

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

This interdisciplinary volume on transitional dynamics in African Christianity is a product of a Conference held at Luther Seminary in St. Paul Minnesota, USA from 23rd to 25th March 2007. It is about the African Christian immigrants' experiences in establishing religious communities in Western cultures. The original intention of the Conference was to discover "what African immigrant churches are doing religiously in the United States, and what manner of religious institutions they are developing by, and for themselves" (Ludwig and Asamoah-Gyadu 2011, ix). Its scope was broadened to include Europe as a result of the valuable contributions and discussions pertaining Europe that ensued during the Conference.

The contributors are from Africa, North America and Europe with varied academic and professional backgrounds and experiences, which give the reader credible information and well-informed knowledge about the development and sustenance of African Christian Churches and institutions in North America and Europe.

Religion for many Africans is a way of life and this is true of the African Christians in this study who represent the four denominational Christian groups – Roman Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox and neo-Protestants. These Christians did not abandon their

brands of Christianity at the ports of entry into North America and Europe. They migrated with their Christianity and maintain it as a viaduct between their old and new countries and cultures. Partly through their religion, the Africans are recreating and modeling themselves in the West. Religion is crucial to surviving the existential realities and coping with challenges of living in North America and Europe. The immigration congregations under study continue to provide a sense of belonging and spiritual resources for a civilization rooted in African cosmologies.

Migration today accounts for the movement of people in the world. In the Introduction, the editors rightly attribute the presence of Africans in the West to migration. This outcome is supported by research done by migration and immigration professionals, scholars, institutions and studies in the West. Gone are the days when migration was hugely from developed Western countries to developing non-Western countries. Today the trend is the reverse; migration is mainly now from developing non-Western countries to Western civilization. Africans contribute largely to this movement. Immigrants from these weak economies, welfare and social structures are moving to the West in search of socio-economic prosperity, political stability and religious freedom.

It is the thesis of the authors that: "Since immigrants frequently react to the alienation and confusion that result from their uprootedness in religious terms, studies on migration experiences and of the process of adaptation of religious communities to new environments are important issues." The authors are recom-

mended for putting together works that support this thesis.

Like any well-written edited work, the editors provided readers with helpful synopses of the chapters. The book's twenty-three chapters are categorized into five thematic parts as follows: Part I, "The African Christian Presence in the West and Discourses on Migration" contains four chapters. Part II, "North American Case Studies" has six chapters. Part III, "Comparisons and Interactions" is a composition of four chapters. Part IV, "European Case Studies" is made up of five chapters. Part V, "Migration Theologies and Theologies of Migration" has four chapters. The four Appendices are informative and helpful that should not be ignored.

Not every African immigrant church in the West is considered in this study, which is quite understandable, but what it presents is adequate, first of its kind and helpful in understanding how African Christians are singing the "Lord's song in a foreign land" and participating in the socio-economic development of the West.

This is the perfect book for studies in African Christianity, African and American studies, Religions in American and European, Religious emigration and immigration. I recommend it for students, faculty, scholars, researchers and pastors.

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