's assertion that, 'I owe it (his success in life) all to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the one who has made all the difference in my life'²¹⁷ Elsewhere, he says, 'you are the sum total of the choices you make'. Did Duncan-William see the tension in pre-determination and freewill in his assertion?.

3.2.2 Mother of Nicholas Duncan-Williams

NDW's mother, Florence Taiwo Naa Akwelley Bruce, a twin, was born on 19th November, 1932 to Violet Awornor Williams and Owula Kofi Bruce.²¹⁸ She was a nurse. Her father was

²¹⁶ Florence Taiwo Bruce, "Funeral Handbook," November 2016.

²¹⁷ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Providence & Destiny: The Nicholas Duncan-Williams Story*. (Accra: Action Chapel International, 2015), p. 6.

²¹⁸ Florence Taiwo Bruce, "Funeral Handbook," 2016.

Fante, but her maternal lineage bridged transnational connections between Nigeria and Ghana since her grandmother was a Yoruba from Abeokuta in Nigeria. After having trained as a nurse in Sierra Leone and Ireland, she returned to Sierra Leone where she practiced briefly before later deciding to travel to Ghana in search of her father, with whom she had limited bonding when she was growing up. Eventually establishing connections with her father, she chose to stay in Ghana, where she practiced as a nurse for many years. She worked in Accra briefly, and then was transferred to Wa²¹⁹ after a stint with the Workers Brigade. After a short stay in Wa, Florence moved to Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region of Ghana. From there, she worked for a few more years in the northern region before moving back to Accra. Although Florence's ancestry connected her also to Nigeria, the difficulty in getting information on her life beyond Ghana imply that we find out little about NDW's matri-clan relations. We also know nothing about whether his mother's relations intervened to assist him as a child being raised by a single parent. NDW's testimony is also silent about how his father, who was a politician in Nkrumah's government, met his mother. In a tribute read at the funeral of NDW's mother, it was stated that his parents had been married, and had lived briefly in Kumasi. However, we are not told about the estranged relationship that earmarked the early conjugal relationship between the couple. All we know from Nicholas Duncan-Williams' testimony is that he had five other siblings, 3 women and 2 men, on his mother's side. Even here, there exists a lack of clarity over his position among his siblings, whether they were half-siblings, or the kind of relationship he shared with them. As part of the research for this study, an interview with two of his siblings revealed that NDW is the third born after two older girls of different fathers. What clearly emerges is that his parents met on one of his father's many journeys. From their encounter, a marriage relationship ensued, out

²¹⁹ Wa is the capital of the northern region of Ghana

of which NDW was born. The relationship, however, did not survive, resulting in NDW being brought up by a single mother.²²⁰

3.2.4 Father of Nicholas Duncan-Williams

NDW is the son of Edward Kojo Duncan-Williams who was born in 1916 at Akumadan, Offinso to Mr. G. W. B. Duncan of Anomabu and Madam Afua Nyanta of Akumadan. Edward Kojo Duncan-Williams was a politician and diplomat whose career as party secretary of the Convention People's Party (CPP) in the Ashanti Region of Ghana,²²¹ and diplomat spanned from the first republic to the third. He was involved in the country's political struggle against colonial rule, and was actively associated with the CPP, rising from an organizer to becoming the party's secretary in the Ashanti region, and then to becoming a close associate of Nkrumah. In the third Republic, he worked in Limann's government as Ghana's ambassador to Benin. There is scant information on how E. K. Duncan-Williams met Florence, Nicholas Duncan-Williams' mother. But the little gathered from an interview with one of the elder brothers of NDW reveals that he got engaged to Florence Taiwo Akwelle Bruce, and they briefly stayed in Kumasi. It, however, appears that the union between the two did not last beyond the early stages of conjugal affairs. Following the break in the relationship between his parents, the young NDW was taken from his father's custody at the age of three, and did not see him again until he was sixteen. Over those years in his young life, he moved with his mother from one region to another, having to face life through his own experiences and the little his single mother could offer. E.K. Duncan-Williams was a polygynist who had sixteen wives and a total of thirty-six children.²²² He was also a philanthropist who financially supported many children to receive education from the basic to

²²⁰ The preliminary information for this section was gleaned from the tribute read on the occasion of the funeral of Mrs. Florence Taiwo Naa Akwelle Bruce.

²²¹ E.K. Duncan-Williams, "Funeral Handbook," 1998.

²²² Interview with Evangelist Agyeman Duncan-Williams, elder brother of NDW on November 21, 2017

the tertiary level. Religiously, he was a liberal Christian, but, from available information, he served as a patron and generously supported the activities of the Methodist Church in his village.

3.3 Growing up and teenage years

According to NDW, he started school in Accra at the age of 9 at the Great Lamptey Mills school, Abossey-Okai.²²³ It was his first ever experience of school. Most children in Ghana start school at age 3 and they are prepared for Class 1 by the age of 6. It is not clear why Duncan-Williams did not start school early but his first entry at age 9 would have definitely put him in class one, among children he was older than by three years. Being older and unable to cope with the lessons due to his lack of preparation for Class 1, he became a laughing stock among his school mates. Due to this, NDW, often frustrated, regularly got into fights, resulting in his mother being constantly called in.²²⁴ Eventually, he started to feel that western education could not give him the needed money and material wealth he anxiously sought.²²⁵

Later, when his mother migrated from Accra to the Upper West region of Ghana to work, she saw in the change of environment an opportunity for NDW to get back into school. According to him, while residing in Wa with his mother, he enrolled for a brief period, his sole consolation being that a large number of his classmates were also far older than the stipulated age. However, after a while he started getting into fights again, causing his mother the same embarrassment as before. By then, his interest in school had completely dissipated,

²²³ Interview with Nicholas Duncan-Williams at the Spintex Road, November 28, 2016.

²²⁴ Interview with Duncan-Williams at the Spintex road, December, 2,2017

²²⁵ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Providence and Destiny*. (Accra: ACI, 2015), 14.

leaving him more interested in pursuing economic activity that would bring him money. ‘The harsh realities of life and deprivation began to take their toll on me.’²²⁶

3.3.1 Bolgatanga Market

According to him, due to his mother’s profession as a nurse, coupled with the fact that he had lost interest in school where he constantly got into fights and received suspensions, his mother applied for a transfer from Wa to Bolgatanga in the upper East Region. For him, the move did not change his situation, but rather presented him with a new level of hardship to endure.²²⁷Faced with financial difficulties, he decided that it was time to go to work to support himself.

His quest for financial independence compelled NDW to take up work as a distributor for a local newspaper vendor who supplied him with bulk copies for daily sales. “Each morning, well before daybreak, I took a quick bath and whistling discordantly to keep my spirit up, I set off for work. By sheer drive and determination, I soon established myself as the ‘Accra boy’ who made incredible sales.”²²⁸ His mother, not wanting him to give up on his schooling, enrolled him into school again in Bolgatanga. According to NDW, soon after he started working, he used the money he had earned from his sales to help his mother and sibling. Every morning, as soon as his newspaper sales were over, he ran home, wore his school uniform and went to school. The newspaper sales business adversely started affecting his school attendance and work, and he eventually dropped out because he was making a reasonable amount of money. He took up more economic activities that sealed the end of his mother’s educational efforts for him. To increase his income, he took on another job of

²²⁶ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Providence and Destiny*. (Accra: ACI, 2015), 15.

²²⁷ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Providence and Destiny*. (Accra: ACI, 2015), 15.

²²⁸ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Providence and Destiny*. (Accra: ACI, 2015.), 15.

pushing wooden food carriages.²²⁹ This generated more money for him despite the fact that it was competitive and strenuous. With schooling out of the picture, NDW spent most of his time in the market with his hired food carriage. He painted it with bright colours and decorations to attract the market women to make him their preferred choice. It did not take long for him to be established and popular with the market women in the Bolgatanga market. He was doing well until the owner of the food carriage one day demanded his carriage because he was migrating out of Bolgatanga and the newspaper agent also became bankrupt and could no longer supply him with newspapers for sale.

These two developments greatly affected the young NDW and kept him at home for some time. Although, in Africa, many children drop out of school for similar reasons as mentioned by NDW, in his case, apart from poverty, hardship and his late first enrolment, it can be adduced that a lack of parental high handedness due to the absence of a father may have also contributed in a large way. Nevertheless, in a sermon preached at the London Marriot hotel at Regent Park, London on 22nd February, 2017, NDW mentioned that he later found out that his inability to concentrate and focus in school was diagnosed to be Dyslexic, which two of his children have also suffered from in their development.

3.3.2 Return to Accra

The collapse of his newspaper sale and his food carriage business made NDW very sad because the sources of his income were gone. Not too long after these events, his mother decided to relocate to Accra, and thus, NDW returned to Accra in 1972. In Accra, he found himself in a deeply cosmopolitan environment where economic activities were very

²²⁹ This is an indigenous wooden cart that is used to carry food stuffs in the market.

boisterous. After a short time of acquainting himself with the city, he quickly got himself busy selling “P.K.” chewing gum around “Opera Square”²³⁰ to cinemagoers. Selling for a security guard at the movie theatre for a percentage, he could watch movies for free. In his quest to get more money, he also established himself at Accra Central Train Station (Kantamanto), where he helped to carry bags of foodstuff for a fee. He lived in Kokomlemle, a suburb of Accra where his uncle had offered him his garage, so, from dawn each day, he walked almost 9 km to get to the Accra Central train station.²³¹ Later, at Accra Central, he got involved with some young men who introduced him to gambling and drugs. Having moved away from his mother to live with his maternal uncle, he had a degree of freedom to indulge his interests.

His mother wanted him to learn a trade, but he refused; so she became incensed with his unruly behaviour and planned to have him placed in a Borstal or Juvenile detention institute.²³² Other narrations have it that because his mum could not control him as a single mother, he got involved with a gang that stole from an unsuspecting shopper, and he was arrested for possible pickpocketing. He was brought before the juvenile court. The presiding judge, Justice Ananse,²³³ was able to trace his father, whom he charged to assume custody of NDW. Thus, at sixteen, NDW met his father for the first time and went to live with him at the Airport Residential Area. His father enrolled him in an elementary school at Madina, a suburb of Accra, but, again, NDW failed to remain in the classroom. As he said, “too many societal influences had firmly gripped me: the fast life, the discos and the blazing voices of

²³⁰ There were a number of Cinema halls all over Accra at the time and these were heavily patronized. One was called Opera, it was at such places that Duncan-Williams practiced his trade as a P.K Chewing gum seller and part of the Thugs who loitered around the square.

²³¹ Truck pushers were young boys who helped market women and their customers transport foodstuffs around the market for a fee.

²³² Juvenal correction Institute is for minors who commit crimes in Ghana.

²³³ Agyemang Duncan-Williams said that the judge was known to Duncan-Williams’ father and so he simply called his father to take custody of the child.

the “Highlife” musicians. I could not concentrate on my studies when my heart was elsewhere.”²³⁴ Once again, he left the classroom and joined a group of young men to attend to travellers at the Kotoka International Airport. He eventually became one of the ‘goroboys’ at the airport.

In the 1970s, getting a seat on the Ghana Airways aeroplane involved a web of social network connections. One needed to be socially connected to obtain a seat reservation. NDW and one of his older siblings established themselves as agents who had connections with the aviation authorities and served as liaisons between the authorities and travellers. They received “goro” (money) for organising the itinerary of persons seeking to travel abroad. Working as a self-made “goro boy” or travelling agent, NDW developed interest in travelling abroad. He was not specifically sure where he was aiming to travel to. However, his desire to overcome the frustrations he had gone through and to seek greener pastures provided the compelling rationale for him to travel.

He had no money to travel by air. So, he planned to stow away. In the 1970s, the economy of Ghana had suffered many hiccups. There was so much despondency and suffering following the many coups that had punctuated the country’s political history. These developments crystallised to compel the government of Ghana, under the leadership of Jerry John Rawlings, to accept the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) prescribed as the blanket solution to the economic woes of Third World countries.²³⁵ However, the implementation of the SAPs further worsened the already bad economy. Consequently, the 1970s marked an important watershed during which many Ghanaians travelled abroad in search of greener pastures. With

²³⁴ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Providence & Destiny*, 24.

²³⁵ Jon Kraus, ‘The Struggle over Structural Adjustment in Ghana’, *Africa Today*, 38(4) (1991), 19-37.

the exodus of valuable manpower from the country, many teachers travelled to neighbouring Nigeria and a lot more to Europe and the Americas. During this brain drain, NDW was among the youth who deemed it important to travel abroad. The Ghanaian diaspora in Western Europe and North America became prominent, and many Ghanaians established themselves in these Western countries as they sought to seek greener pastures elsewhere, following the near collapse of the Ghanaian economy. In the words of NDW, “I was simply fed up with Ghana, I was tired of the land, whether they believed my words or not did not really matter to me. Every young man I knew had made plans to go to America or Europe in search of the Golden Fleece. As far as I knew, that was the only route to success and recognition, and I was not going to be left out of the race.”²³⁶

3.3.3 Stowaway and struggles for survival

In the middle of 1974, NDW finalised his plans of going to Europe, having decided that the only way for him to make it was to stow away. He did not divulge any of these plans to anyone, but travelled to Abidjan, the capital of Ivory Coast, via Kumasi where he prepared to stow away on a cargo ship. In Abidjan, he smuggled himself on board a ship headed for France. “I squeeze myself amongst a pile of timber logs...I had been in the logs for seven days and seven nights in a lying position”²³⁷

An unexpected torrential rain flooded the logs where he was hiding, and forced him to come out of hiding and surrender to the Captain. In a strange twist of fate, he and his fellow stowaways were spared by the Captain and allowed to escape when the ship got to France. Thus, he succeeded to get into France. He was eventually caught and deported back to Accra, only for him to try again in 1975. This time he found himself in Israel. But again, he was

²³⁶ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *You Are Destined to Succeed*. (Accra: ACI, 1990), 125.

²³⁷ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *You Are Destined to Succeed*, 127.

caught and deported back to Ghana. Returning to Ghana, he became more disillusioned and frustrated. He resorted to an epicurean lifestyle and indulged his desires by relishing in smoking and going to nightclubs. To overcome the emotional traumas, he had gone through following his deportations, he resorted also to occultism. He visited shrines and ritual functionaries for spiritual help. At one such spiritual engagement, he travelled to a traditional priest in a village in the Western Region of Ghana to get power and inquire into his destiny. But the priest literally drove him away and shattered his hopes in life. His frustrations and involvement with the spiritual world cumulatively prepared him for his engagement with the Christian faith. NDW states that, from hindsight, he believes that all these were preparatory experiences for his conversion and engagement with the word of God.

3.4 Conversion narrative of Nicholas Duncan-Williams

Having had his stints with the mundane and spiritual worlds, NDW was determined to engage the Christian faith. His severing of links with occultism was due to an encounter he had had with the spiritual world during which he lit a candle and dipped his fingers into the flame.²³⁸ In this incident, he burnt three of his right fingers, as the spirits had numbed his consciousness. It was only after the fingers had burnt that he was able to snap out of his hallucination and shout for help. His shout attracted people in the house, and he was rushed to Korle-Bu hospital for treatment. He was hospitalised for four months at Ward 8. While in hospital, he met an Indian Christian, called Sister Rajj, who preached the gospel of Jesus to him and led him to Christ. Sister Rajj was assisted by two people, the Acquah sisters, who were members of the Church of Pentecost. The Indian population in West Africa is not as dense as in East Africa. But in the late 1970s, Ghana had a few Indian Pentecostal evangelists and medical doctors who were involved in soul-winning. Usually, other Ghanaian evangelists

²³⁸ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Providence and Destiny*, 49.

assisted them. Eventually, this trio introduced NDW to the Christian message. When he was discharged, he joined the Church of Pentecost, on the invitation of the Acquah sisters. He also met Mr. Joseph Nyarko Antwi and Elder Sackey who would become his mentors and lifelong spiritual helpers and guides.²³⁹ After his conversion, NDW received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and started speaking in tongues. His zeal for the Christian faith led him to evangelism and to conduct ‘dawn broadcasting’.

Until the promulgation of the 1992 constitution, which was accompanied by the liberalisation of the media space, the media was deeply controlled by the state. Under the military regime, freedom of speech, articulated through the electronic and print media was under strict control. This had implications for Christian broadcasting. To make up for this deficiency, many Christians devised what became known as “Dawn Broadcasting”, where they woke up before sunrise to preach the Christian message in the streets. Usually, they would stand at vantage points where people could hear them. Nowadays, dawn broadcasting is not as popular in the cities as it is in the villages.

“Dawn broadcasting” was one of the fixations of persons who had just been converted to Pentecostal Christianity, as it served as the avenue for such converts to share their pre-conversion religious experiences. Usually, conversion narratives are crafted in such a way that they attract others to accept Christ. Also, in a relatively technologically underdeveloped society, ‘dawn broadcasting’ was necessary for the continuation of Christian evangelism. It is clear at this point that Pentecostal doctrines and praxis formed the theological foundations of NDW.

²³⁹ Interview with Nicholas Duncan-Williams at Spintex Road on December 5, 2017.

At the time of NDW's conversion, the late Elder Sackey was instrumental in introducing him to the Pentecostal way of prayer, often laced with tongues speaking.²⁴⁰ Bishop Joseph Nyarko Antwi, who was initially with the Church of Pentecost, but later left to help NDW establish his church, was also an influential person in the life of NDW. Since NDW had very limited formal education and could barely read or speak the English language, it was Mr. Joseph Nyarko Antwi (now Bishop Joseph Nyarko Antwi) who initiated the process of teaching him how to read the Bible. Among the persons who started ACI, the church founded by NDW, Bishop Nyarko Antwi is among the few who has remained with the church until today.

The influences of Elder Sackey and Bishop Joseph Nyarko Antwi are seen in the retention of some Pentecostal practices in the ACI. Nicholas Duncan-Williams' singing is characteristic of the influence of the Church of Pentecost, especially during warfare prayers.

3.4.1 The Influence of the Nigerian Charismatic pioneer, Benson Idahosa

In the mid-1970s, NDW had encounters with the teachings of one of the pioneers of the charismatic movement in the West African region, Benson Idahosa. Idahosa was one of the early televangelists in West Africa, whose 'Redemption Hour' TV programme reached multitudes in the sub-region. His extempore teaching, often laced with divine healings and manifestation of pneumatic activities caught the attention of many Christians in Nigeria, his base, and in other countries in West Africa. It was in the house of Amoakohene (a wealthy man who was a friend to Duncan-Williams) that NDW first heard and developed interest in Idahosa upon seeing him for the first time on television. In 1977, Idahosa organised a large crusade in Ghana that was widely patronised by many Ghanaians. It was at this crusade that

²⁴⁰ Interview with Duncan-Williams on 4 December 2017 at the national headquarters of the Action Chapel International, Accra.

NDW first met him. After the crusade, Idahosa announced that he was offering scholarships to young men and women who felt called into ministry to enrol at his Bible school, Christ for All Nations Bible School (CFAN), in Benin City, Nigeria.²⁴¹ Graduates from CFAN were encouraged to start their own ministries. NDW responded to the call and enrolled at the Bible school in Nigeria. While there, he broadened his network and perception by interacting with visiting charismatic leaders including T.L. Osborn, Oral Roberts, and Gordon Lindsay. Thus, he was exposed to the dynamics of Charismatic Ministry at first hand and this experience enhanced his understanding of ministry and emboldened him for his future work. According to NDW, while in Benin City at the CFAN, the Lord told him to watch and learn from Idahosa because he is at his 'Bible school'. NDW concedes that he learnt so much from Idahosa, including boldness in confronting challenges and political leaders.

During his studies at the Christ for All Nations Bible school, NDW had still not mastered the English language. So, his exams were conducted orally, and any time he was asked to respond to a question in English and did not have words to do so, he made recourse to speaking in tongues. When his lecturers asked to know what he was doing, he responded by asking the lecturer to also interpret the tongues.²⁴² Even though he was unable to respond to the questions he had been asked, Idahosa felt he should be allowed to pass. He therefore graduated and returned to Ghana in 1978. The focus of the All Nation Bible School was not so much about rigorously training intellectuals as it was about training people to win souls for Christ. This focus of Idahosa's Bible school was not different from other Bible schools, such

²⁴¹ Paul Gifford, *African Christianity*.2004

²⁴² Interview with Bishop Joseph Nyarko Antwi, December 5, 2017

as the School of Ministry of Morris Cerullo,²⁴³ which were meant to provide short courses for evangelists. Morris Cerullo was interested in training Christian leaders to carry on the Christian message across the globe. Following his ‘School of Ministry and Evangelism’ programme in Accra in 1983 and 1985, he set up a School of Ministry in Ghana with a permanent Ghanaian representative, Rev. Dr. Seth Ablorh.²⁴⁴ Just like Idahosa’s Bible school, Morris Cerullo’s school was directed towards encouraging participants to found their own ministries. Idahosa’s influence on NDW was in the area of Faith and prosperity. He gave NDW the Charismatic outlook to ministry and church. J. Asamoah-Gyadu writes that contrary to popular evangelical teaching at the time, being “modern”, including the wearing of fashionable and flamboyant clothes, was not at variance with the gospel.

3.5 Indigenous Pentecostal Parachurch Evangelical fellowships: Precursors to Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ Ministry

After six months of studies in Benin City, NDW returned to Ghana. He went back to the Church of Pentecost, hoping that he would be engaged as an evangelist for the church. But the leadership of the church turned him down. He then started visiting a prayer fellowship in Tema²⁴⁵ Site 21, which eventually became the Full Gospel Church in Tema, under the leadership of Ashong Mensah. He had wanted to work with Ashong Mensah, but the latter told him to go out and preach on campuses, since God had a special mission for him. NDW thenceforth ventured into campus evangelism.

The religious landscape was coincidentally ripe for the emergence of the charismatic movement. NDW had travelled to Nigeria for ministerial training and returned to Ghana in

²⁴³ Morris Cerullo was one of the leading American evangelists whose ministry helped many Ghanaian charismatic leaders, including Bishop Charles Agyin-Asare.

²⁴⁴ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 2005.

²⁴⁵ Tema is a harbour city of the Greater Accra region.

April 1978. His return to Ghana contributed to shaping the new religious landscape in Ghana, especially in relation to the charismatic movement. The harbinger to the charismatic movement in Ghana was a group of religious revivalists among parachurch groups²⁴⁶. These parachurch groups were made up of individuals who had affiliations with the evangelical churches or mainline churches. The main parachurch groups that provided the basis for the charismatic movement were the Scripture Union (SU), the Ghana Fellowship of Evangelical Students (GHAFEST) and the independent indigenous evangelical fellowships. The Scripture Union (SU) functioned at the pre-university level, while GHAFEST functioned at the tertiary level and the indigenous fellowships functioned in the community. These groups were independent evangelical fellowships with foreign affiliations that had assumed Pentecostal features due to local influences. Students in secondary schools and universities experienced a new religious fervour that was Pentecostal and appealed to their religious and social aspirations. They received baptism in the Holy Spirit evidenced by tongue speaking. These young men and women found their new religious experience to be germane to the first century Christian faith. They enjoyed a musical form that was different from what they knew in the historic churches. But their new religious experiences were not readily accepted in the mainline or historical churches.

American televangelists like Oral Roberts, T.L. Osborn and Morris Cerullo added to the new religious waves by organising crusades in Ghana and other African countries. In addition, there were radio broadcasts by foreign evangelists like Jimmy Swaggart and the availability of books and religious teaching material by foreign preachers like Kenneth Hagin, Oral Roberts, Gordon Lindsay, and John Avanzini among others.

²⁴⁶ Much of the information on para-church movements, which set the pace for the emergence of the charismatic movement is derived from S, B. Adubofuor, "Evangelical Para-church movements in Ghanaian Christianity: c.1950s to early 1990s." (A PhD dissertation submitted to the University of Edinburgh, 1994).

The experiences of these young Ghanaian men and women created a wedge between them and the historic churches of which they were members. This new religious enthusiasm was complemented by musical groups such as Joyful Way Incorporated, Calvary Way Inc., Abundant Life, New Creation and Jesus Generation.²⁴⁷ These groups emphasised the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian. As the widespread dissatisfaction with the “conservativeness” of the mainline churches came to a head, some of the members of these parachurch groups started community-based fellowships that later metamorphosed into churches. Evangelist Enoch Agbozo²⁴⁸ was instrumental in forming a fellowship where most of these young men and women found an outlet for the expression of their newfound spiritual experience. Agbozo formed the Ghana Evangelical Society, which was a precursor to the charismatic church.

Consequently, by the time NDW returned to Ghana in 1978 the Ghanaian religious matrix was charged for a revival. He joined the fray in organising prayer programmes for students in Accra and Tema. He targeted secondary schools and universities, where he prayed and proselytised, primarily by sharing his conversion experiences. He first used his father’s residence at the Airport Residential area as the site for organising prayer fellowships for young men and women. Tongue speaking and divine healing marked his prayer sessions, and further attracted members of the various fellowships who wanted an avenue to express their newfound religious experience. Initially, they were meeting in schools, cinema halls, and any open spaces on Saturdays. At NDW’s father’s house, all-night vigils were held, a situation

²⁴⁷ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 2005.

²⁴⁸ Enoch Agbozo is the founder of the Ghana Evangelical fellowship which was one of the indigenous evangelical fellowships that prepared the grounds for the emergence of the Charismatic Ministries.

that drew the attention of those in the neighbourhood. The name NDW became a catalyst that drew attention to the early ministry of NDW. Because the name resonated with the political elite in Ghana, many Ghanaians decided to identify with the new religious activities NDW was involved in. There were some senior members of the fellowship, such as Mr. and Mrs. Suzie Lamptey, who helped NDW. Initially, it sufficed for the group to meet on Saturdays to pray, but the challenge was that most of these young men and women had to go back to the mainstream churches on Sunday, which did not accommodate their new pneumatic experiences. The need to solve this challenge informed the establishment of the Christian Action Faith Ministries. This name is now the holding name and the ACI is the name of the church under the holding company name.

Conclusion

The life history of NDW and the beginning of the Charismatic movement in Ghana provides a broader understanding of how Ghanaian Christians have engaged the message of Christ. Multiple factors, including the economic breakdown and political morass of the 1970s in Ghana, produced the unintended consequence of laying the foundation for the Charismatic movement in the country. NDW became a visible figure in the movement. His frustrations with life and involvement in the occult, the ripe evangelical ferment and other factors coalesced to start the Action Chapel International (ACI). It is evident from the narrative of NDW's conversion from a wild lifestyle to Christianity that his engagement with Christianity was informed by years of fraternising with occultism and indulging in passions that he later found to contradict the Christian faith. It can be adduced from the early life of NDW that, he was driven by a desire to have the best of what life can offer. This is evident by his entrepreneurial efforts in the Bolgatanga market and the various stowaway attempts. When NDW started his ministry, some were sceptical of his motives and considered him as an opportunist who was trying to use religion as a means of realising the good life and to attract

support from foreign Christian bodies. NDW has responded to such skeptics that, his main motivation in the ministry is the sense of a 'divine call' which took place after his conversion. Leaders of charismatic ministries argue that the 'call' is the sense of awareness and self-understanding that a leader has that God has assigned him or her a specific work to do in advancing the kingdom. They argue that the empowerment and the necessary grace comes with the calling and to a large extent guarantees the results of the ministry. Thus, NDW has argued that his ministry is succeeding and doing well by winning souls as a result of the call of God in his life. His past life cannot be used as a measure of his present life and endeavour. Charismatics point to many biblical incidents of individual who have been called such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos among others. In the next chapter, we discuss the history and development of the Action Chapel International.

CHAPTER FOUR

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF ACTION CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a historical account of ACI,²⁴⁹ focusing particularly on the four decades of the church's existence. I will provide the narrative within the context of para-church organisations, and the pioneering roles of two Ghanaians whose religious zeal and activities laid the foundation for the Charismatic movement. The chapter will also look at the multiple migrations, in terms of geographical locations that the ACI has experienced. The location of the church involved securing the land on the Spintex Road, where the church is presently located, and how Accra as the hub of economic and political administration provides an opportunity for the growth of the church. The chapter looks at factors that have attracted the youth to the church; and how the marriage of Nicholas Duncan-Williams set an unprecedented pace for women's religious leadership in the Charismatic church. Attention will also be focused on the establishment and internationalisation of the church, which also brought about schisms.

The influence of NDW on the religious space in Ghana is such that NDW almost became a national chaplain during the regime of Rawlings.²⁵⁰ Paul Gifford²⁵¹ observed that after the 1992 election, Rawlings wanted to celebrate his new status as a civilian president. His government called on the churches to organize a Thanksgiving service for the nation in

²⁴⁹ Action Chapel International is said to be a subsidiary of an umbrella organizational by Duncan-Williams known as the Christian Action Faith Ministries International (CAFMI). CAFMI which use to be the name of the church is now the holding company with others like the Dominion University College, Action Rehab Center, Action Chapel International and others under it. The church wing of CAFMI is now known as the Action Chapel International.

²⁵⁰ Allan Anderson, "The Newer Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches: The Shape of Future Christianity in Africa?" *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, 24(2) (2002), 174.

²⁵¹ Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*. (London: Hurst & Company, 2004).

January 1993 to thank God for a ‘successful transition’. The mainline churches, led by the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG), refused to get involved with this. The Pentecostal/Charismatic churches, led by NDW, seized the opportunity to develop an important alliance. For NDW the invitation was for him a sign of divine recognition, approval and elevation.’²⁵²

4.1 The Early beginnings of Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ Ministry

In August 1979, a small prayer fellowship that NDW started in his father’s house eventually expanded into his church. The fellowship relied on the activities of pre-existing para-church organisations to enter into the Ghanaian religious space. According to Patrick Josiah:

Most of us at the time were with one of the mainline churches, but we also enjoyed the charismatic leadership of the para-church fellowships. Unlike, for example my church (Presbyterian Church of Ghana) and other such churches, these leaders had no rigid liturgy; they preached in an extempore manner. They prayed a lot. They encouraged us, healed our sicknesses, and taught us the Bible and how relevant it was/is to our situation. So, for most of us, returning home to our mother churches after school vacated was like quenching the spirit. I was, therefore, glad when my elder sister invited me to Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ church.²⁵³

There were many students who joined the ACI, and the charismatic leadership of NDW motivated many of them to sever relationships with their mother churches. When NDW returned from Nigeria, he was involved in campus evangelism, traveling to senior high

²⁵² J. K. Asamoah-Gyadu, ‘God Bless Our Homeland, Ghana’: Religion and Politics in a Post-Colonial African State’ in Cephass N. Omenyo and Eric B. Anum, ‘Trajectories of Religion in Africa’ (New York: Rodapi, 2010), 173.

²⁵³ He is the senior pastor of Action Chapel in Southern London, UK. He serves as the personal assistant to Nicholas Duncan-Williams whenever the latter is in the UK. He was interviewed on 23 October 2017 at his residence in Wimberley, London.

schools across the country. The evangelistic outreach boosted his popularity and paved the way for him to start his own church.²⁵⁴

The para-church organisations provided the linchpin for the founding of ACI. But there were other important social factors. The message of hope was fused with the message of faith and prosperity. The prosperity message had influences from Benson Idahosa, NDW's mentor. In the mid-1970s when poverty had become so grim and pervasive in Ghana, this message of faith and prosperity resonated with many Ghanaians. A focus group discussion for the study argued that the faith and prosperity message dovetailed with the economic challenges at the time and sustained the interest of Ghanaians in the Charismatic movement. In relation to the economic situation and the founding of the church, Patrick Josiah said:

The prevailing economic woes of Ghana were necessary for the rise of the ACI. In the 1980s, many Ghanaians wanted answers to their economic challenges. They wanted a message of faith and prosperity to move on. NDW was, therefore, timely.²⁵⁵

There were also Christian video ministries, which were largely involved in showing Christian movies to many Ghanaians in both urban and rural areas. Spencer Duncan,²⁵⁶ in 1986, had a Christian video ministry that was vibrant and also prepared the grounds for the charismatic movement. The video ministry provided many Ghanaians the opportunity to engage the Christian faith through Christian movies. In an interview with Patrick Josiah he recounted how he had been influenced by Christian movies as follows:

In the 1980s, we had Christian movies all over. It was such a good time to watch Christian movies in order to understand Christian teachings. My faith in the Lord got

²⁵⁴ Interview with Nicholas Duncan-Williams on 29 November 2017 at the headquarters of Action Chapel International, Spintex Road, Accra.

²⁵⁵ Interview with Patrick Josiah, 27th December 2019 at Accra.

²⁵⁶ Spencer Duncan is the cousin of Duncan-Williams and the founder of the joyful way singers.

strengthened by watching most of the Christian movies. Most of time, we gathered at a particular location and have the film showed on a giant screen.²⁵⁷

While many of the respondents are quick to refer to the economic difficulties and para-church evangelical revivals of the 1970s as the catalyst for the rise of ACI and the charismatic movement in general, care must be taken not to limit religious change to economic reasons. Baeta has warned against the invoking of prevailing situations to explain the rise of new religious movements. He cautions:

It appears to me in recent studies of new cults and other movements of religious nature among African peoples, the presumed background element of psychological upheaval, tensions and conflicts, anxieties, et., due to ‘acculturation, technology and western impact’ has tended to be rather overdrawn. Here is a typical judgment in this connection ... Whether there is more anxiety in Ghana now than any time previously, or than in most countries of the world present, must probably remain a matter of opinion. After people have seen some rough time here, e.g. slavery era, and the ‘Western Impact has been with us for the best part of half a millennium.’²⁵⁸

Even so, Comaroff and Comaroff argue that there is a causal relationship between the spirit of capitalism, neoliberalism, and the rise of new religious movements, particularly Pentecostalism.²⁵⁹ The argument of this study is that, we must view religious change as part of the nature of religion, which is a social institution. Therefore, religion as a social institution and part of the cultural material of a people is not immune to change. Change is part of the religious institution. We must, therefore, see the rise of ACI, and by extension the charismatic movement in Ghana, not only as the result of difficult economic times, but also

²⁵⁷ Spencer Duncan is the cousin of Duncan-Williams and the founder of the joyful way singers

²⁵⁸ C.G. Baeta. *Prophetism in Ghana*, 6.

²⁵⁹ Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff, *Millennium Capitalism and the Culture of Neoliberalism* (London: Duke University Press, 2003).

as part of the dynamisms of religious renewal. According to Anderson,²⁶⁰ we cannot separate the spiritual experiences of Pentecostals and Charismatics throughout the world from the wide context of political and social power. It is the contention of this research that while the economic challenges may have contributed in some way to the rise of the charismatic movement, there is not enough evidence that there would not have been such a movement without socio-political upheavals. At best, we could argue that the religious, political and economic condition in the 1980s provided the external motivation for the rise of the charismatic movement. From this perspective, the study maintains the argument that human agency including NDW, providential factors, cultural factors and external factors combined effectively to bring about the charismatic movement in Ghana.

From the above, it is obvious that the emergence of the charismatic movement in Ghana coincided with extant religious activities. The religious fervency of para-church organisations in Ghana since the 1930s, but which came to a head in the 1970s as documented by Samuel Brefo Adubofuor,²⁶¹ provided the initial preparation and basis for the charismatic movement. The para-church organisations, which were interdenominational, but which had most of their members from the historic churches, raised concerns about the need to protect the boundaries and theological purity of the church. They had shown concern about the accommodativeness of the church to some African traditional cultural practices. As Adubofuor had shown in his ground-breaking work 'Evangelical Para-Church Movements in Ghanaian Christianity,' the accusation of liberalism levelled against the historic churches by some of the youth sustained

²⁶⁰ Allan, Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 168.

²⁶¹ Samuel Brefo Adubofuor, 'Evangelical Para-Church Movements'

the evangelical movement, which had influences from North America and the United Kingdom.²⁶²

By the 1970s, the universities and secondary schools had become important sites for para-church organisations.²⁶³ Most of the youth, who formed the membership of para-church organisations, did not sever relationship with their mother churches. As Adubofuor had pointed out, they wanted an experience that was distinctively Christian.²⁶⁴ In view of what was commonly considered distinctive Christian experience, Larbi surmised that the para-church organisations were influenced by the revivals in the Pentecostal churches in Ghana. He wrote: ‘This Pentecostalist revival began to influence the spirituality of two Christian fellowships working among students: Scripture Union (SU), and the University Christian Fellowship (UCF). ... Though the SU has been operating in the country for more than 100 years, mainly in the second cycle institutions, it assumed the Pentecostal spirituality only from late 1960s’.²⁶⁵

Adubofuor had written that the para-church organisations were largely responsible for introducing Pentecostalism into the historic churches in the 1970s.²⁶⁶ As he stated, the para-churches conceptualised the gospel not only in word, but also in power. He summarised this as follows: ‘The gospel is proclaimed not only as the word of God, but “the power of God for

²⁶² Samuel Brefo Adubofuor, ‘Evangelical Para-Church Movements.’

²⁶³ Emmanuel Larbi, “African Pentecostalism in the Context of Global Pentecostal Ecumenical Fraternity: Challenges and Opportunities,” *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, (24) 2 (Fall 2002).

²⁶⁴ Samuel Brefo Adubofuor, ‘Evangelical Para-Church Movements.’

²⁶⁵ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 86.

²⁶⁶ Samuel Brefo Adubofuor, ‘Evangelical Para-Church Movements,’ 166.

salvation” in all its fullness.’²⁶⁷ J. Asamoah-Gyadu cited Matthews Ojo, who advanced the argument that the neo-Pentecostal movement in sub-Saharan Africa has deep roots in the para-church evangelical associations that gained much prominence from the 1950s through the 1970s. ²⁶⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu further wrote that in Ghana such evangelical parachurch movements include individuals, often itinerant evangelists, nondenominational Bible study groups, and prayer associations and fellowships.²⁶⁹ Some are independent but affiliated to the SU, a movement that was set up in Ghana under the auspices of its UK-based branch with the aim of supplementing the efforts of existing churches and encouraging responsible church membership. The thrust of Asamoah-Gyadu’s work is his contention that the proliferation of independent Charismatic churches is partly a culmination of years of imbibing an evangelical/Pentecostal spirituality, which was bound to look for expression outside existing churches and denominations.²⁷⁰ He provided a historical narrative of how the SU and Ghana Fellowship of Evangelical Students (GHAFES) laid the foundation for the Charismatic movement in Ghana. These para-church organisations according to him, had become Pentecostal in character and orientation, providing a space where religious life and activity enjoyed freer expression.²⁷¹

The Scripture Union has a long history in Ghana. It is believed to have started as early as 1890. However, it went into a period of silence between the World Wars. It was in the 1950s that its present organisational structure took shape. The organisation was formed with the targeted goal of ensuring people’s unfettered commitment to the Lord Jesus with a focus on

²⁶⁷ Adubofuor, ‘Evangelical Para-Church Movements,’ 166.

²⁶⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 101.

²⁶⁹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 89.

²⁷⁰ Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 102.

²⁷¹ Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 105.

developing a personal relationship with Christ, imbibing Christian morality, and soul winning.²⁷² These goals were outlined by the organisation based on the observation made by its founders that most of the youth professed Christ only by their lips and were not committed to living the Christian life. Many of them dabbled in occultic practices, even after they claimed to be Christians. Others also demonstrated lukewarm attitudes in their Christian lives.²⁷³

It could be gleaned from the above that the SU, as non-denominational evangelical organisation, was formed to arrest the lukewarm attitudes of the youth towards Christianity, and to provide daily guidance to the youth in their walk with Jesus Christ. The group was designated evangelical because they hoped to bring back the pristine teachings of the first century Apostles. Since its formal establishment in the 1950s in Ghana, the SU has maintained a fervent engagement with the youth in secondary and tertiary levels of education in Ghana. What is significant about the growth of the SU is the incorporation of Pentecostal practices. These practices include melodious singing, divine healing, tongues speaking, prophecies, and drumming and dancing.²⁷⁴ While these practices have not cohered to the formal orthopraxis of the protestant historic churches in Ghana, they have eventually found expression in the historic churches.²⁷⁵

²⁷² Rosalind I. J. Hackett 'Charismatic/Pentecostal Appropriation of Media Technologies in Nigeria and Ghana', *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 28, Fasc. 3 (Aug., 1998), 260.

²⁷³ See Peter Barker and Samuel Boadi-Siaw, 'Changed by the Word: The Story of Scripture Union in Ghana,' (Accra: African Christian Press and Asempa Publishers, 2003), 11.

²⁷⁴ Cephas Omenyo, 'The Charismatic Renewal in Ghana,' *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, 16(2) (1994).

²⁷⁵ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*.

It is of interest to point out that the inclusion of Pentecostal beliefs and practices into para-church organisations could be traced to the fact that the classical Pentecostal movement was already in existence in Ghana. In their works, Daswani²⁷⁶, Larbi²⁷⁷, and Omenyo²⁷⁸ provide the history of Pentecostalism in Ghana dating back to the 1920s. They locate the origin of Pentecostalism in Ghana in the religious experiences of Peter Anim, who is accredited as the Father of Pentecostalism in Ghana. Thus, long before the advent of para-church organisations, the Pentecostal experiences of some leaders of classical Pentecostalism in Ghana, including Peter Anim, had become the precursor for later Pentecostal revivalism in churches in Ghana.²⁷⁹ The historic churches, according to Omenyo, had experienced the Pentecostal movement, which he called Charismatic renewal, in the 1980s.²⁸⁰ While Omenyo did not connect the Charismatic renewal in the historic churches to the activities of para-church groups, we could surmise that the charismatic renewal had many influences on the already existing classical Pentecostal churches and the historic churches.

It must be stated that the incorporation of some Pentecostal practices and beliefs into the religious ethos of the SU brought the organisation into conflict with their executive leaders, most of whom wanted to protect the traditions of the churches as inherited from the European missionaries. The tradition was such that church practices should not delve so much into emotionalism, which was feared would cause relapse into the superstitious beliefs of pre-

²⁷⁶ Girish Daswani, *Looking Back, Moving Forward: Transformation and Ethical Practice in the Ghanaian Church of Pentecost* (Toronto/Buffalo/London: University of Toronto Press, 2015).

²⁷⁷ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*.

²⁷⁸ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*.

²⁷⁹ Girish Daswani, *Looking Back, Moving Forward: Transformation and Ethical Practice in the Ghanaian Church of Pentecost* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 14.

²⁸⁰ Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*.

Christian Ghana.²⁸¹ To protect the boundaries of ‘orthodoxy’ within the historic churches, every effort was made to nip the new religious frenzied emotional expressions in the bud. But as we have stated above, it was the perceived dullness of the historic churches that had partly caused the lukewarm attitude in some of the youth. It must also be mentioned that the failure of the historic churches to engage the African religious experiences made most of the youth clamour for the Pentecostal experience. The historic churches could not oppose this new wave for long. Eventually, they had to come to terms with it, especially when they started losing large numbers of youths.²⁸²

The introduction of Pentecostal practices into SU created a wedge between the youth and the executive of SU. Asamoah-Gyadu traced the existence of the independent Charismatic movement to the strained relationship between conservative evangelicals and their traditional denominations, and the youth in SU. As Asamoah-Gyadu emphasised, the conservative evangelicals advocated a rationalistic approach to the religious experience. They, therefore, placed less emphasis on the emotional aspect of the religious experience. Meanwhile, the younger generation, who had had a stint with the working of the Holy Spirit in their respective secondary school and university campuses, were looking for an outlet where they could freely express their religious experience. This contention, according to Asamoah-Gyadu, was due to the failure of the conservative evangelicals to come to terms with the emotionality of Africans in their expression of religious experience.²⁸³ The rise of the Charismatic movement in Ghana was therefore partly a protest against the ‘restrictions’ that the leadership of the conservative evangelical movement sought to impose on charismatic

²⁸¹ Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 28-53.

²⁸² Opoku Onyinah, “African Christianity in the Twenty-first Century,” *Word & World*, 27(3) (Summer 2007).

²⁸³ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 102.

manifestations that grassroots participants felt God was restoring to their generation. This desire resulted in the formation of Prayer Warriors movements within the SU in 1974.²⁸⁴

4.3 Nicholas Duncan-Williams, The Youth and Action Chapel International

Many researchers have written to explain the increasing number of youth in the Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal/charismatic churches.²⁸⁵ In the case of ACI, the youth became the core membership of the burgeoning church. Since it was generally believed that the economic challenges of the 1970s and 1980s basically resulted from the moral laxity of the youth, the Town Fellowships, aimed at attracting the youth, particularly those in urban areas, was one way of revolutionising the moral foundation of Ghana. The Pentecostalisation of the para-church organisations and Town Fellowships brought the youth into direct contact with a new strand of Christianity, which markedly differed from what most of them had experienced in the historic churches. The various and frequent camp meetings made most of the youth yearn to experience more of the Pentecostal wave, which was becoming a phenomenon within the church in Ghana.

ACI, which started as a Fellowship, provided the ambience for the youth to more freely express their new Pentecostal experience. Since the ACI, unlike the historic churches, did not have a rigid liturgy and preaching was done in an extempore style, many of the youth could easily identify with the dynamism in worship. Besides, the youth were offered roles, such as ushers, instrumentalists, choristers, Sunday school teachers, and prayer leaders, making them

²⁸⁴ Barker and Boadi-Siaw, "Change by the Word," 105.

²⁸⁵ Martin Lindhardt, 'We, the youth, need to be effusive': Pentecostal Youth Culture in Contemporary Chile', *Bulletin of Latin American Research* (34)4 (2012), 485-498; Victor Counted, 'Youth in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches and Factors Accounting for their Attracting them to Pentecostalism', A Paper Presented at the first Nigerian Pentecostal and Charismatic Research, May 2012, Abuja, Karen Lauterbach, 'Becoming a pastor: Youth and social aspirations in Ghana,' *Young* (18)3 (2010): 259-278; Jon Wolseth, 'Safety and Sanctuary: Pentecostalism and Youth Gang Violence in Honduras,' *Latin American Perspectives*, 35(4), Youth and Cultural Politics in Latin America (Jul., 2008), 96-111.

feel very important in the church. Additionally, some of these youths, apart from gaining some prestige from their new roles, also got remunerated, thereby being able to earn their livelihoods after previous futile efforts to obtain jobs, despite being graduates. Some of these youths eventually rose through the ranks to become pastors of new branches of the church in other areas. ACI also provided an expressive space for youth culture, thus making the church very appealing and attractive to the youth who could freely dance, clap hands, make din²⁸⁶, and express spiritual gifts such as healing, prophecy, speaking in tongues, exorcism, and praying for hours in tongues.

Moreover, NDW's message was appealing to the youth, whom he inspired, through emphasising the wealth and health gospel, to aspire to success in life. In his sermons, he often included tips for success in life, and many of the youth, living in the terrible economic conditions of the 1980s, found his message timely and providential. Many of these youths, who had become very desperate about the failure of the State to provide them with jobs, drew inspiration from NDW's humble background, which he always used as a testimony to the viability of the health and wealth gospel.

The use of the English language as the medium of preaching has also been a source of attraction for many youths, as it makes ACI look like an elite church; and many of the youth who join the church see themselves as belonging to a new elitist association. In the early days of the church, sermons were preached in English, but were simultaneously translated, in different rooms, into Ewe, Akan, and French. Currently, separate branches have been

²⁸⁶ "Din" is the purposive shouting Charismatic Christians do during church service.

established for the church's Twi and Ewe speaking people. Until this separation occurred, many outsiders saw ACI as an elitist church.

Furthermore, the use of modern music instruments, such as guitars and others, made the music of ACI very appealing to the youth. In the early days, NDW engaged the service of Leslie Tex Buabasah, a former secular highlife musician, in the music department of the church. Leslie Tex had originally belonged to a group called Apex 2000 that performed at important gatherings and nightclubs. He became converted and started singing gospel music in ACI. He, however, brought with him a new style of musical performance which included short lyrics, which are repeated, hand clapping, regular and free improvisation, call and response patterns, and drumming and dancing. He also incorporated the African-American style of singing into ACI. All this readily resonated with the youth, many of whom had grown tired of the 'dull' hymns of the historic churches. Olla Williams also brought a new dimension to music and worship at ACI. Like Leslie Tex, Olla Williams had previously lived a wild life devoid of religion. Before his conversion, he was a very popular volleyball player and a singer in Accra. He descended from a family of musicians, and his father was a great highlife musician. Following his conversion, he invested his musical talent into the church.

Describing music performance in ACI and the role of Olla Williams, Paul Gifford writes: 'Although choirs and soloists participate, the singing normally involves the entire congregation, led by a Mr. Olla Williams, and backed by a ten-piece band. It is exuberant and exhilarating.'²⁸⁷ Olla Williams had a rare gift for singing that drew many people to ACI. He could sing continuously for three hours, and his improvisations in musical performances

²⁸⁷ Gifford, *African Christianity*, 77.

attracted many youths to ACI. Olla Williams' popularity and skill was such that during the national thanksgiving service in 1994 he led the ACI choir to sing at the event.²⁸⁸ Music is essential to church services in ACI. It is used for the purposes of worship, aesthetics, and entertainment. The notion of having to 'dance away your troubles,' which is a popular saying in ACI, makes the music department one of the key establishments of the church. As DeNora has observed, Praise and worship music is used as self-regulation and self-modulation that people engage in "so as to produce themselves as type of actors imbued with specific feeling, form, attribute and identity characteristics, and as objects of knowledge to themselves and others."²⁸⁹ Atiemo has also observed that music serves as the medium through which Christians in Ghana, particularly charismatics, express their concerns and anxieties. The theology of charismatics is expressed through many means including prayer and music.²⁹⁰

ACI also attracted the youth by later instituting social intervention programmes to take care of youths who needed support to make ends meet in life. Thus, they provided scholarship schemes and announced job opportunities to some graduates in the church. Besides, the church organised its congregants who were well placed in the formal sector, into a broad social network through which many youths were connected to job opportunities. In these ways, the church serves sociologically as a religious family where people share the anxieties and joys of each other. Usually, during social events, such as funerals, naming ceremonies, marriages, and graduations, the church provides some support, financially and socially. Also,

²⁸⁸ Gifford, *African Christianity*, 77.

²⁸⁹ DeNora, 1999:53, cited in Florian, 2015:56, Florian Carl, 'Music, Ritual and Media in Charismatic Religious Experience in Ghana' in Anna E. Nekola & Tom Wagner, *Congregational Music-Making and Community in a Mediated Age*. (London/New York: Routledge, 2015) 45-60.

²⁹⁰ Abamfo Atiemo, 'Singing with Understanding': The Story of Gospel Music in Ghana, *Studies in World Christianity*, 2006, 142.

some youths who migrate to Accra and have no biological family connections in the city, upon joining the church, are linked to persons who help them to adapt to city life.

4.4 The early beginnings and Migrations of Action Chapel International

ACI has had many migrations in its existence. As earlier indicated, the church started as a fellowship that contributed significantly to the new wave of Christianity emerging in the 1970s in Ghana. It consisted of a group of young men and women who rallied under the leadership of NDW. Their purposes were to pray for each other, the nation, and experience the ‘down pouring’ of the Holy Spirit. They met at NDW’s father’s house to pray and share the word of God. In 1978, Benson Idahosa, considered the Father of the Charismatic movement in West Africa, established a branch of his church in Ghana, and named it ‘Redemption Hour Church.’ The church was under the leadership of one of his Ghanaian trainees, now Bishop Anokye.

A few months after Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ fellowship started meeting, Rev. JSB Coker, a Nigerian pastor of Idahosa, and Margaret Idahosa, the wife of Idahosa, visited Ghana. During their visit, they heard about the fellowship led by NDW, who was then affectionately called ‘Bro. Nick’. Rev. Coker visited NDW and his team of young men and women at the Airport residential area and encouraged him to start a church. The fellowship at the time met on Saturdays and included people like Thompson²⁹¹, Matthew Akanbul, Eric Kwapong, Joseph Nyarko Antwi, Emmanuel Ansah, Obeng Manu and Robert Ampiah Kwofie. NDW was then assisted by Thompson who now lives in the United States. After Rev. Coker’s visit, a decision was taken by NDW and his small team of leaders to turn the fellowship into a

²⁹¹ Thompson, a one-year senior to Duncan- Williams at the All Nations for Christ Bible College, indicated in an interview that Duncan-Williams saw him on the stage in the 1979 crusade by Idahosa in Accra and approached him for help with the ministry.

church. The following day, which was a Sunday, NDW and his group started a church at his father's house. NDW named the new church, 'Christian Action Faith Ministries,' explaining that the choice of name was guided by the Holy Spirit and based on the fact that most of the existing churches were 'dull or dead' and lacked faith, thus his new church was going to be a church full of faith and actions based on faith²⁹². Since his father's residence was not spacious enough, the newly established church moved to a nearby school, Association International School, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Amoah. The church experienced rapid growth and attracted a lot of youths from the secondary schools during vacations and a lot also from the tertiary institutions. Some of the members of these early services included Mr. Kofi Saah and his family, Major Duah's family, Elder Sackey's wife and children, Rev. Emmanuel Ansah, and Esther Kanda and her twin brothers. According to Thompson²⁹³, the early days were very exciting, and the presence of the Holy Spirit was with them, evidenced by many testimonies and healings that took place. Akanbul²⁹⁴ shares an incident in which the Kanda twins, on their way home from church one day, came across an owl²⁹⁵ and started praying and rebuking it in the name of Jesus. As they prayed, the owl mysteriously transformed into a human being to their amazement and shock. This incident became news among the youth, and drew attention to the church. During this research, the Kanda brothers were not available to corroborate this story but others who were in the fellowship at the time concur to having heard the story. Many of the youth who have become leaders of major charismatic churches today were drawn to the church and either became permanent members or regular guests. Some of Nicholas Duncan-Williams' contemporary charismatic leaders who were then in

²⁹² Interview with Duncan-Williams on 8 December 2017 at Action Chapel, Headquarters, Accra.

²⁹³ Interview with Thompson on 10 December 2017 at Action Chapel, Headquarters, Accra.

²⁹⁴ Interview with Bishop Matthew Akanbul, 10 December 2017, Accra.

²⁹⁵ An owl is considered in Ghana an evil bird that is used by witches for their nefarious activities.

NDW's church include Bishop Dag Heward Mills,²⁹⁶ who was part of the music group and played the keyboard; Rev. Dr. Robert Ampiah Kwofie,²⁹⁷ who was involved in the prayer and evangelism group; Rev. Steve Mensah and Stanley Mensah,²⁹⁸ who were both singers; Rev. Sam Korankye Ankrah of the Royal House Chapel; and Rev. Ebenezer Markwei of the Living Springs church. Over time, due to its rapid growth, NDW's church decided to move into a hall at the Nurses' Hostel in Accra. Then after a few months at the hostel, it moved to the Teachers' Hall in the centre of Accra. Later it moved to the Trade Fair Center, Pavilion A and later Pavilion B, also in Accra. Then it moved back to NDW's father's house where they managed to put up a temporary structure to house the church.

When the church moved back to Duncan-Williams' father's house, a temporary place of worship was put up. This place was called 'International Worship Centre'²⁹⁹ (IWC) and by then the church had gained recognition as a charismatic church and had increased in number.

4.5 Some challenges during the initial stages of Action Chapel International

Apart from the fellowships, there were very few or no churches at all that demonstrated the charismatic ethos, liturgy and message of the ACI. Thus, the church became the rallying point for the youth and for all who had the Pentecostal experience and were uninterested in continuing with the historic churches and needed a new environment to express their new-

²⁹⁶ Bishop Dag Heward Mills is the founder of the United Denomination with over 3500 branch churches in over 90 countries and has authored 40 books.

²⁹⁷ Dr. Ampiah Kwofie is the founder of the Global Revival ministries. One of the large and earliest charismatic churches in Ghana and noted for loud travelling prayers.

²⁹⁸ Rev Steve Mensah and Rev. Stanley Mensah are the founders of the Charismatic Evangelistic Ministries in Legon, Accra.

²⁹⁹ Charismatic churches in Ghana have the practice of naming particular assemblies for identification and also as a prophetic indication of the assemblies' testimony. For example, the headquarters assembly and branch of Action Chapel International at the Spintex Road in Accra is called 'The Prayer Cathedral'. This research Bishop Bernard Sallah built a cathedral in Adenta in Accra which, with the endorsement of Duncan-Williams, is called 'The Wonder Cathedral. The practice cuts across the charismatic churches and even some historic and classical Pentecostal churches have also practice same

found born-again experience. The rapid growth of the church came with its attendant challenges.

4.5.1 Financial challenges

Unlike the historic churches, which had mother churches abroad and were part of a larger denomination which provided financial support and aid, NDW's church was a local initiative and had to support itself financially. This created a lot of difficulty for the young church. The majority of the people who attended were students who could not support the church financially. NDW himself had no other means of income and was, thus, confronted with the twin problem of having to fend for himself and provide for the financial needs of his young church. According to Akanbul,³⁰⁰ who lived with NDW at the time, even food was a problem. At one time, all they ate was rice and fried eggs day in and day out. In the early years of NDW's marriage, his wife had to resort to the sale of doughnuts which he, Akanbul, would take for hawking and bring the proceeds to be used for NDW's domestic needs. Money for the basic needs of the church was difficult to come by and, therefore, payment for hired premises and provision of musical and sound equipment was a struggle. It was also a reflection of the state of the national economy which was then in its worst decline. In those challenging times, Amoakohene, NDW's long-time friend and a businessman, helped anytime he was able to. Also, Michael Bassett,³⁰¹ the Senior Pastor of Victory Church in Hampstead, England who visited NDW in 1984 in Accra indicated that he supported NDW through those times with monthly stipends, a story that was corroborated by NDW in his introduction of Michael Bassett in December 2018 at the Annual Impact Convention in Accra. Generally, the financial situation of the time was dire and very challenging.

³⁰⁰ Interview with Akanbul on February, 12,2018 at Action Chapel International, Headquarters, Accra.

³⁰¹ Interview with Michael Bassett on December 28, 2018 at Action Chapel International, Accra.

Larbi³⁰² has also indicated that, similar to the story of all the charismatic churches at their inception, one major constraint that Otabil faced in his early days was financial.

4.5.2 Lack of acceptance

Another major challenge that NDW faced was that the historic churches and the existing Pentecostal churches were very hostile to ACI and the charismatic churches that were emerging. This was because NDW was neither well-educated nor well-trained; and he had no ecumenical affiliation as compared to the clergy of the historic churches. Thus, the young ACI struggled for acceptance and recognition from the historic and existing churches and from a large section of the older population. NDW was referred to as the self-styled pastor of a ‘one-man church’. The term ‘one-man church’ is a derogatory expression to signify the poor governance and lack of organisation characteristic of the charismatic churches. The expression, however, connotes the fact that these churches are young, and their leaders have not been tried and tested and thus cannot be trusted. Over time when other charismatic churches were planted, they were referred to as mushroom churches.

4.5.3 Constant eviction from rented places of worship

Another factor that affected the young church was its movement from place to place. Due to the energetic nature of youth during worship and the rapid growth that the church was experiencing they had to be moving from place to place due to regular eviction and sometimes due to available space quickly becoming too small. Within the space of two years the young church had moved to nine different venues within the city of Accra. These movements created a lot of logistical challenges. Larbi³⁰³ indicates that Otabil’s International Central Gospel Church (ICGC) had a similar experience at its inception. In three years, the ICGC had to moved 13 times until it finally secured the lease of a rundown building called

³⁰² Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 168.

³⁰³ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 168.

the Baden-Powell Hall. Other Charismatic churches like the United Denomination (Lighthouse group of churches) were similarly forced out of various venues including the School of Hygiene canteen.

4.5.4 Complaint by Neighbours at the Airport Residential Area

The International Worship Center,³⁰⁴ which was the name of the assembly of ACI at NDW's father's house was an erected temporary structure to house the church. This was in the Airport residential area, a prime area in Accra. The sound of worship, music and preaching through the PA system resulted in 'noise making' which drew the concern of some of the residents of the area. Sarpong, (not his real name), a neighbour, reported them to the police who then intervened to have the nascent church closed for a short time.

NDW and his team of leaders lobbied the leadership of the Ghana Lands Commission,³⁰⁵ headed at the time by Alhaji³⁰⁶ Abass, for a parcel of land to put up a permanent place of worship. A proposed land at Fadama in Accra was offered to them. Considering the distance from the Airport Residential Area to Fadama, NDW turned down the offer, giving reasons that God did not want the church to move to Fadama. Since the director of the Ghana Lands Commission had, in consultation with the State, designated the land at Fadama for religious groups, Pastor Mensah Otabil, founder of ICGC, another charismatic church, took up the offer. According to Nicholas Duncan-Williams' account, he started praying about the situation, hoping that a new land closer to the Airport Residential Area would be offered to him. In late 1988, NDW and Leslie Tex revisited Alhaji Abass, hoping that the latter would give them a piece of land at the Airport Residential Area. Unfortunately for NDW, Alhaji

³⁰⁴ Charismatic churches have a practice of having to name their assembly/center differently from the name of the ministry

³⁰⁵ The Lands Commission is a state institution that manages state lands

³⁰⁶ Alhaji is a 'socio-religious' title that Muslims in Ghana and other West African countries take after they have made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Abass told them the commission had no land at the Airport area. NDW narrated that following the meeting he began to intensify his prayer for God's intervention.³⁰⁷

The dreams of Alhaji Abass had turned out to favour the demands of NDW. After many such dreams, Alhaji Abass decided to give a six-acre parcel of land on the Spintex Road to NDW for the construction of his church. Since that plot of land was not far from the Airport Residential Area, NDW accepted the offer and started the construction of what a few years ago was the biggest charismatic worship place ("Prayer Cathedral") in Accra. Benson Idahosa did the "groundbreaking" of the construction in 1992. Upon completion, the building was formally inaugurated and dedicated in December 2002 by the then president of the Republic of Ghana, John Agyekum Kufuor.

We can glean many issues for discussion from the above narrative. First, some specific historical processes in the establishment of ACI, the earliest charismatic church in Ghana, became common trends for many other charismatic churches in the country. It is a common experience for charismatic churches to face multiple migrations as they take off, usually, starting by using classrooms, canteens, halls, and other available public spaces for their worship. In Ghana, the State has had many challenges stopping the church from using classrooms for religious service. And usually, the debate over whether the church can use public schools for worship has cascaded into a bigger debate over the separation of church and State and the relationship between religion and politics. Ishmael Norman has an extensive discussion on the controversies that have informed the relationship between church

³⁰⁷ Interview with Nicholas Duncan-Williams on November 29, 2017 at the headquarters of Action Chapel International, Accra.

and State in relation to the church's use of public schools for religious service.³⁰⁸ The use of school spaces for worship also blurs the rigid distinction between the sacred space and profane space. But for churches like the African Independent Churches, known in Ghana as *Sunsumsore*, there is only the process of sacralising the space, through the burning of incense and sprinkling of water, to make the profane space sacred for worship service. The scarcity of land and the cost of buying land continue to provide reasons for some emerging churches to use public schools for worship. While the Ghana Education Service has sent many circulars discouraging head-teachers from leasing classrooms to churches, the appropriation of such spaces as public classrooms for church services remains a major feature of the Ghanaian CM and Christianity.

The question of dreams also features prominently in the narrative. Charismatic Christians have a theology of dreams that feeds into their broader theology on revelation. In his article, "Dream and Charisma: Theories of Dreams" in *Jamaa-Movement (Congo)*," Johannes Fabian discusses the complexities of dreams among the Jamaa. He noted that dreams constituted an important dimension of the worship of the Jamaa, and that through dreams the faithful are able to peep into the world that is not visible to the physical eye.³⁰⁹ In Ghana, Charismatic Christians use the cliché, "God reveals to redeem" to convey the importance of dreams, visions, and prophecy in the repertoire of God's activities. In the narrative above, NDW revealed that it was through God's intervention, conveyed through dreams to Alhaji Abaas that eventually made it possible for him to secure the land needed to build his church. Charismatic Christians believe that while God's revelation has ended and is codified in the

³⁰⁸ Ishmael D. Norman, "Separation of Church and State: A Study of Accra City's Use of Public Buildings and Schools for Religious Services in Ghana", *Advances in Applied Sociology* 2013. vol. 3, no.7, 282-288.

³⁰⁹ Johannes Fabian, "Dream and Charisma: Theories of Dreams in the Jamaa-Movement (Congo)," *Anthropos*, Bd. 61, H. 3/6. (1966), 544-560.

Bible, God continues to use dreams and other gifts of the Spirit to draw the attention of Charismatic Christians to certain hidden things in their lives. In the next chapter on the theology of NDW, I will discuss revelation, including dreams, as an important aspect of the religious lives of Charismatic Christians. But suffice it to be said that it is through dreams that many Charismatic leaders have peeped into the unseen world.

The building of the “Prayer Cathedral”, the Headquarters temple of ACI, took many years to complete. According to one of my respondents, it took more than a decade for the huge edifice to be completed. NDW³¹⁰ revealed to me that it was A.B. Mensah, who God used to finally provide money for the roofing of the church. In his remarks, NDW believes that it was God who brought A.B. Mensah to help build the church. Most charismatic churches also spend lots of money and many years to build huge edifices. Examples of such huge buildings include Mensa Otabil’s ‘Christ Temple’, Bishop Charles Agyin Asare’s ‘Perez Dome’, Dag Heward Mill’s ‘Qodesh’, Steve Mensah’s ‘Rehoboth Temple’. The building of such imposing churches in the cities of Ghana reflects the wealth and health message of charismatic leaders. This has, however, been criticised by some Ghanaians as a waste of money. For many Ghanaians, spending money and resources on huge edifices could be used to build social facilities such as schools and hospitals, which the nation needs. In response, some charismatic leaders have pointed to schools, including universities, hospitals, and rehabilitation centres that their churches have constructed. The ACI, for example, has a university and rehabilitation centre for drug addicts.

³¹⁰ Interview with Rev. Nii Quaofio, 30th December, 2018 at Spintex road, Accra.

4.6 Marriage and role of women in Action Chapel International

Generally, Christians believe that marriage is an important institution established by God himself; and that it is necessary for companionship and procreation. They also believe that marriage is a covenant that binds two people together until the death of one of the spouses. The indissolubility of Christian marriage has, however, been a subject of intense debate among many Christians.

NDW married Francisca Nyarko (later Francisca Duncan-Williams) in January, 1981 at the Achimota School Hall. At the time, he was twenty-four years of age while Francisca was twenty-one years. Among the guests in attendance were Ashong Mensah, Kwaku Hatchful,³¹¹ Robert Ampiah Kwofie, and the best man was Spencer Duncan.³¹² The event was celebrated as a wedding ceremony, which, at the time, was new to most young people who desired similar marriage ceremonies. The marriage to Francisca took place two years after he returned from his Bible College studies in Nigeria and started the church. Francisca was then an active member of the church and was in the choir. In NDW's own words, the marriage was necessary for his ministry:

I married young because, as a young man leading a ministry that was destined to be great, I need a partner, who will support me in ministerial work. I also needed to stay focus[ed] and enjoy the blessing of having a godly woman. My marriage to Francisca had many blessings: it kept me from the usual sex scandals that assail some men of God; it also contributed to consolidating my ministry.³¹³

³¹¹ Kwaku Hatchful was a youth leader and a lecturer at the University of Ghana who later became the executive director of the Scripture Union, Ghana.

³¹² Spencer Duncan is the paternal cousin of Duncan-Williams. He founded the very popular Calvary road singer which later became a charismatic church known as the Harvest Chapel. A lot of the leaders of the charismatic church like Dag Heward Mills, Markwei, Emmanuel Ansah were also members of Calvary road singers.

³¹³ Interview with Nicholas Duncan-Williams on November 29, 2017 at the headquarters of Action Chapel, Accra.

This marriage became a model for other charismatic leaders who came after NDW. After the marriage, NDW brought Francisca into the ministry, assigning her the duty of taking care of the women in the church. Since Francisca was moderately literate, she contributed to teaching some of the older women in the church how to read and meditate on the Bible. She also assumed the duty of training the women in some basic vocational skills, such as sewing, weaving, soap making, baking, and basic life skills. She also organised workshops to teach women basic lessons in parenting. She became the leader of the women's ministry known as Daughter of Zion³¹⁴. Francisca was later ordained as a Reverend and had full responsibility for the ministry of women in the church. She also became an inspiration and a mentor for the wives of leaders of other charismatic churches. According to Soothill, undoubtedly, the authority of pastor's wives in the charismatic churches stems essentially from their relationship with the men to whom they are married³¹⁵. Other leaders of charismatic churches who looked up to NDW and his wife were referred to as "Spiritual Sons or Daughters". This concept will be explored later in this work. In Ghana, particularly among the Akan, marriage is considered a rise in social status. Maturity in life is largely framed around one's marital status. In view of that, marriage brings respect to the married partners. It also shows that one is responsible. NDW's early marriage, thus, convinced many people that he was not just a man of God, but also a responsible leader. More importantly, it made him feel he had earned the right to counsel many of the young men and women who had joined his church, and he often used the opportunity to encourage them to follow his example. As a leader, his marriage legitimised him to discuss conjugal relationship matters, particularly in a social environment where experience is counted as important. NDW's marriage produced four children, two girls and two boys, Elsie, Ella, Joel and Daniel. In my interaction with Elsie, she described her

³¹⁴ Jane Soothill, *Gender, Social Change and Spiritual power: Charismatic Christianity in Ghana*, (Boston: Brill, 2007)

³¹⁵ Jane Soothill, *Gender, Social Change and Spiritual power: Charismatic Christianity in Ghana*. p161

father as the best Dad anyone could have. NDW's two daughters are married to pastors of ACI.

What is particularly important about NDW's marriage is how it revolutionised gender relations in charismatic Christianity. Until he started to share the preaching platform with his wife, many of the classical Pentecostal churches in Ghana had no pastoral offices for women. Like Grace Tani,³¹⁶ who together with John Kwasi Nackabah, founded the Twelve Apostles Church, an AIC in the early twentieth century,³¹⁷ many women had been relegated to the background in Ghanaian Christianity. The missionaries had a practice that separated men from women in terms of vocation, only men were trained for ministry. The classical Pentecostal Churches in Ghana, including the Assemblies of God Church, Christ Apostolic Church, Apostolic Church of Ghana, and the Church of Pentecost did not have any pastoral offices for women. It was, therefore, revolutionary and unprecedented that NDW made Francisca a co-leader in the administration of the church. This set the pace for other charismatic leaders to bring their wives into the ministry. Currently, it has become common practice for most charismatic leaders to do ministry with their wives. Thus, the wives of almost all charismatic leaders in Ghana are preachers too, and they play key roles in the ministry. They are ordained as Reverends and have the freedom to organise the women and other programmes in their churches. Having initiated this trend of incorporating women in ministry, the ACI has gone further to ensure that women also receive training as pastors to lead the church. As a result, the church now boasts of a significant number of women pastors.

³¹⁶ C. G. Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*.

³¹⁷ Paul S. Breidenbach, Maame Harris Grace Tani and Papa Kwesi John Nackabah, "Independent Church Leaders in the Gold Coast, 1914-1958" *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 12(4) (1979), 581-614.

4.7 Growth, Expansion and Branch formation

The growth of ACI despite its initial challenges was phenomenal. The church attracted the youth from all suburbs in and around Accra. Many people who came for the services went away so uplifted and invited their friends and loved ones. Within a short period of its inception, The ACI was registering hundreds in its Sunday and week-day services. By 1984, the official numbers of attendance were into 3000+ members on Sundays. In July 1988, the church hosted the renowned American Healing Evangelist, Oral Roberts and Benson Idahosa. During this event, the church filled the Accra International Stadium which at the time had a capacity of 20,000+. The growth and expansion continued when some members of the church living in other parts of Accra called for branches to be established in their area. The planting of branches was not a new idea to NDW since it was the practice of the Pentecostal and the historic churches. He had also experienced similar planting of branches in Benin City while studying under Idahosa. The first set of branches were planted in Dansoman by Alex Yoda, Madina by Alfred Acheampong, Tema by Benjie Djin between 1986 and 1987. ACI became the first charismatic church to have branches in Ghana. Later charismatic leaders and churches followed this approach to spread out and expand their church brand. By 1989, NDW had released the branch churches to the pastors in charge due to reasons that were not clear. These branch churches later became financially and administratively independent of NDW. NDW in an answer to this question during this study responded, “It was too much headache at the time and someone had convinced me to accept the American concept of one mega church”. Matthew Akanbul, one of the earliest associates of NDW, indicated that a possible reason for the release of the churches was financial. However, Benson Idahosa ‘queried’ him against the action. The Tema branch was renamed ‘Love Tabernacle church’ under the leadership of Benjie Djin, Alfred Acheampong renamed his branch ‘International Prayer

House Chapel' and the Dansoman branch which was led by Yoda was given to a new pastor called Isaac Clive Mould, and Yoda was later reassigned to Benin.

By 1990, the desire to plant more branches was rekindled. Between 1990 and 1995, several local and international branches had been planted: Madina branch by Godwin Ayivor, Sakumono branch by Leslie Tex and Emily Buabasah, Tema branch by Crenstil, Adenta branch by Steve Yeboah, Kumasi branch by Owusu Afriyie, Cape Coast branch by John Bentil, Togo branch by Matthew Akanbul, London branch by Alex Ameyaw, Cotonou branch by Matthew Akanbul, Germany branch by Matthew Akanbul, Italy branch by Diane, South London branch by Patrick Josiah, Côte'd'Ivoire branch by George Asare. The names of countries attached to some of the branches were to indicate the specific international areas that the church spread to in its earliest history.

4.8 Convocations

By 1996, NDW had moved the church's headquarters to its permanent location on the Spintex road. The convocations of the church are its weekly and annual gatherings. Sunday services, Wednesday teaching and communion, and Thursday Prayer meetings, also known as 'Dominion Hour,' are weekly. The 'Impact' Convention is the annual gathering of all the members of all the branches worldwide and the Easter convention is the annual programme of the church.

4.8.1 Sunday Services

Sundays are the busiest days and two services are conducted mainly by Duncan-William or the Resident Bishop of the cathedral. A total of 8,000 members are normally expected in the two services on Sundays. The first service starts at 7:00am and the Second service starts at

10:00am. The mid-week service on Wednesday starts at 6:00pm and Thursday prayer service starts at 9:00am. The order of service looks like this:

- A. Prayer and worship
 - i. Intercession
 - ii. Praise and Worship
- B. Announcement
 - i. Welcome of visitors
 - ii. Announcements
- C. First Offering
- D. Choir, song ministrations
- E. Preaching
- F. Second Offering/Tithe
- G. Altar Call & Prayer for new-comers
- H. Benediction

4.8.2 Wednesday Service

The Wednesday services are mainly for teaching and communion. They are usually conducted by the Bishop of the Prayer Cathedral. About 800 members attend this service. NDW, on some occasions, takes over to continue with what he has been teaching on Sunday.

4.8.3 Thursdays Prayer Meeting (Dominion Hour formerly Jericho Hour)

This prayer meeting is unique in the sense that it attracts large numbers of worshippers from all over the city. It is a time of travailing prayers, worship and deliverance, so worshippers stand for most part of the service. More will be said about this prayer time later in this work.

4.8.4 Impact Convention

The focus of this annual gathering of all the members of the ACI worldwide is to receive spiritual grace for the coming year. It is a week-long programme with morning and evening sessions. Consecration, Ordinations and Licensing of ministers are done during this annual convention. The speakers are usually world-renowned preachers like T.D. Jakes, Jerry Savelle, Paula White, John Francis among others. It is usually held from the last Sunday of November to the first Sunday in December.

4.8.5 Easter Conventions

Apart from the Impact Conventions, the other annual programme of the church is the Easter convention. The Easter Conventions are usually held from Wednesday of the Passion Week and ends on the Sunday which is called 'Resurrection Sunday'.

4.9 Episcopacy and governance of ACI

An episcopal polity is a hierarchical form of church governance in which the chief local authorities are called Bishops. Episcopacy refers to the office of a Bishop in the church of God. An episcopal church is one which includes the office of Bishop within its structures and its understanding of the nature of ordained ministry. The word episcopacy is derived from the Greek word 'episcopē', which means 'oversight'. Episcopacy refers to the oversight exercised by Bishops. Generally, it is only those churches which include the office of Bishops within their structure which are called episcopal.³¹⁸

In 1994, Duncan-William was consecrated as Bishop of ACI by his mentor and spiritual father, Benson Idahosa. This made him the first leader of a charismatic church in Ghana to be consecrated a Bishop. It also indicated that the church had adopted the episcopal system of governance. The episcopal system invests authority in individual ordained ministers consecrated and called Bishops to oversee the affairs of the ministry. Eventually as the church grew and expanded, more Bishops were consecrated, and a College of Bishops was formed and constituted the highest ecclesiastical decision-making body in ACI. This system of governance has been adopted by most leaders of the CM in Ghana.

The episcopal system of governance adopted by charismatic ministries are not strictly patterned after that of the Roman catholic church or the Protestant churches. The charismatics

³¹⁸The Functions of Church Administration-The Episcopacy, <http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/2007>, (accessed on 20/40/2018).

are innovative in their use of the episcopacy and have not gone beyond the level of Archbishop. NDW was consecrated Archbishop in December, 2003 and stepped into the same level of episcopacy as his mentor Benson Idahosa before his untimely death. The innovation that comes with the episcopal system of governance by charismatic ministries allows the founding leaders to put in place a system but still retain all the authority and control over the ministry. In the case of NDW which seem to be replicated in most charismatic ministries, the governance is mainly cantered around the founding leader and he or she wields absolute power. This is also large because the ministries are seen as an institution which must be under the divine guidance of the Lord and the founding leaders are the individuals who hear from the Lord. There is therefore very little consultation within the running of these ministries and decision making is mainly invested in the founding leader. Some observers have thus labelled the churches as 'one-man church', a derogatory way of saying decision making is not consultative. In the case of NDW, this research observed that, he had individuals around him who gave him information which were the basis for the decisions he took. Most of these individual that he trusted most often had their own interest and will find a way of relaying the information to favour or advance their course in the organisation or victimise others. In some case, the information is inaccurate but forms the basis for hasty decisions and when eventually the facts are known, it emerges that wrong and hasty decisions have been taken. Sometimes, the structures that have been put in place to address specific duties within the ministry are bypassed or not recognised in decision making and the individuals in charge are not consulted at all or properly briefed afterwards. For instance, a Bishop could be placed over an area to oversee the activities of the pastors and the churches in the area. Such a Bishop according to the structures should be the first point of call in matters relating to his or her area. However, there have been occasions where pastors have transferred without the knowledge or in consultation with area Bishops. The effort here by

this researcher who is also an insider is to throw light on the way charismatic ministries are largely governed. The degree to which the personality of the founding leader takes centre stage and has absolute power and control varies. Some are overtly seen while others are concealed in various organisational structures but ultimately delivers the will of the founding leader.

4.9.1 College of Bishops (CoB)

The College of Bishops is made up of all current ACI Bishops and ACI Bishops who retired in good standing and hold the title of Bishop Emeritus. NDW appoints the Chairman and the vice-chairman of the College of Bishops for a two-year term, which is renewable for an additional two years unless terminated by NDW. The Chairman of the College of Bishops presides over all meetings of the College. Where the chairman is absent or for any other reason unable to preside over a meeting the vice-chairman shall preside. The College of Bishops establishes dioceses as necessary for the effective administration of the church. A diocese consists of all the churches within a given region or area in which the church operates and shall be headed by a Bishop who holds the title of Regional or Area Bishop. The Regional Bishop chairs meetings, conventions, takes decisions and actions within the region, issues pastoral letters, and submits mid-year and end of year formal reports on the state of the churches in their jurisdiction to the College of Bishops.

4.9.2 Resources Operations Center (ROC)

The ROC is an executive arm of the church within the structure. The ROC is responsible for the effective administration and co-ordination of the activities of the church worldwide. The Director of ROC provides managerial leadership and administrative oversight over the affairs of the ROC.

4.10 Bible College/ Liberal Arts University

The desire to train pastors for the expansion of the church led to the establishment of the Action International Bible College (AIBC) in 1984. The AIBC became the first Bible college by a charismatic church in Ghana. The courses at the time were basically at the devotional level. The attitude of charismatic leaders at the time toward academic training was that of scepticism. They had not yet come to appreciate the value of a well-rounded academic training to pastoral work. They had the notion that, the ministers of the historic churches were dry and lacked ‘spiritual anointing’ because of the attention to higher academic pursuits. By 1990, the curriculum of the training was reviewed by Abu Baka Bako to lead to the award of a non-accredited Certificate and Diploma in Theology. Many of the pastors like Gracer Bondzi, Steve Yeboah, Johnny Djangmah, Steve Lartey, Sammy Opare Lokko, Ken Ani-Adjei Mensah who are now Bishops were all trained during this period. By 2009, the college acquired national accreditation and introduced liberal arts courses in Business Administration, Computer Science and Theological Studies and became known as Dominion University College (DUC). NDW became the Chancellor and the chairman of its board.

4.10.1 Voice of Inspiration

The use of Television and Radio broadcast has become a characteristic part of the ministry of charismatic churches. The Television and Radio programme of NDW is known as the ‘Voice of Inspiration’. Mensa Otabil’s broadcast is the ‘Livingword’, Sam Korankye Ankrah’s broadcast is ‘Power in Presence’, Dag Heward Mill’s is ‘Mega Word’. Most of the charismatic churches now own television and radio stations. NDW and ACI own a satellite television station called ‘Dominion Television’.

According to Duncan –Williams, before he started preaching on television and radio, no charismatic church was on television or radio. There were the historic churches that preached

in turns on Sunday evenings on television and radio. There were also the foreign broadcasts by foreign preachers; ‘Redemption Hour’ by Benson Idahosa, “Something good is about to happen to you” by Oral Roberts, and Radio ELWA from Liberia which featured preachers like Jimmy Swaggart. However, when Rawlings came on the scene during the revolution, he placed a ban on all religious programmes on radio and television for a long time. Duncan-William had the opportunity to meet Rawlings through Ekow Spio-Garbrah, one of his ministers. According to NDW,³¹⁹ he engaged Rawlings for over four hours on the need to allow religious programmes on television and radio. Rawlings eventually agreed to allow him to come on television and preach. It was the beginning of a new era for the CM to start preaching on television and radio. The ‘voice of inspiration’ was aired on Sunday mornings before the service on Ghana Television.

4.11 Factors that promoted the growth and expansion of ACI

The analysis of focus group discussions attributes the phenomenal growth of ACI to three key elements:

4.11.1 Inspired preaching and the message of prosperity

The preaching of NDW was practical and inspirational. It motivated the congregation and provided hope to confront the mundane challenges of the time. It was based on the Bible and spoke to the needs of the congregation. In addition, the message of prosperity was appealing to the youth, it sounded good and was a new way of looking at life. The lifestyle and testimony of NDW validated the claims of prosperity. The message promised to address the source of poverty and offered guidance on how to come out of poverty.

4.11.2 Testimonies of transformed lives and baptism of the Holy Spirit

The remarkable thing about many people who came to the church was an evident change in lifestyle. Many embraced the born-again lifestyle and abandoned their wild life. Many also

³¹⁹ Interview with Duncan-Williams at Spintex Road on 28 December 2017.

testified that they received miracles of healing, provision and divine intervention. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues was the most obvious change that took place in many and in a way validated the ministry and the claims of NDW.

4.11.3 Vibrant worship and praise

The music, dance and free expressive atmosphere in the church was entertaining and elating. Ola Williams and his live band provided live music and a joyous atmosphere which was electrifying and vivacious. This was exciting to the teeming youth and they participated in their numbers. One respondent commented that, the dancing and pleasure that they sought in the nightclubs was replaced by the joy of the Lord they found in the church.

4.12 The charismatic leadership qualities of Nicholas Duncan-Williams

The word charisma is a Greek word, which means ‘gift’. In political science and sociology, the term is used to describe a subset of leaders, who, ‘by the force of their personal abilities are capable of having profound and extraordinary effects on followers.’³²⁰ Max Weber considers charismatic leaders as the class of leaders who ‘derive their legitimacy not from rules, positions, or traditions, but from devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him.’³²¹ NDW came into the ministry with some personality traits that enabled him to establish firm control over the church and also command many followers. As a person who operates beyond the boundaries of norms, he does not squarely fit into the characteristics of charismatic leadership. If he transcends the normative practice, then we can argue for that in the sense that he entered into church planting and administration with a poor academic background. From the perspective of ‘conventional knowledge’, a leader of

³²⁰ R. J. House and M. L. Baetz, “Leadership: Some empirical generalizations and new research directions,” in B. M. Staw (ed.), *Research in organizational behavior* (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1979).

³²¹ S. N. Eisenstadt, *Max Weber: On Charisma and Institution Building*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 46.

the church must have received systematic training in theology and other leadership training. But NDW had only six months training in All Nations for Christ Bible Institute in Benin City, Nigeria, after which he stayed for a few months. In fact, his narrative has it that when he was to write examination after his training, he could not write, so an oral examination was conducted for him. But even with that, he still could not speak English fluently, so he started speaking in tongues.

NDW himself has corroborated the above story on several occasions. Even after his training in a Bible institute he had very rudimentary knowledge of the Bible. It was Joseph Nyarko Antwi who assisted him to read and memorise scriptures. Also, he did not have classmates to build strong connections with any elites in society, who would connect him to other influential persons in society. In spite of all these challenges, NDW continued and persevered. His charisma lies in his ability to pray and motivate people with words to cause things to happen.

Nicholas Duncan-Williams' charismatic qualities stem from his ability to pray, and the work of the Holy Spirit in his life and ministry. He can also get people excited, motivated, inspired and moved to follow what he says. In other words, the sheer force of his personality resonated with the ability to motivate, inspire, and encourage others to follow his teachings. Charisma seems to create a certain emotional bond between the leader and the followers. This keeps the admiration of the followers for the leader uncritically high and makes them adopt coping strategies and postures that support the objectives of the leader. The charismatic leader reinforces this hold over the followers by his lifestyle, and series of activities including narratives that sound psychologically persuasive. In the case of CM, the charismatic leader uses narratives from the scriptures to reinforce an expected posture from the followers. NDW

appears to be a master of this art and thus has succeeded in keeping his followers ‘hooked’ on him. This use of charisma which is evident in the ministry of NDW seems to be the pattern for most of the leaders of CM in Ghana.

4.13 Schisms

The creating of branches came along with schisms within the church. Religious schism has received some research attention. The discussion around schisms has generally been part of the study on religious movements. ACI suffered schisms as one of the consequences of the creation of branches and the devolution of some of the administrative powers of NDW to branch leaders of the church. Among the major schisms to hit the church in Ghana was the release of Leslie Tex Buabasah, who oversaw the church at Sakumono. Leslie Tex had been with NDW since the latter started ACI in 1979. As a former highlife musician, he and NDW enjoyed a pre-conversion life as smokers of cannabis and other hard drugs, and patronisers of nightclubs. Somehow by the time NDW encountered Christ, Leslie Tex had also had some religious experiences, pointing him to Christ. Thus, following Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ conversion and his establishment of ACI, he invited Leslie Tex to join him. Like NDW, Leslie Tex also went to the Christ for All Nations Bible School in Benin City, Nigeria. Upon his return, he joined ACI and became a key member. Leslie Tex brought his musical gift to the service of ACI. As an adept instrumentalist and renowned highlife musician, he brought many improvisations to the music ministry of the church. He brought new musical instruments to the church, and as the lead singer, he inspired many people to join ACI. Considering the centrality of Leslie Tex, NDW made him to pioneer and lead the branch of ACI in Sakumono when the church started planting branches in Accra.

He successfully led the church at Sakumono until there was a misunderstanding between him and NDW. The misunderstanding, which eventually led to his release and annexation of the church, was because of disagreement over issues of authority and submission. There also ensued a power struggle over the administration of the church. This contestation fractured the relationship between the two leaders of the church. Following the intervention of Benson Idahosa, whose school had provided Bible training to the two, NDW ceded the church to Leslie Tex.

A similar schism hit the church in Abidjan, after George Asare, who had successfully established ACI in the city of Abidjan, developed issues with NDW. He felt he was not remunerated enough, and also wanted more autonomy to run the church. In the ensuing tension, NDW tried to transfer George Asare and as a way of crippling his budding ambition for autonomy over the church. However, the processes involved in his transfer rather resulted in his secession from the church. According to Joseph (not his real name), as part of the transfer ceremony, James Saah and Ben Anom were sent from Ghana to go and preside over the ceremony. It is alleged that NDW had told the two not to allow George Asare to speak at the ceremony. But as the event pushed towards its climax, Ben Anom decided to allow George Asare to give a farewell message to the church. As he started narrating his achievement since he started the church and the translation was going on, Ben Anom whisked the microphone from the Ivorian translator. This confirmed to the congregation their suspicions about the transfer of George Asare. They felt something fishy was going on, and injustice was being perpetrated against George Asare. The relatively peaceful programme was embroiled in rancour and furore from the congregation. Finally, the ceremony was interrupted and George Asare was carried away by some members of the church. Most of the congregation rallied around him and founded a church that he pastored.

Another schism occurred at Tema, where the head of the church for many years decided to leave to found his own church. He was dissatisfied with church administrative arrangements and felt he was not being heard enough. To mask his intention of secession from NDW, he started a fellowship in Ashiaman, thus recapturing the foundation of the charismatic movement, where members congregated to pray. He was not successful with this, as some of the leadership of the church at his branch uncovered his plans and informed NDW. NDW quelled the tension by replacing the pastor.

All these instances of schisms were framed around power and financial administration. In terms of power, most of those who seceded were concerned about the concentration of administrative power in the hands of NDW. Some of them, particularly Leslie Tex, felt they had been with the church for long, and wanted to be recognised as equal partners in church administration. Others thought they should have semi-autonomy to run their church. These issues mirror complex issues of power control in most charismatic churches. The experience of the charismatic church in Ghana in terms of leadership has not always inured to the benefit of this strand of Christianity. Usually, founders have absolute control of power in administering the church. They seldom share power with others, including those with whom they started the church. This situation spells out administrative cracks in some charismatic churches. Apart from a few charismatic churches like Lighthouse Chapel and International Central Gospel Church, led by Dag Heward Mills and Mensah Otabil respectively, who have structures in place to govern the church devoid of building personal cults around themselves, other charismatic churches are yet to have a well-structured leadership system where power is decentralised and democratised. As part of their autonomy, any leader or member who disagrees with other leaders of the charismatic churches is socially ostracised or excommunicated.

The administrative powers of NDW capped when he was ordained Bishop of ACI in 1994 by Benson Idahosa. His ordination and elevation had implications for church administration and his centrality as a key figure of charismatic churches in Ghana. His power control over his church was consolidated. He also had a *de facto* mandate to oversee the activities of other leaders of CM in Ghana because of his long-standing relationship with them. Within ACI, his authority was uncontested. He became the symbol of authority in the daily administration of the church. The nation also recognised him as a key leader in the charismatic movement in Ghana and invited him to preside sometimes over national religious ceremonies. He has also been involved in mediating the relationship between politicians of the two main political parties in Ghana, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress as a member of the Peace Council representing the CM. His bishopric office as recognised by the state was exemplified when during the dedication of the Prayer Cathedral of ACI in 2002, the then president of Ghana, John Agyekum Kufuor, attended and did the dedication. NDW has also been instrumental in mediating the strained relationship between two ex-presidents of Ghana, Jerry John Rawlings and John Agyekum Kufuor.

4.14 Media and Nicholas Duncan-Williams

Since the liberalisation of the media landscape in Ghana in 1993, many Pentecostal and CM have taken advantage of the situation to evangelise. The church's use of media in Ghana has received some research attention. It was, however, NDW who pioneered charismatic use of the media in Ghana. This position has been affirmed and supported in my interviews with Rev. Steve Mensah, Rev. Dr. Robert Ampiah Kwofie and Bishop Charles Agyin Asare. During the military regime of Jerry John Rawlings (1982-1992), the media was a restricted area for the church and other activists. Apart from religious groups like established historic churches and the Afrikania Mission, the charismatic church, which was in its budding state, had no access to the media. The situation was aggravated by the fact that the media landscape

was heavily under the control of the state. It was only at the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1993 that the media landscape was liberalised. This resulted in the mushrooming of many private media houses, a situation that was accompanied by an explosion in charismatic appropriation of the media to spread their message. NDW, who had gained recognition as the leader of the charismatic movement, had priority over other charismatic leaders in their access to the media. He, therefore, unveiled a series dubbed the 'Voice of Inspiration', which served as an authentic Christian voice and brought hope to many Ghanaians who had become disillusioned and disenchanted about the political tension in the country.

4.15 Nicholas Duncan-Williams and Migration to America

After years of engaging Ghanaians with the message of inspiration, NDW left for the United States of America. Many reasons have been adduced to explain his departure. The first was financial challenges that had hit the church. The second was for him to expand the church in North America, where he planted churches in Virginia and Laurie in Missouri. Regardless of the reasons invoked to explain his sojourn to the United States of America, it must be pointed out that his departure was to add to his credentials and reputation as a man with international clout. He also needed the experience of life out of Africa to administer as the leader of the charismatic movement in Ghana. In his absence, he left the church in the hands of his assistant, Bishop James Saah. But his absence witnessed the emergence of a neo-charismatic movement, which was primarily focused on prophetic ministry. Leaders like Owusu Bempah, Prophet Salifu Amoako, Prophet Victor Kusi Boateng claimed to be called into the office of prophets and flooded the Ghanaian religious landscape with prophecies related to individuals and the future of Ghana. NDW had ordained some of these 'prophets' such as Owusu Bempah and Salifu Amoako.

4.15.1 Jericho Hour

The threat the new prophetic ministries posed to ACI was enormous, as they attracted members from ACI and other charismatic churches. In response, Bishop James Saah, under the direction of NDW, started a weekly prayer programme called ‘Jericho Hour’ in 1998. Saah, however, claims that ‘Jericho Hour’ came into existence following an inspiration by the Holy Spirit after he read the book, ‘Jericho Hour’, authored by Dick Eastman. This is a week day prayer meeting for 3 hours and those who participate are encouraged to stand through the prayer time. According to Asamoah-Gyadu,³²² Saah explained that he felt God asking him to establish a ‘prophetic prayer service’ where ‘giant problems would receive giant solutions’. Regardless of the rationale beyond ‘Jericho Hour’, there is no gainsaying that as a prayer programme it provided an alternative to the prophetic and healing ministry that was overshadowing the older CM. It also helped ACI to consolidate and keep her members. ‘Jericho Hour’, which has now been renamed ‘Dominion Hour’ attracts people from Ghana and abroad. According to my focus group discussion, the subsequent many CM have also started weekday prayer meetings patterned after Jericho hour. This confirms the assertion that most CM learn or take inspiration from what they see Duncan-William do.

4.16 Nicholas Duncan-Williams returns to Ghana

After doing ministry in the United States of America for about eight years, NDW returned to Ghana in 2010 to take over the church from Bishop James Saah. His coming culminated in the completion of the first cathedral of the CM, the Prayer cathedral. The edifice, which had taken more than a decade to finish, was completed and dedicated by ex-president, John Agyekum Kufuor. The dedication of the prayer cathedral marked the formal celebration of the leadership of NDW as a frontline leader of the charismatic movement in Ghana.

³²² Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity: Interpretation from an African Context*. (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2013), 36.

On December 7, 2003, NDW was elevated to the high office of Archbishop by the Trans-Atlantic and Pacific Alliance of Churches (TAPAC) in collaboration with the International Board of Bishops. The ordination again made him the first Archbishop of the charismatic movement in Ghana. His ordination did not just elevate his religious status in charismatic Christianity in Ghana, it also ascribed some responsibilities to him: he was to provide leadership, guidance and instruction in sound doctrines and refute those who propagate false doctrines. He was also to nominate and ordain other bishops and ministers. While some charismatics celebrated the elevation of NDW, many Ghanaians saw it as part of the grand agenda to use power to fleece the masses. There were those who questioned the rationale behind his elevation. Others felt NDW was power-drunk. There were those who felt he should focus his attention on helping the needy in the community rather than chasing titles to advance his selfish interests.

In my own analysis, I see the elevation also as a matter of ecclesiastical power to control other emerging bishops in Ghana. Though this research has unearthed NDW was the first bishop of the charismatic movement in Ghana, other leaders of the movement had become bishops soon after NDW. His elevation to archbishop was partly crafted to set him apart from other bishops, and to consolidate his authority over them. The idea that he was to be the commander of faith also imbued him with power to regulate the teachings of other charismatic leaders. But this position of commander of truth was irrelevant in a religiously plural Ghana where freedom of religious expression and belief is guaranteed by the constitution. It was not clear how he was going to serve as the commander of faith. Perhaps, that job description was more rhetorical and idealistic than real.

4.16.1 Divorce of Francesca Duncan-Williams

Matters did not work well for NDW when three years after his return, he filed a divorce against his wife, Francesca. His divorce raised concerns among Christians and brought his archbishop office into disrepute. Many of the papers reported that he had tarnished the image of the Church in Ghana. The circumstances surrounding the divorce caused many Ghanaians to question the rationale behind the whole saga. According to the papers, he sponsored his wife to travel to London, and while she was away, NDW got a lawyer, went to court, and obtained a divorce against his wife of over 25 years, and with whom he had four children. It took the timely intervention of the lawyer of his wife to temporarily reverse the verdict of the court. But after years of contestations and legal battles, NDW was finally granted the divorce. Many Christians condemned his decision to break up with his wife. Others felt he was an embarrassment to the Christian community. In a recent programme on Joy News, a private television station in Ghana, Francesca opened up about the divorce case. She told the host of the programme that she learnt so much from her husband and even became a committed Christian through him. She also narrated how she struggled with him to establish ACI. She, however, said she had no ill feelings for her ex-husband. She had also reconciled with some of their children who supported their father.

The divorce issue reintroduced the thorny issue of divorce in Ghanaian Christianity, many discussed the merits and demerits. While some Christian groups like the Roman Catholics do not countenance divorce, other charismatic leaders in Ghana had no hard and fast rules about it. This is against the backdrop that many of these charismatic leaders had tried to intervene to save the marriage of NDW from hitting the rocks. In Christianity, the subject of divorce has divided many Christians into two camps: those who accept divorce when the sustenance of a marriage union is impossible and those who are against divorce, no matter the situation.

Those who supported conditional divorce and those who countenance divorce entirely all invoke the Bible as the source of their authority. This makes the issue more confusing for many Christians.

The researcher gathered, however, that NDW had divorced his wife and reunited with her before divorcing her again. The first divorce occurred in 1999 in the United States of America where the two had gone to do mission. But through the intervention of the African-American televangelist, T.D. Jakes, the marriage was restored in 2001. But the second divorce in 2006 defied all mediations from other Christian leaders. Both NDW and his wife were tight-lipped on the reason for their divorce. In all my interviews with my interlocutors who were witnesses to the divorce saga and who have been with the couple for decades, I, however, discovered that NDW still provides for the material wellbeing of his ex-wife. He is now married to an African-American woman, Rosa Whitaker, who is a business mogul. NDW refused to talk about his divorce in my interview with him and preferred to keep it private. He has, however, said on some platforms that he married at a time when he was very young and did not know what he was doing. Many have surmised that his divorce has given some young pastors and non-pastors the confidence to also want to divorce their spouses.

4.17 Trials and Persecutions

It must be stated that the divorce added to many scandals levelled against NDW that have raised public eyebrows about his ministry. The first hit him early in his ministry when he accepted a gift of a Mercedes Benz from a member who was later arrested as a drug dealer. When he was also accused of preaching only prosperity and living a flamboyant lifestyle, his response that Jesus wore designer wear stirred controversies in Ghana. According to Rev.

Steve Mensah, a foremost leader of the Charismatic Evangelistic Ministries, NDW was accused of indoctrinating young men like him with the prosperity message.

In spite of all these controversies in NDW's ministry, he continues to command respect among many Christians in Ghana and globally. He recently led the prayer during the inauguration Day Prayer Service ahead of the inauguration ceremony for the 45th President of the United States of America, Donald J. Trump.

4.18 The National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC)

In 2015, NDW was made chairman of the NACCC which was founded in 1999 by Bishop Dag Heward Mills. It plays a supervisory role to ensure that ministers maintain high moral standards. It defines one of its objectives as fostering close cooperation between its members and with other umbrella church organisations including the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC) and the Christian Council of Ghana (CCC). Its membership is made up mainly of Charismatic churches and its objective is to include fostering cooperation among the charismatic churches, according to Gideon Titi-Ofei, the general secretary of the NACCC.

NDW as a result of his leadership in the NACCC and being well known by successive government became a member of the Peace Council of Ghana. The Peace Council is a selection of leaders of various religious bodies in the country into an independent statutory national peace institution established in 2011. The members of the council are appointed by the president for a period of four years and made up of thirteen members from various religious group such as the Muslims, Catholics, Protestants and Charismatics. The core function of the council according to Gideon Titi-Ofei who is also a member is to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts and to build sustainable peace. NDW has been involved in

discussion to broker peace in previous national elections. However, the some have questioned the independence of the Peace Council due to the fact that they were appointed by the president and whether NDW is really representing the interest of members of the NACCC. NDW has responded to such criticism as baseless and he was only serving the national interest and the interest of peace in the nation.

4.19 The initial Internationalisation of Action Chapel International

Nicholas Duncan-Williams' journey to Nigeria to pursue Bible studies was the beginning of the internationalisation of ACI. In Nigeria, NDW met some influential American televangelists who exposed him to the Western type of the Pentecostal/charismatic movement. Benson Idahosa, who had connections with international televangelists, exposed his students to the international connections of the charismatic movement. In the early day of ACI and due to the relationship between NDW and Idahosa. Many American preachers who visited Idahosa in Benin City, Nigeria were also made to visit Accra and ACI. This resulted in world renowned charismatic preachers and their teachings being identified with NDW and ACI. Among these included Oral Roberts, TL Osborne, Lester Sumrull, Derek Prince among others. Such visits attracted the Christian community in the country to ACI and the large crowds that gather and the impression made on these foreign preachers made them take videos and news of ACI, NDW and Ghana to their home media. NDW therefore started enjoying preaching invitations around the world particularly in the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

In the more recent history of the church, the church's organisation of programmes such as the 'Impact Convention' has brought some American preachers, including T.D. Jakes and Paula White, John Francis, Noel Jones to the church. Impact Convention has also become one of

the means that the church relates with the political elite of Ghana. On many occasions, sitting presidents and other influential politicians in Ghana have participated in the programme. Other Ghanaians and non-Ghanaians have travelled all over the world to Ghana to participate in the programme.

The creation of the Ghanaian diaspora in our contemporary world, beginning in the 1970s was also important for the internationalisation of ACI. In the late 1970s and late 1980s, many Ghanaians left the shores of Ghana to seek greener pastures elsewhere. Many of them ended up in countries in Western Europe, including the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Netherlands, and Italy. Most of them carried the new religious fervour with them. They became the precursors in the extension of the Ghanaian charismatic movement to Western Europe. In the case of the United Kingdom, a branch of ACI had already been established in 1986. This drive was motivated by the zeal to bring the Gospel to Ghanaians in the diaspora and also engage in reverse mission. According to NDW:

We realised that a significant number of Ghanaians were leaving the shores of Ghana in search of greener pastures. It, therefore, became imperative for us to send the gospel to them wherever they went. I have always found the urgency to send the gospel everywhere in the world. It was, therefore, a good opportunity for me to send pastors to many countries in Europe to begin the church.³²³

Conclusion

Action Chapel International has gone through many phases. The survival of the church in the face of political difficulties and internal schisms attests to the entrenchment of the charismatic movement in Ghana. Since the ACI gained ground early in the charismatic movement in Ghana, many of the newer charismatic movements have taken inspiration from NDW. The courage of NDW to start an independent church and to be able to attract world

³²³ Interview with Nicholas Duncan-Williams at the Spintex road on 29 November 2017.

renown preachers emboldened a lot of the younger ministers who felt they were called into the ministry. This begun the proliferation of charismatic ministries in Ghana. They take a cue from the humble beginnings of NDW and started their ministries in Cinema Hall, Classrooms, Warehouses, Store fronts and many other locations that did not require cost. Others also took inspiration in the fact that NDW was not educated but has trusted the Lord to achieve such a feat so they could also do same. What the next chapter will do is to provide a critical analysis of the theology of NDW and how that cascades into our understanding of the charismatic movement in Ghana.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE THEOLOGY OF DUNCAN-WILLIAMS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Church history presents four sources of Christian theology – revelation, Bible, experience, and reason. These sources are not mutually exclusive but are complementary. In this section, I will discuss the various sources of Christian theology, and then I will describe the nature of Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ theology and analyse it. Specifically, I will look at his theology of the Spirit, Salvation, the church, and other things. I argue that NDW’s theology is embedded in orality and narrativity. This is because he does not have extensive theological or academic training to engage in sophisticated and intellectual theologizing. Even so, he has written some non-academic books (usually with the help of highly educated members of his church) that seek to unpack his theological orientation. This is not to say that it is easy to glean from his teachings and writings the distinctiveness of his theology. This difficulty may partly be because Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ theology is an amalgamation of the teachings of some American televangelists and his personal experiences as a Christian within the African context.

5.1.1 Sources of Theology

There is considerable discussion among Christian theologians about revelation as a source of knowledge about God. The discussions have centred on questions such as: to what extent can God be known? Can revelation be authentic knowledge? Or as has been suggested: is the Bible a revelation of how to be saved or a revelation of what is to be known? Responses to these questions have come in different forms of revelation, which, as Alister McGrath argues, are complementary rather than mutually exclusive.³²⁴ The first form of this is revelation as doctrine. Here, the basic argument is that revelation states axiomatic truths that must not be

³²⁴ Alister E. McGrath. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1994), 152-157.

contested. Revelation states a proposition that must be accepted in the construction of Christian doctrine. The finite dimension of human beings informs the centrality of revelation in Christian theology. Consequently, a theologian cannot depend entirely on reason to explicate or comprehend the Christian Faith. It is on the basis of the limitedness of the human mind that theology has been defined as 'faith seeking understanding.'³²⁵ Thus, the centrality of faith as a priori to knowledge is aptly captured as follows: "For I do not seek to understand so that I may believe; but I believe so that I may understand."³²⁶

The place of revelation in theology is also based on the assumption that it is only through the continuing direction of the Holy Spirit that genuine theological work can be done.³²⁷ For Charismatic Christians, the basic text that expresses the place of the Holy Spirit in illuminating the mind of a Christian about God and His creation is, "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth."³²⁸ This avers the Charismatic Christian belief that all knowledge of God comes by way of revelation and is constructed from the perspective of the theocentric. This perception of revelation has not gone unscathed from criticism. Some scholars have argued that it is dogmatic and intellectually unstimulating. It is also believed to objectify God, obscuring in the process the historical and personal relation God has with his creation. There is yet another notion of revelation which emphasizes the centrality of experience. Here the experience of the individual is important in understanding the dynamics of Christian theology. But this aspect of revelation has been severely critiqued. In its place,

³²⁵ Anselm of Canterbury, *Proslogion*, trans. M. J. Charlesworth in *The Major Works*, ed. Brian Davies and G. R. Evans (NY: Oxford University Press, 1998).

³²⁶ Anselm of Canterbury, *Proslogion*, 5.

³²⁷ J. Rodman Williams. *Renewal Theology: System Theology from a Charismatic Perspective*, Three Volumes in One. (Zondervan: Michigan, 1996), 21.

³²⁸ Holy Bible, John 16:13.

Pannenberg³²⁹ has offered an alternative. He argues that revelation should be conceptualized from the perspective of history. Accordingly, the incarnation of Jesus Christ marked the highest level of revelation, which saw God entering the domain of humanity – space and time. It is a revelation that has sustained the prominent place given to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In this sense, revelation is shifted from the domain of an individual's experience to that of a historical episode that has universal appeal.³³⁰

John Calvin stated clearly that knowledge for the construction of Christian theology could be gleaned from basically two sources: nature and revelation. He was of the view that through nature, one could obtain a broad, general knowledge of God, which form of knowledge, he argues, is universal and explains the existential fact of the knowledge of God among all creation. On this basis, he affirmed the religiosity embedded in the mind of the human being. No society is bereft of the knowledge of God. He was, however, quick to point out that natural knowledge of God does not necessarily lead to the redemptive knowledge of God. Natural knowledge of God will lead human beings to search for God, but it will not guarantee that the search will culminate in the worship of the true God – which is redemptive knowledge. Calvin, therefore, concluded that it is through the revelation of God through Jesus and through scriptures alone that one can be saved. Thus, redemptive knowledge of God is embodied in the person and work of Jesus Christ, and revealed through the Bible alone. According to Calvin, this revealed knowledge of God is embodied in the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus, which is foundational to salvation.³³¹

³²⁹ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993).

³³⁰ Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Revelation in Early Christianity," in G.R. Evans (ed.), *Christian Authority*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 76-85.

³³¹ John Calvin, *Compend of the Institute of Christian Religion*. (London: Lutterworth Press, 1964).

The Bible constitutes an important source of Christian theology. The Bible is considered the inspired word of God that is both inerrant and infallible. For NDW, the Bible is treated as a living text that can transform the lives of Christian converts. In many cases, as I observed, NDW engages in less of a systematic theology of the Bible. Sometimes scriptures are selected to fulfil a particular teaching, either on marriage, prosperity, and tithing.

The other source for the formulation of Christian theology is reason. Since human beings are rational, it is to be expected that reason should have a major role to play in theology. The premise of reason is based on the understanding that there is certainly basic and objective knowledge of God that can be explicated, and that any rational person who is willing to think clearly will arrive at this truth.³³² There has, however, been considerable debate within Christian theology concerning what that role might be. Three broad categories of positions can be discerned.³³³ The invocation of reason, as opposed to rationality, as a source of Christian theology is an admission of the ability of human beings to reason through nature and revelation to arrive at the conclusion on the existential reality of God.

The third source of Christianity theology is tradition. The word ‘tradition’ implies not merely something that is handed down, but an active process of reflection by which theological or spiritual insights are valued, assessed, and transmitted from one generation to another.³³⁴ This means that for theology to do its work adequately, there is also the need for familiarity with the history of the church. This means particularly the affirmations of church councils, creeds,

³³² J. Rodman Williams. *Renewal Theology: System Theology from a Charismatic Perspective* (Three Volumes in One). (Zondervan: Michigan, 1996), 36.

³³³ McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 182.

³³⁴ McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 188.

and confessions, which contain the way the church has at various times expressed its tenets.³³⁵ The recourse to 'tradition' is argued on the assumption that scripture is silent on a number of points – but God had providentially arranged for the second source of revelation to supplement this deficiency. In other words, a belief, which is not to be found in scripture, may thus, on the basis of this notion of dual-source theory, be justified by an appeal to an unwritten tradition. Tradition required the supplementation of the voice from the past. Nevertheless, there have been many challenges to the appeal to tradition. Some theologians dismissed the credibility of tradition as a viable source of doing theology.

Religious experience is another important source for Christian theology. This source of Christian theology assumes that a personal experience of salvation in Christ is necessary for effective theology. The essential reality of knowing human finitude and the inevitability of death makes a person trust in Christ who has overcome all human limitations. Martin Luther is reported to have said, “experience makes a theologian.”³³⁶ The idea that human religious experience can act as a foundational resource for Christian theology has obvious attractions. It suggests that Christian theology is concerned with human experience – something which is common to all humanity, rather than the exclusive preserve of a small group. To those who are embarrassed by the ‘scandal of particularity’, the approach has many merits. It suggests that all the world religions are basically human responses to the same religious experience – often referred to as ‘a core experience of the transcendent.’ Theology is thus the Christian attempt to reflect upon this common human experience, in the knowledge that the same experience underlies the other world religions.³³⁷ However, the idea of common experience

³³⁵ Williams, *Renewal Theology*, 24.

³³⁶ McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 194.

³³⁷ McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 195.

has been critiqued as vague. It is argued that experience cannot by itself be regarded as a reliable theological source; it must be interpreted and corrected by theology. What is more important is how experience is critically and accurately used in theology.³³⁸

5.1.2 Experience informed theology of Duncan-Williams

Having established the multiple sources used in constructing Christian theology, it is important to show how these sources reflect the theology of NDW. It must be pointed out that because of his lack of education, NDW's theology drifts heavily towards experience, particularly his personal experiences, their socio-historical contexts, and religious pragmatism. Very often, his experiences are extrapolated into the construction of his theology. In most cases, the extemporaneous nature of his sermons (as opposed to the liturgical structure of preaching) is defined in terms of the living presence of the Holy Spirit. Similarly, the historic accomplishment of some earlier Pentecostal leaders, including Charles Parham, are invoked to validate a particular theology. Testimonies are therefore a critical source and means of validation of theology. I will expound further on this when we look at the type of hermeneutical approach that NDW invokes to do theology.

5.2 *Charismatic theology: Focus on Nicholas Duncan-Williams*

This section provides a survey of the nature and sources of the theology of NDW. I will only flesh out the multiple influences on his theology. I will discuss how the Bible, the Akan primal worldview, and the socio-political conditions of Ghana in part influence the theology of NDW. I will argue that the orality of his theology distilled through songs and testimonies helps him to be innovative and creative in fine-tuning his message to reflect the needs of his congregation. Orality also makes his teachings flexible and amenable to changes. More importantly, it creates a social space for his congregation to interact with each other. His

³³⁸ Bernard Cooke, "The Experiential 'Word of God'," in Leonard Swidler, ed., *Consensus in Theology? A Dialogue with Hans King and Edward Schillebeeckx*. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980), 72.

ability to synthesize the Akan primal worldview and the Gospel makes his theology appealing to his congregants – leading to NDW’s contextual theology.

5.2.1. Orality of charismatic theology

Orality as a means of theologizing is a fundamental quality of Pentecostal spirituality.³³⁹

Hollenweger has observed that:

Orality of liturgy; narrativity of theology and witness; maximum participation at the levels of reflection, prayer and decision making and therefore a form of community that is reconciliatory; inclusion of dreams and visions into personal and public forms of worship; they function as a kind of icon for the individual and the community; an understanding of the body/mind relationship that is informed by experiences of correspondence between body and mind; the most striking application of this insight is the ministry of healing by prayer.³⁴⁰

For Charismatic Christians, orality is a characteristic expression of spirituality.³⁴¹ Charismatics have a theological bent towards orality, and this could refer to practices such as dancing, spontaneous singing and dancing, personal experiences and testimonies, stories built around founders, indigenous folklore and pre-Christian narratives of founders and congregants. These are not written-down liturgies and orders of worship. The orality of charismatic theology deviates from the systematic theology of the historic church. It is orality that bridges the gap between religious experience and the extemporaneous proclivities of CM. The orality of CM in Ghana finds resonance in the orality of most Ghanaian cultures. Among the Akan, for example, religion as an analytical category does not exist. In the same way, the idea of religion as a distinct set of beliefs, which has been theologized in a very

³³⁹ Walter Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997).

³⁴⁰ Walter Hollenweger, ‘After Twenty Years’ Research on Pentecostalism,’ *International Review of Mission*, (75)297 (1986), 6.

³⁴¹ David Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Pentecostalism in Latin America*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 163.

systematic way did not exist prior to the imposition of colonial rule. Theology among the Akan flowed from praxis to theory. There was also no compartmentalization of life between the sacred and the mundane. The two were intertwined and influenced each other. Orality – which involves the passing on of tradition from one generation to another – was key in ensuring the continuity of a belief. This tendency of pre-colonial Akans towards orality found expression in praxis. Among many pre-colonial societies in Ghana, including the Akan, conscious effort was made by the older generation to pass on beliefs and appropriate norms to the younger generation. This achieved the enshrining of such beliefs in stories, myths, legends, and other folklore. Because orality was fundamental, there was much improvisation in the process of passing on cultural norms to succeeding generations. It is important to point out that the pre-colonial religion of the Akan of Ghana, just like other African groups, was based on pragmatism. The Akan were more concerned about what worked to make life better. They were not so much concerned with theory as they were with praxis. It is in this light that we find the critique of Louis Brenner cogent when he accused Western Europeans of imposing a conceptualization of religion that was based on a systematization of beliefs. Brenner notes that the theorizing of religion as an analytical category that could be studied was an European imposition that obscured the African understanding of religion.³⁴²

The indigenous religion of the Akan and its contribution to shaping religious ideas and practices have deeply affected the Charismatic movement in Ghana. In Akan indigenous religion, practice and pragmatism were considered *a priori* to religious beliefs and theory. The emphasis of the Akan indigenous religious system was what works, as opposed to the rigid cognitive task of developing theories. It is in this light that we should understand why

³⁴² Louis Brenner, “Religious” Discourses in and about Africa’, in Karin Barber and P.F. de Moraes Farias (Eds.), *Discourse and its Disguise: The Interpretation of African Oral Texts*. (Birmingham: University of Birmingham Centre of West African Studies, 1989), 87-105.

NDW, an Akan and with less education, places emphasis on his oratorical skills and ability to improvise during preaching. At prayer sessions, one can easily identify the spontaneity and orality of Charismatic theology. During prayers, members pray together, intersperse their prayer with speaking in tongues, clapping of hands, in some case ‘shooting’ the devil, pacing up and down, and sometimes freely showing emotions such as weeping, laughing, and expressing signs of ecstasy.³⁴³ Thus, to better appreciate the orality of Charismatics, including the theology of NDW, we must keep the orality of the Akan culture in mind.

NDW, as I have established, did not have the benefit of thorough theological training, compared to his counterparts in the historic churches. He had had a stint of less than a year of Bible education at Idahosa’s Christ for All Nation Bible School. Even though he spoke in tongues when he had oral examinations, he still passed. Likewise, his sermons are usually unwritten, and they are interspersed with prophecy, songs, and exorcism. The orality of NDW is such that it helps in improvisation during a sermon. As I have argued, the centrality of orality in the theology of NDW is largely due to his charismatic spirituality and his basic western education. He lacks the theological sophistication to engage in the systematization of theology.

Related to oral theology is the emphasis charismatics place on experience. Among charismatics, experience is very important. It is through experience, particularly with the Holy Spirit, that one gets initiated into Pentecostalism, which is signalled by speaking in tongues. Experiencing the Holy Spirit in Charismatic Christianity is also a way of

³⁴³ Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel*. (London; Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017), 19.

demonstrating spiritual gifts. Sometimes this is connected to the practice of the leadership laying hands on the person. It is common for Charismatic Christians in Ghana to spend every last Friday of the month in a vigil where they pray for the gifts of the Spirit for congregants. In some churches, like the ACI, every fortnight is dedicated to a vigil and praying for the gifts of the Spirit. The leader of the Church is important in the dispensation of the gifts. This is usually done through the laying on of hands and exorcism. The overriding importance of experience in Charismatic Christianity in Ghana is such that doctrine is in a third-order moment of an implicit theological method that emerges from and aims at the experience of worship rather than systematization, abstraction, and formalization.³⁴⁴ In ACI, experiencing the Spirit through speaking in tongues, healing, prophecy, ecstasy, and spontaneity in dancing and singing is evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The emphasis placed on experience and orality captures the main characteristic of ACI. This overwhelming emphasis on pneumatological experience is partly a result of the Charismatics' lack of appreciation for intellectual theology and of NDW's inability to express his theology in a more sophisticated manner. In fact, Archer has observed that the dependence on orality is a major feature of Charismatic Christianity because Charismatics lack the intellectual ability and academic sophistication required to produce an acceptable enduring theology.³⁴⁵ But it is also the orality of the theology of Charismatic Christianity that has partly contributed to the growth of the movement globally and in Ghana.

In the case of NDW, he combines the orality and narrativity of his theology with writing non-academic books. The books are not theologically sophisticated or intellectually stimulating.

³⁴⁴ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 19.

³⁴⁵ Kenneth J. Archer, "A Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology: Method and Manner," *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 9(3) (2007), 302.

They are usually motivational and devotional in orientation, meant to inspire faith. In most cases, he allegorises biblical narratives. There are many instances where the stories of the Bible are so allegorised that one loses track of their original intent. The evidence of his non-academic books, and his orality and narrativity, primarily consisting of testimonies, songs, and prayers, clearly reveal NDW's theological leaning. What is apparent is that his theologies are a fusion of his experiences, theological influences from foreign preachers, and his environment. This assertion is not to undermine the agency that NDW exercises in advancing theological assumptions, but rather to show that he has appropriated teachings from many sources.

NDW's narrative theology has a social effect. It creates an atmosphere of inter-personal relationship with the congregation. The orality of his theology also affords him the opportunity to improvise as he delivers his sermons. In other words, the absence of a written liturgy allows NDW to incorporate new ideas in his preaching. The 'call and response' patterns incorporated in his teaching sustain the attention and focus of his congregation.

With regard to the orality of his theology, NDW himself has stated that:

It is always important to create space for the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is dynamic in His engagement with the Church. If you have your sermon written, then it becomes intellectual exercise instead of allowing the Holy Spirit to take charge. The written sermon is dull and uninspiring. It does not improvise and engages the congregation. There are times you go to some of the old churches in Ghana, and you find people sleeping while the sermon is going on. As I said, the Holy Spirit must not be caged in our written sermon. We must allow Him to work.³⁴⁶

NDW's orality feeds the perception that charismatics are more engaging in their sermons than historic mission churches in Ghana. His ability to engage the congregation through slogans such as, 'Say I receive it,' 'Say I am a winner,' and 'Shout a big Amen' and so on

³⁴⁶ Interview with Duncan-Williams at Spintex road on December 4, 2017.

have ways not only of capturing the attention of the congregation, but also of reaffirming their faith in the Lord. The orality of his sermons also engenders group solidarity in his church. Phrases like ‘Give your neighbour high five.’ ‘shake hands of your neighbour,’ ‘Say to your neighbour, “you are blessed,”’ ‘If you believe and receive it, just give the Lord a clap,’ and so on are strategically developed to ensure that members of the congregation interact with each other. This creates an environment for people to communicate and engage with each other. A congregant at ACI commented about such practices as follows:

I have lived in the United Kingdom before. And whenever I was invited to any of the so-called reformed Anglican churches, they had a practice of allowing members a few minutes to say hello to each other. Sometimes it becomes boring because you always receive the same uninspiring questions like, ‘how are you?’ and ‘where are you from?’ And for an African, you always get bogged down by having to tell people where you come from. But this practice is so artificial that you hardly feel the sense of community. But here, you always have the chance to be part of the sermon. You say after the preacher faith-affirming words and declarations. You feel you are part of the service.³⁴⁷

NDW’s incorporation of ‘din’ into his oral liturgy is yet another way of engaging his congregation during church service. ACI and other charismatic churches have a practice of din. They usually shout so loud to hoot at the devil or even shame the demonic powers and principalities. Considering the impact of din, a congregant said the following:

When I shout at the devil; when I shout to claim my blessings; when I shout to take charge of the spiritual realm, I feel relieved. I feel I have overcome. The devil and his host get confused when we shout. The Lord wins victory for us, as we shout.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁷ Interview with George Asare on phone on December 3, 2017.

³⁴⁸ Interview with Vida Kumah in Accra on December 5, 2017.

At one service, *din* went on for about ten minutes. It was believed that as congregants made noise, they assumed control over the spirit world. Congregants of ACI believe that Africa is suffused with spirits – territorial spirits, ancestral spirits, witchcraft, and dwarfs (*mmoatia* in Twi) – in Akan folklore, these are humanlike creatures who are generally skilled in endowing human beings with spiritual powers. They see themselves as being in a constant struggle against these spiritual forces, which are considered to influence life negatively. Nicholas Duncan-Williams' ability to show or express himself as the intercessor of his congregation and his members reinforces the authority he commands. NDW explained the importance of *din* as follows:

There are powers, principalities and other forces that the Christian must fight. These forces never cease scheming to ruin the life of Christians. They are in in the families, communities and at the national level. The shouting, jumping, clapping etc from the logical point of view may sound nonsense, but as an intercessor and prayer warrior for the nation, I have no doubt that such actions sends a strong warning to the camp of spiritual enemies.³⁴⁹

NDW's orality theology allows him to reinforce Akan beliefs in the malevolent acts of evil spiritual forces without striving to provide extensive evidence from the Bible. Being Akan just as many of his congregants are, NDW reinforces the Akan worldview through oral accounts to lead members into 'spiritual battles.' This also allows him to develop his oratorical skills.

His orality also elicits interjections from the congregation while preaching is in session. It is not uncommon at ACI for congregants to interject preaching with reinforcing expressions like, 'Preach on!', 'Prophecy, Man of God,' and so on. There is, therefore, a continuous flow of communication between NDW and his congregants during church service.

³⁴⁹ Interview with Duncan-Williams at Spintex road on December 4, 2017.

5.2.2 Nicholas Duncan-Williams and the Bible

Related to NDW's theology of orality is his use of the Bible as the primary source of authority in theologizing. Since the introduction of the Bible and its translation into many Ghanaian languages by the missionaries, many Ghanaian charismatic leaders have been encouraged to engage the Bible for themselves. Kingsley Larbi³⁵⁰, Allan Anderson³⁵¹ and Lamin Sanneh³⁵² have argued that the translation of the Bible was primarily responsible for the emergence of African Independent Churches like the Musama Disco Christo Church by Jehu Appiah, and the Twelve Apostles Church by Grace Tani and John Nachabah. NDW was introduced to the Bible right after his conversion while he was admitted at Korle Bu Hospital. As he was only partially literate, he depended on the goodwill of some individuals to broaden his understanding of the contents of the Bible. His journey to Nigeria to attend Bible school marked a major turning point in his life. Although he was still not adept in reading, he was able to pick up a few things from the Bible that marked the genesis of his ministry.

He depends on the Bible as the authoritative source of his theology. He has memorized some important portions of the Bible which he uses to engage with existential challenges in life. As a young man who had just converted from his wild life to Christianity, he narrates how he engaged the Bible:

At the time of my conversion, I could not read or write. I usually had to depend on a few friends who could read to help me. I also did well to memorize a few Bible texts, which I used for prayer. I taught myself to read by reading the Bible. But after my experience in Nigeria, I came back to Ghana very determined to master the Bible.

³⁵⁰ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*.

³⁵¹ Allan Anderson, *Moya: The Holy Spirit in an African Context*. (Pretoria: South Africa, 1991).

³⁵² Lamin Sanneh, *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact*. (London: C. Hurst & Co, 1983).

Since becoming a minister, I have read and reread the Bible many times. This is because it is the foundation of my faith and my ministry.³⁵³

The use of the Bible in historic mission churches in Ghana is radically different from its use in the charismatic churches. In the historic mission churches, the Bible is considered a revelation that must be studied and expounded, and interpreted by the preacher.³⁵⁴ On the other hand, in the fast-growing Charismatic churches, the Bible is understood as a record of covenants, promises, pledges and commitment between God and his chosen.³⁵⁵ This often leads charismatic believers to maintain a conviction akin to the following: ‘The Bible is God’s word. It is meant for me. It has the power to unlock my blessing and address existential realities. As a child of God, I am to claim all the blessings in the Bible. It is the only book that speaks to my present needs. I always claim its blessings and promises. As a child of Abraham, I claim his blessings through the Bible.’³⁵⁶ In many charismatic churches, the Bible also becomes a weapon for spiritual warfare. Some portions in the book of Psalms are read repeatedly to declare blessings for oneself or invoke curses on a real or perceived enemy. Unlike in a post-enlightenment Western world where the Bible is subject to critical review and analysis, in the case of charismatic Christianity, the prior assumption is that the Bible is inerrant and inspired. According to Keith Warrington, Pentecostals largely agree with many other evangelicals concerning the inspiration and authority of the Bible. Because of its divine source, Pentecostals have always revered its content.³⁵⁷ No attempt is made to critique it. Allan Anderson makes it clear that most Pentecostals worldwide rely on an experiential

³⁵³ Interview with Duncan-Williams at Spintex road on December 4, 2017.

³⁵⁴ Paul Gifford, “The Bible in Africa: A Novel Usage in Africa’s New Churches,” *Bulletin of the SOAS*, (71)2 (2008), 206.

³⁵⁵ Gifford, “The Bible in Africa,” 206.

³⁵⁶ This is my own construction of how some Charismatic leaders utilise the Bible.

³⁵⁷ Keith Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter*, (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 181.

rather than literal understanding of the Bible, and it is therefore not very meaningful to discuss the interpretation of the text alone. They believe in spiritual illumination, the experiential immediacy of the Spirit who makes the Bible alive and therefore different from any other book.³⁵⁸ Thus, in many cases, before a preacher preaches, he or she will ask the congregation to raise their Bible to show that they have been committed to reading it. Also, in charismatic circles, the Bible is believed to be the embodiment of the will, promises, and motives of God for human beings. Thus, the Bible serves as the basis for charismatic Christianity. It is also used during marriage ceremonies, and it is common practice for the family of the bride to request that a Bible be included among the items demanded for a dowry presentation. This practice thrives on the belief that the Bible has all the answers to problems related to marriage and life. Thus, at a 'traditional' marriage ceremony, which precedes what is popularly referred to as the 'church wedding', the couple would be given a Bible, and an officiating Pastor, assuming the role of a counsellor, would tell the couple something along the following lines: 'This Bible that is being handed to you, don't keep it under your pillow. Read it every day. Read it before problems. Read it when problems emerge. If there is a problem, the first point of call should be the Bible. Do not forsake the Bible.' In such gatherings, the Bible is given to the bride. Similarly, it is not infrequent for a Bible to be presented as a birthday gift. Besides, during the swearing-in of the president of Ghana, and of ministers and parliamentarians, those who profess the Christian faith are normally required to take their oaths of service on the Bible. Likewise, during court proceedings, the defendant and the plaintiff are both asked to swear on the Bible. This function of the Bible compels the persons swearing by it to remain true to what they do and say.

³⁵⁸ Allan Heaton Anderson, *Pentecostalism: An Introduction*, 222.

Recently, the fact that people still tell lies after they have sworn on the Bible has compelled some individuals to call for a replacement of the Bible as the basis of truth-telling. This call, hinged on the assumption that often stiff-necked recalcitrants fail to live by the oaths that they have sworn on the Bible, advocates for political elites and other public office holders should swear instead by some of the ‘powerful’ deities in the country. For instance, a few years ago the erstwhile president, Jerry John Rawlings, asked politicians whom he considered corrupt to swear by Anto Nsu Nyama, a very famous deity in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

5.2.3 The Hermeneutics and liturgical order of Nicholas Duncan-Williams

The hermeneutics of NDW conforms with what Allan Anderson refers to in *African Reformation* as the ‘literalistic or concordistic approach’ to the Bible.³⁵⁹ This approach consists of people taking the Bible in its plain form and matching it to real life situations. Once a common ground is found between these comparisons, it is believed that God is speaking.

In an interview with NDW on his interpretation of the scriptures, he asserted:

My approach to the Bible is simple, ‘the Bible must speak to the situation’, and it is the work of the Holy Spirit to inspire the relevant scripture for the practical situation. When I read the Bible, I use it the best way I can and know to do, I apply it to my situation and the situation of others. It must be directly applicable to the situation at hand. It must be able to address the situation of poverty, sickness, barrenness, unemployment and the mundane circumstances of the people of God. ‘The Bible is our answer book’.³⁶⁰

Carlos Mesters³⁶¹ says that when ‘common people’ read the Bible a ‘dislocation’ occurs and emphasis is not placed on the text’s meaning in itself but rather on the meaning the text has for the people reading it. This kind of dislocation leads to the practice called ‘allegorisation’

³⁵⁹ Allan H. Anderson, *African Reformation*. (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2001), 220.

³⁶⁰ Interview with Duncan-Williams on 20th December, 2017 at Action Chapel, Spintex Road.

³⁶¹ Carlos Mester, *The Use of the Bible in Christian Communities of the Common People*. (New York: Orbis.1993), 185.

or ‘typological’ interpretation, where the interpreter draws connections between events in the Bible and immediate circumstances.

NDW and most charismatic leaders practice a type of hermeneutics that leans towards allegorising biblical characters. Usually, biblical characters and their experiences are reinterpreted to reflect contemporary issues of life. For example, in teaching about the need for Christians to guard against any activity that would put their salvation at risk, the story of the Good Samaritan, which has the character moving from Jerusalem to Jericho is given a different interpretation. According to NDW,³⁶² the journey of the character from Jerusalem to Jericho is a metaphor of a man backsliding. This is because Jerusalem is believed to be the city of God, while Jericho is a city of ‘pagans’. In applying this to the life of a Christian, NDW preached that Christians should not leave the Church (ACI) for any other religion since that would imply backsliding.

Mark Stibbe introduces a framework in his article that sheds important understanding on charismatic theology.³⁶³ He argues that the first characteristic of charismatic hermeneutics would be ‘this: that’, which as a hermeneutical process often begins with the Holy Spirit working upon a person’s heart and impressing him or her with a burning sense of the relevant scriptures for his or her situation. For example, in Acts 2:1-40, Peter’s explanation for the outpouring of the Spirit (This) is as a result of the prophecy in Joel 2:28 (That). He goes ahead to outline seven different readings from Acts 2:1-40 which forms a framework of the

³⁶² Sermon notes of Patrick Josiah, Sermon title: Vigilance, preached by Duncan-Williams at Action Chapel, Airport in March, 1989.

³⁶³ Mark Stibbe, “This is That: Some Thoughts Concerning Charismatic Hermeneutics,” *Anvil: An Anglican Evangelical Journal for Theology and Mission*, (15)3(1998), 181-193.

way charismatics read and make meaning of the scriptures. Charismatic hermeneutics is thus guided by the following readings: the first is an Experiential reading which insists that for anyone to interpret the scripture prophetically, one must be baptized in the Holy Spirit. The second is the Analogical reading where Peter interprets the scripture analogically by relating Joel 2:28 to Acts 2:17. This analogical method is a significant characteristic of charismatic hermeneutics. Charismatic hermeneutics begins with the story of what God is doing now and then proposes analogies with the over-arching 'meta narrative' of the scripture. The question is, 'Is there a story in scripture of what the Spirit is doing right now in my life and my community?' The third is a Communal reading which emphasises the fact that Peter's exposition was undertaken in a community and for a community. It is not an isolated ivory tower enterprise. Charismatic hermeneutics takes place within a community of shared experience. The fourth is a Christological reading which makes it clear from Acts 2:14 that Peter's interpretation is Christocentric. Peter's experience of the Spirit led him into a thoroughly comprehensive Christology. Charismatic hermeneutics is heavily Christocentric. The fifth is an Emotional reading. Peter's address was an emotional address which led to an emotional response. In Acts 2:37 the scripture says 'the crowd were cut to the heart' as a result of Peter's address. Charismatic exegetes rightly advocate that the emotions must be involved in our reading of scripture and indeed our response to scripture. Biblical interpretation is therefore not a matter of the mind alone, it is a matter for the mind and heart. The sixth is a Practical reading. In Acts 2:37 when Peter concluded the sermon, the crowd expressed the need to appropriate what they had heard: What shall we do? Peter's exposition was a deep desire for an active response. If the interpretation and exposition of scripture do not at the very least, offer the possibility of a life-changing encounter with the Spirit of God, then the charismatics will be profoundly disappointed. The seventh is an Eschatological reading. In Acts 2, Peter had an intense sense that 'the end is nigh'. The phrase, 'the latter

rain' suggests eminent end and charismatic hermeneutics is keenly emphatic on the heightened sense of Christ's return. Stibbe's framework provides an ample illustration of the key tenets of NDW hermeneutics.

5.2.3 NDW's teaching on ancestral spirits

Not only does NDW analogize some characters of the Bible, but he also uses the Akan primal worldview to engage the Gospel. The reference to the existential reality of malevolent spirits in Akan cosmogony and the power of Jesus over the super-sensory world of the Akan provides a legitimizing force for NDW. Besides, his ability to pray and take charge of the realms of the spirit enhances his credibility before his congregation. So, while his reference to the familiar terrain of the Akan primal worldview boosts his popularity, NDW stresses the power of Jesus Christ to subvert the mediatory role of the deities and ancestors in matters of salvation. In the theology of NDW, ancestors, though believed to be live the spirit world, could exert influences on Christians. He profiles ancestral spirits as demonic, and equally denounces every efforts Christians invest in seeking help from their ancestors. NDW's renunciation of ancestors is because he believes the ancestors are incapable of offering salvation to anyone alive. He condemns the ancestors as part of the malevolent spirits that Christian need to ward off with prayers. In all this, NDW turns the Akan belief on the ability of ancestors to positively influence the lives of the "living on earth" on its head.

Thus, in the theology of NDW, the ancestors and deities are stripped of their salvific power, and that power is transferred to Jesus Christ. NDW also becomes the mediator in interceding for his congregation against the malevolent spirits of the Akan. There is, therefore, some degree of ambivalence in terms of how the Akan primal worldview is appropriated. On the

one hand, the ability of NDW to prove the existence of Akan malevolent spirits and his ability to demonstrate power over them enhances his popularity. It also reinforces his credibility as a prayer warrior. On the other hand, the existence of ancestors as the part of the malevolent spirits is considered the antithesis of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Such inadvertent exaggeration of the powers of malevolent spirits could lure some members of ACI to secure the service of ritual functionaries, particularly if NDW failed to provide the needed help. In the end, there remains tension about the existence of malevolent spirits.

Even so, it appears that the articulation of the existence of malevolent spirits gets the congregants of ACI to depend on NDW as they engage the daily realities of life. One respondent had this to say regarding her confidence in NDW's ability to intercede on her behalf:

As you may be aware, there are just too many spirits in our world. Sometimes it is not that you cannot pray, but you also need the service of a person who is matured in the things of the spirit to complement your effort. Archbishop (NDW) has over the years showed himself credible as the apostle of Strategic prayer. He intercedes for the nation and individuals as well. While I do not lean on him, as though he were my God, I trust that consulting him on some spiritual matters is never out of place.³⁶⁴

The perception among most members of ACI that NDW is able to deal with the demonic forces of the realm of the spirit has earned him the titles 'Apostle of Strategic prayer' and 'Papa' among his congregants. The name 'Papa' positions NDW in a paternalistic role over his members. His words are considered sacrosanct on all important matters. Being the founder of the church, the name 'Papa' does not only affirm his leadership status but also allows him to claim the undivided loyalty of his congregants. In some cases, he continues to

³⁶⁴ Interview with Deladem Afolabi in Accra on December 5, 2017.

receive a 'tithe' from his protégés who also call him 'Papa'. The concept of 'spiritual father and spiritual son/daughter' will be discussed further in this work. However, in the Akan concept of coming into being, it is believed that a child gets his spirit from his father. Therefore, the father is expected to provide spiritual protection for his child. In pre-colonial Akan society, if a child frequently fell sick, the first point of divination to decipher the cause of the illness was to inquire about the relationship the child had with his father. If the relationship was poor, a ritual was performed to reconnect the child to the father.³⁶⁵ Good fathers, upon their death, also become ancestors who are occasionally called on to help the lives of the living. Along the lines of this Akan notion of fatherhood and religion, a kind of 'personality cult' has emerged around NDW. It is also true that the image created of him as the 'Apostle of Strategic prayer' or the nation's intercessor has endeared him to powerful politicians in Ghana. He has easy access to all the presidents Ghana has had since the inauguration of the Fourth Republic in 1992. He has had audiences with presidents Jerry John Rawlings, John Agyekum Kufuor, John Evans Atta Mills, and John Dramani Mahama. These politicians also maintain a pragmatic view of their relationship with NDW, because the latter commands a huge following, which politicians count on during elections. But in relation to the idea of 'Papa', NDW tends to serve as a patron who connects loyal members to the political elites in Ghana. Consequently, a sort of 'Big Man' rule, (as this has been described), is routinized in the charismatic movement.³⁶⁶

³⁶⁵ For more on Akan notion of personhood, see: Kwame Anthony Appiah. 'Akan and Euro-American Concept of the person,' in Brown Lee M, *African Philosophy: New and Traditional Perspectives*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 13-21.

³⁶⁶ John F. McCauley, "Africa's New Big Man's Rule?: Pentecostalism and Patronage in Ghana," *African Affairs*, (123)446 (2012),1-21.

5.2.4 Other Sources theology of NDW

5.2.4.1 Songs and Music

Songs are also another source of distilling the theology of NDW. Music lies at the heart of many Akan people. They use music to express their desires and aspirations.³⁶⁷ Music has social significance as it binds people together. This is precisely because among the Akan, indigenous music is collectively owned, and the 'call and response' pattern becomes a source of ensuring mutual co-existence. It is not an exaggeration to claim that music permeates every aspect of Akan life. On the farm or when hauling the net from the sea, music serves as accompaniment. In Akan indigenous religion, music is used to arouse the deities and ancestors. At ACI, music features prominently in church services. Through music, the theology of NDW is diffused to congregants. Usually, the songs sung during worship are infused with biblical ideas and themes. While most of the songs are sung in English, the lyrics of the song reflect the worldview of Akan Cosmology. This usually reflects in Akan soteriology, which is based on material prosperity. When ACI and other charismatic churches worship and sing songs like, 'You are Lord, you are Lord, you are Lord...You are Lord, you are Lord, you are Lord...when I look at the mountains, I look at the valleys, I look at the Seas O my Lord...you are God', the song reveals the theology of supremacy of Jesus in all things among the Charismatics and in the understanding of NDW. Also songs like, 'we conquer satan, we conquer demons, we conquer principalities, we conquer power...shout halle.. hallelujah...halle ...hallelujah...' or 'Satan don fall for grand oo basha basha,' (roughly translated as, "Satan has utterly been defeated") among others depict the dual concept of God and Evil that is so prevalent in the Akan worldview. This parallelism makes identification of the theology of NDW and the CM easily recognisable and appealing to his congregants.

³⁶⁷ Assimeng, *Social Structure of Ghana*, 237.

5.2.4.2 Personal Testimonies

NDW's personal testimonies are another source of his theology. Usually, he uses his conversion experience, which involved a transition from dedication to occultic forces to Jesus to stress some of his teachings. His testimonies are usually embellished to elicit faith from his congregants and to demonstrate the power of God to defeat the devil and to save. According to Mark Cartledge, testimonies within charismatic spirituality are usually located within a narrative structure. People tell of their need and desire for God and his kingdom, how God has met and continues to meet them in their search and changes their lives in conformity with his purposes of salvation³⁶⁸. Cartledge's comment reflects the nature of Nicholas Duncan-Williams' testimony and other testimonies within CM in Ghana. According to NDW, a testimony is a personal real-life experience of the power and presence of God in the life of an individual which validates the claims of scripture: 'In my case, my initial experience with the gospel on the bed of affliction which transformed my life from a very wayward individual who indulged in all kinds of vices to a devoted Christian is a proof of God's power'³⁶⁹. This provides an undeniable proof of the reality of God. Testimonies are a key feature of charismatic spirituality and worship. Usually, NDW elides specific dates and periodization in narrating his testimonies. This frustrates attempts to accurately reconstruct testimonies through the rigors of academia. Besides, his testimonies keep being embellished as the years go by. Much as some aspects of his testimony have been captured in a book, this written account is full of gaps that allow NDW to continue to own his testimonies and use them to theologize. For a little over the two decades within which I have been with ACI, I have observed that any time NDW shared his testimonies with the church, something new was always added. In one of his sermons on, 'The Principles of Fasting,' he narrates how a

³⁶⁸ Mark J Cartledge, *Testimony: Its Importance, Place and Potential*. (Cambridge: Grove Books Limited, 2002), 3.

³⁶⁹ Interview with Duncan-Williams on 3 January 2017 at Prayer Cathedral, Spintex Road.

pastor's wife had become an instrument of the devil to frustrate his spiritual growth. According to him, the wife of a pastor of the Church of Pentecost, the church that he first joined upon conversion, posed a major hindrance to his spiritual growth as she deliberately frustrated his attempts at establishing a personal relationship with the pastor, whom he wanted as a mentor. After an intense time of prayer, and to his amazement, the lady surprisingly became nice to him and even became a member of his church later on. This incident is cited as a testimony to the fact that God answers prayer.

His articulation of his pre-Christian occultic practices in his conversion narrative become validating evidence to his theology on the spirit world and occultic forces. His ability to embellish these narratives gives him an aura of spiritual prowess before his congregants. In conversation, one of the congregants of his church commented on NDW's testimonies as follows:

Anytime I listen to Archbishop tell his conversion story, I feel God is really with him. The encounter he had with the occultic world was a preparatory ground for his ministry. It is no doubt that he has been very successful in his ministry. Indeed, his testimony is a mark of God's end-time soldier.³⁷⁰

5.2.4.3 Experiences

In addition to his testimonies, he uses some of his experiences to build his theology. For example, in one of his sermons, he claimed that while in the United States for about a month, he fasted and prayed more than he ate. In the end, God supplied all his needs and further answered some requests he had been praying about for years. He, therefore, teaches that prayer and fasting are the only potent ways of engaging with God. He shared this experience with me as follows:

You know when you tell people about prayer and fasting, it is not just a matter of theory. I have personal experiences. There have been times, through prayer and

³⁷⁰ Interview with Deladem Afolabi in Accra on December 5, 2017.

fasting, God has answered my petitions. The most spectacular one happened in the US, where I had gone for religious duty. I spent a month. But I fasted and prayed more than I ate while there. And through that God answered old petitions I had placed before him.³⁷¹

5.2.4.4 Prophecy

Prophecy is also a major source of his theology. Prophecy, which he believes to be ‘God speaking to his children in their mundane situation through individuals,’ has been a key part of Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ ministry from its beginning and has formed and shaped his theology. According to him, just as the prophetic words from Elijah, Elisha, Samuel and others in scripture were guidance in difficult times, so it is today. In difficult times and in particular situations one needs a specific word from the Spirit of the Lord in order to overcome.³⁷² Corroborating Joseph Nyarko-Antwi’s findings,³⁷³ a survey of Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ sermons from his early years in ministry reveals his encounters with Elder Sackey, Rev. McCann and Ashong Mensah, whose prophecies shaped his understanding and directed his prayer and actions. Subsequently, since the late 1990s, prophecy has become a very important part of his ministry, although he does not make open claims to have any prophetic ability as he does to have superior prayer abilities. The emphasis on prophecy later in his ministry could have been borne out of the proliferation of Neo-Charismatic prophets in the late 1990s. Upon the liberalization of the country’s media landscape, many young men with self-acclaimed prophetic gifts flooded the airwaves with their brand of ministry. Things came to a head in 2002 when there was a change in government as Rawlings, the erstwhile military leader turned civilian, stepped down after his party was defeated by the New Patriotic Party, headed by John Agyekum Kufuor. Upon coming into office in January 2001, one of the first things Kufuor did was to repeal the criminal libel law. Rawlings had enacted

³⁷¹ Interview with Duncan-Williams at Spintex road on December 4, 2017.

³⁷² Interview with Duncan-Williams at Spintex road on 3rd January, 2017.

³⁷³ Interview with Joseph Nyarko-Antwi at Spintex road on 28th November, 2016.

the criminal libel law during the military era to suppress media opposition to his government. When Kufuor lifted the restriction on the media, many young men took advantage of the situation to popularize themselves as prophets. Some of them, like Owusu Bempah, Elisha Salifu Amoako have become unofficial national prophets.

This development was a challenge to the position of NDW as the foremost charismatic leader in Ghana. His major concern was that most of these young prophets were dramatic and detailed with personal prophecies which attracted members from his church. To reinforce his position as a foremost leader of the charismatic movement in Ghana, he started making claims of having had prophecies, some of which concerned the nation. While he is careful not to popularize political prophecies, he did not miss the opportunity to use them in his sermons. Over time, the self-acclaimed prophets of the nation have run into trouble as they made enemies for themselves because they prophesied in favour of a particular politician. However, as already stated, NDW is careful about making his political prophecies public; rather, he intersperses his sermons with bits and pieces of them. For example, in a sermon, 'The Principles of Fasting,' he claimed that on the eve of Ghana's 2016 general elections, the Lord revealed to him how darkness and clouds of tension had surrounded the nation. According to him, some members of his church also had similar revelations and called upon him to intervene. In his own words: 'I asked them to remain calm but rather pray.' Accordingly, after he had prayed, he prophesied that 'Ghana would emerge out of the general elections unscathed by any tension or conflict.'

5.2.4.5 Prayer

Yet another important source of NDW's theology is prayer. He, therefore, considers himself the prayer warrior and intercessor of the nation, and has christened his church 'Prayer

Cathedral’ to reflect this view. He tells his congregants of the many hours he spends in prayer and told me that through prayers, the Lord had revealed to him the spiritual status of nations in the world. Thus, he asserted that by prayer the Lord reveals his purposes and will concerning people, places and events just as Daniel and others in scripture received the Will and Mind of God through prayer. He further states that the fact that Donald Trump invited him to pray during his inauguration proves his credibility as a ‘Man of prayer and an intercessor for nations.’ Essentially, he believes that through prayer he is able to dig into the mysteries of God and that virtually any problem in life can be resolved by prayer because prayer engages God who does not do anything but in answer to prayer.

5.2.4.6 Ghanaian Context

The theology of NDW is also influenced by his environment ie. economic and political situations in Ghana. Usually, the themes of his sermon reflect the economic and social pulse of Ghana. In a country where most of the youth are unemployed, NDW’s carefully tailored sermons are able to give them hope. For instance, his sermon, ‘Launch into the deep,’ was directed at desperate university graduates and the teeming unemployed youth in Ghana. Similarly, his sermon, ‘Let the limit be broken,’ was meant to inspire his congregation to push the frontiers of creativity and wealth creation. He is, however, very mindful of saying things about powerful politicians that would affect the favourable relationship he has with them. Unlike Pastor Mensa Otabil, who has been critical of the political leaders in Ghana, NDW has not been very critical of politicians. He hardly comments on controversial political issues, and his supposed political neutrality makes him a friend of many powerful politicians. However, he claims the space in his church to frame his sermons and theology around socio-political and economic realities in Ghana.

The sources of NDW's theology cited above do not in any way override the overall importance of the Bible to him. In other words, the Bible remains the most influential source of his theology, but his Pentecostal and Charismatic orientation predisposes him also to depend on prayer, testimonies, prophecies, and personal experiences to formulate his theology. The ultimate advantage of this is that it insulates his theology from undue criticisms and challenges from his congregants who constitute a community of the same spiritual experiences. Obviously, it is difficult to scrutinize his testimonies, prophecies, and spiritual encounters.

5.3 THE SPIRITUALITY AND THEOLOGY OF NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS

This section will look at the spirituality of NDW as a framework to analyse his theology. According to Mark J. Cartledge in his book *Encountering the Spirit*, the central motif of the charismatic tradition is the 'encounter with the Spirit' both corporately within the worshipping life of the church and individually through personal devotion and ongoing work and witness in the world. The encounter with God is the common ground of spirituality and theology. Spirituality is the encounter, theology is the attempt to understand and speak it.³⁷⁴In discussing the spirituality of NDW, I will employ the combined knowledge of Pentecostal elements and Charismatic elements because of his dual experience in both traditions and the consequent fusion of both to form his spirituality. The experience either corporately or personally resulting from the descent of the Spirit on a community is what Cartledge³⁷⁵ refers to as an encounter in terms of spirituality. Cartledge further posits that the expression of the encounter is seen in (a) Praise and Worship; (b) Inspired Speech such as Speaking in tongues, Prophecy, Word of wisdom, Word of knowledge, Discerning of spirits, Prayer, Testimonies;

³⁷⁴ Mark J. Cartledge, *Encountering the Spirit: The Charismatic Tradition*, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2006), 16.

³⁷⁵ Cartledge, *Encountering the Spirit*, 16.

(c) The Sanctified life; (d) Empowered kingdom witness; and (e) The community of Interpreters³⁷⁶. It can be adduced from Cartledge that the starting point of Charismatic Spirituality is the Spirit.

Steven J. Land in *Pentecostal Spirituality* has defined Spirituality as “the integration of beliefs and practices in the affections which are themselves evoked and expressed by those beliefs and practices.”³⁷⁷ Allan Anderson describes spirituality as “pertaining to and describing the spiritual or religious life of people and all that is affected by it or all that it affects. Spirituality can be described as people’s awareness and lived experience of God.”³⁷⁸ The Spirituality of NDW therefore has to do with his lived experience with the Holy Spirit and all that pertains to his spiritual life. To break down Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ spirituality and how that informs his theology, I will use the framework provided by Daniel E. Albrecht and Evan B. Howard³⁷⁹ in ‘Pentecostal Spirituality’ in *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*. In there, Christian spirituality is expressed as a ‘lived experience of faith’ and theology ‘examines our understanding of God’. Four elements of spirituality identified in their text which will form the framework within which we will discuss the spirituality and theology of NDW are: (a) Belief, (b) Practices, (c) Sensibilities, and (d) values.

- a) Belief is that which conditions our view of God and our approach to the work of God in our lives.

³⁷⁶ Cartledge, *Encountering the Spirit*. 18

³⁷⁷ Steve J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, (England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001). 13.

³⁷⁸ Allan Heaton Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 192.

³⁷⁹ Daniel E. Albrecht and Evan B. Howard, ‘Pentecostal Spirituality’ in Cecil M. Robeck, Jr. and Amos Yong, *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014.) 236-243.

- b) Practices are both corporate and private that serve as vehicles through which a relationship with God is mediated and which contribute to the very experience of God.
- c) Sensibilities are habitual attitudes or capacities for being affected in certain ways which predispose a given community to notice or respond to the Spirit of God in a distinct manner.
- d) Value is that which governs our sense of what is important to notice, to experience, or to do.

5.3.1 Belief

This comprises the five aspects of doctrine that directly influence Pentecostal and charismatic theology and which will be used to tease out NDW's perspectives and understanding of God. These aspects express devotion to Jesus Christ as Saviour, Spirit Baptizer, Sanctifier, Healer and soon Coming King. Charismatic faith is centrally hinged in the person and the work of Jesus Christ.

5.3.1.1 Jesus the Saviour

NDW's conversion experience continually reminds him that Jesus saves from sin, drugs, worldliness and the power of the occult. According to him, conversion introduces one into the Christian life. To say Jesus saves is an experience of change that is tangible and real in the life of an individual and the community of the 'born again'. In the theology of NDW and the CM in Ghana, those who have genuinely and truly experienced Jesus as saviour and have turned away from their old ways are born again. According to him:

When I was on admission at the Korle-Bu hospital after my crisis experience that resulted in the loss of my three fingers, Dr. Rajj an Indian expatriate doctor came to ask me to give my life to Jesus Christ. She explained the gospel to me. The Holy Spirit brought me to the point of repentance and she led me to confess Jesus as my Lord and personal saviour.

Thus, to be born again, one must have gone through the process of hearing the gospel, repenting and confessing Jesus Christ as Lord and personal saviour. This results in a transformation in the life of the individual. Henri Gooren³⁸⁰ refers to it as a ‘biographical reconstruction’. People who undergo a conversion experience literally reconstruct their lives, giving new meaning to old events and putting different emphases on the bigger ‘plot’ of their life stories.³⁸¹ Duncan-William explains that a born again person’s spirit is renewed and becomes alive to God. The person becomes a ‘new creation’ and is referred to as a believer. Within charismatic circles, a believer is one who is born again. Charismatics have built a theology on the born again experience from a number of scriptures, including John 3:1-6, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Romans 10:9,10 but the key scripture which supports the position of Jesus as saviour is Acts 4:12. NDW and charismatics maintain that the only name by which people can be saved is the name of Jesus. Eastwood Anaba, Dag Heward Mills, Robert Ampiah-kwofie and all the foremost leaders of CM in Ghana maintain that their ministry life and journey begun with the born again experience. Asamoah-Gyadu³⁸² in *African Charismatics* makes the point that CM teach that unless one can point to a definitive turning point at which one’s life was given to Christ through conversion, it is difficult to be considered a believer.

Clearly, NDW and the CM, in the spirit of exclusivism, are steeped in the theology that Jesus alone saves and without the born again experience one cannot claim to have embarked on the Christian journey.

³⁸⁰ Henri Gooren, “Conversion Narratives” in Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder (ed), *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*. (London: University of California Press, 2010.), 93.

³⁸¹ Henri Gooren, ‘Conversion Narratives’ in Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder (ed), *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*. (London: University of California Press, 2010), 93.

³⁸² Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 138.

5.3.1.2 Jesus the Baptiser of the Holy Spirit

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is the sine quo none of charismatic spirituality and theology. This is when the Holy Spirit comes upon a believer, as it happened on the day of Pentecost to the disciples. According to NDW, the baptism of the Spirit is the empowerment that the believer experiences which enables him/her to work and live for God.³⁸³ CM maintain the baptism of the Spirit as essential for every believer. This belief distinguishes the Pentecostals and charismatics from the historic churches. It also contributes in a major way to Christianity and world evangelisation. In the words of NDW:

The Baptism of the Spirit brought power and real zeal into my Christian life. I received it when I started going to the Kaneshie church of Pentecost after my conversion. In a prayer meeting, the presiding Elder requested for those who wanted the experience to come to the altar for prayer. I had at the time received some informal teaching on it so I quickly went forward to the altar to be prayed for. The Elder laid hands on us and encouraged us to ask for the fullness of the Spirit as he lays hands on us. So, I decided to pray aloud asking for the Spirit and suddenly, I felt a strong urge rise from my stomach towards my mouth and before I knew it, I was speaking in tongues.³⁸⁴

NDW's experience resonates with the experiences of many in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. Wolfgang Vondey, in *Pentecostal Theology: Living the full gospel* refers to the Baptism of the Spirit as a deep personal experience in which the regenerated and sanctified believer receives, in an unprecedented encounter with the Holy Spirit, empowerment for the Christian life.³⁸⁵ It is clear from the foregoing, that the experience is personal and comes after the conversion experience. The initial evidence of the Baptism of the Spirit is speaking in tongues. Four main scriptures form the biblical basis for this experience: Acts 2:1-21, Acts 8:5-24, Acts 10:34-48, Acts 19:1-7. These scriptures illustrate the nature of the experience and form the biblical basis for Nicholas Duncan-Williams'

³⁸³ Interview with Duncan-Williams on 3/01/17 at Prayer Cathedral, Accra.

³⁸⁴ Interview with Duncan-Williams on 3/01/17 at Prayer Cathedral, Accra.

³⁸⁵ Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 84.

theology. In Acts 8 and Acts 19 the baptism of the Spirit is received by the laying on of hands as evidenced in the testimony of NDW, but in Acts 10 and Acts 2, the Spirit descended as ‘He’ the Spirit wills, thus, people received the baptism while they heard the gospel being preached or during a time of singing.

NDW and the charismatics argue that, the experience of Spirit baptism makes the believer bold to witness Jesus as the Christ. The Baptism of the Spirit and speaking in tongues become the gateway for the manifestation of the gift of the Spirit. Robert Ampiah Kwofie, in an interview, stated that after he had received the baptism of the Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues, he had a burden and power to pray and after several hours of praying in tongues for days and months at the Achimota forest, he realised a strong manifestation of the gift of prophecy, word of knowledge and discerning of spirits, among others, in his life and ministry.³⁸⁶ Speaking in tongues is considered as a prayer language and also an inspired communication which may require interpretation.

5.3.1.3 Jesus the Sanctifier

To NDW, sanctification is the notion of being ‘set apart’ or ‘separated’ for the purpose and use of God. It is the cleansing or purity that is part of the life of a believer as a result of staying away from sinful practices. In the case of NDW, after his conversion experience, many doubted the genuineness of his claim and said, “Give him a few weeks he will go back to his smoking and womanising”. However, when they realised that he was growing stronger and stronger in his faith such observers came to admit that he had really converted. NDW, therefore, argues that sanctification is to remain faithful to your confession as a follower of Jesus Christ and to stay away from sin and worldliness.

³⁸⁶ Interview with Robert Ampiah-Kwofie on 10/01/17 at Revival City, Accra.

Sanctification validates our faith and it is a witness to the outside world that we are followers of Christ. This is demonstrated by the extent to which we allow the Holy Spirit to mould our lives as believers. Wolfgang Vondey posits that although sanctification is entirely the work of God, the Christian actively participates in the divine act in a personal and experiential manner. The experience of sanctification, therefore, advances the Pentecostal emphasis on salvation as praxis.³⁸⁷ Sanctification or holiness is an essential expression of charismatic spirituality. Mark J. Cartledge in *Encountering the Spirit* cites the words of Wesley who is noted as the key proponent of the idea of sanctification as a post-conversion experience and activity;

‘Through grace’ we ‘are saved by faith’, consisting of those two branches, justification and sanctification. By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the favour of God; by sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin, and restored to the image of God.³⁸⁸

The goal of holiness or sanctification as part of the redemption process is for believers to conform to the image of Christ. For NDW, to be a believer is to continually walk in holiness and sanctification. The church therefore, is supposed to be a community of sanctified people. Steven Land put it this way: ‘if righteousness was a right relationship and direction for life, holiness was the standard for living and the essence of the Christian life. Desire for sin was to be crucified, deed of the flesh mortified and sinful stains and tendencies cleansed’.³⁸⁹ Thus, sanctification is the refining work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer that makes him or her exhibit Christ-like character.

³⁸⁷ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 59.

³⁸⁸ Cartledge, *Encountering the Spirit*, 90.

³⁸⁹ Steven Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*. (England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 89.

5.3.1.4 Jesus the Healer

Healing is considered an essential part of basic Christianity and must be part of Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity. The charismatics, in particular, consider themselves restorationists and, in contrast to cessationists, they believe in the present-day manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit, including healing. This position is based on scriptures like Mark 16:18 and James 5:14-16. In the words of Wolfgang Vondey, 'Pentecostal theology cannot be cessationist since a Pentecostal hermeneutic depends on the continuing extending or repeating possibility of Pentecost throughout the history of the church.'³⁹⁰

NDW's theology on divine healing is based on his experience of healing during his conversion and supported by scriptures. In his testimony, he stated that, he was healed of extreme depression and hallucinations which he suffered from before his conversion. To NDW, Jesus is a healer because He healed him and has subsequently healed many through him. Wolfgang Vondey posits that, according to Acts 3:6, and Acts 4:10, a motif of primary importance for Pentecostal practices of healing is the vocalisation of faith: 'In the name of Jesus Christ stand up and walk.' Peter explains to the astonished crowd that 'by faith in his name, this man has been made strong and the faith that comes through it has given him perfect health.'³⁹¹ Divine healing is the demonstration of the power of Jesus Christ as real, relevant and present in the now. Divine healing is in the name of Jesus, it is ministered through anointing oil, the laying on of hands and the spoken word.

In the theology of NDW, sickness is anything that militates against the abundant life as stated in John 10:10. These include all physical ailments such as cancer, and all forms of emotional and psychological torment. These ailments are believed to originate from the devil and poor

³⁹⁰ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*.61

³⁹¹ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 65.

habits. An example is the madman who was healed in Mark 5:1-20 by Jesus. He was healed completely when Jesus cast out the unclean spirit from him. Thus, within Ghanaian CM, the casting out of unclean spirits from individuals, which is also known as deliverance, is commonly practiced as healing. Some have argued that every Christian must go through post-conversion deliverance sessions in order to free them from the oppression of unclean spirits encountered before their born-again experience. Although not all Ghanaian Charismatics hold this view, proponents of this view maintain that an individual's Christian journey and the enjoyment of the abundant life, and ultimately salvation, can be challenged. The belief within charismatic theology in Jesus as healer is based ultimately on the redemption work of Christ on the cross. The supporting scripture in 1 Peter 2:21-25 is interpreted to mean Jesus has already paid for our healing by his stripes and the shedding of his blood. Therefore, believers are expecting their rights in Christ by demanding healing in any form.

5.3.1.5 Jesus – the Soon Coming King

Another of NDW's firm beliefs, shared also by CM in Ghana, is that Jesus is coming soon to take faithful believers to his father's house, according to John 14:1-4. Proponents of this belief are predominantly pre-millennial and expect Christ to return in bodily form to be seen by all in the sky in an event called the Rapture during which faithful believers, both dead and alive, will be caught up to him in the sky according to their understanding of 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. They further believe that the rapture will take faithful believers to the dwelling place of God to receive rewards in an event referred to as the Lamb's supper and the Bema throne rewards.

This theological understanding of NDW and charismatics has implication for Christian service and world missions: faithful believers will be rewarded with crowns by the Lord Jesus

Christ. James J. Glass,³⁹² in ‘Eschatology: A Clear and Present Danger- A Sure and Certain Hope,’ states that the notion that ‘the Lord Jesus Christ will return to earth in glory is the bedrock of Pentecostal eschatology’.

5.3.2 Practices

Practices are the behaviours and activities that characterise the lived experiences of charismatics. These practices are a response to the descent of the Spirit or the work of the Spirit in the life of a believer. Albrecht and Evans³⁹³ mention a threefold macro rite in corporate Sunday services that also constitute practices: Foundational rites, intermediate, and final rites. Thus, practices are both corporate and private.

5.3.2.1 Sunday Worship

For charismatics, the Sunday worship service is usually the biggest and main religious service in the week. It includes Intercession, Welcome, Praise & Worship,

a) Intercession

For NDW, as for charismatics, prayer is essential for the commencement of any religious gathering because failure to pray could give evil powers and enemies of the faith an advantage. All members are encouraged to participate in the time of intercession, which is typically led by a pastor who intermittently tells the congregation the direction of prayer. The nature of prayer is a mixture of speaking in tongues, clapping of hands, and pacing about in the auditorium.

b) Praise and Worship

³⁹² James J. Glass, “Eschatology: A clear and Present Danger - A sure and Certain Hope” in Keith Warrington (ed), *Pentecostal Perspective*. (Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 1998), 127.

³⁹³ Daniel E. Albrecht and Evan B. Howard, “Pentecostal Spirituality” in *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 239.

This is the part of the service where members dance and rejoice in celebration and thanksgiving to God for his goodness in their lives. The singing is led by a large choir and a praise team. The choir, normally backed by a live band, creates a vibrant and joyous atmosphere for adoration. Mark J. Cartledge writes, “the expectation is that people are free to engage in worship with enthusiasm unconstrained by a book in their hands. This means that people are free to use their arms and hands to raise them to heaven. They are free to clap, dance, jump and sway should they wish to do so in time to the rhythm of the music”³⁹⁴. My respondents agree that this part of the service is uplifting and never to be missed.

The second part of the service consists of the following rite:

c) Preaching

The preaching of the word is the central activity of the service. The sermon is referred to as a message because it is considered to be a word from the Lord to his people and the preacher is under the unction and guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Charisma and extemporaneous style of NDW is captivating and inspiring. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, delivered an extemporaneous message which is considered a model for charismatic ministry preachers. The gift of the Spirit may manifest during the preaching activity as prophetic utterances and vision experiences could occur during this period.

d) Ministration

Ministration is the time in the service when people are called to the front of the auditorium to be prayed for and to expect to be ‘touched’ by the Holy Spirit. During this time, those who want to surrender their lives to Christ are prayed for and those requiring healing or any form

³⁹⁴ Cartledge, *Encountering The Spirit*, 58.

of ministration are prayed for. Also, those who have testimonies of miracles and transformative encounters are allowed to tell their stories.

After the corporate service, members go home to continue the practices in their private devotions. Speaking in tongues, daily Bible reading, fasting and sharing of testimonies attest to a continued relationship with God.

5.3.3 Sensibilities

The habitual attitudes or predispositions that characterise a relationship with God include:

5.3.3.1 The mode of celebration

Charismatics are spontaneous and expressive within the Spirit. The mode of celebration is characteristic of freedom in the Spirit, “and where the Spirit is, there is liberty.”³⁹⁵ There are other modes such as contemplation, waiting on the Spirit, being open to the Spirit, ecstasy when the Holy Spirit moves, and the mode of improvisation following the Spirit’s guidance.

5.3.3.2 The orientation to experience

NDW and Ghanaian charismatics expect to experience the living Christ in their daily life. The presence of the Holy Spirit is essential and the manifestations of His presence essentially serve to validate the power of God.

5.3.3.3 Faith or the expectation of God

Faith or the expectation that God can or will heal, deliver, transform is a key disposition of Ghanaian charismatics. This is expressed as confidence in the divine efficacy to deal with the expectation of believers. Eastwood Anaba,³⁹⁶ a foremost leader within the Charismatic movement, has described NDW as ‘the Epitome of faith’ by which he means NDW is one who exhibits confident expectation in God’s ability to bring things to pass.

³⁹⁵ II Corinthians 3:17.

³⁹⁶ Interview with Eastwood Anaba at London on 12 November 2018.

5.3.3.4 Attention to the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit's filling, conviction, comforting, encouragement, teaching, guidance, and presence are key sensibilities of NDW and Ghanaian charismatics. The concern is not to restrict or limit the move of the Spirit among God's people. The manifestation of the gifts of The Spirit and the miraculous must be allowed full expression by giving full attention to the Holy Spirit.

Other sensibilities such as discerning or dealing with conflict or Spiritual Warfare, the practice of exorcism, self-perception and others will be discussed under Nicholas Duncan-Williams' theology of prayer.

5.3.4 Values

Values guiding the way charismatics conduct themselves in their relationship with God corporately and personally include, firstly, their respect for Biblical authority. NDW affirms and considers the scriptures as his rule in matters of faith and practice.

Secondly, NDW and other charismatics value the importance of the supernatural and of the power of God: power for abundant living, power for victory over sin, power for effective witness to the world. This power is founded in the experience of the baptism of the Spirit.

The third is the value of restoration. Michael G. Moriarty,³⁹⁷ in 'The New Charismatics: A concerned voice responds to Dangerous new trends,' posits that the compelling vision promoted by charismatics is that God is restoring the church in the last days. NDW believes that the ministry of Apostles and Prophets, the baptism of the Spirit, Supernatural manifestations, and other forms of Spirit manifestation are necessarily being restored to the church for the harvest of the last days.

³⁹⁷ Michael G. Moriarty, *The New Charismatics: A Concerned Voice Responds to Dangerous New Trends*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.). 87.

The value of participation in the ministry of the Holy Spirit is essential for the spirituality and theology of NDW and Ghanaian charismatics. This value has implication for charismatic ecclesiology, as it premises that every believer has the right to the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit for the work of ministry. The Priesthood of every believer to participate and to serve the purpose of God is valued. According to Asamoah-Gyadu, the designation ‘ministries’ carries both historical and theological significance. Historically, it refers to independent churches emerging from the neo-Pentecostal movement since the late 1970s.³⁹⁸ Theologically, the expression defines the ecclesiology of these new independent churches in which every believer is considered a potential recipient of charism(s) or ministry gift(s) of the Holy Spirit.

The name of Jesus is paramount and greatest value in the ministry of the CM’s. According to Quayesi-Amakye “In the name of Jesus, I pray.... Indeed, the vocalisation of Jesus name is believed to Vanquish demons, gods and witches; heal the sick; and deliver the demonised. It is also believed to break all forms of satan strongholds such as poverty, death and marital problems. Infact, Jesus’ name becomes a crutch to lean on in times of difficulty”³⁹⁹The above assertion is true for the charismatic ministries in Ghana and the case of NDW. There exists a psychological feeling within the adherents of the CM, that a prayer which does not end with “in the name of Jesus” will not be answered. The scripture in John16:23 “...whatsoever you ask from the father, He will give it to you in My name” provides a pivotal idea on the name of Jesus.

³⁹⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 97.

³⁹⁹ Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, *Christ, Evil and Suffering in Ghanaian Christian Liturgy*, (Sheffield: Equinox Publishing Ltd, 2015.) p.18

Finally, the charismatic value for missions has implication for charismatic eschatology. NDW opines that the baptism of the Spirit is an empowerment to be witnesses to Judea and the uttermost parts of the world. The formation of branches of the ACI in various parts of the world is a response to the scripture in Acts 1:8 and other similar scripture in the Bible. In Missions, what is shared is not only the gospel but the power of the Spirit, healing, deliverance, holiness and the glory of God.

5.4 Nicholas Duncan-Williams' theology on prayer

Throughout the world, NDW has carved a niche for himself as the apostle of strategic prayer. In Ghana, he is famed as the intercessor of the nation. In this regard, he mobilizes other charismatic leaders in Ghana whenever the country is about to go to the polls and draws them for corporate prayer. These prayers that were held at the National Stadium are dubbed 'All believers All-night prayers'. NDW brings together key leaders of the CM like Rev. Dr. Robert Ampiah-Kwofie, Sam korankye Ankrah, Eastwood Anaba, Christie Doe-Tetteh, and the congregants for these prayers for the nation. The theology behind these prayer activities is the belief that evil spirits orchestrate bloodshed and confusion during election period and the possibility of a civil war when political parties fail to accept election results. The prayers are therefore organized and offered to thwart the activities of these evil spirits. Prayer then becomes a medium of enforcing or perpetuating spiritual intervention and dealing with evil spiritual forces. The fame of NDW as the apostle of strategic prayer had transnational effect when during the pre-inauguration service of Donald Trump. Over the years, he has had an itinerary schedule that takes him to other nations around the world to intercede and pray for political leaders. The theology behind NDW friendship with political leaders is rooted in the belief that God appoints political leaders. A prayer made for or on behalf of aspirant political leaders could give them an advantage over their opponents. Sitting governments may be

empowered through prayer to succeed during their reign. Also, prayers offered for both political position aspirants and those in office may protect them against evil spirits and bewitchment from enemies.

In the theology of NDW, there is a cosmic war that was provoked when humans succumbed to the lure of sin. NDW argues that prior to the fall of humankind, God had authorized man to have dominion over all his creation. God made man his viceroy on earth. But man's dominion over God's creation stood so long as man remained obedient to God. Humans needed to remain under the control of God to exercise their full control over God's creation. Unfortunately, human beings lost their control of the universe to the devil, after he succumbed to the lure of the devil. Following the passing on of authority by man to the devil (as a result of sin), the devil assumed effective control over the universe. This situation has sustained the cosmic battle between man and devil over the dominion of the world. NDW, therefore, teaches that it is only through prayer that man can resume his primal control over the universe. And also, since sin disconnected man from God, it is only through prayer that man can reconnect with the divine. In his own words, 'prayer opens heaven for man; and it is through prayer that the divine and human meet.'

NDW teaches that throughout man's life on earth, he is locked in a constant battle with the devil. The devil is projected as an immortal enemy whom man can only conquer through prayer. Life for NDW is a realm of war. We could sum up Nicholas Duncan-Williams' theology on the following statement, gleaned from one of his sermons: 'Prayer Key.'

The contest of the world is a clash of dominions: war. In silence, I rebuke the voice of the enemy. The gate of hell is the strategies of hell, not the ordinary gate that we know. When the prayerful Christian comes to town, the devil must leave. It is illegal for God to intervene in the affairs of men until prayer goes up. Nothing happens unless you open your mouth; nothing happens unless you say something. Prayer

summons God; prayer is a trigger; when prayer goes up, heavens come down; prayer is the meeting place between divinity and humanity meet; it is a place where international decisions are taken. If you have no prayer life, you have no power. The gospel is about power – prayer. God is not just in control, he is in control of those who have submitted their lives to him and are led by the Spirit. Anointing provokes the devil. (...) Praying in the midnight is the dawning of a new day. There are four watches of the day and four watches of the night. Christians must identify this and pray without ceasing. The material is a manifestation of the spiritual. This from this that we understand that 9/11 was not a physical act, but a spiritual one. The church must return to the place of power. Demons have no respect for the system; that explains why America could not preempt 9/11. Systems do not have the capacity to locate a demon. It is only the church that has the power to discern the working of evil spirits. You know why some of you don't receive miracles, healing, and divine favour, it is because of prayerlessness. Prayer must precede praise. People are bound in the spirits to addictions and all manner of things because there is a lack of power. It was through prayer that Peter tapped into the intelligent network of heaven to receive and download divine knowledge.⁴⁰⁰

We can glean key issues in the above quote for discussion. First, NDW maintain that God does not do anything unless one prays. Until one prays, God is not called into action. It is only through prayer that God is stirred into action. Consequently, for a Christian to see the move of God in his life, a Christian must pray. It is through prayer that the heavens are summoned to act. It is only through prayer that God is compelled to act. This theology raises many theological issues that are left unanswered by NDW. For example, how do we reconcile God's Omni-attributes in the face of the efficacy of prayer? Does God act or react to prayer? Does prayer override the sovereignty of God? NDW does not properly theologize about these questions. It is also uncommon for church members to question or critique this doctrine.

Prayer is also the space for the encounter and interaction between the divine and humanity. Since he maintains that sin created a chasm between God and man, it is through prayer that serves as a point of convergence between divinity and humanity. In his sermon, he stated that

⁴⁰⁰ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, "Prayer Key." Published on YouTube on June 14, 2013 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wQM0CufhXGs>, (Accessed on December 29, 2018).

‘When prayer provides the enabling space for the divine and human, there is a transformation in the life of the human.’ In the theology of NDW, it is through prayer that man recovers his primal relations with God.

He also teaches that it is prayer that enables a Christian to scare away all the challenges of life. The devil, he says, is scared of a prayerful Christian. In the world of Africa that is believed as suffused by spirits, it is through prayer that a Christian can overcome the darts of the enemy. He teaches that when a Christian gets into town, the devil and demons must flee. Consequently, a Christian whose presence does not cause a stir in the Kingdom of the devil is backsliding and powerless Christian. But he also argues that prayer must be said according to spiritual timelines. NDW teaches that midnight prayer is the most effective. As he said in his sermon, ‘since the midnight is the dawn of a new day, it is important for a Christian to preempt the breaking of a new day by speaking to power and commanding spiritual forces.’ This also implies that the material world is the manifestation of the spirit. Stretching this debate, NDW argued that the terrorist attack on the United States on September 11, 2001, was a cosmic war between spiritual forces. This according to him, explained why America, despite all its sophisticated weapons, did not see it coming. He argues that ‘demons and evil spirits are not scared by system or military accoutrements. Evil spirits fear prayers because it is through prayer that one can discern the forces of the world.’⁴⁰¹

NDW’s teaching on prayer resonates with his teaching on prosperity. He argues that the devil is the principal cause of poverty and failure in life. Consequently, invoking his theology of

⁴⁰¹ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, “Prayer Key.” Published on YouTube video on June 14, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wQM0CufhXGs> (Accessed on December 29, 2018).

the fall of man, and how he lost dominion, NDW teaches that it is only through prayer that a Christian can unlock his blessings. He encourages hard work and provides some basic work ethics, but the centrality of his theology on prosperity is that it takes fervent and continuous prayer for a Christian to disarm the devil who has a stronghold over the material blessing of a nominal Christian. In his sermon, 'The enemy can't stop your breakthrough,' he said:

The devil cannot truncate your progress; he cannot take away your success; your house will not fall. You will prosper. You will grow healthy. But, all these are possible only through prayer. You may work hard; sweat throughout the month or year, but if you have prayer-less you will continue to languish in poverty. Pray always. It is through prayer that the devil will cease from holding your breakthrough. The devil plans our failure, but we can overcome it through prayer. I have known many Christians who never survived the poverty line because they did not pray. Beloved, we will not lose our miracle. Any kind of disappointment, grieve, we overcome, overturn it in Jesus' name. I pray you learn to pray to take hold of your possession.⁴⁰²

It is clear that NDW theology on prosperity is closely knitted to his theology on prayer. Basically, he teaches that without prayer, one may work hard enough and yet not prosper. Prosperity in his theology was part of God's package he gave to man at creation. But since human beings lost it to the devil, it will take prayer for human beings to reclaim what he lost.

Prosperity also comes in the theology of NDW through following laid down scriptural patterns for prosperity. The first is the payment of tithes by the congregants. In my interpretation of Duncan-Williams' teaching on tithing, a tithe is a month obligation of giving 10% of one's income to God through the church. Malachi 3:8-11 is the key scripture for tithing which interpreted by distilling four facts out of it:

⁴⁰² Nicholas Duncan-Williams, 'The enemy can't stop your breakthrough,' published on YouTube on April 9, 2018. <https://anointedtube.com/video/81754/the-enemy-cant-stop-the-break-through-archbishop-duncan-williams-2018-mp4/> Accessed: December 29, 2018.

- 1) failure to pay tithe is equated to robbing God
- 2) failure to pay tithe attracts a curse
- 3) Obedience in paying tithe results in rebuking the devourer so he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground
- 4) Obedience in paying tithe results in the opening of the windows of heaven and blessings will be poured on the individual so that he/she will not have room to contain it.

Prosperity also comes by sowing seeds to God through the church. Genesis 8:22 ‘While the earth remained, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.’ This scripture in harmony with the American prosperity preaching is interpreted to mean giving money to the church for the work of the ministry and in return, the congregant who is the sower will reap a harvest which is usually far more than had been sown.

Prosperity also in the theology of NDW is contextual in the sense that it is tinted by the Akan concept of prosperity. The Akan concept of prosperity is the idea of Wellbeing in all areas of life and not only material abundance. In *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*, Ogbu Kalu, explains the concept of ‘Nkwa’ which is the Akan concept of prosperity that had earlier been explicated by Kinsley Larbi, Emmanuel Anim and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu.⁴⁰³ ‘Nkwa’ literally means life but it actually signifies liberation from an inimical and life-threatening situation and the freedom to live an authentic life. ‘Nkwa’ according to Larbi⁴⁰⁴ includes the enjoyment of ‘ahonyade’ (material blessing): possessions, prosperity, and riches including children. It also embodies ‘asomdwe’: a life of peace and tranquillity, especially

⁴⁰³ Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostal: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).260.

⁴⁰⁴ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 278.

peace with God, the spirits, kinsfolk, and neighbours. 'Nkwa' also is when one is rescued from forces of evil, 'abayifo' (witches), 'akaberekyerfo' (sorcerers), 'asummantufu' (charmners and bad medicine men) and 'awudifo' (wicked ones). 'Nkwa' is illustrative of the theology of 3 John 1:2 'Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth'. Duncan-Williams' theology of prosperity is not limited to only the material but is also emotional and spiritual.

5.5 NDW'S PRAYER AS A REFLECTION OF HOLISTIC WORLDVIEW

NDW considers prayer critical to the Christian life. Given His non-binary world that is part of the Christian teaching before the enlightenment and reflects his Akan worldview, he considers prayer as critical in the structuring of one's destiny. More specifically, NDW teaches that the spirit world has a direct influence of the material world, such that Christians must build their prayer life to exercise dominion over all spiritual forces. Beyond the malevolent spirits exerting influence on the lives of individuals, NDW teaches that these spirits tend to control nations by claiming, "They exert their influence over heads of nations and kings; and they seek to control the political lives of those nations, suing the human head of the nation – its leader – as their main instrument of operation. They incite kings and rulers to pass wicked and unrighteous laws, most of which contravene the Laws of the Almighty God".⁴⁰⁵ These spirits are also responsible for all immorality and social disorder. NDW wrote that, "Spiritual host of wickedness are responsible for promoting lawlessness and wickedness as the name clearly depicts. They use spiritual influence to ensnare man into all kinds of sin like homosexuality, rape, drug addiction, murder and every other social vice that is known to man".⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁵ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Praying strategic prayer* (n.d.), 39.

⁴⁰⁶ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Powers behind the scenes* (Accra: Rhema Publishers, 2014), 56.

From NDW's assertion, several issues are raised about the lines of demarcation between human responsibility and demonic manipulations. Similarly, it raises questions about the sovereignty of God over the universe. For example, does God's control over the universe create space for malevolent spirits to act as they please? And how do all these shape the doctrine of pain and suffering, theologically known as theodicy?

In all of this, NDW's theology about the existential reality of the influence of the spirit world on the material world is critical in shaping the foundation of his other theologies, including warfare prayer against demonic forces, and the Christian authority over such forces. More so, several Pentecostal Christians share the view that the spirit world interpenetrates the material world to exert significant influence on people. They maintain that this is part of the Christian theological heritage that partly got stifled as part of the nineteenth century rationalistic philosophy. As part of the rise of the Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal movement in the twentieth century, the idea of a living spiritual world that determines the contours of an enchanted world informs NDW's theology on prayer. To ward off any negative influence of the spirit world on Christians, NDW prescribes prayer as the "strategy that can be used to exercise our Dominion Mandate".⁴⁰⁷

5.5.1 PRAYER AND THE CHRISTIAN EMPOWERMENT

The activities of demonic forces in the theology NDW brings to the fore the issue of the authority of Christianity. He addresses the question of how Christians can overcome the negative influences of demonic forces on their lives and in the world. With this, NDW says

⁴⁰⁷ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Praying strategic prayer* (n.d.), 7.

that Christians are “mandated to enforce the laws of our God over the spiritual lawbreakers, who sometimes carry out their activities through human agents”.⁴⁰⁸ He continues, “The believer has the power of attorney to use the name of Jesus to bring the devices of the enemy to a halt”.⁴⁰⁹

The singular role of prayer in dislodging demonic activities is such that NDW claimed “prayer is the most immortal because prayers don’t die”.⁴¹⁰ This is because prayer outlives the one who offers it. Prayer, therefore, remains cardinal in the life a Christian who desires to have a lasting impact on the world. Concurrently, NDW conceptualises prayer as “a spiritual weapon that enables us to access the Kingdom of Heaven”.⁴¹¹ Prayer serves as a guided missile that transcends boundaries and knows no limit. Prayer overrides the enemy and exposes his agenda. Through prayers, Christians enforce the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, as they take dominion.⁴¹² The role of prayer in the life reinforces the significance NDW attaches to regular prayer summits. As prayer remains the solution to virtually all mundane issues, since mundane issues have a spiritual undertone, he calls for prayer when Ghana’s currency suffers high inflation levels and the economy takes a nosedive.

5.5.2. PRAYER AS TRANSFORMATION IN THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN

As I have established above, NDW considers moral degeneration in the life of a Christian as part of the negative influences of demonic forces. Drunkenness, homosexual tendencies, drug addictions, and adultery are all moralised as part of the manifestations of demonic

⁴⁰⁸ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Binding the strong man* (n.d.), 46-47.

⁴⁰⁹ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Binding*, 47.

⁴¹⁰ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Prayer moves God* (n.d.), 9.

⁴¹¹ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Prayer*, 15.

⁴¹² Ibid.

influence.⁴¹³ A born-again Christian is, therefore, expected to choreograph his or her life in ways that overcomes all moral weaknesses. NDW teaches that immorality in the life of a Christian exposes a Christian to spiritual manipulations and leads such a Christian into poverty. Similarly, NDW argues that immorality entangles a Christian with demonic forces that are often masquerading to derail the spiritual and material prosperity of Christians. In an interview with me during my field, NDW said that:

Sin is a serious reproach in the life of a Christian. There are many spiritual forces and demons seeking to undermine the prosperity of Christians. These spirits are responsible for poverty sickness, failures, witchcraft attacks, and disillusionment in the life of a Christian. As I have said, the devil manipulates leaders of the world to succumb to the devil to pass laws that glamorise immorality. When you see that happening, know that such a nation will collapse. Before the collapse of an individual and a nation is immorality.⁴¹⁴

From the perspective of NDW, there is an undivided correlation between sin, salvation and the prosperity of a Christianity. That the material and spiritual are entwined to lead a Christianity into prosperity or poverty is one of the evidences of both the Akan worldview and the general belief in the Bible that demonic powers are real in their activities. But as to whether demons can possess a Christian and strongly exert negative influence leading the Christian into poverty and sickness is not universally shared by all Christians.

Nevertheless, holding the forces of demonic as an existential reality, including their power to determine negatively the life of a Christian, NDW teaches about Christian transformation as part of the salvation package. At the point of salvation, NDW teaches that a Christian is expected to strive to live beyond reproach. A Christian must stay clear of all immoral practices, including those that have been mentioned above. But since NDW also teaches that

⁴¹³ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Praying strategic prayer* (n.d.).

⁴¹⁴ Interview with NDW on December 15, 2018.

a Christians constantly contends with demonic forces to overcome all these moral lapses, he recommends prayer for the transformation of a Christian. According to NDW, it is through the help of the enablement of the Holy Spirit, usually enforced through prayer, that a Christian can live a victorious and spiritually transformative life. This is precisely because NDW argues that sin opens up a Christian to the manipulations of demonic spirits. It is, therefore, through pious living that is rendered possible by the Holy Spirit, that a Christian can ward off demonic influences. The theology of transformation is, therefore, presented as the Christian breaking free from all bad habits.

5.5.3NDW's *THEOLOGY OF HEALING AND PRAYER*

As part of the holistic worldview of NDW that emphasises the entanglement between the material and spiritual, he teaches that the Christian could potentially fall ill because of demonic influences. This implies that while several reasons, including the germ theory – sickness as a result of exposure to toxic material in the physical environment, NDW believes and concurrently teaches that demons a primarily responsible for illness. While he teaches that a Christian who lives immorally exposes himself or herself to demonic attacks, with illness as a clear evidence, NDW maintains that sometimes the devil randomly throws illness at Christians. And that as Christians go through the maturation stages of their faith as part of transformation, the devil brings all manner of illness in their way. He, therefore, considers healing as part of the “the bread of life” of Christians. Concurrently, in NDW’s prayer for healing, he calls on what he refers to as the “healing virtue” of Jesus Christ to impact all Christians. He also calls on the blood of “Yeshua Hamashiach” (the Hebrew name of Jesus Christ” to denounce all forms of illness in the life of Christians.

His use of the name “Yeshua” is significant because it shows how he connects salvation and healing as one and the same. This is because “Yeshua”, the Hebrew linguistic equivalent of

Jesus means “saviour”. So, because in NDW’s theology, illness may be as a result of sin and immorality in the life of a Christian, he calls frames healing as part of a disengagement of a Christian from all Satanic manipulations. He also sees healing as part of the packages of the salvation of a Christian. In his prayer, he calls on the Lord to restore vital organs such as liver, kidney, and heart to a Christian. All these point to his theology that “Jesus is still in the healing business” and healing is part of Jesus’ demonstration of love to humanity. Usually, NDW concludes his prayer by asking his congregation to attempt to do what they could not do before they were at church. For example, he calls on those who had eye problems to remove their medicated lenses and begin to read. Those with migraines to shake their heads to know their illness is healed. From then, he calls on those still struggling to see or recover from their migraine for another round of prayer. In all this, and as part of his framing of illness as demonic, NDW invokes curses on illness.⁴¹⁵

5.5. SALVATION IN THE THEOLOGY OF NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS

The question of salvation is key in Akan religion. The Akan notion of salvation is expressed in concrete terms, such as material blessings and felicity. The Akan notion of salvation is here and now; it is not abstract. The concern of the Akan is to enjoy life to the fullest: have abundant harvest, have multiple children, enjoy good health, prosper in business, and live in cordiality with neighbours. Salvation also means maintaining the equilibrium between the ancestors and the living. The Christian notion of salvation from moral evil and preparation for the ‘other-world’ is unknown in Akan religious beliefs and practices. As an Akan, NDW demonstrates the impact of the Akan notion of salvation in his theology. Paul Gifford wrote that for leaders of Ghana’s new Christianity (the charismatic movement) prosperity is part of the package of the message of salvation. Charismatic leaders argue that poverty and lack of

⁴¹⁵ As an example of NDW’s prayer against illness, kindly see: Prayer For Healing (June 8, 2020) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilg9cwcBBSc> (Accessed: December 5, 2020).

any kind are emblematic of either sin in the life of a Christian or a lack of understanding of the Christian message.⁴¹⁶ NDW's notion of salvation is anchored in the fervent prayer of the Christian. While he believes that salvation is by grace, he teaches that salvation is consolidated and eternally secured through continuous prayer. The centrality of prayer in consolidating salvation is based on his understanding of how God's original plan for his creation (which was for human beings to live in a flawless world) was thwarted by the devil. According to NDW, when humans sinned, they ceded dominion to the devil. NDW captured this as follows:

God's original plan was for man to have dominion, rulership, and governance over the affairs of the Earth. God created the man in the image of the Godhead and then blessed the man to rule the Earth. He did not place Himself in the position to rule the Earth but gave human being everything they would need to rule the domain of the Earth. When human beings ceded the Dominion Mandate to Satan through deception and high treason, God's agenda for human being was interfered with. The woman by listening to the voice of Satan was deceived by Satan.⁴¹⁷

In NDW's narrative about how humans lost their control over the universe, salvation and securing it requires prayer. A Christian must be prayerful enough to avoid the risk of losing his salvation. Salvation is located in a discourse of power and dominion. According to NDW, sin disposed humans of dominion over God's creation. To reverse the power and dominion that human beings have lost to Satan, human beings have to pray ceaselessly. Prayer remains the mainstay of NDW's religious activities. He holds himself as the prayer intercessor of nations.

⁴¹⁶ Paul Gifford, "Prosperity: A New and Foreign Element in Africa Christianity," *Religion*, Vol. 20, 1990, 375

⁴¹⁷ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Prayer Moves God*. (Accra: Prayer Summit Publishing, 1995).15

NDW's emphasis on prayer leads into his teaching on prosperity. He teaches that it is the will of God for Christians to prosper. Much as he advocates hard work, he also proposes that prayer and absolute faith in God is a necessary condition for prosperity. Just like the primal Akan worldview, NDW teaches that poverty is not of God; poverty is an affliction from the devil that must be combated with prayer. There is, therefore, triumphalism associated with the soteriology of NDW: one must receive a promotion at work, experience 'breakthrough' in all facets of life, travel abroad, win legal cases, build houses, buy a fleet of cars and receive political appointments. The entire understanding of salvation in the theology of NDW is primarily 'this-worldly' in focus. As I have indicated, for NDW, sin is the cause of poverty, sickness, suffering, and all forms of difficulties in life. It is this belief that explains the emphasis NDW places on prayers, fasting, deliverance and anointing services. As Asamoah-Gyadu has rightly pointed out, for many charismatic Christians, material acquisitions are reflective of God's favour, which negate suffering in life.⁴¹⁸ In an African worldview, the spirit world and the material world are interlocked in a constant relationship. The happenings in the spiritual world are said to have an influence on the material world. For many Africans, therefore, it is the omnipresence of witchcraft that explains the challenges of poverty and diseases. Witchcraft makes one powerless so that one is easily pushed over the brink into poverty and diseases. The pervasiveness of poverty and sicknesses explains the thriving prosperity gospel in Charismatic Christianity on the continent. The emphasis Charismatic Christians place on the prosperity gospel has been attributed to influences from North America. But a reading of the African traditional spiritual map shows that the prosperity gospel is, by and large, a continuity of the African notion of salvation, which is characterized

⁴¹⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu. *African Charismatics*, 132-164.

by power and material blessings.⁴¹⁹ Prayer also marks the foray of a charismatic Christian to tap into the realm of the spirit to be empowered and transformed for life.⁴²⁰

5.5.1. Ghanaian Charismatic soteriology

Salvation is the most important dimension of religion while it is not readily clear what salvation constitutes. For many charismatic leaders in Ghana, salvation is also synonymous with conversion and involves a radical break with one's ancestral past. Even so, such a rupture is not the same as disbelieving the existential reality of the spiritual map of Ghanaians from which the convert is making such a break. As Birgit Meyer has shown, conversion means projecting one's new religious affiliation against the spirit world of the ancestors.⁴²¹ The world of the ancestors becomes the religious other against which conversion is discussed. Conversion is, therefore, reconfiguring the spiritual map of pre-Christian Africa. This reconfiguration reinforces the validity of the Christian faith. It also reifies Jesus Christ as the only means of salvation. In that sense, the ancestral spirits and the deities of Africa become the demons and principalities of charismatic Christians. This understanding is neatly articulated in the testimonies of charismatic Christians. The ability for a charismatic convert to define and reconstruct his religious identity against his ancestral past creates tension between charismatic Christianity and non-Christian religion. Also, projecting the African spiritual reality as the antithesis of charismatic Christianity helps charismatics to emphasize the power of the Holy Spirit, and deepens the desire of converts to receive pneumatic experiences, which includes speaking in tongues, healing, receiving of visions, and gifts of the Spirit.

⁴¹⁹ Allan H. Anderson. *Spirit-filled World: Religious Dis/Continuity in African Pentecostalism*. (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 137-140.

⁴²⁰ Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity*, 113.

⁴²¹ Birgit Meyer. "Make a Complete Break with the past.' Memory and Post-Colonial Modernity in Ghanaian Pentecostalist Discourse", *Journal of Religion in Africa*, (28)3 (August 1998), 317.

Salvation from the point of view of charismatic Christianity is also about transformation in the life of the convert. NDW's conversion narrative, which depicts him as transitioning and transforming from engagement with 'familiar spirits' (other spirits other than the Holy Spirit) to the Spirit of God is cast in the light of the powerlessness of 'false spirits' as against the overarching power of the Holy Spirit. The emphasis placed on the Holy Spirit in the conversion narrative of NDW also shows the transformation in his lifestyle. As we have already indicated, NDW's conversion narrative is laced with lifestyles that are at odds with Christianity. His assertion that he was involved in the use of illicit drugs (particularly cannabis) and dabbling in all forms of occult practices were meant to prove the validity of his conversion narrative. For charismatic Christians, conversion is a rupture with an immoral and perverse religious life. In the course of this research, I interviewed people who constructed their conversion narratives in terms of their severing of relations with non-Christian practices. One of them related to me that he was involved in the worship of demonic spirits. He was also a strident participant in money occult incantations and practices (known in Ghanaian Twi parlance as 'sikaduro' – 'blood money').⁴²² Some of them narrated grotesque pre-Christian ritual experiences that seek to portray that African indigenous religious rituals are deeply demonic.

5.5.2 Nicholas Duncan-Williams soteriological teaching

In this section, I discuss the teaching of NDW on salvation. I discuss how he conceptualizes salvation, particularly from the point of view of the 'born again' phenomenon, transformation, prosperity, wealth, and health, and empowerment by the Spirit for greater works. In this narrative, I highlight the experiential component of salvation as taught by NDW.

⁴²² This is the type of money that is believed to be acquired through the performance of magical rituals.

NDW does not offer an account of him being exorcized of demonic spirits. But he presents his transformation from a 'wild young man' to a deeply sober Christian. From the conversion narrative of NDW, we glean that for most charismatics, salvation is not only a constructed in a spiritual or religious lens, it is also considered a moralizing factor in the life of the convert. This leads to the question salvation from what to what? For charismatics, salvation means transforming from a horrible life to a comported life. This is expressed in Nicholas Duncan-Williams' conversion narrative. He said that he was deeply involved in the consumption of cannabis, attending discos, womanizing, and aggressively spending on frivolities. His salvation, therefore, meant that he had to quit smoking, womanizing, and becoming frugal. He had to also become a disciplined person, by avoiding discos. The moralizing of salvation offers charismatics the paradigm of an acceptable lifestyle. A charismatic is not permitted to smoke, drink alcohol or even go to the disco. At the point of salvation, a charismatic is expected to shun and spurn all 'worldly' things. In one of his sermons, NDW enjoined the youth (who constitute the largest portion of his church) to be deeply rooted in the Lord. He cautioned them against fornication, drug addiction, and wanton spending.

The prohibition of a worthless lifestyle is redirected to enforcing material success in life. 'Born again,' Christians are expected to look smart, well dressed, and well presented to the public. The money that would have been used to gratify the consumption of alcohol and illicit drugs is used to buy good clothes, buy car/s, houses and other things that show material blessings. In the teaching of NDW, salvation empowers the Christian to overcome the weaknesses that burden the non-Christian. The burdens of alcoholism, fornication, and consumption of illicit drugs dissipate the financial resources of the non-Christian. According

to NDW, demonic spirits cause these burdens. Consequently, in the soteriological theology of charismatic Christians, upon salvation the Christian is empowered to overcome these weaknesses. The Christian becomes a 'born again', in the sense that he or she is empowered to overcome these spirits. Following the overpowering of these spirits, the converts are also given spiritual gifts to guide him or her in life. In the conversion narrative of NDW, he narrates how the Holy Spirit empowered him to overcome all the social ills he was involved in. In place of that, he boasts of the spirit of intercession, where he prays for nations around the world. He believes that the Holy Spirit has vested in him the power to overcome what he refers to as 'territorial spirits'.

In Ghana and around the world, members of ACI refer to NDW as their spiritual papa who has a demonstrable authority over demonic forces. But for NDW, his redemption from sin and a wasteful life meant that the Lord had empowered him for prosperity. He is noted for his opulence, particularly in his dress code. When some years ago, NDW said Jesus might have worn designer wear, this generated heated debates in the Ghanaian public and received a backlash from those who felt the statement was sacrilegious. But he defended this assertion by stating that the Lord does not want those who follow Him to be poor.

Salvation, in addition to material wellbeing, also means freedom from sickness and all forms of diseases. It is not uncommon to hear NDW claiming that those who believe in the Lord and are committed to the things of God are given freedom from debilitating diseases. In prayer sessions, he claims authority over all kinds of diseases, including non-communicable ones such as cancer and kidney failures. During anointing services, church members have their salvation routinized as they are supposedly armed against diseases. In extreme cases,

NDW teaches that sickness could be a result of believers veering away from the things of God. This assumption is predicated on the mystical causality of sickness. In the theology of NDW malevolent spirits cause some sicknesses. During anointing services, members are assured of divine protection and covering against all forms of sicknesses.

In the soteriology of NDW, salvation also means dispensing of the gifts of the Spirit. As I observed in the teachings of NDW, salvation is not simply reciting the declaration of faith in Jesus Christ. It is more about receiving the gifts of the Spirit to live the Christian life. These gifts are basically evidenced and symbolized by speaking in tongues. The speaking of tongues features prominently in the worship of ACI. It is believed to help the believer to communicate the mysteries of God.

The soteriological teaching of NDW challenges the notion that salvation, situated in material prosperity, is of western import. In fact, the discussion, so far, shows that Nicholas Duncan-Williams' theology on salvation resonates with the Akan notion of salvation. It is a salvation that empowers the individual to succeed in life. It is also a kind of salvation that is both *hereafter* and *here and now*. Salvation as an existential reality is a mark of continuity with the Akan indigenous worldview. On the other hand, salvation as forecasting enjoyment in eternal bliss is a discontinuity with the Akan worldview. In the same way, salvation from original sin, which Charismatic Christian emphasize, is lacking in Akan indigenous religion. More importantly, the discussion establishes the influence of Akan religion (emphasizing continuity) on Charismatic Christianity. Consequently, while Charismatic Christians are considered hostile to Akan religion, there is no question but that the Akan worldview on salvation provides an impetus for these Christians to appropriate Christian teaching.

5.5.3 Salvation from the point of view of prosperity theology

To emphasize the place of prosperity in NDW's ministry, people are encouraged to give testimonies of their successes in life. It is also reflected in the flamboyant life of NDW. As a preacher of prosperity, NDW exemplifies what he teaches by living 'good', demonstrating how successful he is, and how others can tap into his blessings if they obediently follow his teachings. When the ostentatious life of NDW became a subject of public critique, he responded to his critics that Jesus wore a 'designer cloth'. The overemphasis placed on prosperity in the sermons of NDW is such that it is easy to discern class-consciousness at his church. It also shows in the elaborate prayers and rituals, including anointing services, which are held to disengage 'poor' congregants from the stronghold of poverty. There have been cases where anointing oils made and anointed in Jerusalem are sold as ritual objects to congregants. These anointing oils are, accordingly, imbued with the power to help deliver 'poor' congregants from poverty. It is rather a paradox that the anointing oils that are considered as having the antidote to life's existential challenges are sold at such high prices that the very 'poor' members of the church can hardly afford them.

The emphasis placed on prosperity is a mirroring of a country where the majority of the citizens are ravaged by poverty. Since the 1980s when Ghana implemented neoliberal regimes, the removal of subsidies on health, agriculture, and education (as part of the conditions of the Structural Adjustment Programmes), the country has seen many of its citizens wallowing in poverty. Over the years, the intransigence of poverty, particularly in the urban areas, has resulted in power alternating between the two main political parties, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in whom Ghanaians

have reposed hope in terms of overcoming the extent of poverty. Even so, over two decades of the coming into force of the Fourth Republic, many Ghanaians appear to have lost hope in ever subsisting beyond the 'poverty line'.

The disillusionment among Ghanaians, as far as the crusade against poverty is concerned, has validated the emphasis NDW and other charismatic preachers place on a prosperity gospel. In sum, the idea of the prosperity gospel is framed around two main assumptions: the first is that poverty is caused by evil, and the second is that the package of salvation includes financial and material prosperity. Charismatic preachers have taken the fight against poverty to the spiritual realm. In most cases, they invoke the ancestral curse and the works of malevolent spirits to explain the extent of poverty in Ghana. Salvation, which involves rupture with one's ancestral past, is expected to unleash one's prosperity. Salvation is believed to free the individual from all ancestral trappings. It is also meant to unlock God's blessings for the convert. Consequently, as part of the package of salvation, one is expected to take hold of their 'possession'. Thus, the phrase 'take hold of your possession' features prominently in the preaching of charismatic leaders. Prosperity in charismatic theology is unleashed through a positive confession of faith and the right application of religious formulae.⁴²³ The formulae for prosperity and financial 'breakthrough' are enshrined in some practices, some of which include exercising diligence and perseverance in prayer. At ACI, the 'Jericho Hour' programme has become the gathering point for believers to engage in a 'spiritual battle' to disarm any demonic powers that are holding back their prosperity.

⁴²³ Gifford, *African Christianity*, 39.

Prosperity at ACI is mediated through 'seed sowing' and payment of tithes. Concluding a story about how a certain woman was heartless and mean towards the British Queen and in consequence, lost a golden opportunity to be blessed, one of the pastors of NDW, James K. Saah, wrote: 'This is the situation that many people find themselves. They lose out on many opportunities which could have brought some huge transformation in their lives. This is simply because they deliberately refuse to sacrifice a little of their wealth, time, energy, love, kindness etc. to someone in need.'⁴²⁴ In charismatic theology, it is the practice of giving that brings about blessing. The popular expression is, 'giving is not self-impoverishment, but self-enrichment.'⁴²⁵ 'Seed sowing' in charismatic theology is a metaphor for investing in the 'Papa' of the church, but it is also about contributing financially towards church projects. Many charismatics are convinced that through their giving, they will receive responses to their prayers. 'God has given us the command to give. Once we give, we bring the blessing of God upon us. I have learned to give. Since I joined this church (ACI), I have always tried to remain true to give to support God's work.'⁴²⁶

The prosperity gospel is framed around some core teachings that invoke the mercy of God in blessing those who faithfully serve Him. Dan Liroy has observed that,

Advocates of the prosperity gospel believe that since it is the will of God for believers to enjoy life to the fullest extent possible (cf. John 10:10), including financial prosperity and entrepreneurial success (cf. Deut 7:12-26; Josh 14:9; Ps 23:1-6; Mal 3:10; Mark 10:29-30; 3 John 3:2), living in poverty violates His will and dishonours His name. A lack of faith is labelled as one reason why Christians fail to be healed, enjoy abundant wealth, and so on. Moreover, it is reasoned that God never wants His people to suffer or be poor. Satan and sin, not God, is said to be the culprits behind

⁴²⁴ James K. Saah. *The Miracle of Sowing and Repenting: A Goodly Principles to Kingdom Prosperity*. (Accra: Kharis Books, 2014),9

⁴²⁵ Saah, *The Miracle of Sowing and Repenting*, 11.

⁴²⁶ Personal communication with a member of Action Chapel International in Accra

every form of sickness, tragedy, and hardship that exists. Allegedly, the devil uses pseudo-symptoms of non-existent ailments to trick believers into imagining they are not feeling well and to entice them to think or say a negative confession.⁴²⁷

5.5.4 Salvation as an articulation of power

The idea that salvation is a lived experience is expected to empower the believer to overcome the challenges of life. Charismatic preachers believe that the African spiritual map is suffused with spirits.⁴²⁸ This belief is a transposition of the indigenous belief system where the world is believed to be the sphere for the operation of the spirits in the metaphysical world. Following from this belief, the African finds a way of walking the tightrope of engaging the Spirit of God and the spirits in the spirit world. The activities of the spirits are believed to have a direct bearing on the activities of the living. In charismatic theology, therefore, the believer is to be empowered to withstand the malevolent activities of the world of the spirits. At the point of salvation, the believer receives a spiritual arsenal that enables him or her to withstand the darts of the devil. In Ephesians 6, the Bible enumerates the protective gear that the believer must wear. While the Bible only names principalities and powers in higher authority, in charismatic theology, these principalities are the ancestors, dwarfs, witches, and other forms of spirituality that inhabit the African spirit world. The attempt at rehabilitating the spiritual prowess of the believer finds concrete expression in church rituals, including the application of anointing oil.

⁴²⁷ Dan Liroy, 'The Heart of the Prosperity Gospel: Self or the Savior? Conspectus: *The Journal of South African*, 2007, 42.

⁴²⁸ J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, 'Spirit and Spirits in the African Religious Traditions,' in Veli-Matti Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, Kirsteen Kim, and Amos Yong, *Interdisciplinary and Religio-Cultural Discourses on a Spirit-Filled World: Loosing the Spirits*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). 43.

In the discourse of charismatic Christians, it is the anointing that ‘makes things happen. It is the power of God in action.’⁴²⁹ At the ACI, which equally articulates the belief of charismatic Christianity in general, there are special programmes where NDW does the anointing – laying of hands, making a cross with the oil on the forehead, and invoking grace and favour on the life of a member. These programmes, known popularly as ‘anointing services’, become the channel through which NDW anoints his congregation. Different types of anointing obtain during such services. There is ‘job anointing’ which is invoked to create employment for the unemployed and promote business success for those involved in a business endeavour. There is also anointing for marriage. This anointing has a twofold effect: the first is to strengthen the marriages of the congregation, and second, to pave the way for members who are looking for spouses. The anointing service features prominently in the religious itinerary of NDW precisely because it is through the anointing that the congregation can tap into ‘spiritual blessing’. The anointing becomes a ritual that connects the material world and the spirit world, focusing on the ‘throne of God.’

Following the centrality of the notion of power in the Pentecostal and charismatic movement,

The Pentecostal neophyte is taught that Jesus will free him from sin and that His power (in the form of the Holy Ghost) will enter and Dwell within him if he repents. Repentance is not merely the renunciation of sin, however. One must "yield to Jesus"; the "world" must be abandoned and a "life of Jesus" begun. The "flesh" will no longer govern if the individual will follow the lead of the “spirit’ within.⁴³⁰

5.5. 4. Salvation as deliverance

The idea of demons in charismatic Christianity is not an abstract concept that can only be speculated on in theology. It is for most of my interlocutors a package of one’s ancestral

⁴²⁹ J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, “Anointing through the screen: Neo-Pentecostalism and Televised Christianity in Ghana,” *Studies in World Christianity*, 11 (2005), 22.

⁴³⁰ John Wilson and Harvey K. Clow, “Themes of Power and Control in a Pentecostal Assembly,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, (20)3 (September 1981), 241-250.

spirits, dwarfs, witches, *Maame Wata* (the queen of marine spirits) and other forms of malevolent spirits. For charismatics, salvation is constructed in terms of triumph over these demonic spirits. Deliverance from demonic powers is very central in the teaching and practices of NDW. He teaches that every Christian is a target of evil and demonic attacks. He teaches that evil attacks anything that reflects goodness because “good is the opposite of evil”. For this reason, he calls on Christians to stop from deluding themselves into thinking that they do not lust after people’s wives. He said that if the devil approached and tempted Jesus Christ, then the devil is not a respecter of anyone. The devil knocks on door of every Christian. And yet, he teaches that there are rules of engagement in the spiritual war against demonic manipulations. He said, a Christian must be willing to live a life that runs in line with his or her calling. NDW teaches that a Christian has a role to play in the war against demonic forces. So, as part of the deliverance processes, he calls on Christians to hand over ten percent of their earning to the Lord, for it is only that that the Lord takes absolute control over the life of a Christian. It is when a Christian gives the tenth percent of his earning as a tithe to the Lord, such a Christian gives God an authorisation to protect him or her against all demonic forces.⁴³¹

Since NDW teaches that demonic possession and manipulation are real in every Christian’s life, he practices deliverance on his teaching that,

“[t]hrough the work of the cross, Satan has been defeated (Phil. 2:5-9). The authority of Satan stole from Adam in the Garden of Eden has been recovered by Jesus Christ and has been handed over to every believer in Christ from Pentecost to the rapture.⁴³²

While NDW teaches that the Cross of Christ is the answer to demonic possession and concurrently the tool of deliverance, he teaches that, Christians must note that “Satan’s

⁴³¹ NDW, “Deliverance from evil” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1ACAeKaGXA>

⁴³² Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Binding the Strongman*. (Accra: Global Prayer Summit, 2001), 5.

licence of operation has not yet expired”.⁴³³ That Satan’s power has not ended until the rapture of the church implies that Christians must rely on the study of the Bible to overcome the devil. Studying the Bible is treated in NDW’s theology as key because he considers Christian ignorance is the very reason Satan manipulates Christians. Thus, NDW teaches that “it is only after we have gained understanding through study of God’s Word that we can enforce the laws of God over all entities of darkness”.⁴³⁴

In all this, deliverance at the ACI features strongly. In the course of my research, I observed that during the deliverance session of the service of ACI, there are many people who supposedly are exorcized from ‘familiar spirits’. There is a special deliverance team that specializes in casting out demons and brings about the spiritual liberation of converts. For charismatics, it is the moment of deliverance that marks one’s conversion narrative. As I have said, for NDW, deliverance must continuously feature in the life of a Christian as the devil still retains his power and seeks to destroy Christians.

5.6. ENGAGING NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS’ THEOLOGY OF SALVATION

The first thing we glean from Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ teaching of salvation is the conceptualization of the Charismatic notion of salvation as a victory in the cosmic struggle between the creature, the devil, and the creator, God. NDW teaches that the existential reality of Satan, who works against Christians, is expressed in his teaching that ‘[S]atan’s license of operation has not yet expired. It will expire after the rapture and his thousand-year reign on earth subsequent to the rapture. After this time, he will then be cast into the bottomless pit (Rev. 20:1-3).’⁴³⁵ As has been pointed out, in charismatic Christianity salvation is not

⁴³³ Duncan-Williams, *Binding*, p. 5.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴³⁵ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Binding the Strongman*. (Accra: Global Prayer Summit, 2001), 5-6.

theological speculation. It is an encounter with the Holy Spirit. In the words of Asamoah-Gyadu, salvation is a lived experience for charismatics.⁴³⁶ As part of the salvation narrative, an individual is expected to have a very moving testimony about how he has been saved. In the theology of NDW, salvation involves the transmission of a child of God from the Kingdom of Darkness to the Kingdom of God. In effect, for charismatics, salvation is liberation, freedom, and independence from the workings of malevolence.

The African spiritual map is believed as practically being suffused with spirits. These spirits are considered dangerous enough to destabilize the life of a Christian. The Christian must, therefore, have a testimony that will boost people's interest in the things of God. The charismatic soteriology of NDW is practical; it is important for Christians to pay attention to some recursive misfortunes in one's life. In a continent where poverty is rife and access to 'the big men and women' can be frustrating, Nicholas Duncan-Williams' construction of this difficulty as part of the stronghold of the devil provides succour for people who desire to be free. Salvation in charismatic Christianity is freedom from poverty, sicknesses, diseases, lack, infertility, impotence, and peace in the hearts. In other words, it is not just a theological speculation or a matter of just confessing the sinner's prayer. Salvation is a transformation in the life of the convert. It brings relief from all ancestral curses and other influences of the malevolent spirit. As Birgit Meyer has pointed out, for Pentecostals and charismatics, the cult of the ancestors becomes the realm of demons. Thus, at the point of salvation, the convert becomes a subject of deliverance if he or she ever got involved with an ancestral cult. In most cases, misfortune in life is associated with the influence of an ancestral spirit. Salvation in charismatic Christianity, therefore, involves a relentless spiritual battle against one's ancestral past.

⁴³⁶ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 133.

Asamoah-Gyadu is right in asserting that for charismatics, salvation involves power over all forms of malevolent spirits.⁴³⁷ In the theology of NDW, a Christian must break free from the principalities and demonic powers that operate in the life of a non-believer. Salvation is, therefore, framed as liberation, freedom, and severing a relationship with all principalities. This much-touted freedom in the soteriology of NDW includes freedom from sickness, poverty, misfortune, and bad destiny. There is also the moralization of salvation. For NDW, salvation should bring about transformation in the life of the convert. This transformation encapsulates sound moral life, embodied in the Bible. The convert is expected to demonstrate the fact of his or her salvation through how he or she engages moral issues. A radical break away from marital infidelity, prostitution, watching of pornography, stealing at work, bad temper, laziness, quarrelsomeness, and lackadaisical attitude to work are considered the defining marks of salvation. The idea of salvation as a transformation in the life of a convert reflects a question that was asked the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, ‘What should we do?’ The Apostle’s answer was a call to the audience to ‘repent and be baptized’.

The idea of repentance as a constituent part of the response to the Christian message is construed as a transformation in the life of a convert. For Pentecostals and charismatics, salvation involves the experience and appropriation of the gospel by the believer that is expressed in a holistic, embodied participation of the entire person turning from sin to God.⁴³⁸ Salvation is the beginning of a new life that syncs with the demands of the Christian faith. One must experience the idea of being ‘saved’.⁴³⁹ The idea of conversion invokes a rupture

⁴³⁷ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 2005.

⁴³⁸ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 44.

⁴³⁹ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 45

and discontinuity with a person's past habit, practices, culture, and traditions.⁴⁴⁰ The change in the life of the convert is part of the individualisation of salvation as a personal encounter with God. This encounter is achieved through the work of the Holy Spirit. The centrality of the Holy Spirit in the drama of salvation is concretized by means of speaking in tongues by the convert. In the theology of NDW, speaking in tongues aligns the spirit of the convert with the Spirit of God. More specifically, speaking in tongues (also construed as heavenly language) helps the believer to emerge victorious in the cosmic battle between good and evil. The elevating of moral weakness to the realm of the metaphysical world sustains the cardinal place of the Holy Spirit in the soteriology of NDW. In the end, the understanding is that the believer is able to overcome moral challenges that burden his or Christian walk. Speaking in tongues helps the believer to overcome the limitations of the body. In the same way, reflecting the notion embedded in African indigenous religions, the soteriology of NDW assumes that there is a direct connection between the mundane and the esoteric world. It is believed that activities in the spiritual world have a direct bearing on the material world. Hence, sickness, poverty, laziness, and misfortune are largely considered the works of forces in the spiritual world. Salvation is, therefore, expected to bring redemption to the Christian from all these life-negating forces.

⁴⁴⁰ Joel Robbins, "Globalization of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity", *ARA* 33 (2004): 117-43 (127).

CHAPTER SIX

NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS, HIS PROSPERITY GOSPEL AND OTHER THEOLOGIES

6.1. INTRODUCTION

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that the charismatic movement has a conspicuous presence in Ghana.⁴⁴¹ The popularity of the movement is such that since its emergence in the 1970s, it has found expression in mainline churches in Ghana, including the Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican, and Catholic denominations.⁴⁴² The pervasiveness of the movement in mainline churches is predicated on the capacity of the charismatic leaders to attract the youth.⁴⁴³ This means that churches that continued to practise what many of the youth considered ‘conservatism’ lost their members in droves to emerging charismatic churches. Consequently, to stem the tide of members drifting to charismatic churches, the mainline churches strategically allowed some of the defining elements of the charismatic movement to find expression in their worship. For example, the speaking in tongues and singing and clapping hands have gained more acceptance in the mainline churches.⁴⁴⁴

6.6.1. Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ prosperity gospel and a critical assessment

The aspect of NDW’s theology that has, however, attracted extensive criticism from a section of the Ghanaian community is his overemphasis on prosperity. As I have established above, the whole gamut of the prosperity gospel is not necessarily an import of American televangelists. Contrary to popular assumption that the prosperity gospel is a sui generis

⁴⁴¹ Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*.

⁴⁴² Gerre ter Haar, “Stand up for Jesus: A survey of new developments in Christianity in Ghana,” *Exchange*, Vol. 23:3, December, (1994), p. 232

⁴⁴³ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*.224

⁴⁴⁴ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, 291.

American import to the rest of the world,⁴⁴⁵ I argue that, while the charismatic church seeks to be more international than local, the Akan cosmology on salvation partly accounts for the emphasis charismatics place on prosperity and good health. It is one of the indigenous religious relics that survived the onslaught of the charismatic movement in Ghana since the 1970s. Indeed, it is part of the edifice of the soteriology of Akan indigenous religion.⁴⁴⁶ I choose the Akan for my analysis because the Akan theology of salvation has shown resilience and continuity in contemporary charismatic Christianity, even after it was disputed in the early days of the charismatic movement. This is precisely because the charismatics branded the spiritual entities of the indigenous metaphysical world as the demons of the Bible.⁴⁴⁷ The health and prosperity gospel is one of the religious teachings of the fastest growing churches in the world.⁴⁴⁸ The influence of this theology has a transnational dimension that features in the global religious map. In some cases, mainline churches have been forced to adopt some aspects of this gospel. The prosperity gospellers creatively incorporate aspects of the ‘think positive’ motivational speeches.⁴⁴⁹

As earlier indicated, besides the Akan influence on NDW’s prosperity gospel theology, the Ghanaian economic context also provided some insight into the popularity of prosperity. Given that the charismatic movement was birthed amid Ghana’s economic challenges, it became temporarily a source of psychological relief to many of the Ghanaian youth who had

⁴⁴⁵ Robert Beckford, “Theology in the Age of crack: crack age, prosperity doctrine and ‘being there,’” *Black Theology in Britain* 4(1), 2001. 9-24.

⁴⁴⁶ Allan H. Anderson, *Spirit-filled world: Religious Dis/Continuity in African Pentecostalism*. (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018,) 137-140

⁴⁴⁷ Meyer, *Translating the Devil*.

⁴⁴⁸ Hunt S. Dramatising the “health and wealth gospel”: belief and practice of a neo-Pentecostal “faith” ministry. *Journal of Beliefs and Values* (21)1 (2000), 73-86.

⁴⁴⁹ Coleman S. “Conservative Protestantism and the world order: the faith movement in the United States and Sweden,” *Sociology of Religion* (54)4 (1993), 353-373.

become disillusioned about life. Many of these youth who were graduates had failed to secure jobs, and the few who were employed were underpaid. In the end, many of the youth could neither fulfil their own expectations nor the hopes their families and society had placed in them. Tensions were high. There were rumours of another military intervention in the country. Nevertheless, since Jerry John Rawlings, the then military leader, had demonstrated firm control over the reins of government, many of such attempted coups were foiled and aborted. There remained, however, the need for a 'palliative' that could re-channel the minds and energies of the youth into something productive. The charismatic movement did not provide employment or any immediate material blessings. Instead, it was able to romanticise and overstretch the notion of prosperity. Through its continuous teachings of prosperity, many of the youth became convinced that it was possible for them to escape the debilitating effects of abject poverty.

While the promise of material prosperity was enticing to the youth, it soon proved to be fraught with difficulties. The promise of God's blessing appeared to have taken too long to manifest. Desperation among the youth was still surging high, and some of them were becoming impatient. But by the late 1980s, NDW had secured a good relationship with some key political elites; and by the 1990s, he had broadened his transnational networks to include some noted American businessmen and businesswomen. He, therefore, used his broader national and international networks to connect some of the youth in his church to job opportunities. While this contributed to assuaging the anxiety of such youth, it resulted in the building of a personality cult around NDW. He became the quintessential 'Big man', who operates a network of people who are ready at all costs to defend him. His ability to dispense job and travelling networks to church members became an important means of endearing himself to his members, and consolidating his influence.

The result of this is that it is almost impossible for one to criticise NDW without being lampooned by loyal church members. Given that his church has attracted a huge following from diverse backgrounds, some of whom occupy key political offices, NDW is able to deploy his 'Big man' role to comment on Ghana's politics. Although he has strategically refrained from openly demonstrating his political affiliation with any of the two major political parties, he is usually accused of being a 'political prostitute' who carefully shifts political alliances to achieve his personal goals, thereby manipulating Ghana's politics to his advantage.

Due to NDW's persuasive approach, many youths felt inspired to take Christianity seriously. As part of the prosperity gospel, it was considered against the will of God for a person to remain poor after he had accepted Jesus Christ as his saviour. Any traces of lack in the life of a Christian was considered the lingering effect of some ancestral curse or the work of malevolent spirits, particularly witchcraft. Consequently, NDW developed an extensive oral theology on ancestral curses and witchcraft. Specifically, he largely propounded that ancestral punishments or curses could be transmitted from one generation to the other if nothing was done to break them. Often, deliverance conferences were held to break such curses. A related teaching was the proposition that ancestors often left altars that were dedicated to demonic forces. Consequently, it became common practice for NDW and other charismatic leaders to organize many days of fasting to break all ancestral altars. For this purpose and to neutralize any effects of ancestral curses, the blood of Jesus Christ was often invoked.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁵⁰ Interview with Nicholas Duncan-Williams on December 12, 2019.

6.6.2 NDW'S TEACHING ON WITCHCRAFT AND SPIRITUAL PRAXIS

The belief in witchcraft also looms high among charismatics in Ghana. In many Ghanaian communities, nothing is believed to happen by chance. Every adverse occurrence is believed to be connected to the works of witches. So, often, tragic events, such as sickness, accidents, and deaths, are attributed to witches. More importantly, extreme poverty is blamed on witches. This assumption is exacerbated in areas where logic appears inadequate to explain certain phenomena. In one of the prayer sessions I attended, a member who claimed to be making progress in life, attributed his success to one of NDW's prayer meetings. He asserted that:

Before taking my prayer life serious [sic], I had always assumed that life was all about what one sees with one's eyes. But I had a change of mind after I carefully analyzed my life, based on the teaching of Archbishop NDW. In one of his prayer conferences, he declared that witches, among others, are the cause of poverty and wastefulness in a person's life. Ever since he said that I decided to take stock of my life. I had worked for many years but had nothing to show for it. I started to pray. Through prayer, it became clear to me that witches were behind my challenges. I, therefore, joined the regular prayer sessions at church. Now, thank God, I have made even in my business. I am not very rich, but, at least, I have made significant progress in my life.⁴⁵¹

The belief in witchcraft helps church members to rationalize events in their lives that common sense and logic fail to explain. Within the charismatic movement in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa, the belief in witchcraft has a trans-denominational dimension. Similarly, the belief in witchcraft transcends the boundaries of a particular religion. Therefore, traditionalists, Muslims, and Christians all believe in the existential reality of witchcraft.⁴⁵² Initially, the missionaries tried to dismiss the reality of witchcraft in Africa, particularly during the resurgence of mission work in the nineteenth century. Rather, they introduced their

⁴⁵¹ Interview with Patrick Mensah Ofori in Accra on 12th November, 2017.

⁴⁵² Danfulani, Umar Habila Dadem, "Exorcising Witchcraft: The Return of the Gods in New Religious Movements on the Jos Plateau and the Benue Regions of Nigeria." *African Affairs* 98 (1999), 167-193.

moral dualism in Africa.⁴⁵³ In the theology of NDW, the postmodern ideas of relativising or neutralising evil does not obtain. He teaches that witchcraft is unambiguously evil. Witchcraft features prominently in his theology and the exorcising of witchcraft becomes a major feature of charismatic exorcism. The overwhelming emphasis placed on witchcraft within charismatic Christianity is such that some think that the belief in witchcraft is more pronounced than the belief in God.⁴⁵⁴ The ubiquitous expression of witchcraft is such that the deliverance ministry in charismatic Christianity has such a prominent position in the religious itinerary of charismatic leaders.⁴⁵⁵ In addition to indigenous influences, NDW'S theology on witchcraft is partly informed by the teachings of some western televangelists, notably Peter Wagner, Derek Prince, Kenneth Hagin, and Frank Peretti.⁴⁵⁶ The theology of witchcraft in charismatic Christianity has gained popularity because it partly helps to explain and rationalise the paradoxes in life, particularly the simultaneous existence of 'good' and 'evil'.⁴⁵⁷ Since poverty is very high in Ghana, usually, it is the 'spirit of poverty' that is targeted for deliverance. It is not uncommon to have church members commanding and binding the 'spirit of poverty'. This prayer is usually interspersed with 'I release my blessings.' It is widely believed among members of NDW's church that one can bind witches that are responsible for one's poverty.⁴⁵⁸ It is also common to command, name, and declare wealth into one's life. For example, at a prayer session, I overheard a member praying in the

⁴⁵³ Meyer. *Translating the Devil*.

⁴⁵⁴ Gifford, *African Christianity*, 108.

⁴⁵⁵ Atiemo, Abamfo. "Deliverance in the Charismatic Churches in Ghana." *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology* (4)2 (1994), 39-49.

⁴⁵⁶ Duah, Grace Baaba Fabiwa. *Deliverance: Fact or Fantasy?* Legon, Ghana: Ed-line Impression Enterprise; Atiemo, Abamfo 1994 "Deliverance in the Charismatic Churches in Ghana." *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology* (4)2 (1998), 39-49.

⁴⁵⁷ Comaroff, Jean and John Comaroff, "Introduction." In *Modernity and Its Malcontents: Ritual and power in Postcolonial Africa*. Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, eds. (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Pres), 11-37

⁴⁵⁸ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Binding the Strong Man*. (Accra, Ghana: Design Solutions, 1998).

following manner: 'I bind the spirit of poverty. I bind all ancestral curses. I command and discharge my prosperity. I declare myself rich.' In many cases, I have observed that such commands and declarations bring psychological relief to church members. It gives them the assurance that, although they live in extreme poverty, their blessings will soon become a reality.

6.6.2.1 NDW's teaching on witchcraft and prayer practices

The NDW's teaching about the entanglement between witchcraft and prosperity which is embodied in the prosperity gospel brings out NDW'S theology on prayer. As indicated earlier, NDW is considered the 'Papa of Prayer'. He is known in charismatic circles as the lead prayer warrior in Ghana. However, his theology on prayer goes beyond just communicating with God, beyond a devotee seeking to communicate with a creator. Prayer in the theology of NDW is also about commanding. Prayer is metamorphosed as a weapon to attack malevolent spirits.⁴⁵⁹ One must, therefore, strive in prayer, unleashing it as a weapon to attack all anti-progress elements in their life.⁴⁶⁰ This conceptualization of prayer has a way of constructing it as a dramatized ritual. In most cases, the supplicants clap their hands, pace up and down, and repeatedly use phrases like, 'I command,' 'I declare,' 'I bind,' and 'I claim.' In the intensity of prayer, one could repeat these phrases for about ten or twenty minutes. Sometimes the leaders of the prayer session declare some commands that the worshippers are expected to repeat. In one such prayer session, I recorded the leader asking worshippers to say the following after him: 'I (name of the worshipper), declare that nothing evil will happen to me. I renounce and rebuke all ancestral curses. I unleash my spiritual prosperity. I command the spirit of poverty to flee from my life.' After these declarations, worshippers are

⁴⁵⁹ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Prayer moves God* (n.d.).

⁴⁶⁰ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Praying strategic prayers* (n.d.).

thrown into ecstatic prayer that could last for about twenty minutes until the leader intervenes. Such prayer is often accompanied by the clapping of hands, stamping of feet, hooting, and shouting.

There is also the dimension of speaking of tongues to release prosperity. For many Ghanaian charismatics and Pentecostals, ‘tongues’ is considered a heavenly language that the devil cannot decode. It is, therefore, deemed an effective mode of prayer for releasing prosperity. During the fieldwork, I attended prayer sessions of NDW’s church and other charismatic churches where I observed worshippers praying in tongues for about one hour without a break. In some cases, the same phrase was repeated for about thirty minutes, followed by another phrase. Besides the use of speaking in tongues to strive in prayer against poverty and lack, there is also the use of anointing oil. At the ACI, there are services devoted only to anointing. At such services, one may receive an anointing for good marriage, traveling mercies, favour, good health, and/or financial prosperity. In the past, worshippers bought the oil from the prayer warriors. However, they now make their purchases at the church’s bookshop where all forms of anointing oils are sold. During an anointing service, the congregation is invited to declare over the anointing oil what they expect from the Lord. The idea of declaration within charismatic Christianity is informed by the belief in positive confession. NDW teaches that words are powerful, and they are capable of transmitting thoughts into action. Confessing something positive is a theology that is framed around God using words to create the cosmos. In most of the church services I attended during the fieldwork, I observed that charismatics take the idea of positive confession as central to their religious orthopraxy. They believe that through confession, they can command the spirit world, speak something good into their lives, and reverse any evil darts the enemy has thrown against them. In one of such prayer sessions at the ACI, the devotees were asked to confess

riches into their lives. Young graduates were also led to confess that they had received their desired jobs. In the same way, those who were sick were asked to confess total healing. This revealed that confessing something positive into one's life is a vital act of charismatic Christianity in Ghana.

The Bible serves as an important text during prayers for prosperity. Usually, biblical texts are literally translated and appropriated to meet the situation of the congregation. In one prayer meeting, the preacher used Philippians 4:19 'And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus,' to charge the congregation to claim their blessings. According to the prayer leader, the text must be claimed. The text must also be appropriated. He explained the text to mean that it is not possible for a 'true' Christian to suffer deprivation or taste the stint of poverty. He challenged the congregation to see themselves blessed. He said that the text is meant to declare the prosperity of Christians, and that, based on it, 'poverty is at variance with life in Jesus Christ.' He asked, 'If Jesus is rich, why should his child be poor?' This question threw the congregation into bouts of prayer for hours.

6.6.2.2 CRITIQUING NDW'S WORLDVIEW ON PROSPERITY GOSPEL

The typical hermeneutic that seeks to contextualize a Bible text is usually ignored in NDW's prosperity theology. In most cases, the best interpretation of a Bible text was how it reflected the existential living conditions of the congregation. According to Jane Soothill "the new charismatic churches are most definitely of this world and express frequent concern for the health, wealth and general success of adherents in this life time".⁴⁶¹ This assertion is an apt description of the core concerns of the CM. The congregation was also told to take God by his words. Consequently, if God says a Christian shall be rich, then that Christian must take

⁴⁶¹ Jane Soothill, *Gender, Social Change and spiritual power: Charismatic Christianity in Ghana*, Boston: Brill, 2007. p37

God by his word and claim the riches. The idea of poverty is considered antithetical to Christianity. In NDW's theology, poverty is an index that the devil is interfering with the life of a Christian. A Christian must, therefore, strive in prayer to overcome the manipulations of the devil. The prosperity gospel assumes that God is obliged to respond to the beck and call of Christians. This obligation is demanded of God to unleash blessings on devotees. Consequently, the prosperity gospel has been repudiated for undermining faith as taught in the Bible.⁴⁶² More so, the prosperity gospel portrays and emphasises one aspect of Jesus – his wealth. While Jesus did not make a fuss about his wealth, prosperity gospel preachers contend that the wealth of Jesus Christ is the fount of their theology. They claim that Jesus was not poor and so it is a sin for a Christian to be poor. Poverty is not a virtue or even an index of spirituality. In fact, for prosperity preachers, poverty is an outflow of ancestral curses or sin in the life of a Christian. The prosperity gospel projects religion in a very instrumental manner. In other words, one must approach religion with the faith of moving God to act. It is a kind of transactional religion, where the gods are worshipped only when they respond to the needs of devotees. God risks being dumped if he fails to provide for devotees. Thus, there is much emphasis on the anthropocentric, instead of the theocentric in the prosperity gospel. For example, more emphasis is placed on what a Christian will get from Christianity, rather than on what a Christian could do to expand the Kingdom of God. The prosperity gospel operates on a certain logic that devotees are expected to 'sow seed' into the life of the preacher. 'Sowing seed' is a metaphor for paying tithes, offerings, and giving voluntarily to support the work of the preacher. 'Seed sowing' is an important feature of Nicholas Duncan-Williams' theology. Scarecrows are built around non-payment of tithes and non-investment in the life of the preacher. Indeed, one of America's founders of the

⁴⁶² Charles Kraft. A theological evaluation of the prosperity gospel, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 143 (1986), 329- 350.

prosperity gospel, Oral Roberts, began his prosperity teaching in the 1950s by encouraging his congregants to sow seed into his life and also to pay tithes.⁴⁶³

My observation in the course of the fieldwork is that the prosperity gospel is engendering a ‘name-it-claim-it-gospel’ among many of the youth who attend Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ church. The mind-set that God will bless one if one works hard enough is dangerous and inimical to Ghana’s development. I argue that given Ghana’s difficulties in overcoming the challenges of poverty, poor sanitation and squalid living conditions, joblessness, and healthcare challenges, the prosperity gospel has little to offer. I argue that Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ teachings are the converse of the protestant ethic which encourages industriousness, frugality, and investment. In fact, a careful study of Akan work ethic shows that Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ prosperity gospel is in many ways at variance with the Akan work ethic, which stresses hard work and generosity so as to ensure the redistribution of wealth to help the marginalised and impoverished in society. But the examination of NDW reveals a departure from the Akan work ethics. It is, therefore, inaccurate to attribute Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ prosperity gospel to the materiality of the Akan notion of salvation. Although the Akan notion of salvation is ‘here-and-now’ and encourages material acquisition, it is not true that it is coterminous with the prosperity gospel. As earlier indicated, the Akan conceptual scheme encourages community and denounces individuality and self-centeredness. Besides, it encourages individuals to be each other’s keepers and to share their wealth. Conversely, the prosperity gospel creates enmity among families. Given that mystical causality is central to the prosperity gospel, innocent family members could be accused of

⁴⁶³ David Harrell, *All Things Are Possible: The Healing and Charismatic Revivals in Modern America*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975).

possessing witchcraft. Often, such an accusation is a clever way of eliminating the accused from sharing the wealth of their relatives. The positionality of witchcraft in the prosperity gospel also legitimises and validates individualism within the charismatic movement.

6.6.3. The media and the prosperity gospel

Since the re-democratization of Ghana in 1992, the media landscape has been deeply liberalized. Many radio stations and television stations have sprung up all over the country. Many of the charismatic leaders have taken advantage of this to own television channels. Some have also bought airtime on radio and television to broadcast their teachings. The proliferation of social media has also aided to increase the attention most charismatic leaders seek. Since the 1990s, the charismatic prosperity gospel has been diffused through the media. The media has given broad publicity to the prosperity gospel of NDW. He has a program on GTV, Ghana's national television station, where he preaches every Sunday morning. Some of the bishops of his church have also obtained radio airtime to spread their prosperity theology.

Social media has also complemented the traditional media to amplify the publicity of the charismatic movement in Ghana. It has made it possible for virtual church services to be conducted. Therefore, congregants who are unable to show up physically at church are able to follow church services on Facebook. ACI has a Facebook account that enables it to reach out to its members across the globe. Thus, through social media, Nicholas Duncan-Williams' prosperity theology has had a transnational effect, as church members all over the world are able to follow his teachings. As the 'Papa' of the church, his words on prosperity are considered weighty enough to elicit action from his followers. ACI is also visible on YouTube, where the teachings of NDW are stored for members to watch at their convenience. Hence, virtual church services are gradually becoming popular, especially since

the internet is now easily accessible for many. So, generally, the media has facilitated the global spread of Nicholas Duncan-Williams' teachings through the free flow of new theological approaches to the prosperity gospel. As a result, he is able to maintain his members and I have observed instances where members of his church living abroad have been instructed to touch the screens of their media devices during anointing services to receive a blessing. This is similar to the influence of T.D. Jakes who is followed in Ghana through traditional and social media, and since he is considered the mentor of NDW, his teachings on prosperity tend to complement those of NDW.

I must, however, point out that while the prosperity gospel has gained a stronghold in charismatic Christianity and appears to be making inroads into some of the historic churches, such as Methodist, Anglican, and the Presbyterian churches, it is widely condemned by some Ghanaians. Some Ghanaians consider it a lazy man's approach to creating wealth. In an informal conversation with me, one news editor maintained that the prosperity gospel is creating religious insanity in the country. According to him, the prosperity gospel is breeding lazy Christians who think that rituals can be used to supplant hard work in wealth creation. Thus, the prosperity gospel is accused of causing Ghanaians to exchange hard work with prayer. At the ACI, it is common to sight a huge congregation during 'Jericho Hour' on Thursdays. This typifies the tendency for many charismatic Christians to attend church gatherings during the prime hours of the day when most of them are expected to be working. In some cases, workers may be found using productive hours at their workplaces to read the Bible and pray for a financial breakthrough. A related observation I made during my research was the recent trend of some offices installing, within their premises, television sets which caused some workers to spend productive working hours watching charismatic leaders specialized in the prosperity gospel. Thus, charismatic work ethics are counterproductive,

endorsing docility and undermining creativity in wealth creation while investing superstition in its adherents.

The popularity of the prosperity gospel has also bred a group of pastors and religious teachers who fleece their congregants on the promise of helping them overcome the agony of poverty. For instance, sometimes bottles of anointing oil are sold at exorbitant prices. At the ACI, congregants are able to access certain levels of anointing depending on how much they are ready to pay. Thus, the saying: 'The higher the amount one pays, the higher the anointing.'. In fact, the anointing oil has become like a magical element that helps one to break free from poverty. Therefore, during anointing services, some congregants are ready to go every mile to spend money to claim prosperity. Over the years, it has been rumoured that some charismatic leaders provide spiritual protection to illicit drug traffickers. In the 1990s, NDW came under similar unrelenting critique when he was accused of having received a car from an illicit drug dealer. Following that incident, some Ghanaians concluded that NDW shielded many illicit drug dealers in his church.

The recourse to witchcraft to explain grim poverty in a church member's life creates problems within families. In Ghana, the accusation of witchcraft is one that could have wider implications for a family. If one family member is accused of witchcraft, other family members also become suspects. This is particularly so for females who may be accused of witchcraft. Among the Akan, witchcraft is believed to pass from mothers to their daughters. And so, if a mother is accused of witchcraft, it is most likely that her daughter/s will also be accused of possessing the craft. There have been several instances where frustrated young men have butchered and hacked their mothers to death because some pastor had told them

that their mothers were responsible for their challenges.⁴⁶⁴ The witchcraft mentality planted in the minds of charismatic Christians also invests fear in them. During my fieldwork, I interacted with many young members of ACI who vowed never to go to their hometowns for fear of being bewitched. In the teaching of NDW, he argued that it is possible for Christians, including prophets to be bewitched, especially if such Christians are not discerning. He said that witches are part of the wicked forces of the demonic world and Christians must pray to discern the deception of witchcraft.⁴⁶⁵ In Ghana, where every family is believed to harbour a witch or wizard, the consistent reference to witchcraft in the church is a disincentive to family unity. In extreme cases, marriages have broken down because a parent of one of the spouses was accused of possessing witchcraft.

The overemphasis on witchcraft also affects distributive infrastructural development in Ghana. Many congregants of the charismatic movement, who are non-natives of Accra, prefer to build in Accra rather than in their home towns. Most of them fear that by building a house or houses in their villages they could become targets of witchcraft attacks. Some who are rich disguise themselves as financially impoverished when attending funerals or other social gatherings in their villages. In view of this mindset, which reflects on practice, Accra is densely populated, while villages seriously lag behind in infrastructural development. Such a concentration of wealth and infrastructural development in Accra and other cities has widened the gap between the rich and the poor, resulting also in a rise in theft, armed robbery, and other crimes which make life in the cities unsafe.

⁴⁶⁴ Ghanaweb “Witchcraft: Grandma set ablaze,” November 26, 2010. <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Witchcraft-Grandma-set-ablaze-198244>; Accessed: October 10, 2020.

⁴⁶⁵ Nicholas Duncan-Williams “Who bewitched you? June 29, 2019; Accessed: July 12, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHAj882zSEQ>.

6.6.4. Empire building and the charismatic ministries in Ghana

The overemphasis of the prosperity gospel in the teaching of NDW finds expression in what I refer to as empire building. I use the term ‘empire’ to denote the fact that charismatic leaders tend to pass on the leadership of the churches they founded to their wives or children. It has become common practice for wives of charismatic leaders to also enter into ministry. Their children are as well encouraged to take up Christian ministerial jobs. At the ACI, there is a succession plan that allows the children of NDW to take over the running of the church in the event of his absence. This idea of empire-building has become a major challenge for other pastors of ACI who cannot dream of ever leading the church someday. Pastors who, for one or two reasons, leave the ACI are constitutionally banned from establishing a church anywhere nearer than about 200 meters from any ACI. This clause, which is part of the agreement required of every potential pastor before ordination, guarantees Nicholas Duncan-Williams’ plans to entrench his empire-building, and safeguards his church against any competition from an ‘insider’.

Due to this trend of empire building within the charismatic movement, unity has eluded the movement and there remains a poor sense of ecumenism among charismatic Christians. Although the leadership of the movement has formed a loose association to coordinate and defend their interests, the absence of unity within the movement clearly remains a formidable challenge. This problem of a lack of unity stems from the drive towards empire building and the concerns of international competition as each charismatic leader seeks to outshine the other. In many cases, financial infidelity among charismatic leaders have led to disagreements and internal schisms. ACI has had many young and experienced pastors leaving the church because they felt that they had not been fairly treated financially, or that they had not been given their due recognition. Consequently, many new charismatic churches have sprung up because of the lack of proper financial accountability in ACI. Other pastors

have also left ACI to form their own churches because they could not come to terms with serving under Nicholas Duncan-Williams' children, who are young in the ministry.

Another trend among most charismatic leaders is the tendency to live ostentatious lives. Within the movement, there is competition over who is the richest. Recently, social media was awash with some charismatic leaders displaying their opulence in the number of houses and fleet of cars they owned. Some even claim to own private jets. The fixation on demonstrating wealth has dimmed the initial evangelistic zeal that resulted in the rise of the charismatic movement. Indeed, the antecedent para-church movements, such as Scripture Union and Gospel Way Incorporation, had evangelism as their core mandate. It was their zeal for evangelism that birthed the charismatic movement. But recently, the charismatic movement has become more epicurean and materialistic, demonstrating less religious fervour to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

6.6.5. Networking globally to extend the prosperity gospel

Through the use of the internet, the prosperity gospel of NDW has obtained a global audience. As indicated, the 1980s was a decisive turn for many Ghanaians travelling across the Atlantic to the Western world. The economic morass of Ghana in the 1980s forced many Ghanaians into the diaspora. In many cases, some of these migrants became key figures in beginning a branch of their churches in the diaspora. Consequently, since the 1980s, branches of Nicholas Duncan-Williams' church have been established in many western countries. When such churches are established, he sends bishops and trained leaders to help consolidate the establishment. Currently, ACI is represented in many European countries and in North America. Through the visible presence of ACI, NDW has succeeded in establishing networks with key prosperity gospelers across North America. Some of them are occasionally invited

to Ghana to augment his prosperity message. Over the last five years, ACI has begun a program that brings businesspersons in the church and outside of the church to interact to find new ways of navigating through the business arena. This is believed to help mentor young men and women in the church to nurture business ideas.

Connecting with other Euro-American partners has helped NDW to update his sermons of prosperity. More importantly, it has helped him to connect his church members to some influential persons in the world of business. In Ghana, NDW is considered a ‘Big Man’ who connects church members to the political elite. These national and transnational networks boost the image of NDW as the ‘Papa’ of the charismatic movement. It also gives credibility to his emphasis on prosperity. More so, NDW has become a globetrotter who travels across the world spreading his prosperity gospel among African populations in the diaspora.

6.4. *Nicholas Duncan-Williams and economic issues in Ghana*

Since independence, Ghana continues to struggle with the colonial legacy of underdevelopment, characterized by high levels of poverty and illiteracy, corruption, poor sanitation and squalid living conditions, and low-intensity conflicts. Since the country’s wholesale implementation of some conditions of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, (which included reduction of subsidies to major sections of the economy – agriculture, health, and education) many Ghanaians have found themselves living in very dire economic circumstances.⁴⁶⁶ While the initiative of the government to implement neo-liberal policies dates back to the 1980s, an era that saw the implementation of Structural Adjustment

⁴⁶⁶ Kwadwo Konadu-Agyemang, “The Best of Times and the Worst of Times: Structural Adjustment Programs and Uneven Development in Africa: The Case of Ghana,” *Professional Geographer* (52)3, 2000, 469-483.

Programmes, Ghana continues to suffer the spillover effect of these policies. The privatization of government economic institutions did not yield the expected results,⁴⁶⁷ and the government's retrenchment agenda also did not stop corruption and transfer payment.⁴⁶⁸ Neither did the removal of subsidies for agriculture, health, and education contribute any significant measure to restructuring the economy. In the end, Ghana continues to struggle with major economic challenges: poverty levels continue to rise, youth unemployment is widespread, parents are struggling to afford the cost of university education for their wards, and the few existing private companies are taking advantage of the situation to underpay university graduates they employ.

Since 2002, the government has implemented some social intervention policies with the aim of reducing the economic burden on Ghanaians. These policies have included the National Health Insurance, School Feeding Programmes, and Free Maternity Care. From 2018, the NPP government also rolled out the Free Senior High School program.⁴⁶⁹ These initiatives are ostensibly meant to lessen the burden on Ghanaians. But the fact that for almost a decade, the country struggled with erratic power supply (known locally as *Dumsɔ*) collapsed the companies of many a Ghanaian who did not have enough money to invest in alternative

⁴⁶⁷ Brenda Chalfin, "Market Reforms and the State: The Case of Shea in Ghana," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, (34)3 (Sep. 1996), 421-440.

⁴⁶⁸ Jon Kraus, "The Struggle over Structural Adjustment in Ghana," *Africa Today*, (38) 4, Ghana: The Process of Political and Economic Change 1991-1992 (4th Qtr., 1991), 19-37.

⁴⁶⁹ Joyce Abebrese, "Social Protection in Ghana: An overview of existing programmes and their prospects and challenges," Friedrich Ebert Stiftung foundation (2014); <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/buero/ghar>. Accessed on 20 December 2019.

power supply.⁴⁷⁰ The almost decade-long irregular power supply resulted in the retrenchment and collapse of some small-scale industries.

The cumulative effect of all this was that Ghanaians started agitating for the government to roll out robust economic policies to remedy the economic challenges of the country. The churches were also called to contribute to reverse the country's economic woes. NDW responded to some of these challenges by providing some interventions. The first was that his church established an education fund that was directed at providing financial support to Ghanaians in general, but with more focus on church members who had secured admission to tertiary institutions but could not afford to pay their fees. This education fund has brought much relief to many Ghanaians. Secondly, the church also established a university, Dominion University College, to make it possible for members of the church to receive tertiary education. Thus, church members who enrolled in the University enjoyed a significant discount to enable them to achieve their goals.

Although NDW appears to be contributing his quota to support the Ghanaian economy, some Ghanaian social commentators are of the view that the church is not pulling its weight enough to support Ghanaians. Such critics argue that while the church receives huge monthly tithes, its focus has largely been on how to satisfy the unquenchable materialistic appetite of church leaders. They further argue that charismatic leaders have become so obsessed with demonstrating opulence that they splash out on social media their new clothes and the fleet of cars they have acquired. Some even compete over who has the latest clothes or best car in town. NDW has had a fair share of such critique. His response was considered an index of

⁴⁷⁰ Ebenezer Nyarko Kumi. "The Electricity Situation in Ghana: Challenges and Opportunities." CGD Policy Paper. Washington, DC: Center for Global Development, 109. (2017) <https://www.cgdev.org/publication/electricity-situation-ghana-challenges-and-opportunities>. accessed on 20 December 2019.

arrogance and insensitivity to the poor in his church. This assertion by NDW was not new in the charismatic movement, as a tele-evangelist of the same movement, Kenneth Copeland, had also passed a similar comment. He is considered the originator of this assertion.⁴⁷¹

These kinds of assertions reinforce images of prosperity that are constructed to determine one's success or failure in life. It places an unnecessary burden on people to aspire to what they can hardly afford. While it is speculated that the idea of the prosperity gospel resonates with indigenous Akan culture, it must be pointed out that it does not integrate the Akan work ethos of industriousness. It also does not incorporate the redistributive logic of wealth among the Akan. Many of the prosperity gospel preachers hardly talk about the redistribution element of wealth acquisition. I, therefore, argue that the prosperity gospel does not necessarily reflect the Akan wealth creation ethos. It also does not conform to traditional Akan industriousness that eschews laziness and passivity. This is precisely because it is too individualistic when compared with the Akan ethos.

Following the display of opulence by some charismatic leaders, the government of Ghana is alleged to be hatching well-advanced plans to tax churches in Ghana. This plan is being proposed partly because some of charismatic churches are involved in the sale of anointing oil and Holy water. It is rumoured that some of these charismatic leaders go on pilgrimage to Israel and, when returning to Ghana, they bring with them what they consider as 'special anointing oil,' which they sell to their members at huge cost. In some of these charismatic

⁴⁷¹Hank, Hanegraaff, *Christianity in crisis: The 21st century* (USA: Thomas Nelson. 2012.) www.equip.org/PDF/JAW455.pdf, accessed 21 December 2018.

churches, prayers are offered based on the cost of the anointing oil. Also, prayers are offered based on the level of financial contribution of a congregant to the church.

6.5. Nicholas Duncan-Williams and Social welfare in Ghana

The government's provision of social welfare to Ghanaians has not been encouraging. As earlier stated, over past years the government has made efforts to support the social welfare of Ghanaians. The rolling out of social intervention programs were all directed at alleviating poverty and supporting Ghanaians to live a meaningful life. One area where the government has shown tenacity in supporting the social welfare of Ghanaians is in the area of education. Many Ghanaians have hailed the government's recent implementation of the Free Senior High School education policy. This policy is reported to have lessened the economic burden on Ghanaians. But there are other critical areas that need immediate attention, such as the area of mental health care in particular, which remains a major challenge in Ghana.⁴⁷² There are many people walking the streets of Ghana's major cities who simply need some help to overcome their mental agonies. Besides, some mentally challenged patients are unable to access rehabilitation centres. Considering the effect of stigmatization that mentally challenged people face in Ghana, NDW has established a rehabilitation centre that is meant to contribute to the healing of persons struggling with mental health challenges or with addiction to substances.

⁴⁷² Kenneth Ae-ngibise, Sara cooper, Edward Adii bokah, Bright Akpalu, Crick Lund, Victor Doku, & The MHAPP Research Programme Consortium, "Whether you like it or not people with mental problems are going to go to them': A qualitative exploration into the widespread use of traditional and faith healers in the provision of mental health care in Ghana,' *International Review of Psychiatry*, December 2010; 22(6): 558–567.

Compared to other charismatic leaders like Mensa Otabil, Dag Heward-Mills, and Sam Korankye-Ankrah, NDW has not done much. These other charismatic leaders have established funds to drill boreholes to provide water for Ghanaians in rural communities. Some of them also provide regular health screening and medication to sections of the society. For example, as part of his 'Healing Jesus Crusade,' Dag Heward-Mills organizes free health screening and medication in the areas that his team visits. NDW does not have a clearly stated policy on the church's social intervention programs.

There is no doubt that NDW has been influential in the political and social life in Ghana. But it is also a truism that he has not done much to help alleviate poverty and social challenges in the Ghanaian society.⁴⁷³ While his prosperity gospel has gone a long way to encourage some Ghanaians to pursue success in life, there is no dispute that he has not provided enough physical infrastructure to help Ghanaians. Besides, much as he may have a good conscience in engaging in the politics of Ghana, it is true that sometimes his comments on national matters have not contributed to uniting the Christian front.

6.6. Conclusion

There is no question that the prosperity gospel has fallen on fertile soil in Ghana. Through the internet, it is spreading beyond the limits of the charismatic movement. It is a type of gospel that brings hope to people who see no hope in the current economic dispensation in Ghana. Indeed, in a country where the majority live in penury, the prosperity gospel promises many Ghanaians of impending prosperity. But at the same time, the prosperity gospel portends a

⁴⁷³ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 218.

major challenge to sound working ethics in Ghana. It is breeding Christians who think that they can substitute hard work with prayer to succeed in life. It is also creating a crop of Christians who are gullible and susceptible to all forms of manipulation. Given that religion could easily be appropriated to fleece people, some prosperity gospelers have taken advantage of their popularity to swindle their congregations. In a country where religion is almost untouchable, any attempt by the political elite to regulate the activities of some charismatic leaders has been met with strong resistance from the Ghanaian Christianity constituency. This leaves the excesses of the prosperity theology in a state of a paradox.

Even so, the charismatic movement should be read as fulfilling the personal ambitions of its founders. In the case of NDW, the challenges and difficulties of his early life shaped the kind of theology he espoused. I, therefore, argue that without exploring the personal ambitions of the founders and the agency they exercised in founding the charismatic movement, any analysis fails to capture the complexities of the movement. I conclude that it is necessary to reconstruct the history of the charismatic movement by exploring how the personal ambitions of its founders have shaped its theological trajectories, and to shift away from over-emphasising the socio-cultural and economic context within which the movement emerged. But to ward off criticism, NDW is also investing in socio-political activities in Ghana. That is whether in his comments on national issues – including praying for the Ghanaian economy or providing social services, NDW is seeking to restyle himself as an important actor in the affairs of Ghana.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

7.1. Summary and main arguments

The study has analysed the role of Nicholas Duncan-Williams (NDW) in the evolution of charismatic Christianity in Ghana. It provided a historical background on how events unfolding in Ghana in the 1960s and 1970s shaped the landscape of the charismatic movement. More importantly, the study argued that the Akan worldview and the socio-economic challenges in Ghana in the 1970s formed important building blocks for the rise of the charismatic movement. The rise of the para-church organisations, such as the Scripture Union, in the 1960s, were important beginnings for the rise of NDW and the CM.

NDW did not have extensive western education. He also had poor parental guidance, precisely because his father literally abandoned him when he (NDW) was still very young. As a young man, NDW went through life under the guidance of his mother. But being a "wild guy", as he said, he followed the path of a rascal, who was ready to test all the avenues of life to free himself from grinning poverty. As part of NDW struggle against poverty, he worked as a head porter in the Northern Region and also became known for doing "odd jobs" to make ends meet.

The narrative about NDW points to the important role Africans have played in shaping the contours of contemporary Christianity globally. Instead of focusing alone on the role of the missionaries in the spread of Christianity, this thesis has demonstrated the African initiative in rearticulating Christianity in important ways that reorient Africans to deal with the existential challenges of life. As I contextualised the historical genealogy of the prosperity

gospel, the thesis has contributed to showing the enduring influence of indigenous cultures on Christianity. Most importantly, it complexes the assumption that for Pentecostals, conversion involves breaking of ties with one's ancestral past. The narrative of the Charismatic churches in Ghana, focusing on the central role played by NDW brings to the fore the need for scholars to see how indigenous cultures intersect with Christianity to help Africans appreciate the holistic dimension of life. Thesis has contributed to the burgeoning literature on Charismatic Christianity in Africa, inviting scholars to explore the changing dynamism embodied in this strand of Christianity.

7.2 Findings

The research findings on the contribution of NDW is thus outlined as follows;

I. He gave the impetus to young men to start CM by his example in pioneering the ACI. By so doing he became a mentor to most of its leaders and the point of reference for most of the practices within the charismatic tradition in Ghana. He also by this mentorship relationship with younger charismatic leaders, developed and established what is called "Spiritual sons and daughters" and "Spiritual covering" in Ghana.

II. NDW also contributed to the creation of the model for a personality centred Charismatic leadership style that is prevalent in the CM in Ghana. Most charismatic churches are drive by their leaders and the sheer force of their personality and gifts. The governance structure is heavily built around the leader, decision making is based on favouring loyalist and administration is very lean.

III. His life and ministry is also an Indigenous contribution to Ghanaian Christianity, evangelisation and church growth. Christianity continuous to grow in Ghana after the initial western enterprise and the CM have contributed immensely to its current phase and spread. NDW has been a key player in this endeavour.

IV. He has contributed immensely in the promotion and the entrenchment of charismatic emphasis and ethos such as;

- a) Vibrant Worship services
- b) Dominion mindset and Attitude
- c) Prosperity preaching
- d) The use of Media and spiritualisation of politics

V. NDW has contributed to the development of the Ghanaian version of the prosperity theology by fusing Akan cosmology of salvation and his understanding of biblical prosperity from the perspective of foremost charismatic leaders from North America. By so doing he has forged a Contextual Theological understanding which is unique and relevant within the Ghanaian context.

7.2 Reflections

The thesis contributes to existing knowledge in the following ways;

1. The research revealed through the life of NDW how leaders of CM in Ghana and Africa start their ministries and the factors they grapple with in developing and establishing these ministries. The study contributes to existing knowledge on the leadership dynamics of local leaders of charismatic ministries and their contribution they make in their context.
2. It also brings to the fore the nature of local initiatives in the evangelization enterprise and the nature of contribution of African Christianity to global Christianity.

The thesis also opens up new areas for further studies and these include;

1. The history and theology of the new charismatics or the prophetic ministries that is threatening to overtake the older charismatics as the new face of African Christianity.
2. The issues of succession which confronts the older charismatics as the founding leaders approach their 70's.

7.3 Conclusion

The research concludes that the quest for fulfilling what is referred to as a “divine call” or the sense of being part of a divine task which dawn on NDW after his conversion experience or the quest for space and significance in life and the exploration of alternative means to such objectives may have motivated NDW and by implication the leaders of the charismatic ministries in Ghana. Whatever, the case may be, this research brings to the fore the ingenuity, determinations and tenacity within the local space to make a contribution and to provide a wider space for the evangelization efforts in Africa.

Bibliography and Oral Sources

1.0 Primary Sources

1.1 Interviews

1.2 Nicholas Duncan-Williams and family

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Spintex road, December 2017, December 2018, December 2019.

Bishop Kibby Otoo, Son- Law of Nicholas Duncan-Williams’, Interview by Researcher, Tape Recording, Washington, September 2019.

Rev. David King, Son –Law of Nicholas Duncan-Williams’, Interview by Researcher, Tape Recording, London, August 2018.

Rev. Joel Nicholas Duncan-Williams’, son of Nicholas Duncan-Williams’, Interview by Researcher, Tape Recording, London, July 2018.

Francis Obodai, Driver of Nicholas Duncan-Williams' for 35 years, Interview by Researcher, Tape Recording, Accra, July 2018.

Elsie Duncan-Otoo, Daughter of Nicholas Duncan-William, Interview by Researcher, Tape Recording, Accra, July 2018.

Spio Gyekye, Leader of Prayer Team at home of Nicholas Duncan-Williams', Interview by Researcher, Tape Recording, Accra, July 2018.

1.1.2 Ministerial friends and Associates of Nicholas Duncan-Williams

Rev. Michael Basset, friend and associate of Nicholas Duncan-Williams for 35 years, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December,2018

Rev. Nii Thompson, friend and associate of Nicholas Duncan-William from 1979, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December,2018

Bishop Eric Kwapong, friend and associate of Nicholas Duncan-William from 1979, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December,2018

Rev. Emmanuel Ansah, friend and associate of Nicholas Duncan-Williams from 1979, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December,2018

Mr. Obeng, friend and associate of Nicholas Duncan-William, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December,2018

Mr. Fred Oware, friend and associates of Nicholas Duncan-William and former Chief of Staff of ACI, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December,2018

1.1.3 Selected Leaders of Charismatic Ministries in Ghana with association with Nicholas Duncan-Williams

Bishop Charles Agyin Asare, founder of Perez Chapel, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December,2018

Bishop Yoofi Titi-Ofei, founder of Pleasant place church and General Secretary of NACCC, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, July,2018

Rev. Eastwood Anaba, founder of Fountain Gate Church, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, February,2020

Rev. Dr. Robert Ampiah Kwofie, founder of Global Revival Ministries, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December,2020

Rev. Steve Mensah, founder of Charismatic Evangelistic Ministries, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December,2018

Bishop S. N. Mensah, leader of Full Gospel Church, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December,2018

1.1.4 Bishops and Pastors of Action Chapel International

Bishop James Saah, Chairman, College of Bishops of ACI, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December, 2018

Bishop Joseph Nyarko Antwi, Bishop of Prayer and a longtime associate of Duncan-William, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, July, 2018

Bishop Ebenezer Obodai, Bishop of Prayer Cathedral, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December, 2018

Bishop Clive Mould, Vice Chair, College of Bishops of ACI, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December, 2018

Bishop Peter Mba bacha, former member of College of Bishops of ACI, Interview by researcher, Tape recording, Togo, Deecember,2018

Bishop Matthew Akanbul, Senior Pastor of Germany branches, Interview by Researcher,Tape recording, Accra, December,2018.

Rev. Nii Quaofio, Senior Pastor of ACI Dansoman branch, Interview by Researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December,2018

Rev. Sena Adzam, Pastor of ACI Adenta branch, Interview by Researcher, Tape recording, Accra, December,2018

1.2 Church Documents and Other reports

ACI, Church Constitution

Nicholas Duncan-Williams,40/Sixty 60th Birthday brochure

ACI, Impact brochure for 2019

Funeral brochure of Mr. Edward Duncan-Williams

Funeral brochure of Florence Bruce

1.3 Internet Sources

Abubakar Ibrahim, 'Bomfeh sues gov't again over National Cathedral,'

<https://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2018/September-1st/bomfeh-sues-govt-again-over-national-cathedral.php> [published on January 9, 2019], accessed: May 18, 2019

Campaign Songs Mean Something

http://www.africanelections.org/ghana/news_detail.php?nws=7447&t=Campaign%20Songs%20Mean%20Something Published on November 29, 2019; Accessed: July 14, 2019

Disband vigilante groups – EC to parties

<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Disband-vigilante-groups-EC-to-parties-723630> Published on February 15, 2019; Accessed on: July 14, 2019

“For the Battle is the Lord’s” (1 Sam. 17:47)

<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/features/For-the-Battle-is-the-Lord-s-1-Sam-17-47-288124>, Published on October 13, 2013; Accessed: July 14, 2019

George Nyavor, Wind of ‘civil uprising’ blowing over West Africa – NDW warns

politicians,’ <https://www.myjoyonline.com/politics/2019/March-5th/wind-of-civil-uprising-blowing-over-west-africa-NDW-warns-politicians.php>, [published on March 5, 2019]; Accessed: May 18, 2019

General News of Sunday, 'You're against National Cathedral because it's not your party building it' –

NDW,’ <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/You-re-against-National-Cathedral-because-it-s-not-your-party-building-it-NDW-699857> [published on November 11, 2018), accessed on: May 18, 2019

General News of Saturday, ‘NDW spiritually ‘commands the Cedi to rise’,

<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/FLASHBACK-NDW-spiritually-commands-the-Cedi-to-rise-683351>, [published: September 8, 2018], accessed: May 18, 2019

Jerry Tsatro Mordy, NICHOLAS DUNCAN-WILLIAMS’ prayer to save cedi is comic relief - Tony Aidoo,’

<https://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2014/February-3rd/NDW-prayer-to-save-cedi-is-comic-relief-tony-aidoo.php> [published: March 2, 2014]; accessed: May 18, 2019

J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, ‘Did Jesus wear designer robes?’

<https://www.lausanne.org/content/did-jesus-wear-designer-robos>, published on November 1, 2009; accessed: August 28, 2019

<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Owusu-Bempah-presents-horn-of-strength-to-Akufo-Addo-520213> Date published: March 19, 2017; Accessed: July 14, 2019

<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Youth-attack-Rev-Owusu-Bempah-s-church-over-death-predictions-712363>; Date published: January 2, 2019; Accessed: July 14, 2019

Audio – Visual Sources

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, ‘Prayer Reveals Things’, Prayer Cathedral, YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nm9ponfQCWM>: Accessed 10th January, 2017.

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, ‘Things Don’t Just Happen: USA’, YouTube Video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=41sn20WfbN0&t=406s>: Accessed 10th April, 2019.

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, ‘Household Wickedness’ Prayer Cathedral. YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXDkPMWcfok>: Accessed 20th May, 2019.

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, ‘Refuse to Give Your Destiny to the Enemy’. Prayer Cathedral. YouTube video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8VMg_xbdDE: Accessed 5th April, 2019

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, ‘The Warfare is Determined by What You Carry’. Rock Church, Baltimore. YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cs60EMyAr5U>: Accessed 8th April, 2019.

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, ‘How to Break every negative cycle in your life’. Gospel Gate. YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ur6vEMhGB2g>: Accessed 4th August, 2019

Nicholas Duncan –Williams, ‘It is written’. Prayer Cathedral. YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9x-tKhuQQt0>: Accessed 2nd August, 2019.

Nicholas Duncan- Williams, ‘I lost My Three My Three Fingers.’ Dominion Television. YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1a6zWKJKjDQ>: Accessed 20th March, 2019.

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, ‘I Escape Death Many Times’. Dominion Television. YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cOhGJK9KfKM>: Accessed 1st June, 2017

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, ‘I Stowed Away On a Ship To America.’ Dominion Television. YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJgHRCxbmEI>: 9th June, 2017.

Nicholas Duncan-William, ‘The Power of Prayer.’ Paula White Ministries. YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zt0AkgDFqRs>: Accessed 11th June, 2017.

Nicholas Duncan-William, ‘The law on the ban on Churches Must Be reviewed’. Paul Adom-Otchere. YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxwa37-lZtA>: Accessed 12th August, 2017

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, 'Why I Still use Duncan –Williams even After Divorce.' YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzfdGto7Jns>: Accessed 10th March, 2017.

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, 'Patterns of The Seed'. Prayer Cathedral. YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOcmC50LkPA>: Accessed 13th July, 2018.

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, 'Dealing with Demons.' Prayer Cathedral. YouTube video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TbCzgEd_68U: Accessed 10th September, 2018

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, 'Spirit of Jealousy' Impact YouTube video, https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=the+spirit+of+jealousy+by+duncan+williams: Accessed 12th August, 2017.

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, 'The Place of a Father.' Prayer Cathedral. YouTube video, https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=place+of+father+by+duncan+williams: Accessed 20th September, 2017.

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, 'The Supernatural vs The Supernatural'. Prayer Cathedral. YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkkgTc6qtec>: Accessed 14th July, 2018

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, 'The 40/60 story.' Citi showcase. YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRGYNw5Ti50>: Accessed 11th March, 2019

Nicholas Duncan-Williams 'Time with Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams.' Point of View. YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcwR0BpxIF8>: Accessed 18th June, 2019

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, '60 Years of Life' YouTube Video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2TaTLnWg7U>: Accessed 15th October, 2018.

Nicholas Duncan-Williams, 'Your Tithe has a Special place and It Works Against the Devil.' Paul Adom-Otchere. YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRyRB3Khwvo> : Accessed 21st December, 2018.

Secondary sources

Atiemo, Abamfo. 'Singing with understanding': The Story of Gospel Music in Ghana,'

Studies in World Christianity, 2006, pp. 142-163.

Adler, P.A. & Adler P. *Membership role in field research* (Treasury Oaks, CA: Sage, 1987).

Adogame, Afe, 'Religion and economic development in Nigeria', *The Nigerian Journal of Economic History* 2 (September): (1999) 22-45.

Adubofour, Samuel B. *The Evangelical Para-church Movement in Ghanaian Christianity: 1950 -1990s* (Doctoral thesis, Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1994).

Agbeti, Kofi J. *West African Church History: Christian Missions and Church Foundations:*

- 1482-1919 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986).
- Akoko, Robert, M, 'New Pentecostalism in the wake of the economic crisis in Cameroon', *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 11(2) (2002), 359-376.
- Akonor, Kwame. *Africa and IMF Conditionality: The Unevenness of Compliance, 1983-2000* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2006).
- Alverson, Mats. *Methodology for close up studies: struggling with closeness and closure* (Lund, Sweden: Lund Institute of Economic research and Higher Education, 2003).
- Anderson, Allan H. *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- Anderson, Allan, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (London: SCM press, 2007)
- Anderson, Allan H. *Spirit-Filled World: Religious Dis/Continuity in African Pentecostalism* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018).
- Anderson, Allan, H. The Newer Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches: The Shape of Future Christianity in Africa? *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, Volume 24, No. 2, (Fall 2002), pp. 167-184.
- Anderson, Allan. 'The Newer Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches: The Shape of Future Christianity in Africa' *Pneuma* Vol. 24, No. 2 (2002), pp. 167-184.
- Anderson, Allan. *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2001).
- Anderson, Allan. *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
- Anozie, Michael. *Childless Marriage in Igbo Christianity: Description of, and Reflections Concerning Solution in a Pastoral Problem* (Hungary: Sheltered Workshops, 1998).
- Archer, Kenneth J, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic: Spirit, Scripture and Community* (Cleveland: CPT Press, 2009).
- Armin, Langer. & Ukiwo, Ukoha. 'Ethnicity, Religion and the State in Ghana and Nigeria:

- Perception from the Street’, *CRISE Working Paper*, No. 3, October, 2007.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, J. Kwabena, ‘Mission to "Set the Captives Free": Healing, Deliverance, and Generational Curses in Ghanaian Pentecostalism,’ *International Review of Mission*, Vol. 93 Noè. 3701371, (July/October 2004), pp. 389-406.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, Kwabena J. ‘Mission to “set the captives free”’: Healing, Deliverance, and Generational Curses in Ghanaian Pentecostalism’, *International Review of Mission* (2004), 389-406.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, Kwabena J. ‘I will Put my Breath in You, and You Will Come to Life’: Charismatic Renewal in Ghanaian Mainline Churches and its Implications for African Diasporan Christianity’ In Afe Adogame, Roswith Gerloff and Klaus Hock, (eds.), *Christianity in Africa and the African Diaspora: The Appropriation of a sacred Heritage* (NY: Continuum Int. Publishing Group, 2008).
- Asamoah-Gyadu, Kwabena J. ‘Traditional Missionary Christianity and New Religious Movements in Ghana’ (MPhil thesis, University of Ghana, 1996).
- Asamoah-Gyadu, Kwabena J. *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit: Ghanaian Perspective on Pentecostalism and Renewal in Africa* (Oxford: Regnum International; Akropong-Akuapem, Regnum Africa, 2015).
- Asamoah-Gyadu, Kwabena, A. ‘God bless our Homeland Ghana’: Religion and Politics in a Post-Colonial African State’ in Cephas N. Omenyo and Eric B. Anum, *Trajectories of Religion in Africa* (Amsterdam/New York, Rodapi, 2010).
- Asamoah-Gyadu, Kwabena, J. *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostals in Ghana* (Leiden: BRILL, 2005).
- Asamoah-Gyadu, Kwabena J. *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity: Interpretations from an African Context* (Oxford: Regnum Books Int., 2013).
- Assimeng, Max J. *Religion and Social Change in West Africa: Introduction to the Sociology of Religion* (Accra: Woeli Pub. Services, 2010).
- Baer, Jonathan, R, ‘Redeemed Bodies: The Functions of Divine Healing in Incipient Pentecostalism’, *Church History*, Vol. 70, No. 4 (Dec., 2001), pp. 735-771.
- Baeta, Christian G. ‘General Introduction,’ in Baeta, Christia G (Ed.). *Christianity in Tropical Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).

- Baeta, Christian. G. *Prophetism in Ghana: A study of some Spiritual Churches* (London: SCM Press, 1962).
- Barker, Peter & Boadi-Siaw, Samuel. *Changed by the Word: The Story of Scripture Union in Ghana* (Accra: African Christian Press, and Asempa Publishers, 2003).
- Bediako, Kwame, 'Africa and Christianity on the threshold of the millennium: The Religious Dimension', *African Affairs*, Vol. 99, No. 395, Century Issue: A Hundred Years of Africa (Apr. 2000), pp. 303-323.
- Bediako, Kwame. *Christianity in Africa: The renewal of non-Western Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995).
- Biney, Ama, 'The Legacy of Nkrumah in Retrospect', *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, vol.2, no.3, (March 2008), pp. 129-159.
- Boafo-Arthur, Kwame. "Ghana: Structural Adjustment, Democratization, and the Politics of Continuity." *African Studies Review*. 42.2 (1999), pp. 41-72.
- Bornat, Joanna "Biographical methods" in Alasuutari, Pertti, Bickman, Leonard and Brannen, Julia (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Social Research Methods* (London UK: Sage, 2008), pp. 344–356.
- Brannick Teresa and Coghlan David. 'In defence of Being "Native": The case for Insider Academic Research', *Organisational Research Methods*, Vol 10 No. 1, (Jan 2007), pp. 59-74.
- Breidenbach, Paul S. 'Maame Harris Grace Tani and Papa Kwesi John Nackabah: Independent Church Leaders in the Gold Coast, 1914-1958,' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (1979), pp. 581-614.
- Busia, Kofi A. *The Position of the Chief in Modern Political System of Ashanti* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1968).
- Cartledge, Mark J, *Encountering The Spirit: The Charismatic Tradition* (London: Darton Longman and Todd, 2006)
- Carl, Florian 'Music, Ritual and Media in Charismatic Religious Experience in Ghana' in Anna E. Nekola & Tom Wagner, *Congregational Music-Making and Community in a Mediated Age* (London/New York: Routledge, 2015).

- Chazan, Naomi 'Ethnicity and Politics in Ghana', *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 97, No. 3 (Autumn, 1982), pp. 461-485.
- Cho, Yong-gi. *Successful Home Cell Groups* (New Jersey: Bridge Publishing Inc., 1981).
- Clark, Peter. *West Africa and Christianity* (London: Edward Arnold, 1986).
- Clarke, R.C. 'African Indigenous Churches in Ghana: Past, Present and Future,' *Journal of African Instituted Church Theology*. Vol. II. No. 1, 2006.
- Coghlan, David & Brannick Teresa. *Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization* (London: Sage, 2005).
- Counted, Victor. 'Youth in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches and Factors Accounting for their Attracting them to Pentecostalism', A Paper Presented at the first Nigerian Pentecostal and Charismatic Research, May 2012, Abuja, pp. 1-21.
- Cox, Harvey 'Foreword' in Allan H. Anderson Walter J. Hollenweger (eds.), *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspective on a Movement in Transition* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999).
- Daniel Albrecht E and Evan Howard B. 'Pentecostal Spirituality' in Cecil M. Robeck, Jr. and Amos Yong, *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- Daswani, Girish. *Looking Back, Moving Forward: Transformation and Ethical Practice in the Ghanaian Church of Pentecost* (Toronto/Buffalo/London: University of Toronto Press, 2015).
- Debrunner, Hans W. *A History of Christianity in Ghana* (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1967).
- Donkor, Kwabena. *Structural Adjustment and Mass Poverty in Ghana* (Brookfield: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1997).
- Dovlo, Elom. 'Religion in the Public Sphere: Challenges and Opportunities in Ghanaian Lawmaking, 1989-2004,' *BYU Law Review*, Volume 2005 | Issue 3, pp. 629-258.
- Droogers, André "Essentialist and Normative Approaches" in Allan Anderson et.al (eds.), *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

- Droogers, André “Essentialist and Normative Approaches” in Allan Anderson et.al (eds.), *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *Providence & Destiny: The Nicholas Nicholas Duncan-Williams Story* (Accra: ACI, 2015).
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *You are Destined to Succeed* (Accra: Action Faith Publications, 1990).
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *Praying through the Promises of God* (Accra: Bishop House, 1999).
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *Binding the Strong Man* (Accra: Salem Author services, 2012).
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *Divine Timing: Avoiding the dangers of premature exposure*, (Accra: Pneuma Life Publishing Inc., 2002).
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *The Incredible Power of the praying woman*, (Accra: Pneuma Life Publishing Inc., 2002).
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *The price of Greatness: Understanding the power of preserving greatness* (Accra: Salem Author services, 1998)
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *The Supernatural Power of a praying Man* (Accra: Salem Author services. 2012).
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *Prayer Moves God* (Accra: Prayer Summit Publishing, 2015).
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *Don't fight the process: Yielding totally to God's plan to make you great*, (Accra: ACI, 2018).
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *Turning Pain to Power*, (Accra: Prayer Summit Publishing, 2012).
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *Enforcing Prophetic decrees* (Accra: Digital inQ. 2012).
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *Powers Behind the Scene*, (Accra: Prayer Summit Publishing, 2017).
- Duncan-Williams, Nicholas. *Understanding the Father factor*, (Accra: CreateSpace Publishing).

- Eisenstadt, S. N. Max. *Weber: On charisma and institution building* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).
- Enos, John L. *In Pursuit of Science and Technology in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Impact of Structural Adjustment Programmes* (London: Routledge, 1995).
- Evered, Roger & Louis, Ries, M. Alternative perspectives in the organizational Sciences: “inquiry from the inside and “inquiry from the outside,” *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (1981), pp. 385-395.
- Fabian, Johannes, ‘Dream and Charisma. "Theories of Dreams" in the Jamaa-Movement (Congo),’ *Anthropos*, Bd. 61, H. 3./6. (1966), pp. 544-560.
- Finkelstein, Barbara, “Revealing Human Agency: The Uses of Biography in the Study of Educational History” in Craig Kridel, *Writing Educational Biography: Exploration in Qualitative Research* (New York and London: Garland Pub. Inc., 1998).
- Garlock, Ruthanne. *Fire in His Bones: The Story of Benson Idahosa – Leader of the Christian Awakening in Africa* (Lagos: Lagos International, 1981).
- Gifford, Paul. *African Christianity: Its Public Role* (London: Hurst & Company, 1998).
- Gifford, Paul. *Ghana’s New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004).
- Gocking, Roger S. *The History of Ghana* (London: Greenwood Press, 2005).
- Goody, Jack, R. *Production and Reproduction: A Comparative Study of the Domestic Domain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
- Gummesson, Evert. *Qualitative Methods in Management research* (2nd ed) (California: Sage, 2000).
- Gyekye, Kwame. *African Cultural Values: An Introduction* (Accra: Sankofa Publishers, 1996).
- Hackett, I.J. Rosalind, ‘Charismatic/Pentecostal Appropriation of Media Technologies in Nigeria and Ghana’, *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 28, Fasc. 3 (Aug., 1998), pp. 258-277.
- Hennink, Monique, Hutter, Inge and Bailey, Ajay. *Qualitative Research Methods* (Thousand

- Oaks: Sage Publications Inc., 2011).
- Herbert, Werlin W. 'The Roots of Corruption - the Ghanaian Enquiry', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 10, 2 (1972), pp. 247-266.
- Hodge, Peter, 'The Ghana Workers Brigade: A Project for Unemployed Youth', *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 15. No. 2 (Jun., 1964), pp. 113-128.
- Holbrook, P. Wendell, 'British Propaganda and the Mobilization of Gold Coast War Effort, 1939-1945.' *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 26, No.4, World War II and Africa (1985), pp. 347-361.
- Hoover Stewart M. *Mass Media Religion: The Social Sources of the Electronic Church* (London: Sage Publication, 1988).
- Hoover, Stewart M., *Mass Media Religion: The Social Sources of the Electronic Church* (London: Sage Publication, 1988).
- House, R. J., & Baetz, M. L. 'Leadership: Some Empirical Generalizations and New Research Directions' in B. M. Staw (Ed.), *Research in organizational behavior* (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1979), pp. 399-401.
- Ibhawoh, Bonny. "Structural Adjustment, Authoritarianism and Human Rights in Africa," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and Middle East*, Vol. 19.1 (1999), 158-167.
- Idowu, Bolaji E. *African Traditional Religion* (New York: Maryknoll, 1973).
- Joanna, Bornat "Biographical methods" in Alasuutari, Pertti; Bickman, Leonard and Brannen, Julia (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Social Research Methods* (London UK: Sage, 2008), 344-356.
- Kalu, Ogbu. U. *African Pentecostalism: An introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- Karanja, W.W., "The Phenomenon of 'Outside Wives': Some Reflections on Its Possible Influence on Fertility," in Bledsoe, Carline H & Pison, Gilles (Eds). *Nuptiality in Sub-Saharan Africa: Contemporary Anthropological and Demographic Perspectives* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).
- Kpobi David N.A. African Chaplains in Seventeenth Century West Africa. In Kalu, U.O.

- (Ed.). *African Christianity: An African Story* (Pretoria: University of Pretoria. 2005), pp. 140-170.
- Kraus, Jon. 'The Struggle over Structural Adjustment in Ghana.' *Africa Today*, Vol. 38, No. 4 Ghana: The Process of Political and Economic Change 1991-1992 (4th Qtr., 1991), pp. 19-37.
- Larbi, Emmanuel K. *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra: Center for Pentecostal studies, 2001).
- Larbi, Kingsley 'African Pentecostalism in the Context of Global Pentecostal Ecumenical Fraternity: Challenges and Opportunities,' *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, Volume 24, No. 2, (Fall 2002), pp. 138-166.
- Lauterbach, Karen. 'Becoming a pastor: Youth and social aspirations in Ghana,' *Young* Vol. 18, No. 3 (2010): 259–278.
- Leonard, Christine. *A Giant in Ghana* (West Sussex: New Wine Press, 1989).
- Lindhardt, Martin. 'We, the youth, need to be effusive': Pentecostal Youth Culture in Contemporary Chile', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, Vol. 34, No. 4, (2012), pp. 485-498.
- Mark, Cartledge J. *Encountering the Spirit: The Charismatic Tradition* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2006).
- Maxwell, David, "'Sacred History, Social History": Tradition and Texts in the Making of a Southern African Transnational Religious Movement,' *Comparative Studies in History and Society*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (July, 2001), pp. 502-524
- Mbiti, John S. *African Religion and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann, 1970).
- Merton, Robert K. "Insider and Outsiders: A chapter in the sociology of knowledge," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 78, No. 1 (Jul., 1972), pp. 9-47.
- Meyer, Birgit. 'Make a Complete Break with the past.' Memory and Post-Colonial Modernity in Ghanaian Pentecostalist Discourse,' *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 28, Fasc. 3 (Aug., 1998), pp. 316-349.
- Meyer, Birgit. *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe in Ghana*

(Trenton/Asmara: African World Press, Inc. 1999).

Mwaura, Philomina N. 'The Role of Charismatic Christianity in Reshaping the Religious

Scene in Africa: The Case of Kenya' in Afe Adogame, Roswith Gerloff and Klaus Hock (Eds.), *Christianity in Africa and the African Diaspora: The Appropriation of a Scattered Heritage* (London/NY: Continuum Int. Pub. Group, 2008).

Nkrumah, Kwame. *Africa Must Unite* (New York: Frederick & Praeger, Inc., Publisher, 1963).

Nkrumah, Kwame. *Consciencism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970).

Nnaemeka, Obioma., 'Urban Spaces, Women's Places: Polygamy as Sign in Mariama Ba's

Novels' In Nnaemeka, Obioma (Ed.) *The Politics of (M)Othering: Womanhood, Identity and Resistance in African Literature* (London: Routledge, 1997).

Norman, D. Ishmael, 'Separation of Church and State: A Study of Accra City's Use of Public

Buildings and Schools for Religious Services in Ghana, *Advances in Applied Sociology*, Vol.3, No.7 (2013), pp. 282-288.

Odotei, Irene K. History of Ghana, Paper presented to visiting students from the US at

Department of Social Work (Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon.UG, Legon, January 11, 2008).

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

Ojo, Mathews "Transnational Religious Networks and indigenous Pentecostal Missionary

Enterprises in the West African Coast Region" In Afe Adogame, Roswith Gerloff and Klaus Hock (Eds.), *Christianity in African and the African Diaspora: The Appropriation of a Scattered Heritage* (London/New York: Continuum International Pub. Group, 2008)

Ojo, Mathews. "Transnational Religious Networks and indigenous Pentecostal Missionary

Enterprises in the West African Coast Region" In Afe Adogame, Roswith Gerloff and Klaus Hock (Eds), *Christianity in African and the African Diaspora: The Appropriation of a Scattered Heritage* (London/New York: Continuum International Pub. Group, 2008).

Ojo, Matthew. 'The Growth of Charismatic Movements in Northern Nigeria' *Ogbomoso*

Journal of Theology Vol. 13, No. 2 (2008), pp. 83-121.

- Ojo, Matthew. "The church in the African State: The Charismatic/Pentecostal Experience in Nigeria", *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol.1, (1999).
- Ojo, Matthew. *The End -Time Army: Charismatic Movements in Modern Nigeria* (Asmara: Africa World Press, 2006).
- Ojo, Matthews. *The End -Time Army: Charismatic Movements in Modern Nigeria* (Asmara: Africa World Press, 2006).
- Okorochoa, C., *The Meaning of Religious Conversion in Africa*. (Aldershot: Avebury, 1987).
- Olupuna, Jacob. "Africa, West (Survey)," In Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Mass (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*. Revised and Expanded Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002).
- Omenyo N. Cephas. *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Boekencentrum: Missiological Research in the Netherlands, 2002).
- Omenyo, C. 'The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana,' *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (1994), pp. 169-185.
- Omenyo, Cephas N. *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum 2002).
- Omenyo, Cephas N. "Agenda for a Discussion of African Initiatives in Christianity: The West African/Ghanaian case" *Missiology: An Intercultural Review*, Vol. XXXIX, No.3 (2011), pp. 373-390.
- Omenyo, Cephas N. and Abamfo Ofori Atiemo, "Claiming Religious Space: The Case of Neo-Propheticism in Ghana", *Ghana Bulletin of Theology*, Vol. 1. No.1 (2006), pp. 55 – 68.
- Onyinah, O. 'African Christianity in the Twenty-first Century,' *Word & World*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Summer 2007), pp. 305-314.
- Onyinah, Opoku. 'Akan Witchcraft and the concept of exorcism in The Church of Pentecost' (PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 2002).
- Opoku, Kofi A. *West African traditional religion* (Accra: FEP International Private Limited,

1978).

Oquaye, Mike 'Human Rights and the Transition to Democracy under the PNDC in Ghana'

Human Rights Quarterly, Vol. 17, No. 3 (Aug., 1995), pp. 556-573.

Oquaye, Mike. *Politics in Ghana: 1972-1979* (Accra: Tornado Publications, 1980).

Owoahene-Acheampong, Stephen. *Inculturation and African Religion: Indigenous and Western Approaches to Medical Practice* (Washington: Peter Lang, 1998).

Pobee, John S & Ositelu, G. *African Initiatives in Christianity: The growth, gifts and diversities of indigenous African churches: a challenge to the ecumenical movement* (Geneva: WCC Publications, World Council of Churches, 1998).

Pobee, Samuel, J. *Religion and Politics in Ghana* (Accra: Christian Counsel of Ghana, Asempa Publishing, 1991).

Quayesi-Amakye, Joseph, *Christ, Evil and Suffering in Ghanaian Christian Liturgy*, (Sheffield: Equinox Publishing Ltd, 2015.)

Quayesi-Amakye, Joseph, *God in Ghanaian Pentecostal Songs*, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 22(2013), Brill.

Quayesi-Amakye, Joseph, *Prophetism in Ghana's New prophetic churches*, *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association*, Vol. 35, No.2, October 2015

Reeck, Darrell. "The Castle and the Umbrella: Some Religious Dimensions of Kwame Nkrumah's Leadership Role in Ghana." *Africa Today*. 23.4 (1976): 7-27.

Riemer, Jeffrey, Varieties of Opportunistic Research in *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, (Sages, 1977)

Roberts, Brian. *Biographical Research* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2002).

Rosenthal-Fischer, Wolfram "Biographical work and biographical structuring in Present-day societies", in Chamberlayne, Prue, Bornat, Joanna, Wengraf, Tom (eds.), *The Turn to Biographical Methods in Social Science* (London – New York: Routledge, 2000).

Rothchild, D. "Ghana and Structural Adjustment: An Overview" in Rothchild, D. Ed. *Ghana: The Political Economy of Recovery* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991).

- Sanneh, Lamin & Carpenter, Joel A. (Ed.). *The Changing Face of Christianity: Africa, the West, and the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- SAPRIN, *Structural Adjustment: The Policy Roots of Economic Crisis, Poverty and Inequality* (London: Zed Books, 2004).
- Shillington, Kelvin. *Ghana and the Rawlings Factor* (London: The Macmillian Press, 1992).
- Spittler R.P. "Suggested Areas for Further Research in Pentecostal Studies," *Pneuma*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Fall, 1983), pp. 39-56.
- Stark, Rodney. *The rise of Christianity*. (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1997).
- Stephenson, J.B., & Greer, L.S. Ethnographers in their own cultures: Two Appalachian cases. *Human Organization*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (1981), pp. 123-130.
- Steven Land J. *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 2001).
- Talton, Benjamin A. "Food to eat and pito to drink" Education, Local Politics, and Self-help Initiatives in Northern Ghana, 1945-1972,' *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, (2003), pp. 205-229.
- Ukah, Asonzeh F K. *New Paradigm of Pentecostal Power: A Study of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Nigeria* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc, 2008).
- Warrington, Keith, (ed) *Pentecostal Perspectives* (Cumbria: Paternoster Publishing, 1998).
- Warrington, Keith, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter*, (London: T&T Clark, 2008).
- Welch, Timothy Bernard, 'God Found His Moses: A Biographical and Theological Analysis of the life of Joseph Smale (1867-1926)' (PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 2009).
- Williamson, George S. *Akan Religion and the Christian Faith* (Accra: University Press, 1965).
- Witte, Marleen de. "Afrikania's Dilemma: Reframing African Authenticity in a Christian Public Sphere." *Etnofoor*, Vol. 17, No. 1/2, (2004), pp. 133-155.
- Wolfgang, Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).

Wolseth, J. 'Safety and Sanctuary: Pentecostalism and Youth Gang Violence in Honduras,'

Latin American Perspectives, Vol. 35, No. 4, Youth and Cultural Politics in Latin America (Jul., 2008), pp. 96-111.

Wood, Robert. *Economic Repercussions of the Overthrow of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah: Third*

World to First World--by One Touch, (Accra: Crusading Engineer Robert Woode, 2012).

APPENDIX I

Participants, Pseudonym and Personal Characteristics for force group discussions

Focus Group I

Pseudonym	Age Range	Gender	Country of Origin
Samuel	51 – 60	M	Ghanaian
George	41 – 50	M	Ghanaian
Akpene	41 – 50	F	Ghanaian
Dzifa	41 – 50	F	Ghanaian
Senam	31 – 40	F	Ghanaian
Kofi	61 – 70	M	Ghanaian
Abena	51 – 60	F	Ghanaian
Audrey	31 – 40	F	Ghanaian

Focus Group II

Pseudonym	Age Range	Gender	Country of Origin
John	61-70	M	Ghanaian
Okafor	51 – 60	M	Nigerian
Alex	51 – 60	M	Ghanaian
Ofo	51 – 60	M	Nigerian
Julian	31 – 40	F	Ghanaian
Esther	41 – 50	F	Ghanaian
Ama	41 – 50	F	Ghanaian
Twum	31 – 40	M	Ghanaian

Focus Group III

Pseudonym	Age Range	Gender	Country of Origin
Kofi	21 – 30	M	Ghanaian
Kwame	21 – 30	M	Ghanaian
Bawa	31 – 40	M	Ghanaian
Gwen	21 – 30	F	Ghanaian
Ransford	51 – 60	M	Ghanaian
Jason	31 – 40	M	Ghanaian
Afi	41 – 50	F	Ghanaian
Akosua	21 – 30	F	Ghanaian

APPENDIX II

Structure of Questions for Focus Group Interviews

1. What was your first encounter with Nicholas Duncan – Williams and ACI
2. What was the nature of the church in the early 1979 – 1989 (first decade)
3. What in your opinion were factors that enhanced the growth in the (first decade)
4. Can you recall some key events and activities in the second (1989-1999) and third decade (1999 – 2019) respectively
5. What in your opinion have been the charge have been the charges in preaching emphasis and social engagement of NDW over the years
6. What are some things that you can say here seen introduced into the Christianity of Ghana due to the CM?
7. What has made you stay with the church all these years

APPENDIX III

CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Topic: Nicholas Duncan – Williams and the Charismatic Ministries in Ghana: A biographical and theological Analysis

Researcher: Rev. Bernard Sallah

Contacts

Tel : [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Description of Research

The CM in Ghana have emerged from the late 1979 and has become the dominate phase of Ghanaian Christianity. The research seeks to unearth the role of Nicholas Duncan-Williams and a certain insight into the dynamics of the critical mind set and theological set understanding of leaders of CM in Ghana. The experience and information disclosed will help in understanding the Nicholas NDW and the CM in Ghana.

Participant

1. Participants are free to withdraw for the study at any time
2. All information collected during these interviews will be treated as confidential and no identifiable information will be disclosed to a third-party
3. Prior permission will be obtained from participants in the event of use of name or direct quote

Results

The primary use of the information collected will be used towards the writing of this thesis

Risk

There are no risks associated with participation in this research. The research has been approved by the research ethics review of the University of Birmingham

Recording

All interviews will be audio recorded. This is to help accurate representation of the information given.

Consent

I confirm that I understand what is expected of me as a participant. I hereby give my consent to participate in the interview / focus group discussion.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX IV

Brief Profile of Leaders of Key Charismatic Ministries in Ghana

Bishop Charles Agyin-Asare

The Perez Chapel International which used to be called the World Miracle church was founded by Bishop Charles Agyin-Asare. The personal testimony of the leader who claims to have started smoking at the age of 11 and matured into a drug addict within 3 years, his involvement in sexual promiscuity, anti-social habits and occultism and the notion that Jesus was only one of the many grandmasters depicts the state in which he was when a young lady he was attracted to led him to Christ. She expressed interest in his proposal but also said he (Agyin-Asare) had to meet her 'boyfriend' which he later got to know as his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The new man was born during an altar call session in a neo-Pentecostal meeting amid tears and grief over his sinful nature at the age of 18 and he continued to grow spiritually in the Church of Pentecost. Agyin-Asare believes all addictive powers were broken when he accepted Jesus Christ as his personal saviour and Lord, this also led to his call into ministry, a classic example of Ghanaian neo-Pentecostal soteriology.

He was ordained as a missionary by Enoch Agbodzo and travelled to Nigeria to study crusade planning at the All Nations for Christ Bible College in Benin City Nigeria under Archbishop Benson Idahosa of blessed memory. After training, he worked briefly with the International Central Gospel Church and later founded the World Miracle Church International, Ghana. His ministry is characterised by signs and wonders in the crusades he organises. The ministry has branches worldwide, Perez University College and the Precious Television Station. He is an author of several Christian books. Bishop Charles Agyin-Asare changed his name to Charles Agyinasare by a statutory declaration in 2011.

Apostle General Sam Korankye Ankrah

Reverend Sam Korankye Ankrah, founding leader of Royal House Chapel International formerly known as the International Bible Worship Centre (IBWC). He claims he was inspired to pursue a career in religion after a visit to an evangelistic music band called the Joyful way incorporated. He is attended the University of Ghana where he formed the Showers of Blessing Incorporated (SOBI) which his wife oversaw during his stay in the Netherlands. The Apostle General Sam Korankye Ankrah claims he returned to Ghana after his encounter with God in which he was instructed to go back to Ghana as a full-time minister. Today, he has a church membership of about 30,000 members with 120 local assemblies, 20 international missions and various internal and external ministries. Rev. Sam Korankye Ankrah has a heart for charity in the form of education, scholarships and medical assistance among others and this is evident in the various outreach departments of his church. Due to his charitable works, he received an award, Order of The Volta Award, (Ghana's Highest Honors) from the President of Ghana in 2008. He also received various international awards for his humanitarian works. He emphasises on nourishing and equipping the saints and believes in preaching the unadulterated word of God to all.

Bishop Dag Heward Mills

Dag Heward-Mills is the founding leader of the United Denominations formerly known as the Lighthouse Group of Churches. He was born to a Swedish mother and a Ghanaian father which favoured him in some ways but also never gave him a sense of belonging to any of the two races. Dag had his encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ whiles he was in Achimota Secondary School and was active in the Scripture Union and the Calvary Road Singers (now Harvest Chapel International). He was trained as a medical Doctor at the University of Ghana

Medical school in Accra, where he felt a strong call of God to start a church. Despite his heavy academic schedule in his fifth year, Heward-Mills started the church in a small classroom at the School of Hygiene, Korle-Bu with 15 people present in the first service. Bishop Dag Heward – Mills is now a world-renowned Evangelist who holds countless conferences, the Healing Jesus Crusade and a large yearly Easter Friday Miracle Crusade that registers over 25,000 people at the independence square in Ghana. Dag has written uncountable books which also serves as a manual for all the churches under him. His emphasis on missionary work and church planting accounts for the many branches the denomination has worldwide as they concentrate on raising, training, sending and supporting ministers. The church has a radio station, television station, the Anagkazo bible school, a Medical Mission and Fertility Centre Hospital and an orphanage. The first love church is the latest addition to the many denominations and is thriving to snatch the youth from the grips of the devil at all cost. His wife, Mrs. Adelaide Heward-Mills is a trained lawyer and was practising until she was also called into fulltime ministry to support the husband. The ministry currently has over 3,000 churches and 80 different countries worldwide.

Pastor Mensah Otabil

Pastor Mensah Otabil a Ghanaian Theologian started life in Sekondi and later moved to Tema, near Accra, in 1966. He dropped out of secondary school after three years due to hardship and even though he was originally an Anglican, he made a personal commitment to Christ when he was about 12 years old. He later committed to Tema Community 2 Primary School Scripture Union where he developed a love for reading the Bible. Otabil later stopped attending the Anglican Church and gave his full commitment to the Scripture Union fellowship that also led to his association with charismatics. In 1975, the Power House

Fellowship sprang out of the fellowship where he got the Holy Spirit baptism in September 1975 and a burden for evangelism. Even though he moved to Kanda in 1976, he kept his association with the Power House Fellowship. he later become the president of the Kanda Fellowship and also the president of Kanda Peoples Defence Committee (a local civilian chapter of Rawling's revolution. Even though Otabil attended prayer meetings of Brother Enoch Agbozo, he believes Duncan-Williams has had an impact on his life as he was inspired by him to also start a ministry, the Central Gospel Church (ICGC), which was established in 1984. The church started at the Kanda Primary School and move severally until it moved to the Baiden Powell Memorial Hall. Otabil believes he is not called to all believers. Example, those who cannot speak English, those who seek prophesies, etcetera because their orientation and his have nothing in common, therefore, the church of God as a body must take different forms to cater for different needs in the body of Christ. Pastor Mensah Otabil says he is called to people who want practical information from God's Word that is usable in their lives for personal development. This has given him a wider listenership on his nationwide accepted daily broadcast 'The Living Word'. This programme has people of other faiths listening in regularly since 1999. Otabil is set apart from the classic and neo-Pentecostals by his emphasis on 'black Consciousness' referred to as the the "Evangelical – Pentecostal Liberation Theory" so, whereas other liberation theologians seem to place man and structure of society at the central in their struggle for political, social, economic and racial emancipation, Otabil makes the Bible the pivot in his discussions. In 1998, he established the first private University in Ghana, The Central University College. Otabil is one of the Ghanaian preachers who are bold to speak their minds concerning the politics of the country. Although he is noted as one of the forerunners of the Ghanaian Christianity movement, his church is not of the general nature of the other charismatic churches where emphasis is placed on the use of oil, anointing, healing, enemies, witches, demons, prophetic

gift, promises etc. Due to his emphasis on structure and principles instead of leaving everything to the Holy Spirit to do, Otabil is one of the few Charismatic Churches in Ghana with solid structures that facilitate the expansion of the church. Until Lighthouse took over, ICGC was the fastest growing charismatic church in Ghana. With its headquarters in Abossey Okai in Accra, Ghana, ICGC currently has branches internationally.

Rev. Dr. Robert Ampiah Kwofi

Affectionately called Papa by his members at the Global Revival ministry, Rev. Dr. Ampiah Kwofi is the President of Ampiah – Kwofi World Outreach (AKWO). In a vision he had, he saw the globe engulfed in flames of revival hence the name Global Revival Ministries (GRM). Papa has 30 years of experience as a Pastor, Teacher, Healing Evangelist, best-selling author and a mentor to younger ministers in Africa and parts of Europe. He was called to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the nations of the world whilst he was studying at the University. AKWO was established in 1984 in Accra with 4 other committed followers at the Young Women's Christian Association, the attendance grew and attracted ministers like Eric Kwapong, George Abekah, Yaw Tekyie, Abednego Fiawo, Calys Tagoe, Kofi Arthue and Sammy Kanda during their Saturday meetings and later relocated to the Rex Cinema and began Sunday Services and Mid-week services were held at Legon Hall, teaching services were held on Tuesdays and all-night prayers on Fridays. The church relocated to Baiden Powell memorial Hall where the church grew numerically because of the weekly Friday all nights and finally settled in its permanent 7,000 capacity church auditorium located in Haatso. GRM has over 50 branches across Ghana, Togo and Cote D'Ivoire. AKWO has held crusades in all region of Ghana and other African countries, discipline converts to attain the full measure of the stature of Christ, Discovering and developing talents, skills and developing leadings, raise intercessors to pray for national.

Rev. Steve Mensah

Rev. Steve Mensah is the General Overseer of the Charismatic Evangelistic Ministry (CEM) in Accra Ghana. He is loved by his colleges and followers for his simplicity, humility and love for the vulnerable not only in his immediate surroundings but on a national level. He has a passion to send the gospel to the unsaved. Every year, Rev. Steve Mensah leads the Christ to Rural World Ministry in bringing “Jesus to the Rural Folks”. This mission includes a free medical assistance, free drugs, food, clothing, bibles and Stationary which is distributed to those you need it most to make sure the people he reaches out to are equipped spiritually and physically. Youth empowerment is another area he prides in. He is the author of many powerful books and preaches the word of God with power and passion in the simplest way possible. He is a great conference speaker on evangelism and prayer and has travelled continents and nation round the world. He was elected chairman of the NACCC for a two-year term in August 2003. He is married to Rev. Jane Mensah and they have 4 children.

Bishop Gideon Yoofi Titi-Ofei

Bishop Titi-Ofie is the founder of the Titi-Ofei ministries, a multi-faceted ministry comprising of the Pleasant Place Church, Pastors Mentoring Pastors, the League of Pastors, the Pastoral Leadership Institute and the Pleasant World Media. He is also a member of the National Peace Council and the CEO of Deoncross Group – a group of world class educational institutions which includes; the graduate school of governance and Leadership, The boardroom Institute, Almond Institute, International Organisation for Capacity Building London and the London School of Governance. He has demonstrated to be a successful leadership coach. He is a motivational speaker and an author. His personal mandate is to develop leaders in the church to be able to reach those in the world. His wife Lady Olivia Titi Ofei is his support and confidant in ministry.

APPENDIX V



Figure 1

A portrait of Nicholas Duncan-Williams



Figure 2

A picture of Nicholas Duncan-Williams on admission at Korle-Bu teaching hospital after he burnt his fingers



Figure 3

The young and new convert NDW standing by the Indian lady who led him to Christ



Figure 4

Nicholas Duncan-Williams and his wife Francisca Duncan-Williams on their wedding day



Figure 5

Nicholas Duncan –Williams being presented with an honorary doctorate from Harvest Bible College in the United Kingdom



Figure 6

The American tele-evangelist Oral Roberts preaching in Action Chapel International, HQ in Accra.



Figure 7

Consecration of Nicholas Duncan-Williams to the Episcopal office of a Bishop. The first within the Ghanaian Charismatic Ministries



Figure 8

Nicholas Duncan-Williams praying at the Trade Fair Centre

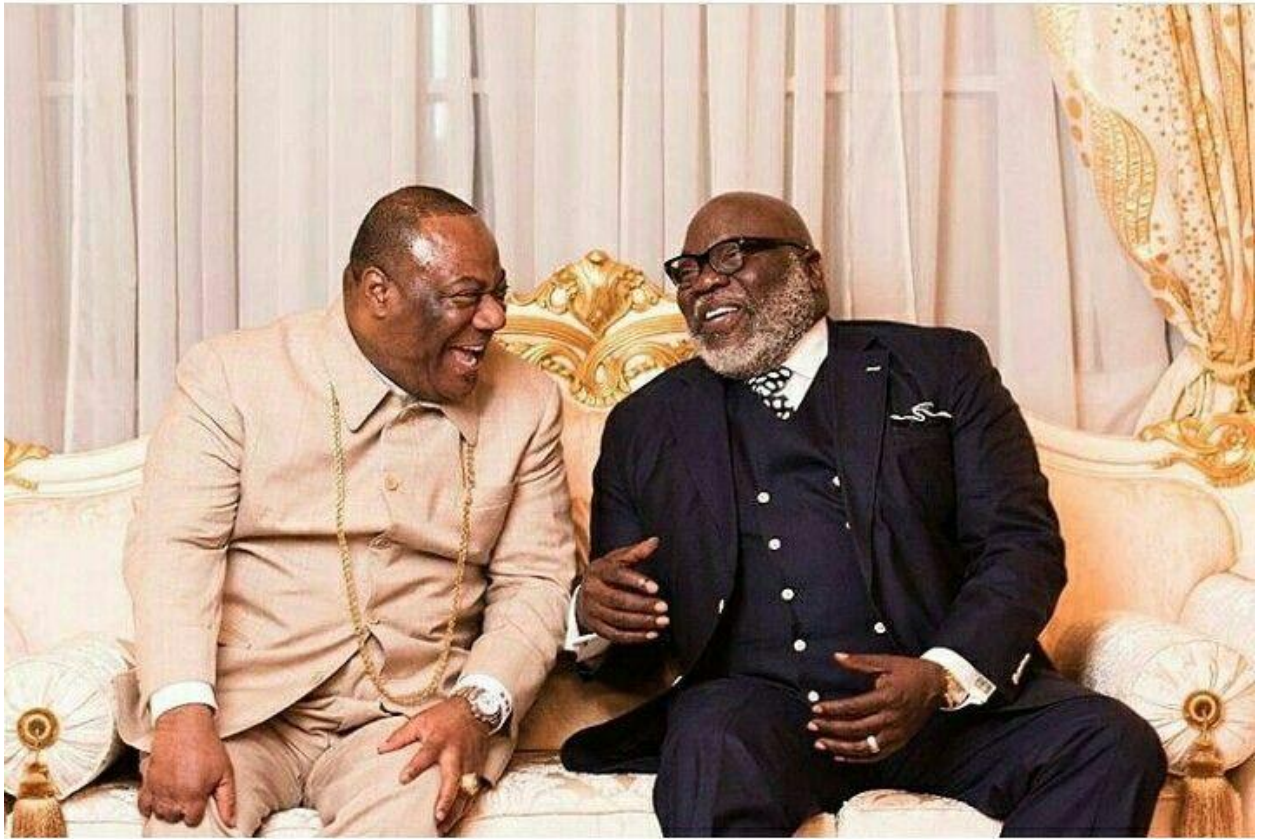


Figure 9

Nicholas Duncan-Williams and TD Jakes at Action Chapel International in Accra