

Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations (A.K.A Wailing Women Worldwide) In Reverse Mission, 1998 - 2019**Gbule¹, Ndidi J.¹; Odili, Jones U.¹; and Ezihe, Anulika N.¹**

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the contributions of Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations (a.k.a. Wailing Women Worldwide) to “reverse mission” which resonates with the demographic shift in World Christianity, whereby the West is no longer the centre of Christianity, but Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Pacific. Thus, this study is to recover some of the specific contributions of Women Intercessors to the spread of the gospel in different cultural contexts and ethnicities. Utilizing historical and narrative approach to research, data were collected from oral interviews, participant observations and secondary materials, and later triangulated for validity and reliability of sources. The findings revealed that Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations have contributed to the rapid numerical, spiritual and socio-economic spread of the gospel. Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations have been in six out of the seven continents of the world covering up to 103 nations. It is therefore recommended that in telling the story of the Church in Africa, women’s contribution to reverse mission cannot be underestimated, and here lies the contribution to knowledge of this study.

Keywords: *Church History, Gender Studies, Reversed Mission, Women for Church and Nations, Wailing Women Worldwide, Mission Studies*

INTRODUCTION

The demography of Christianity has altered tremendously so that the West is no longer the centre of Christendom. Scholars such as Murray [1] have observed that more than half of the world’s Christians now live in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and that the proportion doing so grows annually. He highlights that by 1500, 90% of Christians were in Europe. What was known as Christianity was Europe. In other words, Christianity was expressed in the idiom, metaphysics and law of the Europeans. Hence, Christianity was perceived and viewed as a Western religion. But after this period, he observed, the pendulum began to change and from the middle of the 20th century, Christianity could no longer be described as a European religion. The centre of Christianity has shifted to the Southern continents, Africa, Asia and Latin America. Walls [2] avers that the 21st century Christianity will be shaped by the events and processes that take place in the Southern continents, and above all, by those that take place in Africa. Freston [3] in his study posits that Africa may yet prove to be the spiritual conservatory of the world. When the civilized nations shall have had their spiritual perceptions darkened through a captivating and absorbing materialism, it may be that they have to resort to Africa to recover some of the simple elements of faith. This resonates with what Walls [2] observed that the things by which people recognize and judge what Christianity is, will either for good or ill, increasingly be determined in Africa. The characteristics, doctrines, ethical codes, social applications of the faith will increasingly be those in Africa.

The fifth assembly of the World Council of Churches’ meeting in Africa held in November, 1975, in Nairobi, proclaimed by its very location, and still more, by a large proportion of its participants, through the theme of many of its discussions, arrived at a simple and significant fact, that the Christian churches are today thriving in Africa as in almost nowhere else. Hence, the era of “Missions” in which Christianity in Africa was seen as a plant which had hardly taken root, and needs constant care from outside is over [4]. Hasting [4] recounted that in the past most missionaries tended to despise both African culture and African capacity. They believed that the Christian religion must go with a European culture and European leadership. Nowadays, African Christians are becoming conscious of this contempt; resented it and frequently saw the future of African Christianity in a very different way. In their own worldview, Africa has decided to give back to the world what they received from the missionaries. Not only Africans, but Asian Christians, Latin American Christians, etc. This, therefore, suggests that Christianity can now be found in different countries and continents with their variety of indigenous responses through effective local idioms without the European Enlightenment

Rationalism. Sanneh [5] calls it a “resurgence” that seems to proceed without Western organizational structures. The centre of Christianity can now be found in different countries and continents of the world.

Be that as it may, not much has been written of how Christianity has become diverse, been interpreted, and appropriated by local cultures and associations. The much that has been documented on African Christianity and her reverse mission has focused more on men like Sunday Adeleja of Ukraine, Inwe Reuben Ekeme of Hope Centre Church, North England. Little or no attention has been given to the roles women play in this reverse mission. There are some female based organizations who have in no small manner played prominent roles in the reverse mission. One of such associations is the Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations (a.k.a. Wailing Women Worldwide). The Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations are a group of people who bonded themselves together as the “eleventh hour workers” in God’s vineyard of Intercession. They are to travail to give birth to various items on God’s agenda for our time through fervent prayers of intercession. They are found in several places of the world, up to the tune of over 103 nations. Some of which are Argentina, Bulgaria, Croatia, The United States of America, Australia, Japan, Holland, Canada, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, Israel, Madagascar, Barbados, The Philippines, Sri Lanka, Spain, Ukraine, Ireland, United Kingdom, France, Seychelles, Norway, Grenadines, Haiti, to mention but a few.

This work resonates with what scholars have argued that Christianity is no longer a Western religion but now a world religion where different people from different cultures, localities and languages will come and worship together - the Ephesian moment to borrow the words of Andrew Walls [2]. Thus, proving that Christianity is diverse, yet has one foundation and the foundation is rooted in Christ. The work, therefore, tends to document the origin, growth and the roles of Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations in Reverse Missions with particular reference to Port Harcourt Chapter of the movement of the Women Intercessors for the Church and Nations (a.k.a. Wailing Women Worldwide). A major significance of this study is that it documents the roles and contributions of Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations. The study sensitizes the church and the society at large into taking up teachings that resonates with the contemporary issues on the demography and historiography of African Christianity in their Churches. The study sensitizes the Church to begin to prepare and release their women into evangelism and reverse mission.

Theoretical Framework

Writing on Feminist Theory, Chodorow [6] argues that it is an extension of feminism into theoretical or philosophical discourse. The aim is to understand the nature of gender inequality. He explains that it is preoccupied with women’s social roles, experience, interests and feminist politics in a variety of fields or different spheres of life. The aim he posits, is developing a comprehensive account of the marginalization of women in different fields of endeavour and deploying effective strategies for women liberation from subordination. Gilligan [7] observes that feminist theory focuses on analyzing gender inequality by explaining themes such as discrimination, sexual exploitation, oppression, stereotyping and patriarchy. Mackinnon [8] concurs with the above view when she observes that central to feminist theory and feminist method is consciousness rising. Through this process, she avers, feminists confront the reality of women’s condition by examining their experiences and taking this analysis as the starting point for individual and social change. This theory by its nature has the capability of challenging existing traditional notions of authority and objectivity, and opens a dialectical questioning of existing power structures and general experience. Mackinnon [8] goes on to posit that implicit in feminist theory is the ideological fight against ideological myths about women which consolidate male power over women. Ideological myths about women hold that women are naturally passive and they form part of a powerful socializing influence upon women that lead them into defining their major role as that of “mother, housekeeper and child rearer”.

She further notes that under the rubric of feminism, women situation has been explained as a consequence of biology or of reproduction and mothering, social organizations of biology, as caused by the marriage law or as extension by the patriarchal family. Thus, feminism fundamentally identifies sexuality as the primary social sphere of male power, birth control, sterilization, abuse, domestic battery, rape, incest, lesbianism, sexual harassment, prostitution, female sexual slavery and pornography. To Mackinnon, feminist theory therefore, provides the ideological tools with which to confront and change women’s lives concretely and experientially as it affects the above areas of life.

Winkler [9] makes a similar observation when she said that feminist theory is not only concerned with challenging women’s cause for their equal rights, but with seeing and understanding the social world from the vantage points of women and with changing systems of oppression based on Western masculinist relations of ruling. Accordingly, she posits that feminist theory, engages in ideological struggle to exterminate sexist oppression. The theory takes off from serious enquiry into the cause of women oppression, how it changes over times and how it relates to other forms of oppression. Feminist theory is relevant to this work since the work is poised to look at how women, despite the ideological myths about their natural passivity, have contributed immensely in missions and in contemporary times, are fully involved in “reverse missions”. This is because even in western missionary encounter, the role of women is rarely highlighted. Their roles are muted or seen as adjunct to male exploits. So this work is intended to show that at each point

in the evangelization of the gospel, women as housewives, teachers, nurses, or even leaders are critical to the dissemination of the gospel message.

History of Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations:

The narrative of the history of Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations shows that many women received the same vision at different times and places, in the same year, and from the same God. Among the women that were interviewed, Mrs. Gloria Anwuri and Mrs. Rachel Ozichukwu were selected to give the history of Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations. These women are part of the team of the international coordinators of this movement. In an interview with Mrs. Gloria Anwuri, she said that one morning in November, 1996, after seeing her children off to the car, for school, a wave of sorrow suddenly flooded her heart. It was so strange that she went into her room and wept for about one and half hours without knowing what the problem was, except that her heart was very heavy. She observed that after one and half hours of groaning and lamentation, with excruciating pains, the Lord began to speak to her. Mrs. Gloria Anwuri said the Lord gave her the 57th and 59th chapters of the book of Isaiah and complained of the iniquities in the church and families. He also gave her Jeremiah 9:17-22 and asked her to go and call the Wailing Women as is contained in that chapter.

When all efforts to get the women, who will understand what she was saying failed, she started praying with two women and set up a fellowship in her house, where she invited women to come and pray. One day, in 1998, three women visited her, namely, Dr. (Mrs.) Laide Okafor, Mrs. Gift Aduke and Mrs. Rachel Ozichukwu. Mrs. Gloria Anwuri observed that Mrs. Rachel Ozichukwu was so restless and in her restlessness said that God said He has given Mrs. Gloria Anwuri instruction on what to do over what she, Mrs. Ozichukwu has been going through. Mrs. Ozichukwu said she has been seeing a sword that was dangling over the nations. Mrs. Gloria Anwuri then said that God had asked her to gather women who have seen the abominations in the land but are not part of it. They all opted to be part of the women, and started praying at Cornerstone Foundations, No. 2B Ozuzu Close, D/Line, Port-Harcourt, Nigeria.

Interviewing Mrs. Rachel Ozichukwu on her own experience on the emergence of the Wailing Women, she said that in 1998, most times, when she kneels down to pray, a sword will appear before her. Out of fear and curiosity, she began to enquire from the Lord what the sword was standing for. Mrs. Rachel Ozichukwu said the Lord told her that the sword will do serious devastation everywhere among nations because He is about to do some strange things. She said the Lord directed her to a man called Rev. MosyMadugba who the Lord had told to gather the Church to begin to pray because His anger is red hot over the nation of Nigeria. This was happening at the time when the Nigeria was under the oppressive military dictatorship of General SaniAbacha. She said that at the first instance, Rev. MosyMadugba refused to listen to her, and the Lord asked her to go and meet Mrs. Gloria Anwuri. On getting to Mrs. Gloria Anwuri's house in the company of Dr.(Mrs.) LaideOkafor and Mrs. Gift Aduke, she discovered that God had already told Mrs. Gloria Anwuri everything He had told her, and all of them went to meet Rev. Madugba, who then decided to take responsibility for what God was saying.

Mrs. Ozichukwu said that from his office, letters were sent to churches, to release their women to come and pray to avert God's anger that was about coming to our churches and Nigeria. On the 8th and 9th of May, 1998, women gathered from different churches to No. 2B Ozuzu Close, D/Line, Port Harcourt to pray. Mrs. Ozichukwu said they sat on the floor and cried like a woman that lost her only son. From that meeting, an altar call was made for those that will go over the states of Nigeria to mobilize women to start praying for the church and the nation. Twelve women, Mrs. Ozichukwu said, came out and started travelling from state to state, raising women to pray for the church and the nation. These twelve, she said, are the team of international coordinators today.

From the two stories above, we can deduce that the antecedent of Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nation was not a one-man affair. God was moving in different places and ways, baring His mind and desire to different women at different places and times. Other women had similar encounters that could not be recorded in this work. From the stories so far, we are able to understand that this movement started in the city of Port Harcourt, the capital of Rivers State, Nigeria in May 1998. In that year, they claimed that God summoned his daughters to wail and lament concerning the spiritual state of the Church and the Nigerian nation. The inaugural meeting which was a solemn assembly, was held at cornerstone foundation, 2B Ozuzu Close, D/Line, Port Harcourt, Nigeria. This meeting was accompanied with fasting and lasted for two days, May 8th and 9th, 1998.

For easier actualization of this movement, God had to co-opt. Rev. MosyMadugba to be the "Barack" of these women. Thus:

The Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations declared that they have no physical founder or president. Their founder and president, they claim, is the Holy Spirit. He is the original initiator of this movement. As such, their leaders are known as coordinators. These must lead, direct and coordinate the women according to the pattern given to

them by the Holy Spirit. They maintained that Women Intercessor for the Church and the Nations is God's property and no human being has any right to lay claims of ownership on it. It is founded and established on the Solid Rock, Jesus Christ, and the son of God" (Ozichukwu, personal interview). The work of the Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations is carried out by a collegiate leadership. This means they have a team of leaders who must all be informed about policy decisions and major things that should be done everywhere the group exists.

Reverse Mission: A Study of Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations

Olafinjana [10] reported that European missionaries succeeded in taking their understanding of the Gospel of Jesus to the Africans in Africa. The challenge of the 21st century is, can Africans become successful in taking the Gospel of Jesus to the Europeans in Europe who have become skeptical to the Gospel of Jesus? Women Intercessors for the Church and Nations seems to be an answer to this question. Below are some of the activities of the Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations in some of the nations they went to:

1. Princess EnaEnaho on Europe and London

Princess EnaEnaho recalled that the first time they went to London was in 2003, when they went to raise wailing women. They went there severally, until 2012, when they had a fresh contact with one Mrs. Patricia Obichukwu, a Nigerian. From then, she said, the work was able to stabilize. Interviewing her on what they do when they go on missions, she said they share the vision of the Wailing Women Worldwide and raise women to pray for their nations, the Church and their families. She posits that they look for both believing and unbelieving women because soul winning is God's heartbeat. When they raise these women, they train them and commit the work in their land into their hands because it would reduce cost, efforts, energy and man-power needed to come from another country to come and oversee the work.

France

In an interview with Princess EnaEnaho on how they were able to penetrate France, she recalled that the twelve international coordinators had been to France in 2010, but the people they handed the work over to were not consistent. Like St. Paul, they kept on pressing; going for several missionary journeys, until 2015, when they had a leadership summit in Paris, then, the work in France was stabilized. In the cause of planning for the leadership summit, the women do a lot of mobilization through which they got more women, do prayer walk, breaking the powers and strongholds of the enemy in the land. These helped in stabilizing the work.

The Wailing Women claimed that their visit to France helped in saving the nation from some of the bomb blasts that took place in France. They believed that the fact that they went, took the message God gave them to them, brought repentance on behalf of the land, helped in stopping the bomb blast that would have taken place in the stadium. The suicide bomber got to the entrance of the stadium, but was intercepted by the policeman there. It is true that the policeman died, but if he had gone into that stadium, it would have been devastating. There were other bomb blasts that killed many people, but they believed God used that repentance and a lot of prayers to avert that of the stadium. They maintained that there is hardly any nation they went to without seeing positive results.

Norway

In a personal interview with Princess EnaEnaho, she recalled that in 2002, the Lord mandated her to go to Norway. She got a contact and went to Alesund, in the Western part of Norway. When she got there, she embarked on prophetic walk round the city. From Alesund, she decided to encompass the entire nation of Norway, and went to Bergen, Kristiansand in the south, Stavanger in the North. From there, she went to Kongsvinger and then to Oslo, the capital city. From there, people took her to a place that was a gateway to Christianity in Norway. She went there and prayed. Princess EnaEnaho said that history had it that over a thousand years ago, the king of that place, through which Christianity entered Norway, forced Christianity on people and anybody who refused was killed, a lot of bloodshed took place in that city and people observed that any moment revival comes into Norway, it by passes that place. They had the oldest church in Norway in that city and as at 2002, Princess claimed that the church was about 996 years. She went into that church, prayed, cried and brought repentance for the bloodshed. Thus, she moved from East to West, North to South, and by so doing, was able to encompass the whole of Norway.

Turkey

Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations said the Lord sent them to Turkey in 2011 to go through the old Christian routes. They explained that they went to Ephesus, Cappadocia, Eistenburge, etc. When they got to Ephesus, they discovered the old city was now a ghost city, nobody lives there. Why, you may ask? Princess EnaEnaho explained that they discovered that Christianity existed in Ephesus (Turkey) for about 1,023 years until it was invaded by Islam. The 'men on Horseback' fought a Jihad that led to a mass genocide of the Christians. Many Christian women converted to Islam to save their lives, while some were raped and killed. Osman Ghazi started the Ottoman Empire which gave Muslims political post and made Islam a religion of the state. They went to the Catacombs, saw the caves where Christians used to live. In their Catacombs the Christians could assemble for worship and take refuge in times of

persecution. They went to where they used to have the temple of Diana, and discovered that the main temple was gone, leaving only one long pole and the space there. They also went to Bulgaria in 2011, raised a group, and that group had their first European continental conference in 2017 and their first national conference in 2019. In 2009, they went to Ukraine, went to Sunday Adeleja's Church, visited his rehabilitation centre and prayed with the people.

2. UcheAgbagwara on Angola and Kenya

Interviewing UcheAgbagwara on the mission of the Wailing Women to Angola, she lamented that the first time they went to Angola, there was serious famine in that land. The people went to the garbage and scramble to see if there was anything to eat. It was very pathetic, she said. The sisters there, were organizing soup kitchen, just to cook and feed the street children. The Wailing Women said that they were teaching in churches and through that mission, Angola that was a War-torn zone, is now the envy of nations. Today, you have to cue on the line at their airport because everywhere is fully booked. The brother to one of the women they raised, is now the president of Angola. Uche Abbagwara went further to testify that on one of the days they went to preach, the son of their hostess died before they came back. They cried and told God it is an embarrassment for them to be there with the message of hope and the son of their hostess would be dead. After much prayers, she said, the boy come back to life.

Kenya

The Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations said that God sent them to Kenya with the message of Jonah which was a message of repentance. When they got to Kenya, they were going through a drought season. Their river-beds had dried up, animals were dying, electricity and water were being rationed. Crops were not doing well, while some had already dried up. And God told them He would give them a sign before they left the nation of Kenya. They were taken to a Church, where ministers and churches gathered, fasting, praying and asking God for mercy because they did not know what else to do. When they got there, they preached the message of Jonah to them. After that, they observed that they still needed to reach their president with that message, but did not know how to go about it. Somehow, they discovered a woman, who was a former ambassador of Kenya to Japan that heard of them and came to see them.

By divine providence, they posit, she took the message to the president. On hearing the message, their president behaved like the king of Nineveh and called for three days national solemn assembly, with fasting and prayer. A day before they left Kenya, rain drizzled. What the people have not seen for a long time, started happening as the sign God promised to give them before they would leave Kenya.

3. NneObele On USA

New Jersey

Interviewing NneObele on their American trips, below are some of her direct, unedited comments:

In 2003, the Lord sent all of us to New Jersey, America. We had gone to America once before now. We went to Florida, had a meeting there, came over to New Jersey, had another meeting. The Lord said I should stay back for another three months. I stayed in New Jersey in Sister EbeleOkafor's house and that was how the work in New Jersey started. We started moving from house to house, visiting sisters, encouraging them and that was how the meeting started in New Jersey. It was in winter and terribly cold, but God helped me. I spent whole three months and gradually, the work in New Jersey started growing. That was my first three months in America.

In 2004, Sarah Maduka and I were sent to California, to the Church of Satan. When we got to California, we didn't know anybody, except one brother, Jerry. All we had was his phone number. When we got to the airport, we called him and he was at work, but later came and checked us into a small hotel. That was where we stayed for one week. The Lord told us to embark on prophetic prayer walk in that city. Every morning, we will take light breakfast, pick up our snacks and will move out on foot. Sometimes, it will just be only the two of us on the road because we didn't know of any public transport in that City then. People were just driving their private cars. You could rarely see any public transport there. So, we would walk, go up, go down, praying.

One day, a thought of going to take a city bus came into us, so that we can behave as tourist and pray round California, Los Angeles, to be precise. We now went and picked a city bus as tourists. It will take us round Los Angeles and we were praying as we were going. It took us to many places including the city centre and even to Azusa Street. At the city centre, we raised an altar. Anywhere we got to, we prayed. Then, one day, we were just thinking of how to connect to this Church of Satan. We didn't know how to connect to it. We went on internet and found out that it was in San Francisco and we couldn't get there because we were in Los Angeles, but they had a warehouse in Los Angeles. It's something like a shop and all that were in that shop were all the gadgets of witchcraft. Witchcraft rulers, pots, etc. All the things inside that shop were weird and the people selling there were also looking weird. When we entered, we looked at ourselves, walked the length and breadth of the shop praying. Immediately we finished, we came out, picked a taxi and ran away to the hotel because that place was just like a coven. While we were in Los Angeles, we met a lady called

Jennifer that was ready to start the work of the Wailing Women. We introduced the vision to her, she caught it and started inviting other women and that was how the Wailing Women in California started.

During the three months I stayed back, the Lord asked me to go to the East end and West end of America. I went to Florida, where I met Sister Sharon-Brown and two other people shared the vision again with them and they started in Sharon's house. I moved to Houston and met Sister Vero, shared the vision (Jer. 9:17; and Joel 2:28) with her on her dining table, she became very interested and visited us here in Nigeria. That was how the Houston Wailing Women started. God began to talk about America as a mission field now. He said, "Twelve of you should be going to America and Israel every year". So, twelve of us now go to America and Israel every year. Israel is very peculiar because all of us represent a tribe. It is a spiritual thing. One day in Cornerstone Foundation, the Lord made us take up the tribes of Israel and He arranged it. This was before we started going to Israel.

NneObele commented that on their first visit to Israel, the tour guide was a woman and she was the one that eventually started Wailing Women in Israel. Her name is Donna and she knows so much of the Old Testament scriptures. She knows so much about Israel and was explaining everything, matching it with scripture. She was knowledgeable in her job as a tour guide. "We shared the vision with her and told her how important Israel is, and what God is saying about Wailing Women. We even told her that the original wailing women that Jeremiah raised were the Israeli women. So, she got interested and started. That was how the Wailing Women Worldwide in Israel was started" (NneObele, personal interview).

North America

"God sent us to Washington D.C. during the time of George Bush and John Kerry's election. He told us to walk the length and breadth of Washington, praying, that's prayer walk. So, we shared ourselves into six groups. We will leave the house in the morning, using the train lines. Any train station we got to, we would come out, walk around the environment, pray, and enter the next train again and get to another train station. We did that for about seven days. When we finished the prayer walk, the Lord told us to do a mock election. Gloria Anwuri was our returning officer. We knew God has been talking about George Bush. Before now, John Kerry was already winning, everywhere was Kerry, Kerry. After that mock election, the whole thing turned. God overturned the matter, and George Bush (Jnr) eventually won the election. We knew that was God's will for America at that time. The people who supported Kerry were shocked and exclaimed that they could not explain what happened. This was one prayer project in America that was not known to many people, but God did it" (NneObele, personal interview).

South Africa

Talking about their reverse mission, NneObele observed that there is no nation they entered without God giving them a message for that nation. In the course of delivering that message, the gospel is preached and the Kingdom of God is expanded. There are some nations that Wailing Women have gone into just for prayer projects and you could see the physical manifestations of the answers to these prayers. An example is South Africa.

The first time we went to South Africa, it was a prayer project. God said, 'I want to bury Apartheid'. When we got to South Africa, the Lord said to us 'Give ME six hours of praise'. When we finished singing for six hours, He said to us, 'Go outside, dig the ground, write Apartheid on a piece of paper and bury it'. We did. Then, we were in Johannesburg, but He said to us 'Go to Pretoria'. He gave us specific instructions on what to do in Pretoria. He said, 'When you get to Pretoria, take a red flag, go to the city centre, Kruga Square, and pin it where I will direct you'. This city centre (Krug Square), was where the statues of the real apartheid leaders were. Few of us went there, pinned that red flag and shouted 'DANGER!!!' according to the instruction we were given. We left immediately and went back to Johannesburg. When we came to Johannesburg within the next four days, people started calling us on phone, 'Tune in your television, something is happening.' What was it? God opened the ground and buried one of the statues of the men that spearheaded apartheid in South Africa. God buried it and nothing was remaining. There was no earthquake, there was no bomb, but the ground opened and buried that statue. When you talk about the ground opening and burying some people, we have seen it life. CNN carried the news that one of the images (box), where we went to, has caved into the ground and behold nobody could tell what happened. They have checked, there was no earthquake, nobody pushed it down, there was no bomb. Everybody was confused; geologists tested the ground and were wondering what happened; but we knew what happened. God has actually buried apartheid (NneObele, personal interview).

Discussions and Challenges

The reverse mission of the Wailing Women is majorly on intercession, prayer walk, prophetic actions, evangelism and missions. Findings show that most of the times, their international coordinators go as apostles to break the ground with prayer walks, intercession and prophetic actions. When they get a contact, they first of all go, have a meeting with the women, do prayer walk in the city, go to strategic places to pray, see how they can establish a group there. If they are able to establish a group, they follow them up by mails and phone. Not only that, they also try to go back and see how the

group is fairing. Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations wail to bring revival in the Church and the nation at large. They wail to bring down God's mercy upon the land because when you come to God with a contrite and penitent heart, He answers. They maintained that wailing is not empty tears, but they are bringing a lamentation before God and He hears. When situations become so bad in our nations, God expects us to come with a broken and contrite heart, mixed with tears and lamentation before Him. When the land is sick, you see hunger and death, wickedness everywhere with killings. The land is heaving under heavy load of sin and wickedness. It is being tormented and is vomiting its inhabitants. Through wailing, they go to God and say, "Lord, have mercy". The Lord, who is full of mercy, will show mercy. They are of the opinion that most of the wailings are even done in secret, it's only God that is seeing you. They maintained that they are not wailing for formality or to be seen, and posit that wailing will continue until the earth is filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.

Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations have to a large extent imparted the Church and the Nations. Before the inception of the Wailing Women, the Church was in a state of slumber and a lot of things were in a limbo. But with the inception of the Wailing Women, prayer has been revived, Churches are catching the fire of prayers. Night vigils have been revived and we know that when the Church is imparted, the nation will definitely be imparted because the Church makes up the nation. There are many things that God has used Wailing Women to do which the Church borrowed and it is beautiful. Evangelism is one of such. In the 1970s, evangelism was on fire. People were holding crusades everywhere, but after a while, these things died down. The message of prosperity took people away from evangelism, which is the heartbeat of God. All that, Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations observed, is coming back. God has started reviving evangelism and it's imparting the Church. A lot of things would have happened in some nations. Like war breakout, famine, but God has intervened and shown mercy as a result of wailing and intercession. Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations declared that they may not have seen or had hundred percent answer, but they know that things would have been worse than they are if not for intercession.

The work of the Wailing Women involves the literature aspect, printing books, training manuals and tracts. Sometimes, God gives them words and they put them in tract forms, so that everybody could read. They also have "Words From the Father's Heart" because they have major retreats; some of them are three weeks, some 14 days, some 7 days and some 3 days. In some of these retreats, they have had phone-fast of 21 days. As they go on these periodic retreats, the Lord speaks to them and tells them to put those words into prints. They use this literature aspect to disseminate the things God tells them and also for teaching, like the "Training Manuals" and "Words From The Father's Heart". Then, they have books that they use to let people know how it is done in Wailing Women, like "Wailing Women Mandate", "Operational Handbook" and "Organizational Management System", which is the whole structure of Wailing Women Worldwide.

They alleged that God told them to build Him a city. In that city, He said they should have Aerodrome, School, Hospital, Orphanage, Old People's Home, Hotel, Hostels, Shops, Bank, Skill Acquisition Centre, Prayer Tower, which should be the centre of everything. Already, the land has been bought, over 1,000 plots. Some structures have also been raised. They also mobilize nations, sometimes for national repentance and prayers. Sometimes for national praise, like in Ireland, where they had a national praise day on the 30th of October, 2019. The Wailing Women initiated it, met some pastors in the land, suggested it and the people bought the idea and it was held. Wailing Women also teach women to study the word of God and to pray with it. They observed that praying with the word of God has a lot of advantages. When you read the word of God, your prayer life improves because the word of God is your spiritual food. It strengthens you and your prayer life, they aver. For instance in Tunisia, when they had their first North African Regional Conference of Wailing Women World Wide, it was a huge success and people were amazed because they saw another form of prayer and another way of praying since many of them are Coptic Christians. The evangelicals are not many. They learnt to pray through that conference because the wailing Women taught them how to pray.

Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations teach women to be true mothers, wise wives and keepers at home. They advocate that they have seen results in families. Several husbands have acclaimed that since their wives joined Wailing Women, their lives have changed positively. Their characters changed drastically for the better. There is overflowing joy and more peace in the home. It could be deduced that they teach women how to be financially independent. That is women empowerment, teaching them to start up something that will be yielding them some income. Wailing Women work has prospered a lot of families spiritually, mentally, financially and relationship-wise. Many families that were struggling before they joined Wailing Women, now experience drastic changes financially and are experiencing prosperity. In area of relationship, you now know you have a family beyond your family in Wailing Women, because of the level of love and care amongst them. If you have a challenge, you know there are people who will care for you and run to your aid. They will not just pray, but will care, visit and do something.

There is no age barrier in the Wailing Women movement. As long as a woman could still come around and pray, she is free to belong. Every strata of the society is represented in the Wailing Women move. To ensure continuity in the work

of intercession in nations, there are the young people who are God's succession plan for the work. They are being trained as back-up team and recovery army to bridge the generational gap. Element of patriarchy does not exist in the Wailing Women movement. Thus, they have the male arm of Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations known as Husbands Aglow. The Husbands Aglow believe that they are there for completeness and complementation. They believe they are there to support the women and not to lord it over them. They see the women as the Deborahs while they are the Barracks. Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations encounter challenges as they move to nations and God has been helping them to surmount those challenges. In a personal interview with NneObele, one of the international coordinators, she said there is the challenge of language and culture. Most of the countries they go to don't speak English, so, most of the time, they look for an interpreter to translate the message into the language of the people. Like when they went to Argentina in 2017, the Lord asked them to call two sisters from Angola to interpret for them because they speak Spanish, though theirs is Africanized. The flame was ignited immediately because the people could now understand them very well. The message was really flowing.

The first time they went to Argentina, all the twelve of them went. The work was established but they weren't communicating. Communication was not flowing because of language. The second time they went was like reinforcing the group. The third time, they began to see fruit, when the Angolans came with them. There were a lot of elderly women who are intercessors. About a hundred women were there, and all whites. They had both leadership and ordinary meeting, went to a Church and gave them the message God gave them. They also meet the challenge of poverty in some of the nations they go to. For instance, the first time they went to Burkina Faso, all their luggages did not arrive till the day they were to leave. They were wearing one dress to meeting every day. They later discovered that the nation was so poor that God didn't want them to dress as usual so that they will not be overdressed or too superior to their hosts. When the luggages eventually arrived, they gave them out to the women because you could just feel poverty in their midst. In most nations they got to, they go with full boxes and come back with empty boxes because the people they went to, needed those dresses more than they. There have been cases where they had to cook with charcoals for themselves and their hosts. There was the challenge of getting Visa at times. For instance in February, 2018, they had a leadership summit in Botswana, but they were all refused Visa, all the international coordinators and summit delegates from Nigeria. That was the first of its kind. They have also been refused Visas in other countries and after much persistence, they were given.

There was the challenge of finance and airfare. For twelve of them to travel, involves a lot of money, but they have seen all kinds of miracles. Sometimes, it could just be at the airport, God would just send somebody to send them money. At times, God would tell them to contribute money among themselves. Sometimes, before they take off, they had already bought the tickets, but they may not have any money on them. So, it has been a journey of faith, they explained. Mobilization was a challenge. Princess Ena Enahosaid. "At times, we have to go several times to a nation before we finally get people that will agree to hold the work. This involves a lot of money. Like in United Kingdom, we struggled a lot to establish Wailing Women there, but we finally did and they are waxing strong now." (Princess EnaEnaho, International Coordinator, Personal interview).

The prospects of the Wailing Women according to Atim Ogan is that in every nation, they will have Wailing Women praying for their church and the nation. They desire that the kingdom of this world will become the kingdom of our God and His Christ.

Summarily, the Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations are truly into reverse mission in every aspect. It is not just in terms of religion or church, but extends to the family, individual and nation.

CONCLUSIONS

From the findings of this study, it is evident that Women Intercessors for the Church and the Nations have contributed significantly to the contemporary theme in Church Historiography on reverse mission. Women are therefore important in world missions to carry the gospel of Christ to the world in order to prepare for the second advent of Christ. The women need support and encouragement both from the Church and the men in order to be properly equipped to play their role efficiently and more enthusiastically as socio-religious agents of change in our contemporary times. This will not only bring out great changes, development and radical transformation in the church and nations, but greater glory to God who is a lover of women and all mankind. This work resonates with the demographic shift in World Christianity whereby the West is no longer the centre of Christianity, but Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Pacific. Thus, the preaching structure and liturgy of the Church should resonate with the demographic need. The work resonates with contemporary African Church Historiography on the need to include the place of women in World Missions and gender related issues as part of academic agenda. Church History of any scholarly work must follow a polycentric approach, that is, taking note of different centres of Christianity. The works brings to bear on church leaders and church historians the fact that the destiny of churches can be best harnessed and determined with the instrumentality of women ministries. Thus, church history should be looked at from the ecumenical perspective. It has re-awakened the consciousness of the

Church, government and non-governmental organizations on the need to invest more on women’s spiritual, moral and socio-economic development as a way of fast-tracking Church growth and national development. It will contribute to knowledge on the issue of gender discourse and the field of gender studies.

The study recommends that the church should remove every barrier hindering women from participating fully in missionary enterprise. Women should be encouraged to use their God-given potentials to evangelize and push the gospel forward in this contemporary time. Church leaders must begin to offer their members things that resonate with their existential needs. Training centres should be increased; more women empowerment measures should be introduced for increased women participations and contributions. Our society will take a different shape and attain great height in terms of religious, socio-cultural, educational and technological development when adequate recognition and opportunities are given to the womenfolk to participate in different spheres of life without any form of restrictions.

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Appendix II PRIMARY SOURCES (ORAL SOURCES) LIST OF PRINCIPAL INFORMANTS

S/N	Name of Informant	Age	Status	Place of Interview	Date
1.	Mrs. Gloria Anwuri	65 Years	International Coordinator	Port Harcourt	10/3/19
2.	Mrs. Rachel Ozichukwu	65 Years	International Coordinator	Port Harcourt	11/3/19
3.	Mrs. Ann Akahome	63 Years	International Coordinator	Port Harcourt	13/4/19
4.	Pst. Glory NneObele	64 Years	International Coordinator	Port Harcourt	9/5/19
5.	Mrs. AtimOgan	64 Years	International Coordinator	Port Harcourt	10/5/19
6.	Mrs. Princess EnaEnaho	63 Years	International Coordinator	Port Harcourt	20/5/19
7.	Pst. UcheAgbagwara	55 Years	International Coordinator	Port Harcourt	17/5/19
8.	Mrs. EzinmanneEgbuna	62 Years	African Coordinator	Port Harcourt	6/6/19
9.	Mrs. CalistaAhaji	56 Years	National Coordinator	Port Harcourt	8/6/19
10.	Mrs. Gem-Delight George	64 Years	Regional Coordinator	Port Harcourt	2/6/19
11.	Mrs. Carol Obiara	54 Years	State Coordinator	Port Harcourt	5/7/19
12.	Mrs. Maria Oyabure	54 Years	LGA Coordinator	Port Harcourt	16/7/19
13.	Mrs. NennatorAkakue	54 Years	City Coordinator	Port Harcourt	8/7/19
14.	Mrs. Carol Okpulor	56 Years	Church Coordinator	Port Harcourt	1/7/19
15.	Mrs. LaraiChukwueke	63 Years	Facilitator	Port Harcourt	15/8/19
16.	Pst. Ozichukwu	70 Years	Husbands Aglow	Port Harcourt	6/9/19