
The Christian Missionary Enterprise and Its Effects on Idemili (Igbo, Nigeria) Culture

Kanayo Nwadiolor and Roseline Nonye Ewelukwa

This study examines the impact of Christian missionary enterprises on the socio-cultural settings of Idemili, Anambra State, Nigeria. The study employs qualitative research methods such as interviews, observations and literature review to collect data; a phenomenological approach is used to analyze the data. Through an analysis of primary and secondary sources, the research highlights ways in which Christian missionaries influenced the beliefs, practices, and values of the Idemili people. Through their efforts, Christianity spread, leading to the establishment of schools, hospitals, and other institutions that brought about social and economic development. However, there have also been conflicts with traditional cultural practices and divisions among family members. The findings suggest that the introduction of Christianity led to the transformation of the socio-cultural landscape of the Idemili, resulting in a blend of traditional and Christian beliefs and practices. The study concludes that while Christian missionary work has brought many positive changes to Idemili, it is important to also preserve and respect the people's cultural heritage.

Introduction

The Idemili clan lives in a conglomeration of Igbo towns that make up the present Idemili North and Idemili South Local Government Areas of Anambra State. The history of the people of Idemili is linked with the Idemili River which is networked through towns like Obosi, Ogidi, Oraukwu, Nnobi and Ojoto. The name, Idemili, was derived from the river, while the snake called Eke Idemili lives in the river. The people of Idemili regard the snake as a representative of their deity and therefore, a custodian of their culture and tradition. Idemili people, just like other Igbo clans, had ancient cultural values that made them unique. Nonetheless, the encounter between the people and Christian missionaries introduced new ideas which consequently brought about a new form of value orientation and societal development in the area. These new ideas can be seen clearly in the changed religious and social lives of the people. Every culture exhibits both a predisposition toward stability and a tendency toward change. Thus, while the people of Idemili have enthusiastically accepted Christianity and westernization, this does not imply that they have

done so at the expense of their own identity or by abandoning their ancestral culture in all its aspects. That is to say that even though Christianity seems to have replaced the ancient religion, some traditional ideas and values still exist in the hearts of most Idemili people, even among those who have converted to the new faith. This study is designed to investigate critically the impact of Christianity on the socio-cultural life and values of the Idemili people. The research shall consider the socio-political and economic values of Christianity on the people to show that people adapt to changing circumstances to meet needs, particularly when the old order is no longer beneficial to human development and has become counterproductive. The study will further make a deliberate effort to discover elements of traditional socio-cultural values that persist and the positive impact of Christianity on these cultural values.

Over the years, Christianity has been attacked for its negative impacts on the cultural values of the Igbo people. The introduction of Christianity to Igbo land has been considered by some socio-religious analysts as a challenge to the old order as was put forward by Achebe (1958, 176), who wrote that "the white man has put a knife on the things

that held us together and we have fallen apart.” Just like Achebe, other authors have emphasized the negative impacts of Christianity on African Traditional Religion and culture. The implication of this position is that the Christian faith has had no positive effect on the African people's cultural and social existence. Such a negative perspective of Christianity ignores the contributions of Christianity in education, business, health, housing, politics, culture, economy, and social services, among other areas. There is, therefore, a need to examine the impact of Christianity on the lives of the people of Idemili with the view to striking a balance in the evaluation of its positive and negative impacts on the people. A good number of communities were chosen for a closer investigation in this study. These communities include Nnobi, Nkpor, Ogidi, Oraukwu, Obosi, Alor and Umuoji. They were selected for their historical significance, cultural diversity, economic activities, and geographical representation in relation to Christian missionary activities in the area. Idemili culture in this study will be used interchangeably with Igbo culture since Idemili is a clan in the larger Igbo culture area.

Christianity in the Literature on Nigeria

The encounter of Christianity with the socio-cultural values of the Igbo/African people left influences that have attracted several scholarly analyses with diverse approaches or inquires. A good number have written on the geographical enclave of Igboland from the perspective of conflict between Christianity and traditional socio-cultural values amongst converts and non-converts, while others have highlighted the disintegration of the old system and the eventual rise of new socio-cultural values resulting in moral decadence in Igboland. It suffices to state that while this research will maintain a focus on the Idemili in Anambra State, it will review the various divergent viewpoints of scholars of Christianity in Nigeria with the intention of identifying researchable gaps in the existing literature.

Ekechi (1971), in his effort to denounce aspersions cast on Igbo religion and beliefs, and the consequential misconception the Europeans have about African religion, proposed that the Igbo society was set ablaze by the revolutionary teaching of the missionaries, and he re-echoed the

question whether Christianity was not a license for outlandish excesses and the violation of the traditional moral code. Ekechi seems not to have noticed the positive impacts of Christianity on the Igbo socio-cultural settings.

Despite being a work of historical fiction, *Things Fall Apart*, written by Chinua Achebe in 1958, has become one of the literary works that must be read in any anthropological study of the Igbo people. Achebe describes the Igbo as a people who were self-contained. That the Igbo are self-contained implies that they had little or no contact with people who were not Igbo, but still had a way of life and a system that worked effectively for them until the system was allegedly destroyed by British invaders and missionaries. According to Achebe's depiction, the white man sent in his warriors before his missionaries. While the troops employed force to dismantle the society, the missionaries mostly did so through the establishment of mission schools that started to alter the Igbo worldview. Overall, Achebe's work also fails to describe any positive outcomes of Christianity for the Igbo people.

Adichie (2006) believes that the only authentic identity for the African is the tribe. In effect, she says, “I am Nigerian because the white man created Nigeria and gave me that identity. I am black because the white man constructed black to be as different as possible from his white. But I was Igbo before the white man came.” She disproves the myths that persist about Africa being traditional and backward through juxtaposition, showing that colonization really created a cross-cultural fusion where the two are intermingled. In doing so, she deftly refutes common misconceptions about traditional Africa and demonstrates its rich cultural diversity, yet she too could not point to any positive impacts from the Christian religion on the Igbo people.

Nmah (2016) investigated critically the religious values, beliefs and practices among the Awka people of Nigeria in relation to the socio-religious conflict associated with the Imoka festival and burial rites. His research is useful for academic knowledge and practical understanding intended to correct misinterpretations and misinformation surrounding the Awka. Nmah focused his research on identifying the conflict areas between religions; however he did not identify areas of harmonious encounter. Sibani (2018) posits that

western culture had tremendous impact on African traditional society in both positive and negative dimensions. His point is that, though the encounter posed a challenge to Africans at the initial stage, it gave birth to a hybrid culture that is currently beneficial to African people. Though his work is thought provoking, he did not cover all areas of the encounter between African culture and Christianity, some of which this study intends to address.

Metala (2019) examined the impact of Christianity on African culture in Nigeria. In his study, he emphasized the religious way of life of Africans and Europeans. He considered most especially the modes of worship, birth, sacred streams, marriage customs, magic and witchcraft, just to mention a few. Metala asserts that Christianity as it was presented from western culture had great impact on the African way of worshipping God. Metala made recommendations of inter-religious communication and respect for each other's beliefs. However, having the whole of Nigeria as the scope in a work of this nature was too broad given the diversities of religio-cultural practices among the various Nigerian ethnic groups, and as such, his work could not have addressed specific issues correctly in particular areas like Idemili in Anambra State.

Onwuegbuchulam (2021) opines that Christian missionaries presented the Christian Bible and faith as standing in contradiction to the cultural practices of the African people. He observes that many Africans who like to abide by the demands of their culture and to participate in them whilst still claiming to be Christians have adopted a kind of schizophrenic identity. He raises the question as to whether the Christian Bible and faith are incompatible with African culture and traditional practices. Although Onwuegbuchulam did consider it a dilemma, there is a hybrid produced by the encounter over these years that his work did not identify.

Nkwoemezie believes that "when Christianity arrived, it was not only a religious force, but also a veritable social and cultural force, disrupting the Igbo's initial idyllic, happy, and harmonious life lived and observed" (2003, 139). Ibenwa (2004) observes that with the coming of Christianity and westernization, farming work of crop cultivation and animal rearing declined and people now sought white-collar occupations in cities. This has

resulted in the importation of almost everything and in urban overpopulation. He seems not to have noticed how missionary enterprise brought about improved commercialization among the Igbo. Isichei points out inter alia that "the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were an 'age of anxiety' in the whole Igboland owing to the intrusion of British culture and eventual conquest and assertion resulting in a cauldron of social and cultural instability" (1976, 167). Erojikwe and Nnanna opine that "through a calculated long-range plan for total wipeout of indigenous culture and religious beliefs and practices the missionaries turned the people against their own cultural principle and values" (2021, 30).

These scholars may not have observed that, actually, the arrival of Christianity marked a turning point in the cultural setup of the Igbo people. Though the traditional aspects of their beliefs have been considerably weakened through the influence of Christianity and the rapid developments of modern times, they still persist today. Their disappearance in future is not within sight. This situation is at the foundation of this research work. The study will interrogate the precarious equilibrium between Christianity and the socio-cultural norms in different communities in Idemili with the view to promoting a greater understanding of the cultural variety that exists among religious communities. The study will further examine ways in which the people's traditional values sustained a feeling of continuity and community, while Christianity offered a moral foundation.

Theoretical Underpinning

The Evolutionary Theory of Social Change

The evolutionary theory of social change is one of the theoretical frameworks used in this study. According to Kanavagh, et al (2021), social change is the alteration of the social order of a society which may include changes in social institutions, social behaviours or social relations. It may lead to social transformation. The evolutionary theory gained prominence in the nineteenth century. The evolutionist theorists tied Christianity with western culture, and described Christianity in the stream of history as one of the great religions of the world. Auguste Comte, known as the father of sociology,

believed in the evolutionary model. According to him, just as organisms evolve from simple to more complex, so do societies evolve into higher levels of complexity and organization. Those societies that don't adapt fast enough will fall behind.

The concept of social evolution is rooted in the theory of biological evolution by Charles Darwin, who proposed the idea that everything in the universe originated from simple beginnings. He believed that everything has undergone an evolutionary process to reach its current state. This process might be applicable to religion because it too started off very unstructured and lowly, just like any other phenomenon which has undergone evolutionary change in the context of historical circumstances. It is important to note that religion has historically been used as a catalyst for both positive or negative societal transformation. Religious disagreement, friction, or conflict has resulted in wars and genocides. Religion, on the other hand, has ushered in new, constructive developments. It is therefore necessary to point out the complex connection between social change and religion.

Religion, according to some Neo-Marxists, can be a force for positive social change. Neo-Marxist Otto Maduro cited Liberation Theory in Latin America as an example of religion driving social change. According to Weber, the principles and values of the Protestant Church gave rise to capitalism in Western Europe around the 17th century. It is against the above theoretical background that religion can be viewed as a catalyst for social transformation. This study will undertake an investigation into the role that Christianity has played in the economic and socio-political revolution in Idemili, Anambra state.

Culture Lag Theory

Culture lag theory as expounded by the American sociologist, W.F. Ogburn, holds that material culture changes more rapidly than non-material culture, so that a lag is created between the two realms. Culture lag theorists consider the continuity of traditional beliefs amidst all religious changes. They emphasize that religion as a system of beliefs dies hard. Metuh adds that "African world views have an adaptive potential which respond to the impulses of change and yet hold their own" (1985, viii). This explains the

persistence of traditional values in a changing culture. The theory has been criticized, but its main contention is usually accepted and makes a lot of sense in explaining the ability of African converts to combine traditional values with western Christian culture. The theory is basically concerned with the dialogue between Christianity and culture through the church. Onwubiko refers to this encounter as "a natural interaction between faith and culture in an effort to evangelize the people of the culture" (1992, 1). In the same vein Achilike (1995) termed this phenomenon, "culture interactionist." This theory explains that through enculturation, faith is grasped in a more profound and personal manner by the local people, and it can take deeper root among them (Saldanha 1996). Ogbuji (2015) states that enculturation is the cultural re-expression of faith.

The African religion originally practiced in Idemili is not about to totally disappear, despite many impinging foreign ideas. It has rather retained much of its past. Many African Christians still hold on to traditional religion, cultural practices and ideas. The encounter with Christianity in Idemili has influenced the cultural identity of different communities in the area, yet enculturation processes have contributed to the development of a unique cultural identity which reflects both Christian and traditional elements. Through this process individuals in Idemili have been socialized into both Christian and traditional value systems. The study explores the role of family, community, and religious institutions in shaping the beliefs and practices of individuals through the process of enculturation. With the introduction of Christianity in Idemili, there is a transmission of not only traditional cultural knowledge but also Christian doctrines and narratives. In the encounter between Christianity and socio-cultural values in Idemili, certain cultural practices transformed and evolved. This influenced rituals, ceremonies, and the daily life of the people leading to a blend of Christian and traditional elements. Today, the blend in the two cultures can be seen in the area of marriage ceremonies where the traditional form of marriage and the church wedding complement each other, burial rites where there is no conflict between the Christian and traditional funeral rites for a deceased person, and traditional title taking. For instance, the churches in Idemili area can now

accept a traditionally titled man as a fully fledged member of the church. There is observance of both Sunday and traditional market days as non-working days, and so on.

Idemili Traditional Religion

As mentioned above, the name Idemili was derived from the biggest river in the area that flows through the length of the towns. Animals in the river, especially the totemic python, referred to as 'Eke Idemili', are revered. It is believed that the first man who founded Idemili came from the river goddess and as a result, people pay homage to the deity. The people of Idemili regard the totemic python as a representative of the deity, and as such the python is revered to the extent that it is taboo to harm or kill it. In fact, it is considered a heinous crime to kill a python, and the killer is compelled to accord the snake a befitting burial.

Idemili is a derivation of two words: "Ide" which means king or owner and "Mmili" which means water or river; the combination of the two words, "Idemili," describes the king or owner of the river, and this refers to the river python; thus, the python is believed to be the king or owner of the river and the messenger of the goddess of the river. When pythons visit homes they are believed to be on a spiritual mission to deliver messages from Idemili. The Idemili python species is short and fat with clean spots, and is not venomous. It has never been known to bite humans. It is usually removed from homes with long sticks and taken back to the bush where the stick is thrown away together with the python. The Idemili python is not worshipped, but rather respected as the messenger of the river goddess; hence the relationship is more social than religious and is regarded as one of the socio-cultural values of Idemili people. Amadiume and Umeji (cited in Udengwu, Erojikwe and Nnanna, 2021) assert that Idemili is a very powerful goddess who has her shrines in all communities through which the river passes, and the sacred python is her totemic symbol. The Idemili priest is regarded as a 'female man' because the priest is required to dress in a wrapper like a woman. Hence it is said that the goddess prefers female gender attire, though ironically she forbids women from entering her shrine.

The Coming of Christianity to Idemili

In this section, we present information obtained from our research with Christian elders in Idemili communities. Our field research was complemented with further information obtained from the existing literature on Christianity in the Idemili area. We observed that the earliest communities to witness the presence of Christianity in Idemili were the towns of Obosi, Ogidi, Oba, Nnobi, and Nkpor. This was because of their proximity to Onitsha, the seat of the first Christian missionaries in Igboland, which has been described by Kanu as the "catalyst center at the turn of the twentieth century" (2003, 94).

Obosi welcomed a band of Christians from Onitsha on Easter Day, 1882, with Archdeacon Johnson as the primary missionary. The then traditional ruler of Obosi, Igwe Anene, gave land for a mission station near Akuora market. Mr. J. Strong from Sierra Leone laid the foundation of the earliest bamboo-walled church with a wattle roof, measuring 60 feet by 20 feet. On December 28th, Holy Innocent Day, Archdeacon Johnson performed the first baptism of Obosi converts in the presence of Bishop Ajayi Crowther at Christ Church, Onitsha. A total of 22 children, 26 adult males, and 19 females were baptized. In 1900, land was purchased from Chigbogwu Ogbuezie for two pounds ten shillings for the construction of a new St. Andrews Church with a zinc roof.

Christianity entered Ogidi in 1892 as a result of missionary expansion of the Church Missionary Society, exactly thirty five years after its arrival at Onitsha. The long delay to the arrival in Ogidi was as a result of the war between Onitsha and Ogidi. This was in addition to the lack of adequate personnel and materials necessary for mission expansion, which restricted missionary activities to Onitsha. Furthermore, in 1846, which is seven years after the establishment of the first Christian mission at Onitsha, a prophet was said to have arisen in the Onitsha hinterland called "Odesoruelu" who was believed to be a restorer of the old practices. His agents visited a number of towns within a ten mile radius of Onitsha, including Ogidi, Obosi, Nkwelle Ezunaka, Nsugbe and Ogbunike. They did not visit Onitsha itself, because the white man was there. Odesoruelu was protesting against the rise in food prices which he said the presence of Europeans and their agents

on the Niger had brought about. Also the small pox epidemic of the same year 1864 gave added impetus to his appeal for the restoration of the old way of life, and for a general rise in moral standards of the Igbo people. For this, it would have been difficult for Christianity to spread to Ogidi without the instrumentality of Walter Amobi.

The move to extend Christianity to Ogidi was initiated by an Ogidi chief who felt that Onitsha had an edge over other Igbo towns because of the presence of the missionaries there. Walter Okerulu Okafor Amobi, (later Igwe Amobi 1 of Ogidi), who was living with Obi Ogene of Onitsha, was instrumental in bringing missionaries to Ogidi. Okerulu Amobi, who was attending the Anglican adult school at Onitsha, became a Christian and was baptized as Walter. Early in 1892 five Anglican missionaries led by reverend Henry H. Dobinson, arrived in Amafo Aka odu in Etitu Ogidi-Ani where the parents of Walter Amobi were living. In the missionary group were some early Igbo converts, namely, Thomas D.I. Anyamene, Theophilus B. Akpom, Joshua Kodilinye and George Nicholas Anyaegbunam (who was in future to become the first Anglican priest in Ogidi, 1913-1916).

The Church Missionary Society pioneered stations around Ogbunike, Nsugbe, Ukpo, Umudioka, and Nkpor between 1900 and 1906, with missionary contact with Nkpor in 1904. The Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) established itself in the area in 1906. The Odozi Obodo Sabbath Mission arrived in Nkpor as the third Christian denomination.

According to Muogbo (2019), the introduction of Christianity to Umuoji came after the British colonial army's military conquest and subjugation of their traditional governmental structures in 1904. The establishment of the Catholic Church in an Umuoji hamlet in November 1905 was a watershed moment in the village's history. Chief Okafor Ugwumba, the then traditional ruler of Umuoji, took the daring and foresighted decision to invite Rev. Father McDermoth to build a mission in Umuoji through his friend, Obi Okosi 1 of Onitsha. As a result, the economic and social fortunes of the hamlet have been inextricably linked to the arrival of Catholicism in Umuoji. Father McDermoth arrived in Umuoji in 1905 and was welcomed by the then traditional ruler, Igwe

Okafor Ugwumba, who received the name Michael after his adult baptism. The sacrament of baptism was first administered in Umuoji in 1908 to a total of 50 persons. Rev. Fr. Joseph Shanahan, accompanied by Fathers L.J. Ward, Terrell, and McDermott, delivered the sacraments of Holy Communion and confirmation for the first time in 1909, following rigorous catechism classes and tests. Rev. Fr. Eugene Groetz performed the first infant baptism in the same year. In the same year, Mr. George Chigbo was appointed as the first indigenous catechist. In 1912, there was another mass baptism. Fr. L.J. Ward, accompanied by Fr. F.E. Groetz, was supervising Umuoji station from Onitsha from the commencement of their evangelization effort, but in 1912, Fr. Groetz took up a residence in Umuoji, becoming the first priest to live among the people. The first Christian marriage was celebrated in 1914. The first church in Umuoji was started in 1922 and was completed in 1927. It became an independent parish in 1951. Fr. Matthew Osita Udegbonam (1970-1974) was Umuoji's first Nigerian parish priest. During their evangelizing, the early missionaries in the community established educational institutions that grew into schools.

Prior to the coming of the missionaries, the people of Alor had been practicing traditional religion which involves belief in the indispensability of God Almighty as well as diviners and ancestors. They had various shrines with the major one at the main market square in Nkwo Alor. Particular days of the year were set aside for the sole purpose of celebrating the God Almighty by way of various rituals.

According to an interview conducted with Chief Okafor Ugoka, when the Alor people learnt of the "destructive effect" of the penetration of the white man into the neighboring towns, they resolved that any Alor person who would facilitate such an incursion into Alor would be put to death. They invited a famous native medicine man from Oraeri to prepare the most potent preventive medicine in an attempt to ensure that no such incursion ever happened. Incidentally, according to Chief Ugoka, the incursion did happen. In 1907, some officers of the colonial government in charge of the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria arrived at Nkwo Alor and ordered that all Alor men who had guns should surrender them. They complied because of fear. The white men set the

guns ablaze. In this way, they defused any form of resistance. The highly weakened people became completely submissive to the white man's rule.

Alor was not particularly fast or early in accepting outside influence. It was around 1908 when something started changing. When at last the Alor people capitulated to the white man, and their guns were destroyed, Nweke Ugochukwu's Ogbutu of Uruezeani was appointed a court messenger at Ojoto Uno. In 1914 he came back to Alor with his brothers and they brought with them the Roman Catholic Mission. Thus, the R.C.M. made the first Christian contact with Alor. However the missionaries applied coercion to win membership. They compelled attendance at church services and seized livestock and other personal effects. This caused the failure of the first attempt to plant Christianity in Alor.

In 1915, the missionaries of the Church Missionary Society who had been established at Nnobi and Adazi Ani planned evangelical outreach to Alor. Although this did not firmly plant the church at Alor, there was enough influence that some Alor people began to secretly attend church services at Adazi Ani and Oraukwu. They even sent their children to attend schools in these towns. Eventually, the Anglican Church came to Alor with the founding of St. Paul's church by Chief Ogbue Okobe Ibekwute through the assistance of Igwe Ezeokoli I of Nnobi. Towards 1916, the founders of the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) in Ezi Alor assembled at the residence of Chief Ogbue Okobe Ibekwute at Umuoshi village and began to use it for worship and as a school too. Through the agency of one Mr. Anyaoku of Obosi, then a court clerk and interpreter at Nnobi, a teacher was secured for the young mission. On Friday, the 17th of January 1917, Mr. Isaiah Okeke of Nnewi Ichi arrived in Alor as the first school teacher. He was posted by Rev. Ekpunobi, the priest in charge of Nnewi parish. The first proper service in St. Paul's Anglican Church, Alor was conducted by the first church teacher, Mr. Isaiah Okeke. As a memorial to this great event, every Eke Sunday became a special service day, and open-air evangelism was referred to as Okwuchukwu Uka Eke.

The Alor people's initial reluctance to cooperate with the white man gradually changed as they began to realize the benefits accruing from such a relationship. The white man brought exotic

gifts in order to soften their attitude towards the new Christian religion. Those appointed as warrant chiefs saw it as social prestige to relate to the introduction of Christianity and this made them willing to offer their residences for churches and schools.

The gospel message got to Nnobi in 1908 through the instrumentality of his Royal Majesty, Igwe Solomon Ezeokoli (Ezebube of Nnobi) even before his conversion to Christianity. He was the son of Ezebube of Umuagu, Nnobi and he was a traditional doctor by vocation and famous for treating diseases that afflicted people of Nnobi and surrounding environs. He had established a base in Obosi for the treatment of the sick in the area. Ezeokoli had extraordinary foresight; his regular healing visits exposed him more to the Christian missionaries. C.M.S. had already firmly established the gospel in Obosi, and Mazi Onyeabo was then serving as a catechist when Ezeokoli was converted and baptized as Solomon. Through the friendship of Onyeabo and Ezeokoli, the Christian missionaries of the C.M.S. entered the town of Nnobi. Nnobi became the spring board for the spread of the gospel to towns like Uke, Ideani, Oraukwu, Alor Nnokwa, Adazienu, Ichida, Azigbo and Igboukwu.

Chief Solomon Ezeokoli became warrant chief of Ngo Nnobi in 1911, and this attracted the jealousy of the warrant chief of Awuda village at that time, Solomon Ezeomeisheuku, son of Ezeokigbo. He felt that the great popularity of Solomon Ezeokoli was a threat to his popularity and performance with his own people. This made him try to undermine Ezeokoli's influence by introducing a rival Christian sect, the Roman Catholic Mission in Nnobi.

In 1936, the issue of dogma reared its head and became a significant challenge to the church. The issue was whether the polygamists within the fold would be allowed to participate in or receive Holy Communion. While the Anglican Church was trying to resolve the issue, the concerned polygamists within the fold of believers who would not wait for an amicable solution broke away and formed their own new church known as the Salvation Army Church.

The Christian religion arrived at Oraukwu town in 1914 through itinerant evangelists from Nnobi. They did not establish any church, but simply came to preach and returned back to

Nnobi. But like the biblical farmer, the seed they sowed fell on good soil, to a large extent. The earliest converts, such as Isaac Okongwu, Julius Akanegbu, Wilfred Ewelukwa, Michael Ikeme, Okafor Odunukwe, Okafor Obialigha, Eleazer Onyedibe and Gilbert Obojiofor, had to risk going to Adazi-Enu for their religious services and fellowship as they were against the prevailing conservative community. They set a pattern for others, demonstrating clearly that the God they had discovered was more powerful than the local deities of their forefathers. In 1915, the Church Missionary Society arrived at Oraukwu through an indigene, Abraham Ejidike. He returned from Arondizuogu with the good news. He summoned the meeting of the elders and traditional rulers and informed them of his intention to introduce a new religious worship and school system to the community. He solicited their support and invited them to attend religious services and fellowship on Sundays as well as to send their children to school on weekdays. The compound of Chief Ndulue Ogbunanwafo from Otta village served for both meeting-church service and school. The response to this call was quite impressive, including people of great weight such as Warrant Chiefs, Uzochukwu and Ezinwa of Amaeze village. They encouraged those who wanted to attend the religious services to send their children to school as well. Those early converts, who had been attending services at Adazi-Enu, were relieved of the stress of travelling to Adazi Enu for services. They therefore joined the new and only C.M.S. church in town.

The Roman Catholic Church arrived at Oraukwu in 1916 through Moses Obianonwo from Amaeze village, who also had returned from Arondizuogu. He visited many elders and leaders of the town, including Chief Uzochukwu. He tried to convince them that the R.C.M. was by far better than the C.M.S. that had been established by Mr. Ejidike. When Moses Obianonwo could not succeed in attracting the patronage of his village chiefs and leaders, he threw in the towel by joining the rival group, the C.M.S. This switching over led to a power tussle between him and Mr. Ejidike. Mr. Ejidike eventually joined the R.C.M., soliciting and gaining the full support of Chief Metu. Chief Metu threw in his support for the R.C.M. Church and also invited the mission at Adazi Nnukwu to come to their aid. Missionaries

were sent to assist Mr. Ejidike in establishing the Roman Catholic Church firmly.

In 1918, the C.M.S. Church had been well established except that it had not been given a name. It existed and operated simply as C.M.S. Church, Oraukwu. The overzealous members went further to destroy shrines of local deities, to capture, kill and eat animals consecrated to deities, and to touch or associate with things considered unclean. This generated oppositions to the Christians which resulted in frequent clashes and frictions in Oraukwu. The C.M.S. Church lost many prospective converts by its inflexible application of policies, and this, to a very great extent, explains why the Anglicans today are smaller in population than the Roman Catholics, even though the C.M.S. arrived first in Oraukwu.

The Impact of Christianity in Idemili

Christianity has had a significant impact on traditional Igbo culture. According to Ekpunobi and Ezeaku (2011), aspects of traditional values and morality have been influenced by processes of modernity that are passing through African societies. To deal with the expanding socio-religious difficulties of modern society, traditional ideals and morals are donning new frameworks. This corresponds with Woodberry's argument: "That Western modernity, in its current form, is profoundly shaped by religious factors, and although many aspects of this 'modernity' have been replicated in countries around the world, religion shaped what spread, where it spread, how it spread, and how it adapted to new contexts" (2012, 244).

Positive Impacts:

Educational Development

Christianity has impacted communities in Idemili socially, religiously, economically, educationally and politically. The most important impact was the introduction of western-style education, which enabled the people to grasp the white man's language, so reducing the type of damage that occurred prior to the creation of a lingua franca shared by Europeans and the Igbo. This has enabled the people to become more active in global scientific and technological growth.

The C.M.S. and the Roman Catholic missions carried out their missionary activities using the school approach. Uruakpa (1996) confirms that the two missionary groups had a common aim of Christianizing the people through western education. When the students had not gotten fully immersed in the traditional beliefs of their diverse cultures, the missionaries felt it simpler, and rightfully so, to achieve their goal of conversion through the school. Second, through the schools, they hoped to produce indigenous persons who would help spread the gospel in vernacular languages among their people. Furthermore, the growth of colonial government and the expansion of mercantile houses necessitated the education of people to fill positions such as clerks, messengers, church teachers, chefs, and so on. As a result, for the first time, Idemili people saw education as a means to economic potential.

In Oraukwu the church established the famous Central School and the Community Primary school. The church engaged in financing the education of pupils from poor families. Prior to 1949 when the school attained the status of having standard six, pupils had to travel to neighbouring towns like Nnewi and Nnobi to complete their primary school education. In 1955, the church was granted permission to build a modern school for girls. Land was procured with concerted effort, and the school took off in 1958. Later on, the modern school was converted to a grammar school for boys in 1959. This school competed with and even surpassed some of the known secondary schools in the Eastern Region. This school so far has produced and is still in the business of producing a lot of prominent people.

In Ogidi, the Church Missionary Society successfully constructed their mission station. The C.M.S. founded schools and a hospital in 1907. The Roman Catholic Church flourished in Ogidi, as is evident in their schools founded at Odida, Uru-Ogidi and Nkwo-Eziudo in 1925. St. Vincent Central School was founded in January 1953, with the late Mr. A.N. Udeogalanya as its first headmaster. The technical school, initially opened in 1966, was shuttered following a conflict in 1972, but reopened later that year and was taken over by the government. The current Ogidi vocational school was founded in 1965 and became Ogidi Boys Secondary School in 1971. It is now known as Archbishop Heery Secondary School, Ogidi.

Missionary schools in Idemili communities grew tremendously as more parents and guardians became aware of the need of acquiring western education, which was then one of the key criteria for assessing development and advancement in this part of the world. As the products of the local mission schools began to increase in number, the commercial advantages of education became very evident.

Commercial Revolution

The elimination of the overseas slave trade was most likely the most dramatic influence in changing the Igbo people's economic system in the nineteenth century. It is documented that missionary activity and legal treaties with local chiefs on the banks of the Niger were the first steps in putting an end to the slave trade. The goal to effectively end the slave trade prompted fresh initiatives by British traders and authorities, as well as new relationships with local rulers. The abolition also resulted in a shift to legal trade in Igboland, particularly in palm oil. This was the precursor to Igboland's commercial importance. According to Guardian (2023), life for the Igbo community takes place in the busy marketplace. The market is more than just a location to do business; it serves as the focus for social connections, cultural exchanges, and economic activities. Their enterprising drive and shared language play an important role in business dealings, dating back to their participation in the slave trade in the 15th century.

Egwuonwu and Mgbemena (2019) note that with the arrival of Christianity in Igboland people began to notice huge positive changes in many areas. As movements evolved between rural communities and mission stations, people came to sell to strangers or to answer the clarion call of the gospel and its associated pecuniary incentives. This new economic system which entails free participation by all and sundry was the foundation for the free enterprising nature of the people of the new Igbo nation. According to Afigbo (1981) the impact of this development on Igbo society was quite far reaching. It vested a new value on money as an end in itself, and the Igbo came to say, "*ego beken-ekwuokwu*" (the white man's money talks). Hitherto, people had made money and accumulated wealth in order to marry wives, raise

large yam barns, and buy admission to the revered title and secret societies, since it was from these that prestige and status derived. But with the new development money came to have value for its own sake and to convey status even when not invested in the purchase of status in the traditional manner.

Through Christian missionary activities the Igbo people are contributing to a scientific revolution characterized by inventions and innovation in different fields of human endeavour that will enable Nigeria to enter into a new era of industrialization. This will help Nigeria free itself from the economic yoke placed on it by both the western and eastern influences.

Health Care Delivery

Modern medicine was introduced into the Idemili communities through the activities of the Christian missionaries and this resulted in improved healthcare. Before western influence in Igbo land, traditional medicine was employed to ensure healthy living. However, in order to gain expertise in traditional African medicine, one frequently had to be inducted into a secret society, as many aspects of this type of medicine can only be passed down to initiates. Traditional medicine's relevance, however, waned at the arrival of the missionaries with modern medicine. Traditional medicine was frowned upon due to its affiliation with "witchcraft", supernatural and magical overtones, and was referred to as "juju" or "native medicine" because it employed charms and symbols to cast or remove spells. Some forms of treatment also included ritual acts such as animal sacrifices to placate or curry favour from the divinities if the illness was thought to be caused by divine afflictions, particularly in the treatment of mentally ill individuals.

Western medical missionaries arrived in Idemili in the beginning of the 20th century, bringing with them not only Christian doctrine but also cutting-edge medical procedures (Smith 2005). Acknowledging the health issues encountered by the community, the missionaries established clinics with basic amenities to offer medical attention to the locals. These clinics developed into more complete healthcare delivery systems over time. In close collaboration with the locals, the missionaries trained members of the

communities in fundamental medical procedures and established a network of community health professionals (Johnson & Okeke 1998). These community health professionals were essential in helping to provide basic medical requirements, preventative treatment, and health education. Additionally, the missionaries helped to establish a hospital in Idemili (Iyi Enu hospital, Ogidi) that was staffed by both medically qualified missionaries and local healthcare professionals, and had state-of-the-art amenities (Brown & Igwe 2010). This hospital developed into a major hub for healthcare services in the area, including immunizations, maternity care, and health education initiatives in addition to medical treatment. The evolution of Idemili's healthcare delivery system was significantly influenced by missionary activity. The missionaries were instrumental in lowering mortality rates, increasing community well-being, and expanding access to healthcare by integrating western medical methods and working together with the indigenous population.

Re-Evaluation of Certain Traditional / Cultural Practices

Christian ideals were opposed to very many religious practices of the Idemili people. Some features of the two religions were seriously at odds. Christian missionaries held to western ideas that were considered to be superior to the Idemili traditional worldview. The missionaries believed, as noted by Woodberry (2012), that Christianity came to reconstruct states along "godly" lines and limit sinful human institutions. Before the coming of the missionaries, the birth of twins was an occurrence that the people did not understand; they believed it was an indication that the local deities were displeased with them. Having twins was a curse or an abomination. As a result, these defenseless children were either executed immediately or abandoned to die in the "evil" forest. The same fate befell everyone who suffered from any inexplicable ailment, and from most communicable diseases, such as leprosy, small pox, tuberculosis—any sickness that caused the body to waste or distend, or were classified as unexplained. Sufferers were frequently abandoned to die alone in the wicked forest, with no funeral ceremonies.

Casting out the sick was thought of as a manner of protecting the living and their environment from the wrath of the deities, who might be offended if the ailing person was permitted to die within the homestead. As has already been noted, along with having certain moral implications, these bans have their roots in religious practices and rituals associated with Ala, the earth divinity. Udengwu, Erojikwe and Nnanna affirm that “religion and culture are inseparable. Religion reflects the cultures of its origin embedded in the philosophy, symbols, values, customs, norms and beliefs and worldview of the culture group” (2021, 27). The ecological holy earth, variously referred to as Ani/Ana/Ala in different dialects of Igboland was at the top of the list of deities revered by the Igbo. It was considered a measure of respect to mother earth not to bury corpses that died from unknown causes within her gut.

The Osu caste system was a cultural practice in Idemili before the coming of the Christian missionaries. It was considered a taboo for a freeborn to get married to an osu/ohu, or have anything in common with an osu/ohu (outcast). When Christianity came into Idemili communities, however, the missionaries condemned some of these cultural practices for being offensive to Christian morality. They worshipped together with osu/ohu in the same church, under the belief that in the sight of God, all people are equal. It is to be noted that many of those who first embraced the Christian religion were either slaves or osu/ohu. These were people who, because of their social disabilities, had a grievance against the traditional Igbo culture and the society that had subdued them. They therefore saw the newly forming Christian order as an alternative to Igbo society whose constraints they were happy to escape. And what was more, it did not take much time before the value of the missions as means of getting ahead in the new world ushered in by the colonial rule was proved beyond all reasonable doubt. They were soon employed as clerks, messengers and the like in the government and commercial firms and as teachers and agents in the schools and missions. In these jobs they acquired a new economic power and social status far beyond the wildest imagination of the elders, and thus became objects of admiration and envy.

Christian impact has also brought an end to child marriage, and female genital mutilation in

the area. Thus, Christianity effected significant changes on indigenous Idemili societies because it was the instrument through which a lot of the younger generation of Idemili people were made aware of the sometimes cruel practices inherent in their traditional societies. It drew them away from participating in those celebrations and social process by which the values of the group were transmitted from generation to generation. So while time and death thinned down the ranks of the defenders of the old order, the ranks of the Christians were progressively being augmented. Slowly but steadily a positive new trend became observable, and gained dominance over the old, a point which hitherto has not always been stressed in discussions of the spread of Christianity in Igboland (Nwadiolor and Umeanolue 2013).

Negative Impacts:

Early Conflicts and Challenges between Christianity and Idemili Culture

While there has been positive influence from Christianity and Christian missionaries, there has also been conflict, along with negative impacts on Idemili culture.

Cultural Iconoclasm

The early missionaries regarded themselves as social and religious reformers, with the goal of condemning Igbo religion, social ideas, and customs and replacing them with their own. Anagbogu (2001) adds that many of the converts made hasty decisions that lacked a degree of religious conviction, since conversions were a means of shielding against worse situations in traditional culture. Ekechi (1971) further notes that during their interaction with the Igbo, the dominant culture of the missionaries attempted to displace the Igbo culture. According to Achebe (1958), Christianity changed the Igbo worldview.

The first direct conflict between Christianity and the socio-cultural values in Idemili was seen in the disregard and sacrilege against the Eke Idemili (the totemic python). The Idemili community is known for its reverence to the sacred snake. Conflict arose when some early Christian converts felt that because they had become Christians they were no longer bound by the socio-cultural values

and norms of the traditional religion. They thought they were at liberty to violate with impunity the values and sanctions of the traditional religion. They deliberately killed the Eke Idemili and used them as food. They claimed that God has given man dominion over all animals and as such they can kill and eat the snakes. These young overzealous Christians introduced their reformist ideas and plans by violating the people's traditional practices and by trivializing the indigenous belief system, regarding them as primitive and superstitious. According to Meziemadu, "Attack on indigenous cultural values and norms . . . from the foreign religions of the colonialists forced the people to hate their culture and accept the culture of their invaders" (cited in Udengwa, Erojikwe and Nnanna 2021, 31).

It is pertinent to observe that indoctrination was a tool adopted by some Christian missionaries to cajole the people into attacking and destroying their own culture adjudged sinful and primitive by the early missionaries. Early converts were therefore taught to look down with disgust and contempt on certain aspects of their traditional religion, culture and social institutions. They were discouraged from participating in traditional festivals or to fulfill filial duties towards their ancestors. They were also discouraged from taking local chieftaincy titles, since the reception of these titles seemed to the missionaries to involve them in the service of the traditional divinities by paying homage to them (Nwadiolor 2012).

Christian missions emphasized monogamy as the Christian standard of marriage. In 1936, the issue of polygamy became a serious challenge to the church at Nnobi when some polygamists within the Anglican Church who were denied the Eucharist on account of "wrong marriage" moved away to found the Salvation Army Church. The issue of polygamy did plague the church very adversely, not only in Idemili, but throughout Africa, since the idea of monogamy appears to conflict with the economic and socio-religious set-up of the African people. It is to be noted that in the traditional African society, farming was the major occupation of the people. A man's wealth was determined by the extent of his farm, which in turn was determined by the number of children, particularly male children, that he had. People, therefore, married many wives so as to have a good number of children to assist them in farming.

Christian missions also despised Nso-ani, the traditional religious sanctions which were established for the preservation of the society. For instance, Nso prohibits women having their menstrual periods from visiting streams. This was a simple hygiene mechanism since women did not have modern sanitary pads at the time, and streams were the only source of water supply for the communities. Under these conditions it was simply logical to demand that women in such conditions not visit local streams. Unfortunately, all the missionary bodies encouraged their converts to defy these religious sanctions because they regarded them as taboos emanating from primitive superstitious beliefs.

Muogbo (2019) notes that the first phase of the church's expansion in Umuoji was troubled by a number of problems that hindered conversion and school enrollments; among the difficulties were the discord between the traditional and educated elite. This societal tension did not bode well for the expansion of the church and mission schools as many of the new converts ultimately abandoned their new found faith and returned to a more traditional way of living. Others had one leg in the church and one in the shrine.

According to Nwadiolor (2012), the church would have recorded more substantial gains in Igbo communities if, while maintaining its own position, it had paid more attention to the people's religious institutions and worldview as regards life crises and how they should be handled. The denial by missionaries of the people's traditional values and aspirations without satisfactory substitute or explanation sparked criticism not only from the non-believing population but also from Idemili Christians themselves. To this, Okolugbo (cited by Nwadiolor 2012, 74) notes that "Christianity has of course largely overthrown African moral tabus and sanctions but Christianity while destroying them has put nothing in their place." It is therefore firmly established as a social and missionary institution but it is foreign in character and alien to the life and institutions of Idemili. Idemili people thus view this failure to integrate with the people, their society and institution as a major weakness of the church, responsible for its inability to meet the spiritual needs of the indigenous converts. Thus instead of displacing the traditional religion in the lives of its adherents Christianity became an appendix of the indigenous beliefs and practices,

the Christian God being worshiped on Sundays while recourse was freely made to traditional divinities on week days. During life crises such as birth, marriage, sickness, poverty and death, traditional customs matters more than Christianity, and it is during these crises that the church significantly becomes an alien institution in Idemili.

Division among Family Members

Like any other religion, Christianity can influence family and community dynamics in both positive and negative ways. It can lead to conflicts and divisions, particularly when family members have different religious beliefs. The new religion resulted in internal division among families in Idemili. This in turn resulted in a strong sense of hostility between people which began to destroy the spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood which previously existed. In Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, an elder of the mother's kinsmen said that the new religion has brought division among family members. The converts were compared to a hunter's dog that suddenly goes mad and turns on his master.

The *umunna* (kinsmen) play an important role in the society; they are regarded as one of the most powerful institutions of traditional democracy among the Igbo. They exist in addition to one's immediate family and serve as an instrument of social justice; they are a group of men who share the same family and lineage. Achebe portrayed the *umunna* as an extended family of kinsmen . . . the clan, whose name is greeted with a cheer of applause at social and traditional gatherings, implying that they remain unified. For Mbiti (1970), the *umunna* simply means the extended family system, consisting of people up to four generations with one ancestral origin. In Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, the *umunna* is one's ancestral village's extended family. This demonstrates that in the Igbo traditional setting the *umunna* was a sort of patrilineage. In Igbo cosmology, the *umunna* holds great influence over their members, particularly in law creation, tying all together for good.

There is no doubt that *umunna* membership is dropping; their fortunes and the active engagement of people who should be members

are witnessing a decline. While the *umunna* institution still exists in contemporary Igbo society, the love, passion, and symbolic fervor that drives members to obey the laws and follow its peace processes has faded in most communities in Idemili as a result of membership in different and opposing Christian denominations, as well as the unnecessary antagonism between Christians and non-Christians in the area. Furthermore, individuals are becoming more individualistic as a result of globalization, migration, and cultural hybridization. Many would say that the rise of Christianity caused some people to abandon their kinsmen as a way of distancing themselves from their belief system. The golden age when the *umunna's* belief system was protected and nourished is now destroyed and disregarded.

Many people feel that the arrival of Christianity separated people from their traditional way of life. As a result, there are higher crime rates in society. Christianity, science, and technology have changed many things in the Idemili world, making kinship gatherings appear to be local, obsolete fetishes. Some people who consider themselves to be modern believe that the concept of *umunna* is outdated and should be forgotten. As a result, some modern youths are no longer interested in the concerns of their relatives.

Conclusion

This study has established the dynamism of the presence of Christianity in the Idemili culture area of Igboland by showing its strengths and weaknesses. The socio-cultural values in Idemili are products of their traditional religious beliefs. The conflict that exists between Christianity and the cultural values of the people are moral and ideological in nature. The study validates the fact that Christianity has had a positive impact on the socio-cultural values of Idemili people. Christianity has, no doubt, added a human face to cultural practices such as the redefinition of widowhood, the Osu caste system, the killing of twins, child marriage, genital mutilation, and so on.

The advent of Christianity in the area has also led to a synthesis between the people's culture and the western culture for easy adaptation and accommodation of those outside the culture area as well as those who have unapologetically taken to the Christian faith. This can be seen in important

events in Idemili such as marriage and funeral ceremonies. After performing the traditional marriage rites, the marriage is solemnized in the church; also after the church funeral ceremony, the traditional and social ceremonies will follow. But at the same time Christianity has given rise to disintegration and the lack of unity among the people. Isolating oneself from one's kinsmen is a pointless and fruitless endeavour in Igbo society. The study therefore recommends that while the majority of the people have embraced Christianity and must be encouraged to remain in that faith, they must be educated on the critical need for cherishing, appreciating, and adopting the foundations of their culture; they must comprehend that staying away from their kinsmen is equivalent to denying their Igbo identity. The Igbo culture prioritizes humanity and the ideal of brotherliness above all else . . . it unites, and it is concerned with the people's achievements. Udechukwu (2017) affirms that the Igbo people have strong cultural values. These are the ideals that their forefathers lived by in order to achieve excellent human development. These values are still in place along with modern values. Therefore, if the Igbo people are to achieve concrete human development in the modern society, they must return to the drawing board, that is, bring back their former good cultural values and incorporate them into their current way of life, in the way they think, eat, dress, train their children, worship, work, and so on. Only when this is accomplished will they have positive human development overall.

There is no denying that one key aspect of culture is its changing nature; as a society's socio-economic systems evolve, so do its culture and customs, and a tradition appropriate for that civilization has to be developed. There is no such thing as a finished civilization. As a result, both Igbo culture and western civilization must learn from one another.

References

- Achebe, C. 1958. *Things Fall Apart*. London: Heinemann.
- Achunike, H.C. 1995. *Dreams of Heaven: A Modern Response to Christianity in North Western Igboland 1970-1990*. Enugu: Snaap.
- Adichie, C. N. 2006. *Half of a Yellow Sun*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Afigbo, E. 1981. *Ropes of Sand: Studies in Igbo History and Culture*. Nsukka: University of Nigeria.
- Anagbogu, M.A. 2001. "Cultural Sanctions: Implications for Child Training Education and Counseling." *International Journal of Social Inquiry* 1: 1.
- Brown, R. E., and Igwe, U. 2010. "Healthcare Development in Idemili: A Case Study of Missionary Influence." *Journal of Global Health Perspectives* 21: 45-56.
- Ekechi F.K. 1971. *Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland, 1857-1914*. London: Frank Cass.
- Isichei, E. 1976. "Seven Varieties of Ambiguity: Some Patterns of Igbo Response to Christian Mission." *Journal of Religion in Africa* 3: 213-3.
- Kanu, M.A. 2003. "The Indispensability of the Basic Social Values in African Tradition: A Philosophical Appraisal." *Ogiri: A New Journal of African Studies* 7: 149-161.
- Kavanagh, D. 2021. *Are We Living in a Time of Particularly Rapid Social Change? And How Might We Know?* Technological Forecasting and Social Change. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2021.120856>
- Mbiti, J.S. 1970. *African Religion and Philosophy*. Nairobi: Garden City.
- Metala, A. C. 2019. "Christianity and Africa culture in Nigeria." *Journal of Religion and Theology* 3(2): 26-33.
- Metuh E.I. 1985. *The Gods in Retreat: Continuity and Change in African Religions*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension.
- Nmah, P.E. 2016. "Christianity and Awka Socio-Religio-Cultural Identity Crisis: Areas of conflict." *Ogiri: A New Journal of African Studies* 1: 25-20.
- Nwadiakor, K.L. 2012. "Christianity and Ndoshumili Culture, 1841-1940: A Historical Perspective." *International Journal of Theology & Reformed Tradition* 4: 87-99.
- Nwadiakor, K.L. and I.L. Umeanolue. 2023. "Missionary Factor in the Making of a Modern Igbo

Nation, 1841-1940: A Historical Discourse.” *Unizik Journal of Religion and Human Relations* 1(4): 112-127.

Ogbuji, I. B. 2015. “Missionary Enterprises among the Igbo of South-eastern Nigeria and the Question of Igbo Identity, 1841-2010.” Ph.D. dissertation. Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Onwubiko, O. A. 1992. *Theory and Practice of Enculturation: An African Perspective*. Enugu: Snap.

Onwuegbuechulam, S.P.C. 2021. “Christianity and African Culture: A Question of Either Or?” <https://www.researchgate.net/publication>

Saldanha J. 1996. *Enculturation*. Mumbai: St. Paul.

Smith, E.W. 1967. *African Idea of God*. London: Edinburgh.

Udechukwu, G. I. 2017. “Igbo Cultural Values and the European Influence: A Way to Redirect the Present Igbo Youths.” *Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities, Special Edition*.

Udengwu N., I. Erojikwe and N. Nnanna. 2020. “Cultural Transformation and the Trials of the Sacred Python.” *Text and Context* 13: 2. <http://www.ajol.info/index>

Uruakpa, J.A. 1996. “The Anglican Church and Educational Development in the Eastern States of Nigeria 1857-1966.” In *The Nigermission: Origin, Growth and Impact 1857 - 1995*, edited by S. N. Adiele, 123-141. Aba: Isaeco.

Woodberry, R.D. 2012. “Missionary Roots of Liberal Democracy.” *American Political Science Review* 106(2): 244-274.



Dr. Kanayo Nwadiakor is an Associate Professor of Church History and the current Head of the Department of Religion and Human Relations, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.

Author email: kl.nwadiakor@unizik.edu.ng



Roseline Nonye Ewelukwa is a PhD student of Church History under the supervision of Dr Kanayo Nwadiakor.

Author email: ewelunonye@gmail.com
