Missionaries to the City of God:
Christian Citizenship and African Immigrants in Rome, Italy

by

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Dedication

To
AMITAI & NOGA- who were born to this dissertation
and who always bring 'home' with us, wherever we are.

e per,

NEHEMIAH – figlio di H., che era nato in una 'nuova terra,'
con la speranza che il suo arrivo si farà una 'casa.'

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*All images were taken by the author, unless stated otherwise.

List of Abbreviations

UER   Upper East Region, Ghana

CoP   Church of Pentecost

ICGC   International Christ Gospel Church

LCI   Lighthouse Chapel International

Bolga   Bolgatanga

EU   European Union

FCEI   Federazione della chiese evangeliche in Italia/ The Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy.

Abstract

This study offers a new perspective on African Pentecostal-Charismatic churches in Europe by presenting a multi-sited ethnographic investigation of migrants' religious practices in Ghana and Italy. In addition to their political and economic motivations, migrants also lead pious Christian life, which they aspire to pass on to their host society. These migrants experience the paradox of two conflicting statuses that originate from their positions as "migrants" and as "missionaries," and they navigate this terrain by assuming a status of "Christian citizens," a biblical term which refers to the after-life of the believers in heaven. "Christian citizenship" becomes a path for the Pentecostal migrants to challenge and negotiate their "non-citizenship" as immigrants in Europe. Believers become Christian citizens based on their mission, moral conduct, and piety. The concept of citizenship is often interpreted as a form of belonging and participating in the nation state. The Pentecostal migrants, however, link it to their religiosity. The believers' moral conduct, therefore, comes to counterweigh the immorality of their Italian host society, and thus represents an alternative manner for contributing to, and participating in Italian society.

Italy, long a country which people migrated from, has, in the past three decades, became a destination for many immigrants. Its Mediterranean coastline and its proximity to North Africa has transformed it into a back-door-to-Europe for many African migrants. African migration to Italy has rekindled earlier orientalist discourses about southern Italy and

exoticization of Africans during Italian colonial rule; these have now been redirected towards the new 'Other,' the African-migrant. I argue that, by becoming Christian citizens, believers counter the hegemonic narratives of exclusion of African migrants from Italian society.

This dissertation follows the process of religious migration from Ghana to Italy in three main stages: The historical rise of African Pentecostalism and Christian conversion of children in Ghana, missionary-life around the church in Italy, and life in Rome as immigrants. By exploring the house and the church as places where Christian citizenship is taught and performed and the Italian cooking and hygiene courses, where Italian-citizenship is defined and portrayed, I analyze the various discourses of sovereignty and citizenship as they pertain to the lives of African Pentecostal believers in Italy. These arenas reveal practices of spatiality and temporality, inclusion-exclusion and moral distinction. Thus, this study develops a different understanding of the concept of citizenship, one that is beyond the nation state, and adds to our understanding of the massive global expansion of the Charismatic movement in recent decades.

Introduction

"Spilled off the boat and forgotten"

"How can it be described? How can any of it be described? The trip and the story of the trip are always two different things. The narrator is the one who has stayed home, but then, afterward, presses her mouth upon the traveler's mouth, in order to make the mouth work, to make the mouth say, say, say. One cannot go to a place and speak of it; one cannot both see and say, not really. One can go, and upon returning make a lot of hand motions and indications with the arms. The mouth itself, working at the speed of light, at the eye's instructions, is necessarily struck still; so fast, so much to report, it hangs open and dumb as a gutted bell. All that unsayable life! That's where the narrator comes in. The narrator comes with her kisses and mimicry and tidying up. The narrator comes and makes a slow, fake song of the mouth's eager devastation."

(Lorrie Moore, 1998. *People Like That Are the Only People Here* in *Birds of America*, p. 268)

At the end of 2016, I gave a talk about my research in Catania. A Sicilian harbor town on the Italian shores of the Mediterranean, Catania is now famous for its camps of refugees set up to receive the many boats coming from Libya, bringing with them African refugees hoping to enter Europe. On the train-ride to the Etna volcano, the other reason for which Catania is famous, I crossed paths with three Congolese men. When, in addition to their tickets, the conductor asked to see their documents, "i documenti per favore," they immediately knew without any elaboration what "documents" were "the" documents he was referring to. He exchanged a few more words with them while examining their papers with a heavy face and moved on. They quietly waited until he left our coach and then started whispering together a prayer. No one else in the train was asked for documents, but all others were white.

A year or so earlier in the beginning of May 2015, a report was published about yet another

immigrant boat coming from Libya washing up on the shores of southern Italy. Three

thousand and five hundred people were rescued, seventeen had died. On April 19th, 2015, just

a month and half before, hundreds of migrants had been killed in a shipwreck off the coast of

Italy, bringing the number of the migrants landing in Italy to 23,500, just from the beginning of

2015. In 2014, during my fieldwork, it was reported that approximately 219,000 migrants and

refugees sailed across the Mediterranean trying to reach Europe at all costs - with hope of a

better life. 3,500 died on their way.

These shipwreck disasters occurring on the shores of the Mediterranean are also constantly

reflected in reports from the national and international media.[1] News outlets have referred to

the issue as "The Immigrant Problem" (CNN), "Genocide" (CNN), and "The Ghosts of the

Mediterranean" (BBC) attempting to emphasize the responsibility of European policy makers

to take care of the many immigrants, migrants and asylum seekers arriving to their shores.[2]

Mimy, an Ethiopian woman who had arrived in Italy only about a year before we met in the

cooking course, told to me: "[once we arrive to Italy] we are like water spilled out of the boat

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[1] The stories of the boats are discussed in the popular media, as one of the most crucial problems of the modern age caused by the cruelty of neoliberal markets. However, for Italians, migrants-shipwreck's-stories are not a new phenomenon but rather a recurring story of the past few decades. The inhabitants of these boats are those who change. During the 90's, southern Italy became the arrival spot for migrants coming from Africa, Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East, creating a long history of the refugees on the shores of the Mediterranean.

[2] Italy was also on the headlines when in 2008 Berlusconi and Gaddafi signed a treaty between Italy and Libya, a major point of departure for immigrants from Africa to Italy. The treaty included a cooperation between the two countries to stop irregular migration from Libya to Italy. Accordingly, Italian authorities forcibly sent back to Libya all boats arriving on Italian shores, leading to additional deaths for the migrants who barely managed to survive their way to the Italian shores in the first journey. In 2012, the European court of Human Rights ruled that by returning the migrants to Libya, Italy had violated the European convention on Human Rights.

and forgotten. Nobody cares about us, where we sleep, how we manage to eat, they don't care but they don't let us leave. We are stuck." Her description immediately struck the common image attached to these reports: dots of sub-Saharan African migrants deserted in the sea, fighting with their last breaths against the crashing waves, as rescue teams on floatable rafts try to pull in the survivors. Yet, her account also emphasizes how little attention the fate of the immigrants who manage to survive the journey receives. [3] What happened to the two Congolese migrants when they left Catania?

Yet, not all African immigrants arrive in boats, and the reasons for the arrival of the large number of Africans in Europe over the past forty years have been diverse as well. In many cases, these involve the political and economic situation in Africa that forces the migrants to move outside of their home country to look for work and shelter. Although, not much has been written about the migrants' religious life, Ter Haar (1998) mentions that religion plays an important role. As in Mimy's notion of her presence in Italy, aspects of migration policy in Europe reveal the exclusion of black people. The European Union is often described in these matters as "Fortress Europe" - a coalition of white people defending their interests against the large mass arriving from the outside (Donkwu 1993).

This dissertation explores the fate of those who arrive at Italy's shores. It strives to offer a different perspective on their lives and stories, one that is seldom told. I focus on African immigrants who, in addition to the usual economic or political motivations for migrating to

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[3] For recent studies also exploring this angle look at the stories of immigrants in France told by Julie Kleinman (Kleinman 2012)

Europe, also envision themselves as conveying a religious message that they carry with them from Africa to Europe. Their message is clear; they strive to make Europe Christian again. They thus view their status in Italy as more than that of mere immigrants (labor migrants or refugees), but as missionaries to Europe. In European eyes, the religious life of the African immigrants is often reduced to a colorful and exotic aspect of their lives, sidelined by the background of a secular Europe in which they are now immigrants and refugees (Ter Haar 1998). Yet, in reality, their religious lives, as missionaries and not immigrants, is embedded in a larger, globalized context that binds together migration and religion.

Italy witnessed a massive growth in West African migration in the past few decades. The number of Ghanaian and Nigerian immigrants, for example, has nearly tripled in the last decade reaching approximately 90,000, according to some estimates. Much like other parts of Europe, Italians with whom I have spoken view African migration to Italy as a serious economic and social concern often called "Problema dell'immigrazione."[4] In addition to the economic aspects involved in the recent waves of migration, the appearance of African churches has also introduced considerable changes to the religious landscape of Italy. [5]

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[4] Or sometimes even "Emergenza migranti" (LaRepubblica, 09/01/2015; Italia Vinci blog post 02/15/2017)

[5] However, while they have gained an increasing visibility in the public sphere, African churches in Italy have received little scholarly attention (Gusman 2011; Pace and Butticci 2010). The literature available, is concerned mostly with the immigrants' adjustment to their new environment. Gusman (2011), for example, studying Pentecostal churches in Turin, examines the role of the churches in mobilizing resources, both symbolic and material, to assist the immigrants in adapting to their new setting. Recently, several Italian scholars have started examining migrant churches, exploring their role in relation to welfare, for example among refugees (see for example a collection of studies edited by Nasso et al., 2014).

This dissertation discusses, therefore, the following questions. How do Ghanaian Pentecostal immigrants in Rome conceptualize Christian mission to Europe? What does the Christian identity enable and what kind of moral economy does it shape? How can the Christian identity be juxtaposed with one's migrant identity? And are new meanings of sovereignty and borders negotiated and created through the performance of the notion of Christian citizenship? In this study, I examine the practices that constitute mission for the African believer and demonstrate that by becoming missionaries, they counter the hegemonic narrative of exclusion of African immigrants from Italian society. I argue that the categories of 'missionary' and 'immigrant' form an axis that assumes power and agency on the one hand, and privation and constraint, on the other. Each of these categories evokes distinctive conceptions of borders and authority, and plays a significant role in shaping the identity and self-representation of the African Pentecostals in Rome, primarily as "Christian citizens of God's kingdom." Furthermore, I argue that through their practices as missionaries and as Christian citizens, the African Pentecostal immigrants challenge European notions of citizenship and the nation-state.

I develop the concept of Christian-citizenship, a conceptual citizenship-card that is entrusted to the believers by virtue of their mission and their moral conduct. Christian citizenship, originally a biblical term which refers to believers after life in heaven. However, I argue that, Christian citizenship is more than a religious concept for the Pentecostal migrants. It becomes a path for them to challenge their non-citizenship as immigrants in Europe. The concept of citizenship as it is often interpreted in relation to the nation state as a form of belonging and participating in it, is linked, instead, by the Pentecostal migrants to their religiosity. the religiosity of the Pentecostal believers offers a parallel perspective to the framework of the

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nation-state. In Christian-citizenship, spatiality and temporality are interlinked with a globalized world, rather than the excluding framework of the nation state. The Pentecostal migrants' moral conduct, therefore comes to counterweigh the immorality of their host society, and thus represents an alternative manner for contributing to, and participating in the host society, ultimately enacting and fulfilling their Christian citizenship. The concept of Christian citizenship does not ignore the position of the believers in the nation-state. While Christian citizenship is a concept that offers a form of citizenship which is beyond the nation state, it is not independent. Thus, Christian citizenship is shaped in relation to the nation state. The moral conduct of the believers is a form of contributing to the nation state and their host society. I suggest that Christian citizenship helps mediate the believers' status as immigrants and non-citizens. While African immigrants and refugees in Europe are limited in their ability to become citizens and are confined to the geographical borders of their host countries, Christian citizenship operates on a different temporal and geographical scale. Although, as I discuss further in chapter three, African missionaries are largely unsuccessful at the present in recruiting European adherents to their church, their identity as Christian citizens conceptualizes the fruit of their missionary work beyond the present, and thus gives new meaning to their non-citizen status. Furthermore, I argue that the notion of a Christian citizenship potentially embodies opportunities of mobility and has implications for the way Pentecostalism is perceived on the global sphere. Christian citizenship, in other words, allows the African believers to be missionaries in Italy despite their immigrant status in their daily experiences. Only because of their missionary status the migrants become Christian citizens, and only when they become Christian citizens they use that category to navigate their immigrant status.

Silence

In my first visit to the Church of Pentecost (CoP), a Pentecostal Ghanaian church in Rome, I arrived a large warehouse located in the southern part of the city, in the middle of an industrial zone. The service which included prayer, worship and scripture addressed not only spiritual, but also other various facets of the participants' everyday experiences, including the relationship between husband and wife, children's education, and morality in the workplace. I was impressed (but not surprised) by the array of topics, but it was what was "not said" that struck me the most. It seemed at first as if nothing was being said about the members' experiences as immigrants and their relationships with the surrounding Romans. Nothing was said during the service about issues of *permesso di soggiorno's*,[6] the difficulty to find employment, and the prominent *razzismo* (racism) of which the members frequently spoke outside the context of church, and which they experienced daily. In my naiveté, I expected that the state of being an immigrant would be the main facet distinguishing the content of the services in their home church in Ghana, which I attended a couple of years back, and the immigrant churches outside of Africa. I expected the church to be a venue assisting the immigrant-believers to cope with their new realities. Based on the research I had encountered before my fieldwork, I also suspected that I will find 'diaspora churches.' Yet, for over fourteen months of fieldwork, not once did the hardships of immigration come up as a subject during the weekly services I visited each Sunday. Later, I realized that their status as immigrants was not entirely ignored; rather, their hardship as migrants was often acknowledged in the church, briefly insinuated when, for example, the pastor would state "I know some of you are

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[6] Permesso di soggiorno is a permit of stay, that non-Italian citizens need to hold in order to stay and work in Italy.

struggling" during his preaching about devout conduct. However, beyond these brief moments of recognition by the pastor, being an immigrant - let alone an immigrant in Italy - was never discussed as a topic on to its own. This was true not only to the Church of Pentecost (CoP), but also in the other various churches I visited throughout my fieldwork. There mostly silence. It was indeed as if inside the church, members were no longer immigrants.

It was not that the hardship of immigration did not affect them, but that the context where they could speak about their adversities needed to be different. I encountered stories about their lives as immigrants only when I met members outside of church: on the bus, in the *questura*-where one goes to apply for a permit of stay, or in a cooking course for immigrant women. It was only in these circumstances that I learnt that, for example, when a person is sick the church immediately sends someone to the hospital to stay and guard them from Italian doctors. The immigrants believed that the latter, 'in the name of science,' perform medical experiments on the sick African immigrants without their permission. It was outside the church that I witnessed attestations of their daily experiences of racism, for example, an Italian woman preventing an African man from sitting by her side on the bus. It was only outside the church that I witnessed the believers' anger about the politician Roberto Calderoli from the 'Lega Nord', the Italian right wing party, who called Cecile Kyenge, the first and only African minister in the government, an orangutan.

The African women I met in the cooking course (chapter 5) were all members of Pentecostal churches. In the context of the cooking course, they had a lot to say about their relationship with their host society and the way they were treated. Their stories, and those of other church

members, as well as their reasons for coming to Italy significantly varied. Some arrived by boat after travelling for weeks in the sea with little water or food, and some escaped and travelled the desert and were abused on the way. Others spoke about their stop in Libya to collect money to be able to keep moving, and some simply came by plane to find job opportunities or on a student visa. One had even arrived on the basis of a football scholarship. Scholars have conceptually addressed the African Pentecostal churches in Europe either as migrant churches and thus should be viewed as part of an African diaspora or as a phenomenon of "reverse mission," suggesting that the churches' purpose is to respond to earlier presence of Western missionaries in Africa by bringing back Christianity to the "now dark Europe."[7] Yet, many of the believers I met did not come as missionaries or to conduct what researchers refer to as 'reverse mission.' Rather, they arrived in Italy searching for financial or educational opportunities or seeking asylum. Yet, once in Italy, they sincerely sought to contribute to their host society; their efforts legitimated and motivated by the holy spirit and the divine call (Freston 2010). They see themselves as missionaries bringing the gift of the spirit with them, planning to leave their Pentecostal Churches, for their host society when they leave Italy.

The story of the African Pentecostal missionaries I tell in this study unfolds alternative manners of sovereignty and citizenship that conceptualize borders and geography in a very different way, albeit not less real from the way governments and the European Union portray them. Their stories also inform us about the spread of the Pentecostal movement and its rapid global growth. They speak to a tangible Pentecostal language that shapes the global movement

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[7] In chapter one and chapter four I introduce and discuss respectively the idea of Christian citizenship which I develop as an alternative to the two dominant approaches which frame the churches as either diaspora or "reverse mission."

as such, allowing a newly converted orphan in rural Ghana, a Pentecostal NGO worker, an Ethiopian refugee, and a Ghanaian labor migrant to imagine their next endeavor in any place around the world, and sit together to pray without the confinement of national borders.

Methodology

The Who, What, When, and Where

My research was conducted throughout 16 months of multi-sited fieldwork, first in the Upper East Region of Northern Ghana and then in Rome, Italy. I arrived in Ghana at the summer of 2010, with the aim of studying American missionaries working with local children organizations. While my husband and I were in Accra, not knowing exactly where we were heading next, someone put us in contact with a Ghanaian pastor in one of the branches of the mega church Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI), that was located in northeastern Ghana in the city of Bolgatanga. The Pastor, happened to arrive to Accra the next day, picking up a visiting American pastor from Assemblies of God church in the Midwest. We met at a pizza place, and the next day, with little previous knowledge of the Ghanaian pastor, we found ourselves traveling northeast with him on an 18-hour journey to his home in Bolgatanga, the capital of the Upper East Region of Ghana. We spent the rest of the summer with the pastor and his wife. They made a room in their house available for us, and dedicated their time to showing us anything they thought we could find interesting. I introduced myself as an anthropologist interested in Charismatic-Pentecostal education of children in Ghana. The pastor showed me around local schools, and the children organization he established in the villages. Rather, it was during my stay in his house with his foster children that I started thinking about how one learns to be a Christian and how one's conversion works with other identities the convert has.

Moreover, it was my interaction with other church members around the pastor's house that sent me initially on the path to studying African churches in Italy. The pastor's assistant told me that he wished to travel someday to plant a new church in Europe, which had me start thinking about the transnational effects of African mission, and sent me looking where Pentecostal Ghanaians travel in order to do mission, and how this corresponds with the migration routes of African labor migrants.

Marcus argues that while ethnography remains the key methodology, and anthropologists consider it a distinct form of anthropological knowledge production, it can no longer be assumed that it should take place in one ethnos (Marcus 1998: 231). Multi-sited fieldwork methods are, thus, becoming much more prevalent (Marcus 1998; Gardner 1999; Clifford 1992, 1994). In line with this approach, the multi-sited ethnography does not reduce the depth or the importance of the local. My decision to adopt a multi-sited fieldwork originated in the way my interlocutors - Ghanaian Pentecostal migrants, circulate and reconstruct their social and religious identity around the world. My research followed Marcus' (1998: 90) advice to "follow the people," or in my case, to "follow the believers" - from Accra- to Bolgatanga - to Italy.

A year after my fieldwork in Ghana in the summer of 2011, I arrived in Italy for the first time to visit Ghanaian Charismatic churches, mostly in the Northern regions including Milan, Modena, Genoa, and Bologna. I focused mostly on branches of Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI), the same church I visited during my stay in Ghana, and to which the pastor and his family in Bolgatanga were affiliated. After that summer in Italy, I received

the contact information of the Chairman of the Church of Pentecost, Apostle Reverend Prof. Opoku Onyinah, who, after a short correspondence, introduced me to the church of Pentecost in Rome, where I was to spend the majority of my fieldwork between June 2013 and July 2014. A few months after I left Rome, Lighthouse Chapel Intl., Opened a branch in Rome. A brief visit in 2016 in this branch showed that some of the members of the CoP's branch in Rome were now members of LCI.

During my first months in Rome, I conducted a survey of Pentecostal and African Charismatic churches in the city, with the aim of mapping out the location of churches in relation to the city and achieving a better understanding of the scope and scale of migrant churches throughout Rome. Together with Carmelo, an Italian colleague and researcher at La Sapienza University, I spent weekends walking around the city tracing Charismatic churches. I heard about some from conversations I had with people I met on the train, and Carmelo had learnt of others from friends and colleagues in his work.[8] Some basic information on about 70 immigrant-based churches. While I was interested mainly in the African Churches, I was also interested in receiving a wider perspective on the Charismatic churches in the city. All the churches were Pentecostal or Charismatic churches and included a variety of nationalities including Filipinos, Chinese, Koreans, Eritrean, North Americans, Brazilians, Ethiopians, Ghanaians, Nigerians and others. I was successful in locating, visiting and attending the services of about a third of these churches.

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[8] For a systematic demographic analysis of all migrant churches in Rome see the report published by a group of researchers from La Sapienza University (Naso et al. 2014).

Amongst the various evangelical immigrant groups in Italy, aside from Romanians, Ghanaians are by far the largest group, with 34,824 documented members, followed by Nigerians with 24,814 members (Naso et al. 2014: 14). I eventually focused on two churches; the Church of Pentecost (CoP) and International Central Gospel Church-Christ temple (ICGC), both were prominently Ghanaian in attendance, Ghanaian founded, and represented Charismatic Mega churches in Ghana. The Church of Pentecost was, by far, larger than other African Charismatic churches in the city. The differences between these churches led me to think about space and place of immigrant churches in the city and brought me to think about the meaning of owning versus renting and other notions of the politics of belonging.

Both CoP and ICGC were Charismatic Ghanaian mega churches. In Ghana, the rise of the charismatic sector or charismatic Christianity took place around the same time that Ghana became a democratic state in the early 1990's. In the literature, the term 'Pentecostal' often refers to the older churches. In Ghana, these churches were established during the 1930's, normally by Western missionaries. The term 'charismatic' (also known as 'neo-Pentecostal') is applied to the newer, locally founded churches (Synan 1997). According to this distinction, the CoP, founded by an Irish missionary, James McKeown, in 1937, is a classic Pentecostal church from the old generation. Yet, the CoP also shares similar traits with the charismatic movement, and many leaders of other charismatic churches were first members of the CoP (Daswani 2015, location 349). The CoP is the oldest Pentecostal church in Ghana. Upon independence in 1957, it was called Ghana Apostolic Church. Only in 1962 did it officially adopted the name Church of Pentecost. According to their website, the

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CoP has branches in over 90 countries all working with coordination with the headquarters in Accra, Ghana's capital.

The Rome district was one of the branches of the international mission. It started off as a small prayer group of the founders of the branch who came in the first wave of Ghanaians to Italy during the 1970's. The branch in Rome was established twenty years ago.[9] In its earlier days, the church moved around the city from one rented space to another. Only a decade later did it eventually buy its own space, a large warehouse in a mixed industrial area in the southern part of Rome. In its full attendance, the church accommodates about a hundred believers. Around seventy to eighty regular participants can be found on an average Sunday service. Their Sunday services are held during the morning and lasted about five hours and sometimes longer. The church's congregation is composed of families, some with small children and many with older children and teens. It has relatively more established members, which means they hold regular jobs. Not all members arrived in Rome together as a family unit. Some arrived first and only brought their children and spouses later. Nevertheless, relatively to other African churches I visited throughout Italy, it had a large percentage of families. As a result, they had quite active youth and children ministries. In addition to services, the church also held weddings and officiation ceremonies of their members, as well as home prayer groups and conferences.

International Central Gospel Church (ICGC) is another Ghanaian church. It was founded in Accra in the mid 1980s by Pastor Mensa Otabil and draws over 4000 members in their Accra

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[9] 1998

headquarter. In Rome however, not all members attending their branch are Ghanaians and there are some participants from other African countries. Unlike the CoP, ICGC has a much smaller branch and has about thirty to forty members, twenty of whom participate regularly. As result of the Pastor's high position in the Ghanaian embassy, his church is well known amongst the Ghanaian community in the city, and he is highly respected. ICGC rents church space from an Italian Adventist Church at the center of Rome, only a short walk from Vatican City. At least half of the members had a spouse and/or children in their home country and were in Rome on their own. There were also a few students who studied in one of Rome's universities; their family was either elsewhere in Italy, or they had come on an educational scholarship to Rome. There were only a few children in the church, including the pastor's children, and two other small children, who were in Rome with their mother and grandfather.

In both CoP and ICGC, I attended church services every week, as well as conferences, other church activities that took place throughout the week, and bible study meetings. While I attended every church activity I knew, many of the church members could attend only Sunday services, which were normally in full attendance. Often the people with whom I conversed lived throughout Rome's suburbs and neighboring towns in Lazio - Rome's region, and arrived to the church from afar. In many cases, they also worked in at least two jobs shifting from a day job to a night job, leaving very little time for other interactions. For this reason, interviews were often scheduled around church activities, and therefore, I also relied more on participation and church services than on home visits and out-of-church environment than I would have liked.

Since shadowing people to their day jobs was not a possibility and since I wanted to get a better picture of their lives as immigrants, I started looking for other occasions to meet the migrants outside of church. I went to different arenas including the questura- the local immigration office, assistance and information centers for refugees and immigrants, and Catholic aid organizations. At one of those centers, a volunteer told me about the training that different organization offer for immigrants. She said: "if they want to stay here and get a job, they must first learn how to speak Italian. No one is going to look at them otherwise, and they need to learn to 'do' something." Among these courses are also the cooking and hygiene classes which I attended as I discuss in chapter 5.

The cooking and hygiene courses were supported by an Italian aid organization for refugees and immigrants, which belonged to the federation of Evangelical churches in Italy (FCEI)[10]. Aid workers often refer immigrants to such courses that aim to help the immigrants assimilate and adjust to Italian life. The course I participated in was designed to introduce the participants to Italian culture and equip them with basic skills that, in turn, would help them obtain a job, most likely as domestic workers. There were about fifteen women participating in the course at its maximum capacity, but only about ten women regularly arrived. All the women were from African descent and aside from one Muslim North African woman, all were from sub-Saharan African countries and most were practicing Christians, mostly from Charismatic churches, though two had Catholic background. I participated in the course, cooking with them and learning in hygiene classes, as a full participant. However, the participating women considered me sometimes as someone with external authority, and sometimes as another

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[10] FCEI- federazione della chiese evangeliche in Italia

instructor, rather than one of the participants. Although I was not Italian, and a temporary

immigrant myself, I was a very privileged immigrant, and they never mistook me as one of

their own. The women, who felt invisible in their host society, were eager to share stories with

me and tell me about their lives and struggles. They wanted to make their voices heard by their

host-society, so they knew what they were going through. However, for the women I met,

interactions with members of Italian society were often limited to employers, officials,

bureaucrats, and the instructors of these courses, none of whom had interest in their daily life

and objections to Italian society. The juxtaposition of the way immigrant women was framed

and socialized to be and not-to-be "Italians," and the way members of the churches I saw

perceived themselves in the church raised questions for me about the gap between the two,

and accordingly, what does it means to be an immigrant versus a missionary in Italian society.

Anthropologists working on Christianity often describe how their identity as non-born-again

believers poses a problem for their interlocutors, especially when, after a period, they do not

show signs of conversion (Daswani 2015; Harding 2000; Robbins 2003). However, for my

Pentecostal interlocutors, my Israeli roots and my upbringing as Jewish (even if only on paper)

were sufficient for welcoming me into their church. I was still expected to embrace Jesus after

a while, but when that did not happen, they usually showed more patience, certain that it will

surely happen. In one of my first visits to the CoP, when I arrived in the morning before service

started, a woman asked me if I was a daughter of Abraham. Although I thought I knew what

she meant, but did not want to make any false assumption, I said I was born Jewish. She told

me: "we are too - daughters of Abraham." In ICGC, when I introduced myself to the pastor, he

immediately recognized my name as a biblical name (the word Smadar in Hebrew is the flower

of the vine and appears in the Song of Songs) and as an Israeli. He was excited about my

presence, and since Pentecostals have a special relationship with Israel and the Jewish people,

and many aspire to visit the country one day, my presence at the church often received special

meaning.

Even though, particularly in the Church of Pentecost, my Jewish identity might have given me a

entry ticket to the church, my stay was dependent on my future expected conversion. While

anthropologists observe their interlocutors with close attention to details of their social lives,

(and perhaps even more so in religious fields), the observation goes both ways. I was

constantly under the watchful eyes of church members who examined me to see if "any

change" in my belief had occurred. Moreover, members would share with me visions they had

about my potential conversion, and they were sure that it would happen when the time is

right. One women I interviewed, told me she had a vision, where she saw that I will accept

Jesus Christ just around the time I finish writing my study.

Since I knew my interlocutors saw me as a potential convert, and since I was grateful for the

opportunity they gave me to witness their devotion, it was particularly important for me to not

mislead any of them (intentionally or unintentionally). I never claimed to be Christian and was

honest about my identity. I was consciously redrawing the limits of my participation, and tried

to find the balance of participating to an extent that would not create false assumptions; I read

the bible with them and I stood when they danced during praise, but I avoided praying,

participating in prayer circles or doing any gestures that could be interpreted as praying such

as closing eyes, lifting hands, looking up etc,' or coming to the table during communion. My

presence in ICGC was much more relaxed and accommodating in comparison to CoP.

Particularly in the CoP, along with my non-Christianity, the fact that I came alone to church

was also a problem for many of the church members. The pastor's wife once asked me while

behind her were a group of women overhearing, if I was married. She was relived to find out

that I am, but then, was troubled by the fact that my husband did not come to church with me.

Throughout the year, she would say to me at the end of each service: "next time bring your

husband."

Anthropology of Christianity

While I am not a Christian myself, my approach to the study of Christianity has benefited from

the emerging field of the anthropology of Christianity. This approach to the study of

Christianity makes Christianity of the people I study central to my work rather than a

background to another culture, and takes the religious motives and convictions of my

interlocutors as such (Robbins 2003: 195, 2007; Luhrmann 2004). Doing so allows social

actions of believers and what believers say to guide the theories employed (Cannel 2006;

Robbins 2007). Thus, the content of Christianity received the same significance that its social

and institutional modes receive, and people's experiences is emphasized (Cannel 2007).

Pertinent to such approach is the understanding that, as Keane (2007) and Engelke (2007)

show in their approach to semiotic anthropology, sign systems cannot be separated from the

material. Thus, elements such as church premises, sound systems, and luxurious cars along

with other material elements and the understanding of ones' transcendental movement and

ultimately one's Christian citizenship - which are part of the ideological worlds of believers -

are all taken to be part of the same sign system and to represent moral interests (Daswani

2015; Engelke 2007; Keane 2007). At my field site, where change and discontinuity cannot be

ignored, I attempted to think ethnographically about how people experience change[11]

(Robbins 2007), and pay attention to the journey and the process of believers' religious

transformation, rather than emphasize its results (Daswani 2015: location 508). How do

believers experience displacement and what role does religion play in their experience?

Globalized religion & transnationalism

In the Church of Pentecost's website describing its international missions, it is stated that:

> The spread of the Church was propelled partially by, the national economic
> crisis of 1983 which forced several Ghanaians, including members of the
> Church to seek means of subsistence abroad. Members of the Church in the
> Diaspora carried with them the gospel and, in due course, pioneered
> branches of the Church wherever they settled.[12]

Recently, anthropologists started to take into account the significance of the relationship

between religious movements and transnational movement of people (Levitt 2001;

Hüwelmeier and Krause 2010), as well as to the religious portable practices that travel

with people (Csordas 2010). Some of these possible connections include migration and

missionization (Daswani 2010). The growth of the charismatic movement throughout the

20th century and into the 21st century has crossed geographical borders, linking the

globalization of religion to de-territorializing (Casanova 2001). Whether the reason for

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[11] Joel Robbins (2007), recently argued that "continuity thinking motivates the traditional anthropological neglect of Christianity" thus far. Accordingly, he calls for anthropologists of Christianity to consider rapture rather than continuity.

[12] http://thecophq.org/international.php?id=5&%C2%A9INTERNATIONAL%20MISSIONS&%C2%A9#sthash.YxuGwABd.dpuf. See also Onyinah study on the development of the international mission within the Church of Pentecost (Onyinah 2012).

migration is for economic opportunities or missionization, the tremendous success of the

movement worldwide is undeniable. Anthropologists of Christianity focusing on the

charismatic movement have been occupied with understanding the immense success of the

Charismatic movement in the global sphere. Some ethnographies link the success of the

movement to the support the church provides for the migrants in their new land (Corten

1999; Eisland 1996; Freston 1995) emphasizing the egalitarian and the ecstatic aspects of

the ritual that provide a substitute for the everyday oppression. Some focus on the

importance and devotion of missionary work to recruit new members (Coleman 2000).

Other ethnographers explain its success in elements of glocalization, according to which, on

the structural level, the movement preserves its world view of a pious morality and

religious practices such as glossolalia[13] and healing, but at the same time adapts to local

cultures (Robbins 2004). This study adds another facet to the explanations of the

Charismatic movement's global growth.

However, the explanation I suggest is not rooted in the structure of the movement as some

scholars have suggested. In accordance with the approach of the anthropology of

Christianity described above, that is, the argument that anthropologists study religion by

allowing what believers say to guide the concepts they develop, I suggest that part of the

success of the movement depends on the believers' own consciousness as Christian

citizens. While I certainly tie the idea of Christian citizenship to the transnational character

of the movement, I do so while paying close attention to other transnational forces like the

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[13] Glossolalia also called speaking in tongues is a trans-like-state in which the believer is praying
fervently in an unintelligible speech. For Pentecostal believers, glossolalia is a sign of the presence of the
Holy Spirit as well as an indication of the believer's devotion.

effects of the neo-liberal market and its nuanced interplay on the lives of migrant-believers in their host society.

Transnational processes often mark the demise of the nation-state (Glick Schiller and Basch 1995). Daswani states that "belonging to an imagined transnational religious community, becomes an important way to momentarily step outside ethnic or national boundaries" (Daswani 2013: 45). Levitt, however, emphasizes that the role of states is important when looking at transnational migrants since states regulate movement and religious expression (Levitt 2003: 852). Keeping these stances in mind, I explore in this study the way Pentecostal believers' religion is played at the interchange of the nation state as well as the limitation and the extent to which an imagined transnational community enables the believer to step outside the "national boundaries," whether at home in Ghana or in his Italian host society.

Citizenship and citizens

During the last year of my dissertation, I became an American citizen. I went to the naturalization ceremony in Detroit's courthouse, accompanied by a friend who insisted on documenting it. She stated that "besides, it would be interesting anthropologically." I was amongst the only participants in this ceremony who was not accompanied by a large crowd of family members. My family saw it as a bureaucratic procedure that would not influence our lives, given that I was already a Canadian citizen. A Palestinian woman from Jordan accompanied by her lawyer was in front of me in line in the court room. The lawyer asked

her if she was excited. She said that she was excited, but also a little nervous: "I have been waiting for this for so long – I hope they won't change their mind in the last minute," she laughed. "After today I can send for my son," she explained. I was having mixed emotions about being naturalized and had postponed the decision about my naturalization since I had initially arrived in the US as a foreign student nearly eight years earlier. Along with a French woman and a Canadian man, I was one of the few who were not part of the "disadvantaged" newcomers (Ong 2003), who had probably acquired their citizenship for pragmatic reasons. At the ceremony, the judge congratulated the participants and talked about the great privilege we now all share: "to become American citizens." "You are now part of something big, part of this great nation," he said. He called each candidate to the stand announcing the country from where they had come: China, India, Nigeria, Liberia, Congo, Syria, Lebanon, Pakistan, and Syria - again and again. At the end of the ceremony, the participants emotionally hugged and shook each other's hands, congratulating one another of the new notion of freedom they just acquired, which meant also the possibility to sponsor other family members and save them from war infected zones. A few women came to me excited. "We were looking for you," they said asking if I was from Palestine. They had assumed that when the judge said Israel, he must have meant Palestine. I apologetically smiled and said 'Israel' and they seemed confused. "Oh" - embarrassed a bit, they smiled back. "So why did you become American?" one of them asked.

My American citizenship was granted to me based on my husband's American citizenship. It was passed to him by his American born parents, just like I inherited my Canadian citizenship. But, like me, he spent most of his childhood in Israel. I applied for citizenship a

few months back and my application was quickly processed. The others whom I met during the process in the immigration service were often accompanied by lawyers carrying mountains of thick files of documents. "I've been in the process [of naturalization] for years and have been living in the USA for almost 20 years now," a woman from Brazil confided in me in the waiting lounge as we were both waiting for our citizenship exam.

A few years back, during my fieldwork in Rome, I went to the Roman *questura*- the local immigration office, to file for my permit of stay. There too, I was surrounded with displaced migrants looking to be declared as legal in their host state. And there too, I was quickly processed, unlike the others who were sent back time after time to bring more and more documents and proofs. The process this time, however, did not go entirely smooth. I was asked to bring my son's original birth certificate so that I can prove that "he was mine" in order to make him "legal" for the period of our stay. Since the notarized copy of his birth certificate I had brought with me from the American embassy was not sufficient I asked the immigration officer what should I do. He initially lifted his shoulders indicating that it was not his problem, but then quietly told me: "but don't worry about it, nobody is going to stop you." And so, he officially had sent me off to "find the original," but had no expectation that I will return. Even when faced by the so called "objectivity" of the modern nation-state's bureaucracy, new-comers face very different experiences based on their skin color, country of origin, and religious identity.

My flexible and privileged multiple-passport citizenship(s) are at odds with the non-citizenship of many of my interlocutors. For the refugees and less advantaged immigrants I

met, the meaning of citizenship was far from my own experiences. Christian citizenship is a cultural logic in an era where, as Ong argues, individuals as well as governments develop a flexible notion of citizenship and sovereignty since different factors such as capital accumulation and displacement require individuals to respond to the changing of political-economic conditions (Ong 1999: 6). Citizenship is also contingent. You might take it for granted once you have it, but desperately long for it if you do not. It acquires freedom of movement and the right to have rights, which for most of the people I met during my fieldwork, was not something to be taken for granted. It is this context that informs the interpretation of citizenship of the Pentecostal-migrant members in the churches I visited. The concept of Christian citizenship undermines the vision of citizenship intertwined with the nation state; it, thus, allows us to think beyond modern conceptions of the statehood, sovereignty and citizenship. It encourages us to examine the complex relationships entangled in the modern conceptions of citizenship. I study citizenship as a concept that transcends the expression of rights articulated in the legal context, but I do not ignore its tangible legal consequences. The legal terms of national citizenship have no parallel in this conception of Christian citizenship and nor do the privileges that are granted with it. Rather, in this dissertation, I discuss how these different visions of citizenship (legal-nation-state and Christian) correspond and what is entailed in claiming Christian citizenship.

The Italian context and the new "non-citizens"

During the 1980's, Italy experienced a large influx of immigration from developing countries, mainly North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa and the Balkans (mainly Romania,

Moldavia and Albania). Italy was transformed from a country that people migrated from, to one that receives migrants. This new immigration raised a distant past, which Gramsci called "the Southern question" (1926). It dated back to Italy's unification period during which, the undeveloped South was considered backward and ultimately "Other" in relation to the rich enlightened North. Thus, to understand the way Italians experience and view contemporary migration to their land, we must first briefly examine the larger set of concerns that has characterized the Italians' relationship with the nation state, which in turn affected who can become a citizen nowadays in Italy.

The Southern Question

One day when I was having coffee with one of my friends in a cafè in the center of Rome he asked if I heard in the news about what Calderoli had done. He was referring to the words of Senator Roberto Calderoli, a member of the right wing political party, *Lega Nord,* in a speech to a rally in the northern city of Treviso. In his speech, he compared Cecile Kyenge, Italy's first black cabinet minister, to an orangutan. "I love animals - bears and wolves, as everyone knows - but when I see the pictures of Kyenge I cannot but think of, even if I'm not saying she is one, the features of an orangutan." Two weeks later in another rally two bananas were thrown at Keyenge by one of Calderoli's supporters (BBC, 07/15/2013). The *Lega Nord (Northern League)* also promotes the secession of the North (known as *Padania*) and anti-immigration policies. Members of the party are often accused of making xenophobic remarks about Italy's immigrants. My friend, who was originally from the south, said: "you know, it is all about the North-South division. The *Lega* used to focus all its racism on the south but now they direct their actions against the black immigrants."

My friend's remark refers to the historical context through which Italians experience the new immigration and denotes to the fact that changes in migration flows in the past forty years have reawakened or rather, have given new meaning to old questions about the Italian past, particularly in relation to the rivalry between the North of Italy and the Southern regions, also known as the "Southern question" (Gramsci 1995 [1926]). The transition of Italy to the modern nation-state was accompanied by further geographical fragmentation between North and South. The Southern regions are often identified as "backwards" in contrast to the industrially developed North, and are essentially conceived as the Other (Schneider 1998). Putnam (1993) argues that this fragmentation, based on the accelerated development of the North, was due to the North's greater social capital: the weight of family ties in the South came at the expense of civic engagements that were prevalent in the North and contributed to its economic success (Putman 1993: 175). However, Putnam's argument echoes that of Banfield, according to which the South is represented by norms of *amoral familism* even at the expense of material benefits, creating a culture of poverty (Banfield 1958). This notion, however, has been greatly critiqued by anthropologists. Instead, anthropologists argue that the North has been achieved its control and dominance through an orientalist discourse (Giordano 2006). Yet, in contemporary Italy, these representations of the North-South have been transplanted to define Italy's relationship with a different "Other," the African migrants; the "Others" against whom a new EU-Italian identity is being defined (Mai 2002).

After the unification of the Italian state in the early 1900s, one of the problems that

accompanied the "Southern question" was Italy's struggle to join the colonial conquest of Africa (Labanca 2002) and claim its place among the great Western powers. The discussions about Italian citizenship in the North-South debate, which was characterized by emphasizing elements of culture or civility (*civiltà*) and race (*razza*) reemerged in Italy's imperial presence initially in Eritrea and Somalia, and later in its invasion to Libya (1911-12) and Ethiopia (1934-36). Thus, this discourse was redirected from the "Southern question" to the Italian colonies and their inhabitants: Italians and Africans.

During the liberal decades (1870-1914) and the expansion of colonial Italy, citizenship policies were introduced. Up until 1912, the determining factor of granting Italian citizenship was the birth on the land *(ius- soli),* yet in 1912 Italy passed a new law that granted citizenship based on bloodlines *(jus sanguinis)*. The new law also invited a reconsideration of the status of the Italian subjects in the colonies. Donati (2013) shows that in the colonies there was a clear line separating the colonizers from the natives, which emphasized the inferior civilization of the local population (121). Consequently, the term *cittadinanza* (citizens) was used for the Italians from the metropole, whereas *sudditanza* (subjects) or *sudditanza coloniale* (colonial subjects) were used for the Eritrei and Somali populations. In North Africa, however, as six years into the occupation, the local population received another category to define their relationship to the Italian state. They were now conceived as "colonial citizens" instead of "colonial subjects" (Donati 2013: 129). This new status of colonial citizenship was granted on the basis of a combination of *jus sanguinis* – birth to native parents (non-Italian), and *jus soli* – birth on the colony (ibid).

This division into "subject" and "citizen," however, is further complicated by the issue of *meticci*- racially mixed children born in the colony to an Italian father from the metropole, and an African mother, especially in light of the new 1912 *jus sanguinis*. These children, who were born mainly out of informal unions, had now the right to claim Italian metropole citizenship on the grounds of their bloodline (given their Italian father's citizenship). Yet, they did not have any rights over inheritance since inheritance at the time was reserved for the offspring of legal marriages (Donati 2013*)*. As for the Africans in the colonies, naturalization was hardly a possibility, and was seldom granted, and only to individuals who exceptionally contributed to the metropole, and even then, it was non-transmittable (Donati 2013: 123). The regulation of citizenship endorsed the notion of nationality and the ability to transfer nationalism to Italians in the diaspora such as those living in the colonies.

The consequences of decolonization for Italy have been considered by many scholars as limited. Pinkus (2003) described Italian decolonization as a non-event, insinuating the absence of any traumatic results of this process. However, Ballinger demonstrates how decolonization was traumatically experienced through the return of Italians to Italy and their repatriation from their former possessions (Ballinger 2007).

The historical memory of its colonial endeavor continues to be prevalent in Italy nowadays. The historical repression of the country's brutal crimes and genocides, and the long-held myth of the Italians as the "kind colonizers" (*Italiani brava gente*), continues to shape Italian consciousness (Donati 2013; Giordano 2006). Italian scholarship, therefore, has only recently started to address Italy's colonial past, which has often been overshadowed by its

fascist history. The study of its colonial past has become predominant, especially in response to the 1980's waves of immigration from sub-Saharan Africa (Palumbo 2003). Studies of Italy's colonial past questioned the image of a stable Italian identity (Pinkus 1995) and the process of shaping of an Italian national identity (Donati 2013). These questions inform any study of immigrants in Italy nowadays since as Donati (2013) shows, "Italianess" and the extent to which one can be or become Italian is deconstructed through the concept of citizenship.

The question of the South as well as that of Italy's colonial past are significantly interlinked to my own research. Oriental discourses about the south along with exotic discourses about Africa have been redirected towards the new 'Other,' those who are tagged today as *"extra-comunitari"* immigrants (from outside of the EU community). Italy's past in Africa exposes a violent orientalist discourse (Pickering-Iazzi, 2003). Images of Africa and Africans from the colonial period represented Africa as an exotic site of heroic self-fulfillment and sexual and territorial fantasy (Sartini-Blum 2003). These perceptions continue to inform the images of Africans nowadays,[14] and shape the interactions of Italians with African labor migrants.

In the current European context, such perceptions are translated into images of fear and threat from the "other", and as result of terrorist attacks in several European countries in the past decade, European governments have extended their monitoring and control of illegal immigration. The enemy is now perceived as internal to the states' territories and is

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[14] Italy's civilizing mission in Africa and especially the educating of African children during the colonial period continues to be present through ideas of adoption of Ethiopian children.

represented by the non-European, non-white-Christian immigrant.[15] In Rome for example,

after several cases of sexual assault and rape occurred, officials adopted a similar approach

of zero tolerance; it was enough to be an African immigrant to be targeted as a suspect in

any crime. The "zero tolerance" campaign reinforced the public's fear and anxiety about the

immigrants and immigration. Immigrants who are caught without documents in Europe

are sent to detention camps (*centri di permanenza temporanea*) before deportation. Those

who manage their way "in" face, in many cases, dehumanized conditions while they

attempt to find a way to become legal (Angel Ajani 2005; Ticktin 2011).

Approaches such as "zero tolerance" and positioning the immigrant as the new "other,"

alienate the black other while creating the unity of white supremacy. This is especially true

when that other also represents different religious practices. Özyürek (2009) writes that

after the formation of the European Union as a political and cultural federation, there was a

growing anxiety over 'European identity.' This anxiety was intensified with the increasing

immigration of non-European populations and especially religious migration. Appadurai

argues that the "systematic compromise of national economic sovereignty that is built into

the logic of globalization" turns minorities into "the major site for displacing the anxieties

of many states about their own minority or marginality (real or imagined) in a world of

mega states, of unruly economic flows, and compromised sovereignties" (2006:43). Unlike

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[15] It is important to note, that the hierarchies of migrants' othering in Italian society varied along the years and is more complicated than the phenotypical expressions of immigrants. For example, Filipinos were one of the first "model migrants" because of their close cultural affinity as Catholic and Spanish speaking (both romance languages). Religion on the other hand, plays an important part in the way immigrants are received in Italian society. Thus, some Albanians, Turks and North Africans, who may not look so distinct from Italians in their physical appearance, are excluded and marked as others based on their religious identity as Muslim.

the policy makers and European citizens, who interlink their anxiety over the 'fate' of a clear (real or imagined) place, immigrants are perceived in many cases as displaced people, who belong nowhere. Hence, immigrants are a productive site for studying citizenship.

Movement of people across the globe is not a novel thing and has been documented throughout history. However, there has been a major change in the approach to migration in the modern period with the rise of the nation-state and its attempt to control and regulate such movements. Transnational migration has come to be perceived as a major challenge for the nation state and its sovereignty (Soysal 1994). Thus, anthropologists have therefore investigated the interplay of immigrants, the state, and the limits of citizenship (Ong 1999; Partridge 2013; Soysal 1994; Ticktin 2006). Soysal, for example, shows how transnational discourses of human rights transcend the borders of the nation state and weaken the power of the state to exclude noncitizens. In so, they lead to the "declining significance of national citizenship" (Soysal 1994: 156).

Yet, even at the face of such human rights discourses or analytical units such as Christian citizenship, the nation-state remains the point of reference, through its terms citizenship is understood. While my "transnational" interlocutors challenge a traditional 'state-centric' theory, the nation-state continues to be the unit of analytical consideration in the transnational scheme (Daswani 2013). Yet, it is exactly within this context that this dissertation *Migrants to the City of God* becomes particularly valuable. I unfold in this study the recurring tensions between different temporalities. On the one hand, the nation state is illustrated by the state-of-migration, and dictated by the limits of its own conceptions of citizenship; on the other, the spiritual space is illustrated by the notion of missionary work

and the affiliation with a transnational network. Believers constantly move between these spaces and temporalities working around these tensions and discrepancies. They give new interpretations to the concept of citizenship, which challenge the sovereignty and borders of the nation-state.

"Missionaries to the City of God"

My dissertation focuses on Ghanaian missionaries in Rome. However, to understand the full scope of their religious life in Italy, one must also understand the background from which they come and what happens to them outside of church, as well as how they are perceived by and perceive their hosts. *Missionaries to the City of God* is, therefore, organized around these three perspectives: the religious conversion in Ghana (Ch.2), the missionary life around the Church in Italy (Ch. 3-4), and the life in Rome as immigrants (ch.5). Moreover, we must first understand the context in which these churches developed and emerged (Ch. 1).

In the first chapter, I aim to situate my research in the literature on African Christianity in Africa and outside of it, particularly in Europe. I first provide a brief historical overview of the development of Christianity in Ghana. I aim to highlight elements of Pentecostal ideas of evangelizing and transnational connections and show that they are significant for the ability of migrants to proselytize in Europe and shape themselves as missionaries. I, then, consider how scholars have conceptualized African churches in Europe. There are two substantial approaches. The first suggests they are migrant churches and thus should be

viewed as part of the African diaspora. The second frames these churches as a phenomenon of 'reverse mission' suggesting that the churches' purpose is to respond to earlier presence of Western missionaries in Africa. As both frameworks fail to explain the phenomenon of African charismatic churches in Italy, I introduce the idea of Christian citizenship as an alternative to these two dominant approaches. In the subsequent chapters, I show how Christian citizenship is established and what is at stake in this kind of citizenship, both in terms of the believers and in relation to the citizenship of the nation state.

The second chapter takes us to Ghana, the home country of many of the believers I later met in Italy. I examine how ideas of mission are formed in Ghanaian Pentecostalism by examining a case of conversion of children from the rural villages surrounding Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region of Ghana. In the pastor's house - the children's foster family - they learn Christian morality as a substitute for traditional religions and how to become Christians. Eventually they adopt their role as young missionaries who bring Christianity back to their home villages. I suggest that becoming Christians is a form of political economy of mobility in mission which grants the children certain opportunities of mobility and as adults, a way out of Bolgatanga and sometimes out of Africa. I suggest that the elements the children learn are fundamental to Pentecostal-charismatic believers and thus are crucial when discussing African mission in Europe.

Chapters three and four unfold the components of Christian citizenship by addressing elements of spatiality and temporality amongst the Ghanaian believers. I explore the practices of distinction and exclusion by as well as in relation to their Italian hosts in Rome.

Chapter three discusses the dialectical tension between being an immigrant and being a missionary. I explore the spatial practices and aspects of mobility that inform African Pentecostals' experiences as missionaries. I show that movement is construed simultaneously as horizontal - from Africa to Europe and between spaces within the city of Rome, and vertical - between spiritual levels of being, what believers describe as "moving to a higher level," denoting to the transcendental movement of the body and the spirit. I further discuss elements of citizenship as they pertain to African Pentecostal believers in Europe as these unravel between the near-impossibility of becoming a citizen in the EU, on the one hand, and the immigrants' own notion of citizens-of-the-world derived from their religious belief. I chart the church as a space in which migrants become missionaries. Being a missionary offers opportunities of mobility that unravel other discourses of citizenship, and therefore, also offers the possibility of "unbecoming" an immigrant.

Chapter four further elaborates on this notion of citizenship; it discusses how Christian citizenship is shaped and performed. I explore the Pentecostal churches and a discourse of moral distinction represented by the moral Christian citizens and their immoral host country. Moreover, I show that Christian citizenship is shaped and informed by a Pentecostal temporality of the near future. Such temporality mediates for the African Pentecostal members the dissonance between *being* an immigrant and *being* a missionary through the process of *becoming* a Christian citizen.

Chapter five investigates institutional encounters that take place outside of the framework of the church. It focuses on hygiene and cooking courses offered to immigrant women. In

the institutional context of the Italian state, the Pentecostal believers are just immigrants. They cannot be missionaries nor citizens. While these courses strive to "Italianize" immigrant women and their bodies, they simultaneously mold them into the 'other' and therefore offer them a path to inclusion in the Italian society, albeit in the margins of society. I show that contemporary approaches towards the new immigrants' assimilation into Italian society are not novel, but are rather situated in Italy's liberal and fascist historical periods and in the Italian colonial enterprise and its own configuration of citizenship. Finally, I argue that these courses unofficially and unintendedly also provide a structured space where women can discuss their experiences as immigrants and refugees and challenge notions of African exoticism. This chapter pays attention to the space of encounter between African migrants and Italians, and their interaction within institutions, as well as to the historical context in which these discourses arise. The discourses represented in the courses are at the core of the integration policies promoted by the Italian state and mark the immigrants as others and as non-citizens. Finally, in the conclusions, I then return to and sum up the concept of Christian citizenship and suggest possible future research.

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *</p>

A note about terminology:

The terms migrant and immigrant: The two are often used interchangeably in the literature. However, there is a big difference between them. Migrant is someone who temporarily relocates, for example, for job purposes, but does not intend to settle down in

the host country. Immigrant, on the other hand, refers to someone who leaves their home country in the purpose for permanently relocating to a new country. Many of the migrants I met are somewhere on this line: they left their country for better life elsewhere (if they are not refugees, often it is for economic opportunities). Yet, they are often not sure to where they are heading, and in that sense, they are migrants more than immigrants. They often end up moving between countries, wherever opportunities present themselves: they are nomads more than immigrants. Many of them dream of being able to return to their home country one day, but often never do so, and at this point they become immigrants hoping for the opportunity to become permanently legal in Italy (citizens). I am still uncomfortable with either of these terms. None of them accurately describes the people I met in my fieldwork, and I believe that the new migrants' experiences of home are worth further discussions. However, throughout my dissertation, I prefer to use the term immigrant (unless deliberately mentioned). Many of the people with whom I talked set roots in Italy, and their children see themselves as Italians (even though many do not have the technical documents to support this). My dissertation explores exactly these boundaries between identities. What happens when different conceptions of citizenship are at stake: a global versus a national, a "paper-based" citizenship versus a spiritual one? How do these conceptions shape the immigrant/migrant experience in their host society? Moreover, since a large part of the debate concerning the new immigrants hinges on issues of legalization, the term "illegal-migrants" is often used in popular media and amongst bureaucratic organizations. "Illegal" indicates something that is outside of the law; it insinuates in other words criminal activity. Yet, for many of the migrants, all they want is a better life for them and for their families, and their only "crime" is moving. A lot of them

aspire to receive their permanent residency and many are in the process of being approved (even if it takes years until they will be given a rubber seal). For this reason, whenever possible I prefer to use "paperless" or "undocumented" rather than "illegal."

Chapter I:

From Africa to the World: Christian Citizenship

One day during my fieldwork in Bolgatanga, in the Upper East region of Ghana, I asked the children in my host family where should we go to see the area. The children chose to take me and my husband to the town of Paga, about an hour or so north, near the border with Burkina Paso. The city is known as "crocodile town" for its sacred crocodile filled ponds. Most of the children had never been there, yet they had heard all about it, and were especially excited by the prospects of feeding and touching live crocodiles. Yet, perhaps more so than the crocodiles, the real highlight for the kids was that we passed many branches and signs of their church, *Lighthouse Chapel Intl* (LCI), On the way to our short excursion to Paga. Angell, one of the older girls, who was about 12 years old, told Mommie, the 8 year old girl who was sitting right next to her: "Look, we're EVERYWHERE!" The kids were fascinating by the discovery that they were part of something much bigger than a single church. Every time we passed a sign of LCI, they all started singing and cheering. Later, when we were already back at the house, one of the boys told me: "do you have an LCI branch in your city? You should go there!"

The worldwide branches of LCI and other Pentecostal mega churches like it reflect the image of a globalized religion through which a broader, imagined Christian community is interlinked. Angell's revelation about her own place in a larger

Christian geography resonates with many Pentecostal believers throughout the world. Two years later, during my fieldwork in Rome, I watched how Ghanaian believers gather each Sunday in halls throughout the city as do Ghanaians in other cities I visited around Italy - Milan and Modena – as well as throughout Europe and the world. Inter-regional conferences of these churches often take place in different locations around Europe compelling pastors and passionate church goers alike to travel across the borderlines of nation states. The service is recorded and often uploaded to social media such as YouTube and Facebook-church-profiles, where similar services happening at the same time can be viewed. Every week, through their prayer and worship, Ghanaians represent an external consciousness of a global reach and imagined Christian community that stands beyond the immigrant self and the nation state (Daswani 2015). The church is where a global form of identity is preformed and within which missionary relationships are situated (ibid). It is during church service that the believers transform themselves from "non-citizen immigrants" in Italy to Christian citizens of the world.

This chapter has a twofold goal. First, I provide a brief historical and literature overview of the development of Christianity in Ghana. My aim is not to trace the origins of Pentecostalism in Ghana nor in West Africa, but rather to highlight elements of Pentecostal ideas of evangelizing and transnational connections, particularly in the respective churches I worked on in my fieldwork, LCI, ICGC and CoP, and show that they are significant for the ability of migrants to proselytize in Europe and shape themselves as missionaries. In the second part of the chapter, I consider how scholars have conceptually addressed the

African Pentecostal churches in Europe. Many studies suggest these are migrant churches and thus should be viewed as part of an African diaspora. A smaller, yet significant portion of the studies frames these churches as a phenomenon of "reverse mission" suggesting that these churches emerge from a response to the earlier presence of Western missionaries in Africa. In this part, I introduce the idea of Christian citizenship which I develop more thoroughly later in chapter four as an alternative to the two dominant approaches which frame the churches as either diaspora or "reverse mission." Christian citizenship, an alternative consciousness, I argue, is what allows church members to operate as missionaries in Rome, despite their being "non-citizens" in the European context - an element which robs them of their agency.

Part I: Early Pentecostalism to Global Expansion

An African reformation: early Pentecostalism

Scholarship on Christianity in West Africa indicates that Christian mission in Ghana is documented as early as the 15th century, when Roman Catholic missionaries accompanied the earliest Portuguese traders to Ghana, then known as the Gold Coast (Debrunner 1967; Onyinah 2002). However, in the following four centuries, although the Portuguese missionaries continued to be present in the Gold Coast, they had little success in evangelizing the local population. The Gold Coast had also seen other missionary attempts, unsuccessful as well, by Moravian missionaries (1730) and Anglican missionaries (1766). The failure of the earlier missionaries in the Gold Coast came to an end in the 19th century. The Basel mission was the first significant missionary success and in 1869, only eight years

after its arrival in the Gold Coast, the missionaries had a total number of 1,851 local

members spread throughout twenty-four congregations. Another successful mission was

the second Roman Catholic Church's mission in 1880 lead by the Society of Africa Missions

(SMA), which was invited by James Marshall, the Gold Coast Governor at the time. By 1901,

the Roman Catholic Church had spread from Elmina to over forty townships and in 1922,

the first indigenous priest, Father Anastsius Odaye Dogli, was ordained (Amanor 2004).

In 1907, a group of African American missionaries, coming from the Azuza Street Revival in

Los Angeles, arrived in Liberia, ultimately introducing Pentecostalism to West Africa

(Anderson 2004: 115). From that point on, testimonies about prophets such as William

Wade Harris, a Liberian from the Grebo people, and his successors, John Swatson and

Sampson Oppong, describe a widespread spiritual movement (Onyinah 2002). Harris, a

West African, who had no Western missionary training or financial support is claimed to

have converted about 120,000 people in a very short span of time, a success which was

attributed to his prophetic powers. He preached for a monotheistic religion that rejected

cult objects (Amanor 2004). These prophets also traveled through the Ivory Coast

encouraging new believers to dedicate their lives to Jesus and demanding they abandon

their traditional beliefs of healers, idols and fetishes. They played a significant role in the

mass conversion into African Christianity from the beginning of the 20th century

(Debrunnen 1967: 269-277; Hastings 1979), which lead to the revival in all the mainline

churches in the form of African Indigenous Churches (AIC) and paved the path for

indigenous Pentecostalism.[16] Moreover, the prophets and their success indicate that

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[16] The term AIC African indigenous churches or African independent churches covers a wide variety of
churches but scholars argue that a better description of this movement represented by the AIC churches is

Pentecostalism in Ghana had an indigenous origin (Larbi 2001), and while influenced by

different missionaries, it was, nevertheless, mainly a locally cultivated movement.

The father of Ghanaian Pentecostalism

Peter Anim (1890-1984) is portrayed as the father of Pentecostalism in Ghana. He left his

Orthodox Christian background when he was young to seek a more spiritual life (Hansen

2002: 57). In 1922, he was ordained by the *Faith of Tabernacle* Ministry in Philadelphia,

which greatly influenced his perception of faith healing. At that time, the first printed

magazine from the Azuza Street Revival was published. Entitled the *Apostolic Faith* it was

crucial for spreading the Pentecostal message across the world (Daswani 2015). Maxwell

shows that the cost-efficient technology which allowed the printing, spread, and

consumption of Pentecostal texts became a significant instrument of proselytism, and

moreover, helped create a sense of a wider imagined community of Pentecostal believers

around the world. Anim later withdrew from the *Faith of Tabernacle* and adopted the name

Apostolic Faith for his church, linking it instead to an American and Nigerian congregation

(Daswani 2015). His movement put a strong emphasis on prayer and healing and held a

strong evangelistic ethos (Larbi 2001), which greatly influenced Ghanaian Pentecostalism

as it is shaped today. Anim later cooperated with James McKeown, a Scottish pastor who

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"indigenous Pentecostal type churches," following Anderson's similar case in South Africa (Onyinah 2002; Asamoah-Gyado 2000 in Onyinah 2002: 154). At the end of colonialism with the shift to independent governments, scholars thought that the significance of African Christianity will be decreased significantly, as Christianity was so much associated with colonialism and with its education system. However, the complete opposite has happened and during the 80's and the 90's these churches played a significant role in the struggles of the second liberation throughout sub-Saharan Africa (Gifford 1994). For a specific example of this process see also the Nigerian case (Burgess 2015).

arrived in 1937 in Ghana particularly to assist Anim's mission. From Anim's and McKeown's

mission grew the Church of Pentecost (Onyinah 2002: 166).[17]

The story of Peter Anim portrays the different elements which shape Pentecostalism in

Ghana: The influences of the search for alternative healing methods; missionary education

and access to printed missionary media from across the world;[18] as well as the

development of transnational relationships between West Africa and America and Europe

(Daswani 2015: 36). Moreover, it exemplifies the significance, from the very beginning, of

global connections to the spread and prosperity of the Pentecostal movement, which

continues to this day.

Transformation of African Christianity: 1975-Today

When Ghana was declared a republic in 1960 there were four recognizable strands of

Christianity: Roman Catholic, which was the biggest denomination church; the mainline

Protestant Churches; the established Pentecostals; and the African Independent Churches

(AIC's). The mainline churches (the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Anglican) had substantial

impact over the building of the modern nation of Ghana, particularly through their

schooling system, which constituted Ghana's elite since the nineteenth century (Gifford

2004). The Catholic Church had tremendous involvement in development in Ghana with its

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[17] The Church of Pentecost under McKeown was first called the Ghana Apostolic Church and only after 1962 following the advice of Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's 1st president the church changed its name to The Church of Pentecost.
[18] During the 1930's Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's 1st president resided in the USA while he attended Lincoln college and the University of Pennsylvania. He was also involved in different activist movements and was invited to become a guest preacher in local churches. Nkrumah's time in the USA is known to have extensive influence on his ideology and Ghana's foreign policy.

access to US aid funds. While the impact of these two strands stands clear, the Charismatic sector, also known as the Neo-Pentecostal or the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (PCC), enjoyed great influence since the 1980s, not only in Ghana, but throughout West Africa. Characterized by an enthusiastic drive to proselytize and a transnational global orientation, Ghanaian and Nigerian churches especially have played a major role in the massive growth of the PCCs in West Africa (Gifford 2003; Marshall 2009; Meyer 2004; Palmie 2007).[19]

In Ghana, the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches include mega churches such as Action Chapel International (ACI), Lighthouse chapel International(LCI), International Central Gospel Church (ICGC) and Winners' Chapel (Officially called: Living Faith Church Worldwide). These churches opened prayer centers, convention halls, and bible schools, and many of them own large new buildings which they rent out. All of which are led by mega "religious superstars" (Gifford 2004: 24). I will briefly examine LCI and ICGC that were both prominent in my fieldwork in Ghana and in Italy, and whose activity posters are everywhere to be seen today in Ghana.

The head of Lighthouse Chapel International, Bishop Dag Howard-Mills, is the son of a Ghanaian father and a Swiss mother. He was trained as a doctor and his original church grew from a fellowship for medical professionals in Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital (Gifford

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[19] With this notion of global connections, the PCC maintained strong relationship with Preachers from around the world. Amongst those particularly famous is the German Pentecostal Reinhard Bonnke who has been an active missionary throughout Africa since 1967 and is recorded to have seen 75 million conversions to Christianity throughout the years. http://reinhardbonnke.com/home.html#&panel1-1

2004). In 1991, he left the medical practice for full time ministry. In his Headquarters, "Qodesh," in Accra, he attracts over 3,000 followers every Sunday. In addition, Heward-Mills is largely involved in TV broadcasts as well as the Church's ministerial training school.[20] Much like the ACI, International Central Gospel Church (ICGC) was founded in Accra in the mid-1980s by Pastor Mensa Otabil. He draws around 7000 followers every Sunday to his church in Accra. His TV telecasts and radio preaching position him as a celebrity well outside of his congregation.

While the new Charismatic revival demonstrates a great divergence among the new churches, the examples of LCI and ICGC clearly show that these churches all have in common a global orientation along with a strong emphasis on church planting, evangelizing, and lay leadership. This is evident in a cursory examination of their names (Action Chapel **International**, Lighthouse chapel **International**, **International** Central Gospel Church, and Living Faith Church **Worldwide**). LCI website claims over 250 churches in 78 countries worldwide, including seven branches in Italy, mostly in the northern cities of Modena, Millan, Parma, and Turin. Their most southern branch opened during 2015 in Rome. ICGC claims over 100 branches throughout Ghana alone, and has wide range of churches worldwide including one in Rome.

The emphasis in these churches is often faith-gospel also called prosperity-gospel, according to which God has met all the needs of human beings in the suffering and death of

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[20] http://lighthousechapel.org

Christ, and every Christian should now share the victory of Christ over sickness, sin, and poverty, and enjoy the blessings of health and wealth. Church leaders preach that God is a rich God and that those who want to enjoy his prosperity must support God's servant- the pastors themselves (Gifford1998: 39). The enormous amounts of funding that are raised by these churches go towards sustaining the churches, planting new ones, and other different projects led by religious entrepreneurs, but also supply church leaders with lavish cars and expensive attire. The prosperity gospel thus often correlates with class. Their services are characterized by their vast use of expensive technology such as massive sound systems in their modern buildings and prayer halls (see image 1).[21]

Figure 1. ICGC, Christ temple, Accra. Photo credit: http://centralgospel.com

The success of the new Charismatic churches greatly affected Ghana's Christianity beyond their specific congregations. Particularly, it had led to the "charismatization" of the mainline churches, which had to adapt in order to maintain their followers. Meyer suggests that this recent upsurge of the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (PCC) in Africa should be

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[21] In chapter four I demonstrate how the prosperity gospel is part of the "near future" temporality that assists church members to facilitate the dissonance of their identity as immigrants.

viewed as a new phase in the appropriation of Christianity in Africa and as part of a new global phenomenon (2004).

The changes in African Christianity in the second half of the 20th century raised numerous questions concerning the relationship between Africa and the process of globalization, and more broadly about the connection between religion, politics, and the public sphere. Accordingly, ethnographic research on West African churches has been on the rise since the second half of the 20th century. At first, it was mostly concerned with the African Indigenous Churches (e.g., Fabian 1971; Peel 1968), which were considered an "authentic" Africanized version of Christianity. Yet with the massive revival of the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (PCC) and their considerable spread and salient popularity, the focus on the African Indigenous Churches was gradually replaced during the late 1980s.[22] In Anthropological research the shift in the focus towards Charismatic Churches also reflected a paradigmatic shift, where approaches such as functionalism and symbolism were no longer considered sufficient in explaining the acceleration of religious changes after colonialism and independence (Horton 1971). [23]

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[22] Horton's (1971) classic article for example, argued that the traditional cosmology of pre-modern pre-Christianity and Islam in Africa focuses on the microcosm of the local community and therefore traditional religious ideas will respond in certain way to the changes in this environment. Whereas in the modern world and the massive socio-political changes in African societies, Christianity offers a cosmology that happens within the macrocosm. Thus, he argues that when massive amounts of people find themselves outside the microcosm in the way that happened during conversion to Christianity and Islam in West Africa, then those left in the microcosm would assume, according to their cosmology, that the lesser spirits which are part of the microcosm are in retreat, and therefore, are irrelevant. Such explanation frames the world-religions as a catalyst that coincided with the responses of traditional belief to changes, and only at that position could gain such huge number of converts.

[23] Following Horton's article, Ifeka-Moller (1974) later posted a critique article of the intellectualist approach represented by Horton. Amongst the various aspects she criticizes, she shows that in many societies in Eastern Nigeria there was a large variation on beliefs about the scared, thus we can expect that there will also be accordingly, a wide range of beliefs that emerge in response to wider social and cultural

As I discussed earlier, the evangelical appearance in Africa is inseparable from the colonial process (see also Comaroff and Comaroff' 1986). Towards the end of the second half of the 20th century, scholars have started examining various aspects of its implications. Marshall, for example, links the Pentecostal revival in Nigeria to colonial and postcolonial realities (2009). Her study shows how the experience of being "Born Again" in Nigeria is coupled with understanding the promises of political and religious salvation made during the colonial and postcolonial periods. Similarly, Anderson (2007) emphasizes the prominent role of natives, women, and national (non-Western) missionaries in the movement's success around the world. His extensive study shows that Pentecostalism was a missionary movement from the start as can also be seen from the development of Pentecostalism in Ghana (above). Informed by the postcolonial perspective, Anderson's study is one of the few works that consider actors outside the western world in early Pentecostalism, and thus, also allows for a consideration of the role of these actors as missionaries outside of the colonized countries today.

The latest and most recent wave of literature views African Christianity as part of the global phenomenon (for example, Burgess 2009; Knibbe 2009; as well as Keane 2007). African Christianity is more prominently acknowledged as an active player in the Charismatic realm. We are no longer speaking strictly about European missionaries

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changes, unlike Horton's fundamental assumption that traditional religions invariably contain a supreme being. Thus, she argues his approach fails to analyze the social factors in which religious change is encapsulated and therefore it cannot explain the fact that conversion was not as rapid and smooth as Horton makes it seem to be, in some communities, she says, conversion was taking place rapidly, whereas others resisted it.

"forcing" their religion and culture on the margins nor looking at models such as that

suggested by Horton, which ignores detailed nuances in religious variations (1972).[24]

The Charismatic global expansion

During the 20th century, the charismatic movement[25] crossed geographical borders from

North America (Wacker 2001) to South America (Freston 1995; Lehmann 1966) and to

Asia and Africa (Meyer 2004), becoming one of the largest congregations in Christianity.

Each year, about 9 million new believers around the world join the movement. Researchers

estimate that the movement includes approximately 400 million believers worldwide,

roughly, a third of all practicing Christians, while more conservative assessments claim that

the numbers are closer to 250 million believers (Martin 2002). While the far-reaching

charismatic renewal is described as globally spreading, researchers agree that the majority

of the believers come from the southern hemisphere. Casanova (2001) links the concept of

globalization in religion to what he describes as "de-territorializing." He suggests that

Pentecostalism is the first true global religion.

Although researchers describe the Pentecostal movement as a missionary movement from

the very beginning, its global spread was not solely a result of the cause of evangelizing.

Onyinah's (2002) research on the Church of Pentecost (CoP) in Ghana, for example,

describes the beginning of its spread to other countries not as an organized delegation for

proselytizing, but rather as resulting from a disorganized process of migration. Members

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[24] See footnote 5 in this chapter.
[25] The Charismatic movement is used here as an umbrella term which contain Pentecostal churches, evangelical churches, neo-Pentecostal and other churches with charismatic character.

migrated to other countries and shared their faith as they settled working within the arbitrary borders of the nation state. Migrants sent reports home about establishing new churches and Pastors were sent to support those churches. Only later, after reports continued to arrive about new churches, the CoP established the department of "International mission office" for coordinating the activities of all branches overseas. As stated in the *General Council Minutes* in 1991, the department's functions among other things was "to advise missionaries and organize with them crusades for the affective evangelism of the nations" (Onyinah 2002: 183). Thus, only after the process had already started, the international mission became a purpose for migration, and not simply its consequence. The success of the International Mission that was undertaken in all the main charismatic churches was very impressive, on paper at least. The CoP International Mission office annual report, for example, indicates that 217 new branches were opened in the year 2000 alone (The Church of Pentecost end of year report, cited in Onyinah 2002: 183).

Whether members' global quest is motivated by a missionary purpose or for other reasons, the success of the movement around the world is indisputable. Researchers have given varied explanations to the enormous success of the Charismatic movement in the global sphere. The first explanation, rooted in Marxist theory, emphasizes the fact that the majority of the believers who join the movement are immigrants from Africa and Asia (Martin 1990). The Evangelical movement provides communal support and solutions for different social problems (see for example, the case of women and poverty in Latin Pentecostalism: Corten 1999; Eisland 1999; Freston 1995). The egalitarian and the ecstatic aspects of the ritual, in which everyone is equal in the eyes of the Lord, provide a substitute

for the everyday oppression that originates in their social position. Similarly, the

egalitarian element is attractive for ethnic minorities. Another explanation examines the

structural cultural similarity of Evangelical- ecstatic practices and non-western local

rituals, mostly African ritual (Martin 1990). This too allows for a religious bricolage that

makes it possible for the new believers to act in a familiar ritual form, yet still within the

Pentecostal belief.

The next two explanations are intertwined. The first addresses the believers themselves

and not their target audiences. The success of the movement accordingly is due to the

enormous devotion of Charismatic believers to recruiting new believers, their missionary

work, and to spreading the gospel. In fact, there is no "special" training required: any

believer can recruit new believers. This explanation also contains an organizational aspect.

Since each person can recruit new believers, the network structure of the movement is

wide and encourages constant growth of new religious communities (Coleman 2000).

Approaches of globalization and glocalization, too, furnish explanations for the movement's

success. The question at stake here is whether the movement reconstitutes its canonical

Western identity around the world, or rather indigenizes and adapts to local cultures.

Researchers argue that both processes occur at the same time, yet on different levels

(Martin 1990; Robbins 2004). On the structural level, it preserves its world view of a pious

morality and religious practices such as glossolalia and healing (Robbins 2004). Martin

adds that there is a global aspect to the movement characterized with a strong process of

Americanization and democratization, which shifts the local politics that are characterized

with political violence (Martin 1990: 280). Thus, conversion leads to a conceptual change in patterns of family, gender, and labor. On the other hand, the movement shows incredible flexibility in absorbing local perceptions and local social struggles (Robbins 2004). On this level, we can see a process of "reverse glocalization." In the case of Latin America, for example, the Pentecostal missionaries reproduce aspects of the local culture such as Leadership authority and patriarchal relationship (Martin 1990: 282).

This brief review shows that the majority of these explanations for the growth of the Pentecostal Charismatic movement consider its expansion in one direction, from the western core to the global south. Yet, while this direction might have been viable thus far, the north-south separation is no longer as clear as in the past. The directions of expansion are no longer linear when Pentecostal believers from countries in the global south such as Ghana travel to other core countries like Italy and claim to conduct mission in their host societies. While some of the explanations remain salient regardless of the direction of growth, the difference in directionality requires us to examine additional possible explanations for the spread. Such explanations include its association with a diasporal religion that depends on economic powers dictated by the neoliberal market, or the formation of a reverse-mission movement arising in response to European colonial history. Both explanations are particularly relevant for discussions of the spread of African churches in Europe. We, therefore, must examine these two frameworks to examine whether or not they can apply in relation to the case of African Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Italy.

PART II: African Churches in Europe

Studies of diasporal-religions argue that religion is more easily portable, and thus, more transferable than other aspects of culture such as architecture or landscape. Attesting to this is the substantial rise in African Charismatic Christianity and Islam in Europe following the recent waves of African migrations. Much of the research on Pentecostalism in Europe explores it as an immigrant religion (Beckford 2009; Colman 2000; Schiller 2010) and raises interesting questions concerning the link between Charismatic Christianity and immigrant minorities in contemporary Europe.

In Europe, studies of Pentecostalism have focused largely on Northern Europe: Germany (Glick-Schiller 2010; Schär 2004; Simon 2010; Währisch-Oblau 2000, 2009), England (Daswani 2010, 2015; Harris 2006), the Netherlands (Droogers 2010), and France (Fancello and Mary 2011). While African migration is visible throughout Europe, southern countries such as Italy, Spain, and Greece have experienced a larger influx of African migrants compared to the north, due to their proximity to Africa and the accessibility of their southern coastlines to migration routes from Africa (Feldman 2012). Thus, Italy is particularly valuable for understanding the spread of African Christianity and its global mission in Europe, as well as aspects of labor migration and integration in the European Union.

African Pentecostal churches in Europe are an example of the transnational spread of the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (PCC) outside of Africa. They clearly play an important role in the creation of African diasporas by connecting the immigrants to their home

communities and assisting the immigrants in their incorporation into their "host" societies.

Researchers appear to agree that most of these churches, aside from Sunday Adelaja in

Kiev,[26] are unsuccessful in recruiting the local European population, and most of their

recruited members are economic migrants from their own home countries, an element that

strengthens their perception as diaspora churches. However, an alternative perspective to

the "migrant/diaspora churches" frames the spread of African churches as a form of

"reverse mission." They are seen as attempts by African Pentecostal Christians to reach out

and "re-evangelize secular Europe" (Fancello 2011; Koning 2009).

Diasporic religion

Recently, scholars have started to focus on African Diasporas in Europe (Hine et al 2009;

Pace' 2008; Partridge 2012; Thomas 2007; Tshimanga et al 2009). Johnson (2012) notes

that these studies reveal how diaspora and diasporic conditions are shaped in places where

ethnic and religious enclaves are less encouraged, in keeping with a strong republican

regime such as the French regime (e.g., Scott 2007). Unlike the French case, in the Italian

case, it is not the framework of a civil secular society that excludes religious presentations

from public spaces. Rather, religious participation continues to be highly advocated in

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[26] Rev. Sunday Adelaja is a Nigerian born pastor who migrated to the USSR as a scholarship student. He founded an evangelical-charismatic Megachurch in Kiev, Ukraine. His church "Embassy of God" is considered to be the largest charismatic church in Europe, which claims to have 25,000 members in Kiev alone, including Kiev's Mayor Leonid Chernovetsky. http://sundayadelajablog.com/about/biography. Adelaja's case was initially discussed as an evidence of the success of African Charismatic churches. However, it is seen now rather as an anomaly which scholars find hard to explain. Some attribute it to the fact that he is preaching fluently in the local language, and to the fact that he does not represents an extension of an African church but rather a grass-root-local-church with an African pastor.

Italian society as long as it does not present deviations from the hegemonic Catholic

framework. In fact, Ghanaian churches, like other non-Catholic foreign churches are not

listed as churches or religious organization in the Italian state but rather as a cultural

organization.

On September 21st 2013, on the occasion of Founders Day - a statutorily day in which

Ghana celebrates the birthday of its first President Dr. Kwame Nkrumah - a few dozen

Ghanaians living in Rome gathered in a large assembly hall on the outskirts of town. The

hall was rented from the Italian Evangelical church for an event titled "a prayer for Ghana."

The event was advertised in many Ghanaian churches in Rome and around it. Yet, only a

few dozen people gathered in the large hall that could easily fit over 400 people, preparing

for prayer under the watchful eyes of the Italian ushers. On the two sides of the main stage,

two large flags of Ghana were hanging. Aside from the flags (and the formal traditional

gowns and suits worn by the attendees), no other special decorations were exhibited. The

event was directed by a Ghanaian pastor and began with his opening words:

> "Thank you God for bringing the Ghanaian people thus far. Thank you for all you
> have done for Ghana…" as he speaks, Ghana's national anthem plays in the
> background. A choir assembled for the occasion composed by members of different
> churches accompany him on stage. He talks about Ghana's Anthem, which is playing
> in background and says: "look at our beloved anthem it starts with the word God
> and ends with God. This is how it should always be in life, start with God and end
> with God."[27] He presents Mrs. Evelyn Anita Stokes-Hayford, Ghana's ambassador to
> Italy. As she comes up on stage, the choir gets ready to get down from the stage, yet
> she asks them to stay on stage and sing for her. She wears a crystal white gown and
> a head cover and stands out in her presence. Her speech describes Ghana as a
> leading country in Africa: she gives Congo as an example of an African country at
> war and describes how Ghana is sending it assistance. And returns to God as the

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[27] Ghana's national anthem titled "God Bless Our Homeland Ghana" has three stanzas. The first line of the first stanza is as its title: "God bless our homeland Ghana" and the last line in the third stanza is "And under God march on for evermore!"

thread that connects it all: "what our country needs is for us to seek God. Are we doing our part of the bargain? [...] God is so great that he must be Ghanaian! [...]," she exclaims and the crowed cheers. "When you will be going back to Ghana don't let anybody tells you that it is so bad there. Because if it was, they wouldn't have built houses there. You can wander in some parts of Accra and wonder whether you are in Hollywood...our country is and will continue to be an example to all countries in Africa."

This event organized by the religious institute and supported by official national representatives can easily be imagined as an event aimed at the Ghanaian diaspora. The event along with the speech the ambassador delivered illustrates the ability and the accessibility of religion in bringing together people away from their home country.

One of the debates in Diaspora studies is whether diaspora should be defined as constituted in relation to a specific space or 'homeland' (such as the Jewish diaspora) or can it also be created without the gaze to a specific territory (Clifford 1994; Johnson 2012) such as the Black Atlantic diaspora that refers to shared history of slavery, rather than a specific geographic location (Gilroy 1993). Still, Johnson describes six characteristics that generally can define diaspora and distinguish it from other immigrant groups. These conditions by extension are also applicable to diasporic religions (Johnson 2012, 2015). They include separation from one center towards one or several others; collective memory of a homeland and the cultivation of a relationship and affinity with the homeland, at least as an imagined community; an establishment of an infrastructure that maintains the diasporic condition; the segregation of the diasporic community, at least partially from the mainstream hosting society; and finally, an idealization of ancestral time and place (ibid). Examining these conditions, one might question the suitability of Pentecostalism to the

concept of diaspora.

On the one hand, Ghanaian believers as much as any other immigrant groups fit the second, third, and often the fourth and fifth conditions which Johnson describes: a national collective memory; relationship and affinity; infrastructure that maintains the diasporic condition; and segregation of the diasporic from the mainstream hosting society. Yet, can a community constitute a diaspora without having a diasporic religion? The collective *Prayer for Ghana* event as well as my interviews, in which many believers expressed their desire to return to their home country, reflect that Ghanaians too celebrate their home country's existence, and some even see their future retirement back in Ghana. However, the first and last aspects Johnson describes, namely, the separation from one center towards another, and to the idealization of ancestral time and place, require further clarification. While Ghanaian Pentecostals do separate from their home country, or in other words, a place that can be considered as a center for their home church or prayer house, those centers are transportable and can be replaced and placed anywhere around the world. Moreover, their idealization of ancestral time as Pentecostals (again a time not a place) exists and goes back to biblical time, but it is not linked to their home country. Thus, there is a gap between their diasporic identity as Ghanaians and their supposedly diasporic identity as Pentecostals, which eliminates the aspect of territoriality that is so central to the formation of diaspore.

Towards the end of 2013, the Church of Pentecost (CoP), one of the churches I visited regularly, received a new pastor. On the first worship held by the new pastor, most the prayer was conducted in Twi, most of the songs were in Akan, and the woman who

normally held the translation of the service from English to Italian, changed her role and translated only parts of the service from Twi to English. The services held by Pastor Patrick, the previous pastor, were held in English with a simultaneous translation to Italian and occasionally Twi, depending on the attendees and whether there would be an additional service later that day held in Twi. All other services I attended in Ghanaian Pentecostal churches throughout Italy were also usually conducted in English. Although there were hardly ever native Italians attending the services, the church elders and pastor Patrick insisted that English be the main language so that if there was an opportunity to proselytize, the service would be accessible to non-Ghanaians. For the same reason, by consensus, English was the service language for all the Ghanaian and Nigerian churches' international branches outside of Ghana I visited throughout the various periods of my fieldwork.[28] English on the one hand, was the international language, whereas Italian, on the other hand, was flagged to make the service accessible to locals. When the new pastor arrived, the dominant language became Twi. People started giving testimonies in Twi and the practice of prayer received a different tone.

On the way home from the second service held by the new pastor, I took the street-car back to the center with a couple of women from church. They asked me if I understood the service, and I answered that I understood only some of it, as my Twi was not good enough yet. They started chatting in a somewhat agitated voice, not clear if it was addressed at

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[28] In contrast to the Ghanaian and Nigerian Pentecostal churches, the Ethiopian and Eritrean Pentecostal churches I visited in Rome were all conducted in their native languages (mostly, Amharic and Tigrinya respectively). They were also more suspicious in regards to my visit especially if I arrived with my Italian colleague. For some, the pastor agreed for an interview, but we were denied access to the service.

themselves or at me, and stated that it should not be this way, and the service should

return to English, because this way nobody else but Ghanaians will come and "we're

missing the point, how can we spread the blessings to the world if only we can

understand?" Although not many Italians are fluent in English, the perception of English as

a universal language stands at the center of many African Charismatic churches. On the

other hand, the service in Twi felt more comfortable to some. As Kofi, a church member,

told me, it was easier for him to give testimonies in his mother tongue.

The women I spoke with on the street-car had in mind not only the members of the church,

but also all the potential members for whom the church would be destined in the future.

For similar reasons, other Ghanaian and Nigerian churches I visited in Rome held their

services in English as well. Very shortly after that first service, the language of the service

shifted once again, and while there was noticeably more Twi present in the CoP services

since the arrival of the new pastor, there was always at least an English translation and if

occasionally someone gave testimony in their native language, someone would translate

him as he/she went along.

The two vignettes above raise the question whether a community of immigrants can be

defined as diaspora while its religious identity is non-diasporic? To "be in a diaspora"

depends not only on having family roots elsewhere, but rather the living and cultivation of

a "double consciousness in relation to a place that is central" (Johnson 2015). Many

Pentecostals in Europe do not aim to assimilate and are willing to migrate to wherever

their faith and mission carry them, although their circumstances might lead them to

eventually stay in Italy.[29] African Pentecostalism, moreover, can hardly be defined as a diasporic religion. Historically, as Pentecostalism was being cultivated in West Africa among other places, it remained largely de-centered and de-territorialized, making it a global religion and according to some scholars, the first true global religion (Casanova 2001: 437).[30]

Research on diaspora and religion discusses how the everyday is mobilized by religion in creating a diaspora. However, the "silence" which I discussed in the introduction indicates that the everyday existence of the migrants in Europe is separated from the life of the church, thus establishing a separation between the diasporic dimension and the religious aspect. Diasporic religion does not fit the Pentecostal churches and therefore, the tension between the diasporic community and its non-diasporic religion should be more carefully examined.

Similarly, Van Dijk asks whether the transnational character of Pentecostalism and its intricate linkage with African economic migration enable the migrants in Europe to navigate the tensions of their 'diasporic condition' (Van Dijk 1997). Accordingly, West African Pentecostal communities in Italy are positioned at the intersection of the global, which is constituted by the transnational character of Pentecostal religion, and the local,

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[29] Since Thomas Tweed coined the term "diasporic religions" (1997) the coupling of the two has become common in studies concerning the way religions are utilized and re-institutionalized in spaces away from their creation. Yet, the degree to which religious participation is effective in constituting diasporic communities is still debated in scholarly work (Johnson 2012: 97)

[30] Moreover, while Pentecostals do idealize ancestral time - a biblical time, to be exact - it is one that is not tied to a place but rather to ideas and morality.

which is derived from the believers' 'diasporic condition.' Thus, the role of African

Pentecostal churches or the immigrants' religious participation in the constitution of

diasporic communities in Italy, is constantly negotiated. Finally, positioning the believers as

diasporic and their religion as non-diasporic is somewhat problematic as many Pentecostal

believers would portray their overall life as guided and designed by their belief. This

separation is artificial and not very productive.

Reverse mission

> *"Many migrant Christians do not regard themselves as refugees but as missionaries. The vision held by many migrant churches is that the West, which was once the starting point for missionary activities around the world, has now become dark, recaptured by the power of evil... We are the living sign that God has not abandoned Europe."*
> *(Uniting in Diversity Conference report, FCEI, Ciampino Sassone 03/2004)* [31]

One can argue that when considering the concept of African congregations in Europe,

unlike the case of the African diaspora in the Americas, it is not the history of the slave

trade that shapes the identity of their members, but rather the memory of colonial rule in

Africa. The history of Christian mission and church formation is embedded in the history of

colonial rule and as described above, which is responsible for the emergence of the African

Independent Churches. Considering this background, the question of reverse mission

comes to mind in regards to the African churches in Europe and deserves a nuanced

examination.

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[31] fcei- federazione della chiesa evangeliche in Italia. More about this organization can be found in chapter 5 where I discuss a cooking course for migrant women organized by fcei.

As I have described above in the short overview of the history of Christianity and mission in Africa, much of research on Christian mission depicts a clear route from the "West to the rest" (Catto 2008). However, when I met Christian believers in Ghana who were intending to depart for Europe for religious mission, the idea that the movement of missionaries was a one-way-lane, "West to the rest," no longer seemed adequate. Scholars have referred to the sending of Christian missionaries to Europe and North America by Churches from the non-Western world, particularly Africa, Asia and Latin America as a form of "reverse mission" (Ojo 2007: 380). The term entails more than a geographical placement, but also a sociological one. It refers to the direction in which Christianity grows and the direction of missionary-sending, and implies reversing the direction of colonization (Freston 2010:155). Can this change in directionality make the new mission to Europe a "reverse mission"? And if so what is it reversing? The phrase 'reverse mission' suggests a level of agency. Does the sending of representatives to Western countries and particularly European ones by African Churches' representatives reconstruct and reshape conceptual categories such as "periphery" and "center?"

Although Christian immigration to Europe is far less prominent than other areas, Freston writes that its effect is magnified by the extent of European "de-Christianization," and the common perception that there is a significant decline in European Christianity (Freston 2010). The notion of reverse mission appears to draw on this context. Accordingly, several studies have addressed the ambivalent nature of the concept of "reverse mission," which designates secular Europe as a new field for African missionary activity. Discussing the gap between "reverse mission" as an ideal discourse and "reverse mission" as a praxis (Fancello

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2011; Koning 2009; Währisch-Oblau 2009), researchers have noted that while most of these churches are established in Europe by African migrants and their members include mostly Africans, they are predominantly characterized by an international, non-diasporal and a non-denominational outlook (Adogame 2000; Catto 2008; Währisch-Oblau 2009). Nigerians and Ghanaians are particularly dominant in these churches, also known as "migrants-missionaries" (Fancello and Mary 2011).

Währisch-Oblau (2008) argues that "these churches do not constitute a diaspora: a group of displaced people who stick together in a foreign land to protect their cultural and religious identity; rather they make up a 'reverse mission' movement." Her research depicts a clear notion of mission. Africans in the churches I visited in Milan, Modena, and Rome go out to the streets to evangelize on a regular basis with the purpose of gathering European members to their churches. In one of my interviews, a pastor in the Church of Pentecost in Rome described their church as being built for Italians: *"even if they do not come now, we are leaving the church for them, it will be here, we have patience… Maybe for the next generation. They are the purpose of our church here"* (November 2014).

Freston (2010) argues that Northern Pentecostalism is much "less Pentecostal" in relation to Pentecostalism in the Southern hemisphere. He refers here to the aesthetic and the charismatic nature of Pentecostalism, which is expressed differently in churches originating in the global south and particularly Africa, than in European countries such as

Italy.[32] Europe in general, he argues shown much more resistance to Pentecostalism then other areas of the world where Pentecostalism have spread quickly. Freston writes that "the 'scandal' with [African] Pentecostalism in Europe is that, it is the colonial 'Other' who had come to the former metropolis not to 'beg or steal or learn western wisdom', but to tell the West, that it lost its way." In this sense, he argues, it is a reverse mission (ibid).

But what is exactly being reversed here? It is difficult to accept the paradigm of reverse mission considering the criteria of colonialism as the object to be reversed as well as the reversal of the directionality of mission. If the matter of reverse mission is the former colonizer, should Ghanaian missionaries in Italy be excluded since Italy had never colonized Ghana? Would Sunday Adelaja, the Nigerian pastor, leading hundreds of Ukrainians be excluded because Ukraine never engaged in colonizing the global south? Or if we adopt the idea of "from the West to the rest" (Catto 2008 in Freston 2010), is Ukraine excluded because it is not considered part of "the West" (and so are other African Pentecostal churches in Asia)? Indeed, African Pentecostal mission is not limited to the West; a quick look at the website of each of these churches reveals that they each have hundreds of branches throughout the globe.

The arguments proposed by Freston and Währisch-Oblau for reverse mission seem convincing at first and tempting to adopt as a meta perspective: a response to colonial intervention that provides agency to the former colonized. However, in praxis, during my

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[32] I describe the aesthetic of Italian-led Pentecostalism and the differences between it and African Pentecostalism briefly in chapter 3 and more elaborately in chapter 4.

fieldwork, hardly any of the pastors or believers I had met talked about their church activity as means of "relighting" Christianity in Europe. It seemed to be a term used mostly by remote leadership in the home country attempting to make headlines, and not by the people who actually went on mission journeys. Methodologically, doing a 'close reading' exposes that what they did talk about is their mission led by the holy spirit; they talked about going where the spirit guides them, and they talked about the importance of evangelizing as part of their identity as Pentecostals. In this scheme, the "reverse"-part is left out. The term reverse mission simply fails to capture their understanding of their work as missionaries.

Thus, I suggest we use the reverse mission paradigm with extra caution. By inscribing the reverse to the mission, Pentecostalism is reduced to be a direct result of colonialism alone. And while the colonial period and the European control over African subjects indeed shaped African Pentecostalism to a large extent, the history of the development of Pentecostalism in Africa, which was briefly summarized in the overview above, indicates that we would be wrong to say that Pentecostalism resulted solely from the colonial encounter. We would be wrong to draw a teleological model, where Pentecostalism is the south's response to the north's historical Pentecostalism. Instead it would be much more fruitful to rely on anthropological studies looking at these churches as doing mission in Europe and carrying a transportable message (Csordas 2007) while being part of a global culture (Coleman 2010; Dasawni 2010, 2015; Marshall 2009; Robbins 2004, 2009, 2010), instead of concluding their doing as a reverse mission.

To conclude, the two frameworks of diaspora and reverse mission attempt to provide an answer to a question of purpose: "why and what are these churches doing in Europe?" One suggests a social and economic reason while the second suggests a religious reason. As we can see from examining both approaches, each have valid explanations. Moreover, examining them one by the other emphasizes that both attempt to provide an answer in the form of identity: that of a migrant, and that of a missionary. Instead, like other anthropologists of Christianity, I believe that it is rather the dissonance of these particular two identities that can provide a better answer to the questions: Why and what are these Pentecostal, largely African churches doing in Europe (or elsewhere for that matter) and how do these migrant- missionaries bridge the conflicting aspects of their identity? The cases of ICGC, the 'Church of Pentecost' (CoP), and 'Lighthouse Chapel International' (LCI) - three Ghanaian-founded churches and their international branches, which are the focus of this dissertation, are, therefore, particularly interesting as they enable us to shed further light on this tension between the churches' transnational character and their role in diasporic communities.

Becoming missionaries: Christian citizens of the world

One of the major differences between the early African mission to the West and the contemporary situation, is the growth in autonomous missions from the global south and the presence of a huge immigrant Christian community in Europe. The concept of reverse mission references the north-south divide and embodies socio-political power relations. However, discussing the immigrant-missionaries as doing 'mission' instead of 'reverse mission' frees us from binding this process to specific places. Conceptually, "immigrant" is

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by necessity linked with two reference points; the origin home country, and the host state, which are often linked together through deep historical, economic and political processes. These are represented by terminology embedded in the nation state, and foremost, the question of citizenship, namely, who can migrate where, who can live where, and what rights and duties, limitations and freedoms, come with belonging to one state or the other? Inevitably, the members of the Pentecostal churches, who are by large migrants, are part of this discourse which excludes certain populations based on nationality (Soysal 1994).

Soysal (1994) offers a model of post-national citizenship in which people can be members of a polity regardless of historical or cultural ties to the nation state. However, the model of post-national citizenship still assumes the nation-state as the main category, according to which other parameters of affiliation are set/to which other ... are aligned. I suggest that the African Pentecostal churches in Europe are not only linked with these two reference points of the nation-state, the origin country and the host state. Rather, I argue that they simultaneously offer a parallel spatiality and temporality linked to the globalized world in which their religiosity offers an alternative framework of belonging - in the form of a Christian citizenship - than that offered by the nation-state. Being Christian citizens allows them to recognize themselves as missionaries. The tension between these two forms of identity, immigrants versus missionaries, is constantly negotiated and mediated through the idea of Christian citizenship.

Währisch-Oblau (2008), who examines African churches in Germany, points out that many of the migrants come to Europe as economic migrants or refugees, but they see themselves

as missionaries brought to Europe by the Holy Spirit. In their statements, they describe their experiences realizing their true calling as missionaries only once they had arrived in Europe, while others talk about their "missionary call" before coming. Ter Haar (1998) indicates that amongst the members of the churches she studied in the Netherlands, African Christians do not tend to look back to the African past, but rather, "they are generally forward-looking people." They use their religious faith to legitimate their space (Ter Haar 1998: 49). In fact, pastors and believers often refer to the Bible to show that God has no borders, and that his children are free as the children of Israel.[33]

The sense of 'no borders' is further reinforced in the Pentecostal scheme, both through the political organization in which churches are planted worldwide and pastors are sent based on new perishes' needs, as well as on the individual level. For the follower, full conversion consists of acting with authority on the scriptural language (Keane 2008). In other words, conversion to Charismatic Christianity grants agency to the individual in the religious sphere and, moreover, expressions of agency corroborate the individual's full conversion. Through the process of conversion, the individual receives the legitimacy to play an active role as a missionary and convert others; and thus, it also validates his participation in the universal Christian mission. This notion grants Africans the authority to travel to Europe or any other part of the world to proselytize.

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[33] Some biblical references include:
Philippians 3:20: "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ"
Luke 22:29-30 "and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."
Ephesians 2:19 "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household."

While this approach attributes much agency to the African Churches, it is important to

understand its limits and ways of operation. Such authority and notion of freedom must be

understood in the context of the globalization of migration. The 'no borders' notion of the

missionaries' Christian religiosity is constantly negotiated in their host societies.

Demarcation of these churches as "African churches" suggests that there is another type of

Christianity, an African Christianity, which is different from the mainstream European

Christianity and is interlinked with ethnicity. However, in my field sites and as reported in

other studies, African Christians in Europe see themselves first and foremost as Christians,

and not African-Christians. It is not that they deny or ignore their ethnicity, but rather that

the two are not necessarily coupled together. They are Christians first and Africans second.

Ter Haar (1998) writes that the insistence by many non-Africans on the existence of a

specific African identity may be inspired by a concern for religious orthodoxy, or a

response to a need of white Christian communities to distinguish themselves from black

Christian communities that worship amongst them and who they believe differ from them.

Furthermore, she argues, such insistence continues, in fact, the old colonial and early

missionary discourse and praxis of regarding the 'otherness of Africans' (Ter Haar

1998:46).[34]

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[34] Ter Haar further argues that the development of an ethnic identity, which is required for the
development of an African diaspora, can take place only after the personal identity of the individual has
been secured. This depends on the size of the minority group in relation to the larger population. In
continental Europe, the African diaspora is relatively a small minority and has little power as a group,
which greatly differs from the African diaspora in the Americas, and unlike the United Kingdom, where
church leaders insist on an African identity in the experience of their faith (ibid). The reason that African
Pentecostals in Italy emphasize their Christian identity rather than their ethnic one may indeed be a result
of their lack of power as a minority group as Ter Haar suggests, but has more to do, I argue, with their
belief in their role as Christian missionaries, which, in church overpowers their immigrant status.

Scholars have discussed the globalized nature of Pentecostalism (Coleman 2004) and its

transportable message and practices (Csordas 2007; Maxwell 2006). These elements are

fundamental to the overall argument of this dissertation regarding Christian citizenship.

However, the globalized nature of Pentecostalism is not analogous to Christian citizenship.

The conception of Christian citizenship goes beyond the globalized message of

Pentecostalism that adapts to the cultures of the converts. Rather, I employ Christian

citizenship as a notion of consciousness that shapes people's everyday experiences.[35] That

is, the globalized notion of Pentecostalism might have brought the African believers to Italy

and helped them adapt to their new environment, but it is the way they consider

themselves Christian citizens, which allows them to be missionaries in Italy despite their

immigrant status on the day to day level. A few studies have recently started to examine

citizenship in relation to religion and to explore Christian believers' self-identification as

citizens of Heaven (Daswani 2015; Fumanti 2010; O'Neill 2009). These studies identify

Christian citizenship as moral behavior which is paralleled with preforming "good

citizenship." Behaviors such as being law abiding, hard-working Christians, as well as

engaging in charity, prayer, fasting, and bible reading allow members to demonstrate their

Christian citizenship (O'Neill 2009). Thus, morality, not papers, dictates virtuous

citizenship (Fumanti 2010). Moreover, Daswani shows that members of the CoP in London

also demonstrated Christian citizenship by showing care to others outside of their

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[35] In chapter 4 I discuss the concept of Christian citizenship in depth, and show how it plays on the everyday level of believers. I also consider in that chapter, Christian citizenship in relation to the nation-state citizenship.

community through prayer and accountability (2015) thus supporting the idea of a Christian citizenship that transcends local borders.

There is a vast literature on citizenship and the nation state, particularly in relation to immigration, mostly emphasizing legal and political aspects (Ong 2003; Partridge 2012; Soysal 1994; Ticktin 2011). Yet very little is written about it in relation to religious aspects and how they shape ideas of citizenship.[36] As noted above, Ter Haar argues that to create a diasporal identity, the personal identity of the individual must be secured. Yet, instead of their Ghanaian identity, one can suggest that the religious Pentecostal identity of the individual plays a larger role, and that this Pentecostal identity is what allows the migrants to enter international circuits and be part of a larger Pentecostal community beyond the host nation state. This imagined global community reminds us the promise of the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (PCC) to their followers a few decades back, a promise to a link to the global circuit (Meyer 2004). Churches are often described as local mediators, especially in migrant churches, helping immigrants transition to the host societies by providing networks, food, work, judicial assistance etc. Instead, we might suggest an additional role as mediating a global setting and constructing the imagination of transnational networks.

While the nation state mediates people's social and political lives and defines their ability to move between borders and geographies, Christianity is becoming more prevalent in

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[36] However, the other way around, that is how the nation state responds to religious performance has received the attention of several studies. See for example the attention given to headscarves in France and Germany (Partridge 2012; Scott 2007).

shaping migration, especially of people from the global south, and creating a transnational

sense of belonging. The perception of Christian citizenship is particularly intriguing when it

corresponds with the current lives of Pentecostals as immigrants in Europe. Daswani

describes well the interaction between these two states. The Pentecostal believers are

migrants in the near future, and citizens of heaven in the distant future,[37] and the two

states are simultaneously negotiated (Daswani 2015: location 3371). While, Daswani

emphasizes the near future as immigrants versus the more distant future (afterlife) of

citizens of heaven, I show that, it is rather the present in which they are immigrants and the

near future in which they become Christian citizens. Thus, the idea of Christian citizenship

pertains to the believers' immediate life, and not their afterlife. And although the rhetoric of

Christian citizenship surrounds heaven,[38] its implication are for their life in Europe.

Through the idea of Christian citizenship discussed in the following chapters, I aim to

unravel the tension between the present (migrant, immigrant, refugee, EU non-citizen) and

the near future (Christian citizens) of the Pentecostal believers in Rome. Guyer's (2007)

distinction of the near future is particularly crucial at this point as it can represent the

difference between a process of being (being immigrants) and the process of becoming (the

near future, becoming Christian citizens). While Pentecostals in Rome might be immigrants

at the present, they are constantly in a process of becoming Christian citizens, always

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[37] Daswani borrows the terminology of 'near future' and 'distant future' from Jane Guyer (2007). Her analysis is particularly important in this case because she states that by using 'near future' she privilege emergent socialities. Thus, she says "to ask what becomes near when 'near' fades from collective consciousness is to ask about social distance and access as well as conceptual horizons. It is to invoke material and political urgencies as well as time space scheme." (2007: 410).
[38] Citizens of God's kingdom refers to the return of the messiah or to the afterlife.

learning to be better, do better, proselytize better, and make greater effort to bring local Italians to their church. Theoretically, from Guyer's terminology of the near future as a process, we can also infer that "becoming" is a conceptual consciousness, and in so, it does not ignore the believers' situation in Europe and comes to acknowledge the limits of a transcendental authority in this world (Daswani 2015: Locations 3742) and particularly in Europe.

In the next chapter I will examine how ideas of mission are formed in Ghanaian Pentecostalism by looking at a case of conversion of children from the rural villages surrounding Bolgatanga in the Upper East region of Ghana. These ideas are fundamental to Pentecostal-charismatic believers and their formation as missionaries and thus are crucial when discussing African mission in Europe.

Chapter II:

Little Missionaries

"The bus is late," the lady in the ticket window at the station tells us. It is nine o'clock in the morning and it is already boiling hot. The central bus station in Accra is empty; no one is there except for us and the pastor. As we wait, the pastor's brother-in-law comes to meet and greet the pastor, who passes on a parcel for him and his wife. His wife, as the pastor tells me, is from Tema, a city east of the capital of Ghana – Accra; with the children, the pastor and his wife rarely have a chance to travel south and see them. Three hours later, there are over fifty people preparing to board the bus. Somehow everybody seemed to know that the bus will be late. "Ghana time," I was told. We began the journey north leaving behind the bustle of Accra. About third way through, we make an extended break in Kumasi in the Ashanti Region about 240 km Northwest of Accra.[39] When we stop there, another one of the pastor's relatives come to the station to see him. The pastor is originally from the Ashanti region. After he studied in Accra, he and his wife moved to the Upper East region, to where they were taken by their call to mission. At five in the morning, after nearly twenty hours of travel, we arrive to the city of Bolgatanga, or Bolga as it is called by locals. It was still dark, and only a few first rays of sunshine were out, exposing the wide-open fields one of the least populated regions of Ghana. A car comes to pick us up and a smiling

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[39] We will make one more extended break in our trip to Bolgatanga in the city of Tamale, about 640 km north of Accra, and about 160 km from Bolgatanga.

young man grabs our bags and tosses them in the back of the truck. We arrive at a small

compound surrounded by a brick wall and segregated by a large, heavy metal gate. A few

dogs are barking and a ten-year-old boy comes to open the gate for us. Immediately after

we enter, a seven-year-old boy comes out taking the pastor's bag, and then an eight-year-

old girl appears smiling standing at the entrance to the house. Soon we are surrounded by

over a dozen children; sleep is still lingering in their eyes, but they are excited to see the

pastor coming back home from his travels. I think to myself, could they all be the pastor's

children?

This was my first encounter with the pastor's house during my fieldwork in 2010. I came to

Ghana to conduct fieldwork on Christian education in the Upper East Region of Ghana,

observing Pentecostal[40] missionary work among children. I soon realized that examining

conversion among children obliges an understanding of kinship relationships, given that

their care is dependent on others, and thus their conversion is also dependent on others.

Thus, conversion is interwoven with kinship. As many scholars have indicated, the process

of conversion is always more complicated than simply "shifting to the other side." In this

chapter, I examine a case study of Children's Christian conversion in the Upper East Region

of Ghana. I show that conversion does not only involve the breaking of kin ties, but rather

that relationships are maintained (on different levels) with one's kin, even when the other

members of the family have not converted to Christianity. Moreover, I argue that

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[40] I use the term Pentecostal as an umbrella term for charismatic Christianity. As the previous chapter
showed African Christianity has grown in many directions particularly noticeable is the charismatic
Christianity. While the groups I discuss here mostly identify themselves as Pentecostals, they also engage
with external Christian groups, particularly American Evangelical churches.

conversion is a process in which the convert learns how to be a Christian, and not a one-time shift, as often is portrayed in Pentecostal conversion narratives. I do so by exploring the house as a space through which the children learn to become Christians. I examine the conditions in which they learn the flexible Pentecostal language that allows them not only to convert to Christianity, but also to become missionaries for their own families.

During my stay with the pastor's family, his family included 14 children between the ages of four to seventeen. If we are to speak in a formalist language, only three of them were his biological children and one was his niece; her mother - the pastor's sister - who was a labor migrant in Germany, left her several years earlier with the pastor, who raised her as his own. The rest of the children showed up at his doorstep or were collected from the streets to his home by himself or by the other children throughout the years.[41] Originally from the surrounding villages, their parents could not support them and sent them to search for a job and food in Bolgatanga, the nearest city.[42] In Bolgatanga, at first, the children would hangout around the market, surviving on leftover food thrown out at the end of the day, while trying to sell whatever they could find or whatever they could make. One of the boys, for example, would sell earrings made of pieces of copper wire found in the street which he

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[41] The pastor spoke in English and Twi with his wife and the children. The children however spoke between them mostly FraFra which is one of the languages spoken in the UER especially in the Bolgatanga area, and some children also spoke different languages or dialects with children that were from the same area.

[42] The population of the Upper East Region is primarily rural (79%). The 2012 census data shows a growing pattern of a reduction in rural population and an increase of urban population in the region, resulting in a total of 10% decrease between 1984 through 2010 (Ghana Statistical Service: Population & Housing Census 2012).

sold mostly to tourists as gold.[43] He would later make these earrings for his siblings as gifts on occasions.

Christian movements in Africa have always been involved in transformations of kinship formations related to conversion (Beidelman 1982; Comaroff 1985; Meyer 1999). Yet, the majority of research on African Christianity and especially studies concerned with Christian conversion indicate that the process of conversion involves a form of "breaking" from local or previous belief and practices, which often also creates a rupture in the family and kinship ties.[44] The pastor opened his home to children who were detached from their natal family[45] and raised them, with his wife, as family members and as Christians.[46] Christianity in Ghana is mostly found in the south, whereas in the north and the upper regions indigenous religions are more prominent, and closer to the border with Burkina Faso, Islam as well. Thus, although churches are scattered throughout the region, they are far from the massive presence of the Mega churches you see in the south. This also meant that most of the children in the pastor's house did not come from Christian families, or that if they did come from one, Christianity would be practiced alongside indigenous religions. The children's conversion process depicts a case in which there is not necessarily a rupture

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[43] People in the upper East Region tell stories about the availability of gold in the area, probably as a result of the gold mining history of the region and the gold mine in Nangodi, a small town about an hour from Bolgatanga, that operated in the 30s (see Renne 2015). When the children told me about the "gold-rumors" they believed that gold is what attracts outsiders (tourists) to the area.

[44] This is by no means to imply that there is a single *type* of "African traditional family", but rather to suggest that the specific traditional family to a specific country, region or ethnic group.

[45] Some of the reasons include death of one or both parents; parents who send their children to work in the city since they can no longer care for them; absence of a parent from the country for labor reasons etc'.

[46] The pastor's role in religious fostering has some resemblance to cases like those seen in cities in Senegal, where the Islamic Marabout provide protection and "foster" and educate the Talibé, who their lack of formal education places them in a religious inferiority to the Marabout (see for example, Carter 1997).

from the children's non-Christian kin, as previously described in the literature in relation to other conversion stories, but rather their story involves both the making new and the maintaining of old kin ties.

In the case of the conversion that I describe, kinship relationships are prevalent on three levels: first, in the making of new kin with the Christian foster family as the children enter the pastor's house and create kinship bonds not only with the pastor and his wife but also with the other children; second, in maintaining relationships with the natal family that still resides in the villages and did not necessarily convert to Christianity; and lastly, in the creation of kinship relationship with the spiritual family of Jesus. In this scheme, the children become mediators between the Christian organization, their new family and Christianity, of which they are becoming, AND the village, their natal families and the ancestral or Muslim belief they come from. By so doing, the children themselves turn into missionaries.

Acting, children, mobilization

The foster care that the pastor established with his wife in their home was not the only path through which he reaches children. The pastor is the head of a Christian organization established in 1994 called *Action Child Mobilization*. It is a non-denominational Christian Missionary Organization reaching out to children through clubs, schools and churches. The purpose of this organization is to reach children in the Upper East region of Ghana and expose them to Christianity. The organization recruits young volunteer leaders to a program called *Royal Kids Cadets*. The leaders or "royal cadets" organize the activities for

the children in the region. The main purpose of the *Royal Kids Cadets* as it is portrayed in

their website[47] is to "Reach Out to Children and Disciple them to become Soldiers for the

Kingdom of God."[48] At the time of my fieldwork, the program organized cadets' leadership

training to provide guidance for new leaders as well as operating leaders from the area.

There were about 60 participants in the training seminar, who made their way from all

around the region by bus, hitchhiking and walking. For some, this trip took more than a day

of travel.

In 2008, the organization formed a collaboration with a Canadian NGO called *Right to Play,*

which provided means for the *Royal Kids Cadet* organization in return for access to their

participating children. Thus, the activities of this Canadian NGO, which promotes the

improvement of the lives of children in disadvantaged areas around the world by using

sports and play, received a Christian missionary quality in the Upper East region. All in all,

the pastor estimated that there are over 3000 children participating in the organization's

activities from all around the area.

Like the pastor's organization, the pastor's home can be viewed as an ideal type of

evangelist programing. As he describes online, he is able "to reach so easily into Muslim

and idolatrous homes through the children" and "directly be in touch with parents and

families, helping to transform families." When the children were accepted into the pastor's

home, they were expected to conduct a Christian life. For many of them, this meant learning

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[47] http://acmfamilyhome.webs.com/pillarsofacmghana.htm
[48] Capital letters and emphasis appears in the original document.

what it means to be a Christian not only during Sunday service but also inside the house and during their everyday activities; they learned through their interaction with each other and the rest of the household.

Among Born Again Christians, a true conversion results in the acceptance of Jesus Christ. As has been carefully described in the literature, the majority of Born Again Christians can point to a specific moment in which they were born again (Harding 2000; Luhrmann 2004; Neitz 1981). The narrative usually involves the first time a believer is filled with the Holy Spirit and speaks in tongues. In contrast to this clear moment of transition, portrayed in many conversion narratives by Born Again evangelical believers, I argue that conversion is not a clear-cut transition from one side to the other but rather a process in which the converts constantly negotiate their identity. The juxtaposition of religious conversion and kinship might reveal a better and more complex understanding of the process in which Christian conversion takes place in West Africa.

This case study raises interesting theoretical questions in regard to Christianity, specifically the process of conversion, and its interplay with kinship terminology. If we employ the kinship language, there is a "marriage knot" between conversions to Christianity and the conceptualization of kinship and family. As I found in Bolgatanga, in this conversion narrative, as the children join the new family of Christianity, they are untangled from the Muslim or local ancestral beliefs of their parents; yet, when they return to their villages and their extended families, they are now the carriers of Christianity and are charged with

drawing their kin into the "family of Jesus." The converted children become the means of converting others in their natal families because they remain in contact with them.

In the first part of this chapter, I show that Christian movements have always involved kinship formation. I discuss the concept of family in Western African societies in the framework of the rapid growth of Christian influences in Africa. I focus on how Christian movements become more explicitly oriented to public welfare and to social problems such as migration and orphans care, especially in light of the HIV epidemic. Finally, I discuss the involvement of Christian movements as a form of "public morality."

In the second part of this chapter. I consider the children as social actors in their own conversion. Through this case study, I discuss the process of conversion to Christianity as one that actively involves kin making and kin breaking, which is formed by the tension between the church and the ancestral and spirit systems of belief. I ask how the children's new position within the pastor's family and as newly converted Christians influences their previous kinship relations with their natal families in the villages, and how the process of conversion is shaped in relation to different spaces such as the city versus the rural village, the new large stone house versus the traditional mud houses, and the church versus ancestral shrines. All of these spaces suggest specific interpretations of kinship systems and different meanings of the concept of the "family." Thus, the children negotiate their identity as they move between and within these systems according to spaces and through changing meanings created by the process of conversion. In the final remarks of this chapter, I discuss the ramifications of the elements of conversion and mission making

exemplified by the children to the making of global missionaries as will be discussed in the following chapters.

African Christianity

The relationship between Christianity and "traditional religion" and the question of Africanization as well as the question of religion and the public sphere have always been major concerns in the study of African Christianity (Meyer 2004). In the 80s, the African Indigenous Churches (AIC) were considered an "authentic" Africanized version of Christianity. Yet, during the 90s, they were gradually replaced by the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (PCC) led by Mega Churches. One of the characteristics of the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches was that they promise to their believers a link to the global circuits, and in return they have gained and continue to gain a constantly growing number of followers. In spite of their growing popularity, researchers have only started at the turn of millennia to study more closely the Pentecostal Charismatic churches (Meyer 2004).[49] The change in African Christianity raises numerous questions regarding the relationship between religion and the public sphere, leading to a growing body of research concerning the influence of Christianity and Christian based organizations on contemporary issues such as health and politics.

At the beginning of the 1990s after the end of the Cold War, East African governments begun to pressure American missionaries to register as development agencies, which

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[49] For a more thorough review of the development of African and Pentecostal Christianity and its global enterprise see chapter one.

included faith based groups. Evangelicals, mostly Americans, appear to have been seen as the new foreign policy makers (Stambach 2009). Furthermore, aid organizations, including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank, began to identify religious organizations as key providers of basic education and care (Marshall-Fratani 2001). Accordingly, many donations and funds were allocated to different local Christian organizations for the purpose of supporting local education. This is also the case of the collaboration between the Canadian NGO and the local Ghanaian pastor which provided funds in exchange for different activities for children in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

Comaroff and Comaroff (1986) note that it is important to point out that the Evangelical encounter in Africa is inseparable from the colonial process. In examining the cultural implications of the mission and how it is related to the political process, they suggest that the ability to impose the conditions of being on others is found not only in the institutional level of power but also in the everyday interactions. Thus, a close examination is required of the everyday habits of life and their relationship with manifest political processes (Comaroff and Comaroff 1986). Moreover, they argue that both of these dimensions "are simultaneously material and symbolic, and the relationship between "religion" and "politics" plays itself out in each" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1986: 2). Maxwell (1999) notes that, even though the appearance of these churches is rooted in the colonial period, the changes that took place in the post-colonial period are imperative for shaping the path of the Pentecostal Charismatic churches today. He argues that the term Christian independence, which was used during the colonial period to distinguish between churches

that do not rely on white supervision, no longer works in the post-colonial era, in which "foreign" and "authentic" are interrelated. The new Pentecostal Charismatic churches were African founded but globally oriented. As Meyer concludes, much of the study on these churches refers to the religious dimension in terms of a deep inner belief that constitutes the ungraspable power of religion, which again reaffirms religion as a separate sphere (2004).

The case described in this paper shows not only that religious conversion is entwined with the public as well as the domestic sphere, as kinship networks, but is also interwoven with the welfare system and care. Moreover, following the route demonstrated by African churches, this case study further demonstrates not only the involvement of Pentecostal Charismatic churches in the public sphere and its entanglement with the domestic sphere, but also how much the domestic sphere of the Pentecostal charismatic churches is part of building those global connections, much of it due to the flexible language of African Pentecostalism and ideas of mobility.

Christianity from the domestic to public health

The influences of the Christianization process in Africa is evident in the domestic sphere as well. From the beginning, Christianity was viewed as a corrective morality to the cultural-tradition (Beidelman 1993; Keane 2007; Klaits 2010; Meyer 1999) as it is seen in many other cases around the world (see, for example, the case of the Solomon Islands in Akin 2003). While Christianity is an important part of the public sphere, in many African societies social change is commonly viewed first in the arena of the family (Dahl 2009b).

Accordingly, it is not surprising to find that many religious organizations throughout Africa and specifically in Ghana have been employing domestic terminology such as family and kinship terms in relation to the process of conversion. [50] This terminology becomes even more prominent (and perhaps more complicated) when it comes to the field of kin based care and the problem of orphans or children who are not in the care of their natal families.

Although the link between conversion and the private sphere is given, it is important to understand that Christianity in Africa has started to become explicitly oriented towards the public sphere in relation to social problems like welfare and care. Some of the questions revolving around this topic deal with Christianity and politics, or in other words, religion and the secular. The separation between the two continues to inform public and scholarly debates about questions of resistance and domination (Meyer 2004). As Comaroff shows (1985), this debate about the public and politics was extended to encompass the everyday life.

Klaits (2010) describes how the concept of love in Setswana refers to action and sentiment directed towards enhancing the well-being of other people; many see the source of this love in God and Jesus. Furthermore, he shows that care is something similar to love although measured in materiality. In Setswana, the care system is perceived as part of the domestic sphere and is expected to be carried out by kin; yet at the same time, care is understood in terms of faith and Christianity. As Klaits' work shows, Christianity is

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[50] It is also not surprising for the same reason, to find that conversion involves rapture in the family.

becoming one of the most influential factors in Africa today. Its vast influence includes the way people deal with issues such as health and illness or are coming to understand morality, kinship, gender and civil society (Comaroff 1985; Dhal 2009b; Klaits 2009, 2010; Prince et al. 2009). One such topic is the problem of orphans.

In the past few decades, the issue of African orphans has become part of an ongoing African and international public and academic debate, especially in light of the AIDS epidemic and other socio-economic situations such as the rising numbers of African labor immigrants in western countries. In many of these cases, orphan children are left in the care of their extended families, while others are sent to non-governmental and international organizations. The dilemma with the care of these children becomes even more complicated in the scheme of Christianity. Many organizations (governmental and NGOs), politicians, and church members and leaders throughout Africa are now viewing Christianity as the corrective moral solution for the upbringing of orphans, one that is favored over local traditional systems of morals. "Traditional culture" or kin-based provision of care is perceived as failing, especially in light of the AIDS epidemic;[51] in its place, they endorse a form of Christian morality, preaching unconditional love that crosses kinship systems (Dhal 2009a). Even though many orphans still live with their extended families, it seems that family-based care in Africa is becoming unsustainable (Bledsoe 1990; Dhal 2009a). In northern Ghana, many families from the rural areas send their children to the nearest cities to find work and sustain themselves. Many young women find

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[51] While in some parts of Africa this is more prevalent than other parts, such as in countries in East Africa where AIDS is presented in much greater numbers, research conducted throughout Sub-Saharan Africa direct towards that phenomenon.

themselves arriving at the cities where they are crammed with other girls into buses that take them to urban centers in the south such as Kumasi, where they often end up working as maids and prostitutes. In this scheme, local and international Christian organizations gather the children and provide them with care in the form of Christian foster families or orphanages.

Dhal discusses the example of the Brotherhood of Ministries in Botswana who argued that too many kin neglect their orphans and that, therefore, the orphans should be raised by the church. In other words, culture – considered as kinship, was no longer trusted (2009b: 31). She further shows how pastors preached to members of the church to adopt orphan children by invoking Jesus' love for them. Her analysis suggests that Botswanan children find themselves either in the care of an institution or in the care of a traditional extended family member (Dhal 2009b). However, it seems that the case of the Ghanaian pastor and the orphans shows that the fate of the children cannot be examined as either solely institutional care or solely traditional kin based care. Although Christian institutions including the Ghanaian pastor support the care of the children within the church, this example reveals a much more complex situation in which traditional kinship systems and Christian institutions are intertwined, introducing new meanings into contemporary African kinship.

Breaking kin: Christian morality

The process of conversion is depicted as a process of kin breaking already represented in Genesis, where God tells Abraham to leave the false gods of his father, "to cut the bonds

that tie him to his father," for which he will be rewarded with the promised land (Delaney 2001). This rupture becomes almost an integral part of narratives of religious conversion and is depicted in many of the anthropological literature on conversion (See for example: Harding 2000, Keane 2007). Meyer, for example, shows that for the Ewe Pentecostals in Ghana, rupture from a "state of past sinfulness" consists of breaking free from kinship connections created by blood (1999). In the Solomon Islands, missionaries encouraged converts to restrict their day-to-day interactions with their nuclear family as the extended families could cause the new believers to "*back-slide"* to the ancestral beliefs (Akin, personal communication). The "break" ensures the maintaining of Christian morality by the fragile converts. Yet, even if the new morality encourages the break, are kinship ties so easily broken? Is it necessary to break one's kinship ties in order to form new religious ties? Moreover, one can argue that if kinship is a form of morality and religion also is a form of morality, then to not break either the kin tie or the moral tie, the two moralities need to correspond to each other.

It was the rainy season and the beginning of the summer vacation. The day after I arrived, the children in the house of the pastor got dressed in their best clothes, packed a plastic bag with some clothes from the pile of shared clothing and tied it with a string. All the children, the pastor, his wife, and a visiting American pastor from the Midwest entered a rundown 1964 Volkswagen van to scatter the children back to their families, each to his home village. The smaller ones were sitting on the laps of the older ones and the rest took a seat on the floor of the van; no fights and no fuss; it seemed that everyone knew their place. Packed with 18 people in the van, the drive started with a collective prayer to Jesus, led by the

pastor with the children joining in. When a younger boy was playing with his brother, one of the older girls very quietly put his hands together and closed his eyes with her hand. Now, they were ready for prayer.

Every year, those amongst the children who knew their natal families would spend their summer in the villages helping their families with the crop, returning to the city and to the pastor's house at the end of school vacation. It was only during this ride that the pastor had the opportunity to meet the children's families and although many of the children did not want to go back to their villages, it was highly encouraged by the pastor and his wife.

Figure 2.
Upon arriving to one of the children's village all the children get off the van and accompany him to his family home.

I could not help but wonder why the pastor would encourage the children to return to their families. The families in most cases were not Christians, did not attend church and could

not make sure the children would keep their new Christian way or "backslide" as Akin describes it (Akin 1999). When I had the opportunity to ask the pastor why he persuaded them to go back, he said that besides "manpower," the children also brought back with them Christianity. When I later asked whether he was worried that they would lose their faith or would not attend church, he said: "Jesus is their family now, and our father [God] will keep them safe and make them do the right thing" (August 2010).

The pastor believes that the notion of the Christian family is stronger than any other kin relationship. Furthermore, he indicates that this is an open family suggesting that Christianity is, first and foremost, a moral substitute for the traditional path, and second, that it can still embrace new members. In one of the first houses we visited, we entered the compound and were led to one of the internal mud huts. The father, a tall and lean older man who seemed to be in his 60's, was sitting barefoot on a straw mat on the floor. Like most of the parents we visited, the old man and his wife were wearing threadbare clothes. The father wore a pair of black pants, a long teal colored shirt and a small brown and purple synthetic wool hat, and was holding a long wooden stick that he used as a walking cane. He quietly greeted everybody with small hand gestures and invited everybody to sit around the small fire. Sitting by him was a woman (perhaps the mother or one of the wives) in a cream-colored gown with red floral prints, who had a small toddler boy backed to her.[52] She bowed her head greeting the pastor and his family; both seemed happy to see the pastor and frequently smiled. A few minutes later, the woman brought the pastor's wife

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[52] The practice of carrying an infant in a carrier is called 'backing' in many areas in Africa. Such practice frees the mother's hands allowing her to do other things in her daily routine, while taking her child with her.

a live chicken and a basket of eggs as a gift to take home with us. She gave the chicken to one of the older girls to keep, and she skillfully held it by the legs. The kids were all sitting quietly behind the adults around the fire. The pastor was the one doing most of the talking. The boy translated the pastor's words to his father, who seemed to only know the local language, which the pastor did not speak.[53] As we were sitting, the older brother, a tall man in his mid 30s, arrived as well. As he walked in, he ruffled his little brother's hair in endearment. He was wearing jeans and a t-shirt and spoke to the pastor in English. He remained standing the whole time. The task of translating the pastor passed on, from his younger sibling to him. He told the pastor how much they appreciated him taking care of their child. As we were getting ready to go, the older brother said to the pastor that he would make sure his little brother goes to church; there is a church in the next village, he explained. The pastor nodded telling the older brother: "you go with him," and greeted him with a "God bless you." He paused for a minute and looked at the little kid and then at the father and then said: "maybe you take your father with you, ok?"

At first glance, the children's departure from their natal home and the conversion to Christianity appears to be another form of the breaking of kin ties - a rupture from traditional beliefs and the natal family for the sake of creating new kin ties with the pastor's home, with the other children, and with Christianity. Yet, by sending the children back to their homes with their new faith, the pastor is, in fact, renewing and at the same time, also

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[53] Much like Christianity, language also adapted by geography. English is found in the cities where in the rural villages you find one of the local languages.

redefining preexisting traditional kinship relationships, rather than breaking them. In this scheme, their families are to be converted as well.

One big family

When thinking of orphans in the West, one often tends to picture children that are entirely detached from their kin. However, this is not the case in many African societies where the extended family has been very dominant and often tied together, even at the physical level of the residence territory (Foster 2000). The role played by the extended family in caring for orphans has been demonstrated in many studies (for example, Bures et al. 2009; Foster 2000) and most orphan children in Africa are cared for by their kin. Although the institutional structure of African families has become more diverse, the support of the extended family is still salient, and in some fields, such as support and care for children, it is still quite prominent (Tanga 2013; Weisner et al. 1997). However, recently many researchers suggest that in the last three decades, especially in the areas affected by the AIDS epidemic, where the number of orphans has dramatically escalated, the extended family has started to disintegrate and the support system of the extended family is declining.

The traditional 'safety-net' can no longer cope with the continuous increase in the number of orphans (Dahl 2009b; Heymann at al. 2007). Foster (2000) argues that the weakening of the extended family is not entirely a result of the AIDS pandemic suggesting that it started prior to it, due to other influences such as urbanization and labor migration. The AIDS pandemic has, however, intensified the issue, resulting in child-headed households and the

increasing numbers of children living on the streets. Considering the changes, the familial structure is undergoing in African societies is significant for our understanding of the situation and experiences of the children who arrive at the pastor's house. The children who were cared for by the pastor and his wife were not completely detached from their natal families, but were sent by the families to the city in order to find work as their kin were no longer able to support them. Thus, the extended natal family remained in the picture, and the children remained in constant touch with their kin, returning during school breaks or when help was needed, for example during the rainy season when extra hands are required to plow the fields. At some level, we might view the pastor's care of the children as an extension of the concept of there-is-no-orphan common to many African societies. According to this concept, losing both parents does not make one an orphan as the extended family and the community take responsibility for the child. A child accordingly belongs to the community and the community is responsible for his education and morality (Tanga 2013).

During our trip to the villages, it seemed as if the children were the ones most excited about bringing their new siblings and parents to their home villages. Dressed in their best clothes and with a sense of pride, they requested the pastor and the other children to accompany them to the mud house of their natal kin and were highly disappointed when for some, it became too dark to walk up the dirt paths to the village and they were dropped off unaccompanied.

The relationship between the children, the pastor and the natal families can be described as a form of exchange. The children brought with them not only a newly found spirituality as the pastor said, but also material supply and a small amount of money that the pastor's wife gave each child to bring to his or her family. After all, they were sent to the city to find a job, not Jesus. It seemed to me that the extended kin, including sometimes the father and his other wives or the other siblings, were rather pleased with meeting the pastor on this occasion. They often expressed how grateful they were for his care of their child; the basket of eggs and the live chicken that were given by the father's wife to the pastor's wife were indeed an evidence of their gratitude, a real gratitude when one has so little. In this way, the natal parents acknowledge their responsibility for the care of the child, and the care is exchanged in goods. This exchange works both way. The pastor trades the conversion of the child and the access to the family with the money the child brings to the family to support them.

In their return to the village, the children become a path for the Christian organization to the family at the core of Ghanaian society. In a leadership seminar of the *Royal Kids Cadets,* the Christian children organization, which I described at the beginning of the chapter, one of the Cadets' guides shared a testimony with the participants. In his testimony, he revealed that an occurring problem he encounters while working in the villages with which he was charged is coping with the resistance of Muslim parents, a problem that was brought up by many of the other leaders as well. He portrayed one instance when he was attempting to collect as many children as he could for an activity, and then one of the fathers of the children came furious to him claiming that he was not only providing activity for the

children, but was actually attempting to convert his son. The father said that as a father he could not refuse the child since all the other children in the village came to the activity. Eventually, the cadets' guide continued, not only that the child was able to continue his participation, but the whole family converted from Islam and accepted Jesus. As he ended his testimony, all the participants cried hallelujah. His testimony does not reveal any other details about the converted Muslim family such as what the conversion of an entire family entails. However, this example shows that while rapture might be a scenario in a Christian conversion narrative, often the goal is, in fact, not the individuals but rather the family as a whole. In this particular case, the point of access to the family is through the children. As in other studies on conversion, the spread of Christianity occurs through the creation of networks: Christian organizations, the pastor, his house, his family, the children, and back to their family. Thus care, access, and mobility are being exchanged alongside material goods.

Becoming Christians

House societies

In his ethnography of the Ojibwe of Berens River, Hallowell (1992) portrays the strong ties between landscape and conversion. Christianity, or more precisely, where one can find Christianity, is very much determined by landscape, that is, where one finds conversion, who is converted, and the kind of affine that is created and where. In the Upper East Region of Ghana, Christianity is found closer to the cities and to larger transportation routes, whereas if you turn further to the rural villages where there are only traces of dirt paths traditional religions' presence is revealed. Thus, the link between Christianity and mobility

is not only a metaphor, it is physically visible in the landscape.[54] Attending church might be easier if you live closer to the cities; yet, how does one learn to speak, carry oneself and be a Christian? What is entailed in identifying as a born-again Christian? These elements are all practices that are learned inside the house. Thus, in the geography of spaces and places of conversion, one space that is crucial for understanding the process of conversion is the house.

Chelcea writes that temporary or more permanent co-residents such as tenants, visitors, guests, craftsmen, neighbors, or laborers may enjoy the equivalent of full domestic status. From a phenomenological perspective, she argues such persons are often under the authority and responsibility of the house patriarch, being included in the household and regarded as kin (Chelcea 2003: 722-723). Similarly, the children who arrive at the pastor's house, knocking on his door and asking to stay with him, become part of his household and under his authority; it is at that moment that they also symbolically become Christians in his eyes.

The pastor's house is surrounded by a brick wall and a heavy rusted metal gate. When I asked: when did the children become Christians? He said that they became Christians once they entered the gate of his house. He refers here to the fact that the children found Jesus at that moment since he is in the house and in their hearts, but also implies that it was a

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[54] In the following chapters I discuss to a great extent the link between Christianity and mobility. In particular, for a discussion of the idea of Pentecostal mobility see chapter 3: Moving to a Higher Level.

condition for the children to stay; he will not be able to accept a child that would worship, what he sees as an idol, in his home.

Figure 3.
A Charismatic Church in Bolgatanga, North Eeast Region, Gahana.

Figure 4.
An Anglican church in one of the villages just outide of Bolgatanga.

Figure 5.
An ancestral shrine in one of the children's home. Upon visiting the house the
Pastor introduced the ancestral symbols as idols.

Naming

While entering the gate is a symbolic moment and a strong metaphor for their new path as

converts, the children still need to learn what it means to be Christians in everyday life. The

gate was the symbol, but the house is where one learns measures of morality as well as how to behave at the most basic level formulating their identity as a Born Again Christian. One aspect of this is the practice of naming. Levi-Strauss stresses that the house and house society should be viewed as an analytical category in ethnographic research. He stresses that the house "is a corporate body holding an estate made up of both material and immaterial wealth, which perpetuates itself through the transmission of its name, its goods, and its titles down a real or imaginary line, considered legitimate as long as this continuity can express itself in the language of kinship and affinity and, most often, of both" (Levi-Strauss 1982: 174). L.H. Morgan's work reveals the importance of the practice of naming in creating borders; he evaluates names as a practice of tracing ancestry: "It is but a fit tribute to our Indian predecessors, to record the baptismal names of our rivers lakes and streams, and also of their ancient sites" (1962: 49). We learn from Morgan how a simple practice such as "naming" is extremely important for creating geographical boundaries and affinity. The practice of naming in the creation of boundaries and affinity is already found in the biblical origin myth: the animals are created and then brought before Man to be named by him, thus distinguishing, through the process of naming, man from animal. Furthermore, when man cannot find his partner from amongst the animals, God creates man's first kin, the woman, and Man names her accordingly "Woman." Thus, the family institute is established in Genesis through the triad of naming/distinguishing/kinship. Naming is a practice that does not just create affinity, but rather also creates distinction.

One of the first practices that accompany the children's move into the pastor's house is their renaming. They receive their Christian name in an almost mundane way: the pastor

simply informs them of how they will be called from now on. While it seems arbitrary, the

naming has a crucial role in distinguishing the children's new life from their old life. Thus,

children at the house all have double names; first they have their Ghanaian born name and

then they receive their Christian name from the pastor: Mommi becomes Angelina, Bikke

becomes Isaiah, Agus is Agnes, and Yawo is David. By giving the children in the house a new

name, a Christian name, they are distinguished from their past and they start the process of

conversion. Although they receive a new name, their old name is not completely erased and

is still used in the house by the children among themselves. Both names are used almost

interchangeably during regular house work or play. During more official times like in

church, or when praying or speaking about religion, their Christian name is used.

Terms or titles used by a group are often a means of specifying relationships; such are

kinship terminologies (Mafela 2012). Thus, in addition to the Christian names that each

child receives once he is accepted to the house, one should also consider what titles the

children use for one another. Most of the children in the house refer to each other as

siblings, if they were asked; they recognize the other children as their brothers and sisters -

for example, in sayings such as "tell your brothers to get ready", "give it to sister Danna."

Not all children used the title papa to call the pastor; some refrained from using any name.

The pastor was seen as a figure of authority, both religiously and as the head of the house.

However, all children called the pastor's wife "mama," and the pastor and his wife referred

to all the children as their own. Kinship terminology reflects relationships based on

bloodlines or affinity such as marriage, or in this case an affinity of care through an

unofficial adoption. It is very much possible that the children recognized their house

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members as their kin, as part of their conversion and adoption into the family of the pastor. Yet, the use of kinship terminology is often figurative and symbolic, regardless of actual blood or marriage ties. For example, among many sub-Saharan African societies, "auntie" or "mamma" is used for any older woman as a form of respect; "father" is used in many other contexts around the world for teachers or for someone with authority or in religious contexts (Neitz 1981), and "brother" or "sister" are used as terms that reflect affiliation to the same social group or represent affection (Lossifides 1991; Revez 2003). Thus, the kinship terminology that is used by the children serves another meaning and possibly is used to express respect towards the parents and the bonding between the children in relation to the processes they are undergoing.

On both levels of metaphorical and the actual affinity formation, the practice of naming is revolved around the house: how the children call the foster family, how the parents call the children, and how the children call each other. Both the Christian naming and the kin titles expose the house as a morality that is held together through the transformation of names and titles, through language of kinship and alliance.

Substance to be shared and morality to be learnt

The titles such as "mamma" and "sister" shape the ways relationships are formed within the new kin such as sharing of substance and materiality. Traditional anthropological approaches to kinship focus on procreation which assumes a division between the "biological" and the "social" (Schneider 1972). The new approaches undermine the biological-social division (see for example: Carsten 2000a; Franklin and McKinnon 2001;

Strathern 1992). Carsten, for example, describes how for Malays, identity and substance are mutable and fluid through living and consuming together in houses. She writes: "for Malays, kinship is a process of becoming" (1995). The shared substance that outlines the life in the pastor's house is a way of becoming for the children in the house, becoming Christians as well as becoming kin.

The two older girls and the mother are always found in the kitchen cooking over the stove. The kitchen has a small door leading to the backyard where a pit of fire is maintained for the larger cooking pots. They finish preparing one meal and start the next. Today they are preparing one of the chickens from the backyard. The younger girls move between the backyard where they play and the kitchen helping wherever they can. They observe at first. Preparing a chicken is not something that happens very often, but requires a lot of skill. While the older girl attends to it, the younger ones' help prepare the rest of the meal, including fried plantains, red rice and beans. When it is time to eat, they all get a plate and sit in the living room. The big dining table is too small to contain so many children and they prefer that everyone sit together. Before they start to eat they close their eyes and one of the older kids says a prayer, usually said by the pastor, but the pastor was out that day. The older girls divide the food and they make sure the younger children eat first and only then the older ones including themselves. If the younger ones were still hungry the older girls would give them another portion from their own plate.

When I was there, my husband and I sat next to the table with the pastor and the visiting American pastor. The children ate separately and usually the mother would eat with them,

despite my repeating requests to have the kids or at least the pastor's wife eat with us. Occasionally she did, just to comply with my pleas, but otherwise she would say she doesn't want the kids to eat by themselves and there is not enough room for everyone around the table. A bit after the meal starts, Bikke, the youngest child comes to the table and stands next to the pastor with a half naughty half pleading expression, silently asking for leftovers from the pastor's plate. It was not that Bikke had not eaten yet, but it was the food that was prepared for the pastor that he wanted to share. Usually the pastor would give him a portion of fried plantains and Bikke, pleased with his accomplishment, would right away take the plate to share with the other children. On one of the days when I came back from the town, I brought the children a few bottles of Coca-Cola which were considered a special treat. Each time I would bring them Coke, the call of joy was heart filling, and within minutes it would have been gone. Yet, if one of the kids was out to get something from the market, or even away for the day (or two), the children would always save him/ her some of the drink, even after it went flat.

For the children, it was clear that food is something to be shared; no one ever took things for themselves, as the older always made sure the younger would get their share and that there was enough food. The older children were models for the younger ones, modeling the responsibilities of care for each other. At the end of the day at bedtime, just like at meal time, the children chose to go to sleep together; all the girls in one room and all the boys in another, although there were other rooms available to them in the house. One of the girls said that they felt safe together.

On Sunday morning, I woke up to the sound of music. Diana, the oldest girl, was already up and ironing and chanting in the hallway. She laughed as she saw me, as if she became self-conscious about her singing. She handed me a stretched white shirt she just ironed. Although there was a laundry machine in the house, laundry detergent was scarce. When used, the garments were washed in water mixed with shredded pieces of a soap bar. They were then hanged on a rope in the backyard where the cooking pit was and as a result the clothes would have a smell of smoke and the stiffness of air dried cloths; the ironing was supposed to soften the cloth and so all of our clothes were ironed including underwear and socks. However, since ironing was time consuming and required energy, it was used mainly during Sunday mornings for preparing church clothes. The girls kept bringing Diana pieces they picked from the big pile of shared clothing in the girls' room dancing to the sound of the hymns. And so, the sharing was not just of food, but also of every aspect of material culture in the house such as clothes and toys.[55] In the pile of shared clothes in the girls' room, some things were known to belong to a particular child ("those are Angell's shoes"). Nonetheless, they were all still in the pile and any of the child could use them.

While food and property were important aspects of becoming kin, praying was an important aspect of becoming Christians. Perhaps every activity around the house started in a form of praying: before eating, before going to sleep, when leaving the house in the van, especially when all the children were together. You could always hear the children singing and chanting prayers around the house; when getting ready in the morning, cooking in the

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[55] There were not a lot of toys in the house, but there were books, some colors and coloring workbooks. The leisure material games that were mostly available usually involved the outside garden such as bikes and soccer balls.

kitchen or sometimes even when playing soccer in the backyard. Praying was also part of all the activities held with children outside. As part of the cadets' activity in the villages, before starting a soccer game or any outside game, everybody joined in a circle and prayed with the cadets' guide leading the prayer. Like the other practices, prayer had a significant role in the conversion process. It constantly reinforced the Christian teachings and ways of behaving.

Figures 6 (top); 7 (bottom)
Praying before a soccer game in one of the villages as part of the ACM activity

Becoming Christians also involves learning Christian morality. In one of the evenings, the Pastor calls the girls to sit with him in the living room. He sends the boys to play outside and cautions them not to disturb them. That next day was the two-day seminar of the Cadets' leaders. All the leaders, young men and women, who operate kids' groups in their villages joined together for activities prepared by the pastor and to report on their work. A couple of girls who came to participate in the seminar arrive to the pastor's house that night and they too join the pastor's talk in the living room. He talks to them about sexuality and modesty and saving themselves for their husband. He warns them about guys who will talk nicely to them and say they love them. Right now, their love should be dedicated to Jesus. They talk until it is very late and at the end they all hold hands and pray out loud.

The 'Other'

Spatiality can shape notions of belonging and otherness by creating boundaries between people and borders of social groups (Stasch 2009). In this sense, the house generates divisions just as it creates shared perceptions (Mueggler 2001) and thus can be considered an environment which articulates the way household members can learn about the viewpoints of other people. In the house, the children learn to realize how Christianity views ancestor or Muslim religions. On the garden table where the children would hang out most of the day, there were a few pamphlets carrying the title "I was born a Muslim".[56] The children went over the pamphlets again and again, sometimes just browsing through them;

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[56] See appendix 1

at one point, one of the children even brought it to me to read.[57]
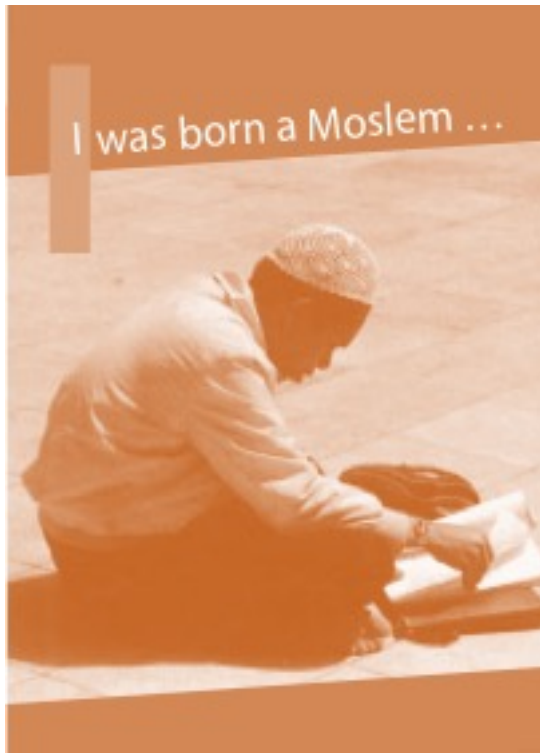
Figure 8.
Cover of the pamphlet *I was born a Moslem*. (Pamphlets creator: unknown)

The cover picture showed an African man with his bare feet sitting on the floor and wearing

a *taqiyah,* a Muslim male head-cover. The pamphlet narrated his story, which opened with

the following lines: "I want to tell you why I accepted Jesus Christ as my savior…" The

pamphlet's narrative is about a Muslim man who was sent to an English school where he

read the Bible and discovered Christianity to be the true religion: "*Having tried to observe*

conscientiously the religion of my ancestors without finding relief for my soul, I went back to

the Bible to find- at least- the secret of salvation." Furthermore, it depicts Muslim men as

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[57] I am not sure if the children fully understood what I was doing there, although I and the pastor
explained to them several times. Throughout the years, the pastor hosted many western missionaries in his
house; it is possible they considered me for one of them. Thus, he might have brought the pamphlet to me
as an act of confirmation.

people with evil intentions. Later the narrator becomes a missionary: "*I saw hundred conversions. People gave up their idols of stone and wood…They became fervent Disciples of Christ… What a privilege to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to people who have never heard it".* The children learn to recognize the other, and consider that they were once that "other," but that now, according to this narrative, their role is to bring Christianity to the others.

From middlemen to little missionaries

As we have seen thus far, the children learn in the house how to become Christians and how to become kin. The last things we should consider in this scheme is what happens to everything they know about themselves prior to the moment they become Christians and what the implications of their new status are. It is when the children return during the summer vacation to their natal family and their home village that they symbolically bring back with them their Christianity. Furthermore, the children become agents of conversion mediating between their new siblings and Christian parents and their natal family, for example, through language and the act of translation. They are the only ones who can move between Twi or English and the local dialect of their village. They do not only translate language but religion as well; moreover, they do not only mediate between the different branches of their new kinship tree, but also between their old and new habitus, creating a "circle" for a biographical completion (Carsten 2000b).

While moving between spaces and places, from the city to the village, the stone house to the mud hut, from Christianity to ancestor belief - the children in this conversion story (as

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in all conversion stories, I would argue) need to mediate the different (and some would say contradictory) aspects of their identities in a way that would allow them to operate with their pre-conversion habitus in their Born-Again self.

Christianity is presented not only in relation to the public sphere but also in relation to the domestic sphere, in the form of kinship. In this chapter, I attempted to show that these two categories are greatly intertwined. Furthermore, I showed that children are not passive bystanders in their conversion in relations to their caregivers. Rather, they are social actors and moreover, they are attributed agency by the adults who surround them. As the next chapters will show, this agency - illustrated by the children who carry their new faith to their villages - continues in different stages of Pentecostal lives. Moreover, this agency is carried out not only inwards, towards one's natal family, but is also extended on the transnational level.

The coupling together of conversion and kinship raises questions regarding the political economy of Pentecostalism in West Africa and around the world. conversion to Christianity as can be seen in many parts of the world is a form of mobility, and not strictly a matter of belief. Thus, by entering the house and by converting to Christianity, the children were given an opportunity to social mobility. Christianity meant an opportunity for education, for getting a job later, and moreover, to have the safe net of the church.

In my last days in Bolga, I was sitting outside on the house's veranda with the pastor's assistant, a young man in his early twenties. He asked me a lot about the U.S. and where I

came from, and said that he too wants to go there. "What will you do there?" I asked. He

paused for a second and said: "I'll bring the word of Jesus," and smiled. Some of the kids

were playing outside around the yard. They often just hung around us listening to our

conversations. As we were talking, David, one of the older boys, stopped playing, lingered,

and came to sit down with us. At first, he was just listening and skimming a pamphlet that

was lying on the table, as if not really listening but just taking a break from the soccer game.

He remained silent the whole time, but finally, he said: "I will also go- one day."

David's wish was said hesitantly, as if he wasn't sure he was allowed to even think about it.

The conversation about other faraway places and the options of going away somewhere,

was repeated on several different occasions. Away from the North - to the South of Ghana;

to Kumasi and Accra, and then out of Africa all together. It seems as if the thought of being

able to move away lingered more commonly amongst the older ones than the young ones.

As if the older you get the more courage you have to think beyond your natal borders. A

week earlier, as I was coming back from a cadets meeting, a representative of *Right to Play*,

the NGO that collaborated with the *Royal Kids' Cadets*, gave me a ride back to the pastor's

house. It was not surprising to hear that he too is a member of a Pentecostal Church as

most Christian residents in the area were followers of one charismatic church or another.

On the other hand, it was unexpected to hear, that he was thinking of leaving his job to

become a missionary and establish an extension of their church abroad. It struck me mainly

because he was holding a well-paid position in an area where work is not that easily found.

When I asked where would he go, he replied that in addition to his church's mission all over

Africa, the church sends missionaries as far as India and "even to Europe." What was

surprising in his statement that although he worked in an international NGO, he described

his ticket out of Africa as missionary work, rather than his NGO job. A few years later, I

heard from someone in Rome, that he knew a guy from Bolga who worked in that NGO that

moved to Italy. However, I never met him again and could not corroborate that it was

indeed him. I did meet, however, many other Ghanaian believers like him all over Italy

(who are also often simply called by the popular media, labor migrants), and in the

following chapters, I wish to tell their stories, which is, to that matter, also that of the NGO

worker.

How does one go from a small house in the Upper East Region of Ghana to become a

missionary in Rome? Mueggler (2001) writes about houses in rural Yunnan as technologies

for producing subjectivities. He describes domestic spaces such as dark rooms that allow

eggs to mature, dry spaces where hemp could dry quickly, and smoky places where meat

would not rot. To those domestic spaces, he argues, persons were attached: young women

were associated with cool, wet corners where vegetables were kept fresh, and senior men

were linked with dry smoky attics where their skills and seniority were preserved

(Mueggler 2001: 54). Mueggler's illustration of the technologies of the house emphasizes

how the technologies, embodied by the different spaces of Yunnan houses, composed social

persons (2001). Furthermore, it elucidates the house as an environment in which different

spaces allow an ideal environment for their inhabitants to mature and prosper until it is

ready to be used or until it is ready to move-on in the social world. Similarly, the house of

the pastor is an environment in which the children learn to be and learn the flexible

language of Christianity, its borders and their own; which they then export, first to their families and their close geographical surroundings.

It is these aspects and the tangible language of Pentecostalism and mission that the Children take with them; which allow David to cross an intangible border around the world, to move in it freely; and which also allow an NGO employee from the Upper East Region of Ghana to find himself in Italy. That language mediates the experience of an African refugee or labor migrant and translates it into Pentecostal idioms.

Chapter III:

Unbecoming Immigrants

Sunday on the Trenini

It is eight AM on a Sunday morning July 2013. It is still early but the sun is already beating on my head. I am waiting for the *trenini* - my new companion for the next twelve months. The *trenini*, a "small train," as the Romans refer to it, is a yellow metal streetcar (*Elettromotrice*) that was built in the seventies. Once a sign of progress, the *trenini* nowadays is considered by the locals as the worst form of public transportation in the city. On hot summer days, the *trenini* becomes a boiling tin can, and in the winter, rain leaks on the passengers through cracks in the roof. On weekdays, the *trenini* becomes extremely crowded as the passengers struggle to find a spot to stand in it. But unlike most days of the week, on Sunday morning the city's neighborhoods quiet down and the only people traveling on the train are devout Christians on their way to church; today the *trenini* is entirely empty. I climb its tall narrow steps and sit in the middle on one of the single yellow seats.

As we drive further away from the center of town, an African family climbs on and sits a few rows in front of me. The man wears a grey heavy suit and large dark sunglasses; a big bible is tacked under his arm. The woman is wearing a beautiful West African style dress made of a red, blue and orange fabric. They are speaking *Ga* amongst themselves, which

immediately makes me think that like me, they too are heading to *The Church of Pentecost (CoP)*. It is my first visit to the COP and my first time in this part of Rome, and although I received from one of the church elders the night before instructions about how to find the church, I am glad I encountered the family and less worried about orienting myself. When the *trenini* reaches *Tobagi* station, my stop, the family remains on the train. And when they get off the next stop and start running to catch a connector bus that continues south, I realize there must be more than one Ghanaian church around there.

The *trenini* became an important space in which every Sunday morning I met members travelling to church from all over the city. I met other couples like that couple from the train; the men usually were wearing suits made of heavy fabrics and the women were often dressed in traditional African gowns. The women typically carry a plastic bag, which later, I learnt that it contained contemporary clothes or traditional African fabrics and always a pair of high heel shoes. If one of them would wear a pair of jeans and a tee-shirt, she would later change into her gown at the bathroom located outside or at the very entrance of the church. And if one were already wearing her gown, she would change back to her everyday clothes at the end of the service.

Kravel-Tovi coined the term "identity suits" *(Chalifat zehuyot)*, referring to the conversion process of immigrant women (*Olot*) in Israel. Kravel-Tovi shows that these women are required to perform an orthodox Jewish identity to confirm their Jewishness for rabbinic eyes, while the state of Israel, represented by the Chief Rabbinate *(Rabannut)*, confirms its Jewish authority in the Jewish state through the conversion process of the converts (2012).

Kravel-Tovi's research illustrates that the relationship between the converter - in her case the state of Israel, and the converts - the immigrant women, is based on a dramaturgic relationship that involves performance, in which both the converters and the converts "wear" metaphorically and literally their identity suits. In this sense, the *trenini* too becomes a liminal space, and African fabrics, much like in the immigrant converts to Judaism in Israel, become transition objects for church members to transform from their everyday appearance as African immigrants into their religious identity as African missionaries. These acts of dressing reveal an emic distinction between their religious identity as missionaries and their everyday life as immigrants - between inside and outside; they reveal and disguise on stage and behind the scenes of their shifting roles. Moreover, the African fabrics brought to the services are a symbol of the members' continued adherence to their social identities as Ghanaians, but even more so, as Christian Ghanaians. Cloth embodies a notion of history and identity, and therefore, the perception of belonging (for the importance of cloth in religious rituals, see Renne 1995).

In the following few months, I conducted a survey of African churches in the area of Rome, which indicated that there are several West African churches stretched out along that part of town. Together with Carmelo, a local friend and a researcher at La Sapienza University, who was too interested in the spread of immigrant churches, I spent weekends walking all over the city tracing the churches. I learnt about some from hearsay, and others Carmelo had learnt of from friends and colleagues in his work.[58]

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[58] A study on immigrant evangelical churches in Italy found that amongst the various evangelical immigrant groups in Italy, aside from Romanians, Ghanaians are by far the largest group with 34,824

Basic information was gathered on about seventy immigrant-based churches. All were

Pentecostal or Charismatic churches and included a variety of nationalities including

Filipinos, Chinese, Koreans, Eritrean, North Americans, Brazilians, Ethiopians, Ghanaians,

Nigerians, and others. I was successful in locating, visiting and attending services in about a

third of these churches. My original assumption as to the number of churches was wrong.

There was not a single church in each area. Rather the churches varied in size, members,

and in their ideological emphasis. The chances are that if you are a Ghanaian immigrant in

Rome you are affiliated with one African church or another. Most of the African churches I

visited were located on the outskirts of the city, many on the southern part. At first, I

assumed that this was where many immigrants were living given that rent and living

expenses there were slightly cheaper. However, later I found out that many of the members

attending these churches were traveling from all over the city, and some of them even came

each Sunday morning from outside of the city to attend the services.

In the following discussion, I explore notions of mobility and movement amongst Ghanaian

Pentecostal missionaries in Rome, Italy. I argue that doing so allows us to better

understand and situate the paradox embodied by the staggering silence about the daily

experiences of the church members as immigrants during church services, which I

presented in the introduction. I show that these spatial practices and notions of mobility

inform the transformation of Pentecostal members from 'immigrants' to 'missionaries' and

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documented members, followed by Nigerians with 24,814 members (Naso et al 2014: 14). For a
systematic demographic analysis of all migrant churches in Rome see the report published by a group of
researchers from La Sapienza University (Naso et al. 2014).

from non-European citizens to Christian 'citizens.' The "moments of becoming" when one becomes a missionary or takes once again the role of the migrant are contingent on "place" and "space" This transformation is not necessarily in the migrants' initial intentions in coming to Europe, nor does it reflect their ability to actually missionize Italian population. Rather this transformation into missionaries occurs within the walls of the church with the believers' candid desire to win souls for Jesus.

In the first part of this chapter, I discuss the dialectic relationship between being a "missionary" and being an "immigrant." I examine the hierarchies embedded in the notion of "mission" and show that they are rooted in the early Christian mission to Africa. Moreover, I argue that in addition to the historical background within which this tension emerged, the contemporary context of immigrants in Europe nowadays is significant as well. The contemporary situation dictates the meaning of being a black immigrant in the EU that on the very basic level will never be included as part of European society, in part due to ideas of European citizenship. I discuss these ideas as they pertain specifically to Italian history, and more broadly to contemporary discourses of citizenship. The hierarchical position of the immigrant as a non-citizen and subaltern contradicts the historical power dynamics imbedded the idea of the missionary and mission. Yet, despite and perhaps due to the tension between the two categories of missionary and immigrant, I further suggest that the conception of mission introduces opportunities of mobility that unravel the other discourses of citizenship as linked to the believers' Christian identity.

In the second part, I explore how mobility, dictated by their geographical relocation from Africa to Europe[59] but also facilitated by their affiliation with a transnational Pentecostal church and networks, informs the life of immigrant believers in a Catholic identified state.[60] I argue that their mobility is construed by the immigrants simultaneously in two directions; First, their mobility is horizontal – within the city of Rome – between the spaces and places that unfold specific geopolitics of religious identity. Second, mobility is also envisioned as vertical, a movement through which one connects to the divine regardless of his actual place, and moves between spiritual levels of being, what Pentecostal believers describe as "moving to a higher level."

In the last part of this chapter, I discuss elements of aesthetics, and then explore them through J. Z. Smith's (1987) conceptualization of place. I discuss aesthetics as 'sensory', an understanding of aesthetics that incorporates also sensations and forms of knowledge, rather than only a shared appreciation of the visual as aesthetics are more commonly understood. Considering the portable practices and sensibilities of mobility and movement such as ecstatic prayer, joyful sounds, and bodily gestures, as will be discussed in the second part of this chapter, I argue that movement and mobility are an inseparable part of the Pentecostal aesthetics. Moreover, I argue that considering mobility as part of aesthetics allows us to understand elements of the global manifestation of the Pentecostal movement.

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[59] Members of the church I met have arrived for varied reasons and motivations. Some members I met arrived with the large immigration from West Africa to Italy in the 70's many of them came on a study scholarship, members who came in 2000's arrived for financial motivation as labor workers, others were sent through their work in places such as the UN, embassies and in global organizations.

[60] Even though the constitution of Italy recognizes the state and the Catholic church as independent and sovereign from one another, the Lateran Treaty of 1929 give special status to the Catholic church and most non-immigrant Italian-born citizens recognize themselves as Catholic.

Finally, engaging with J. Z. Smith's discussion of the imagined place and the importance of territory as an ordering master rubric, I suggest that we should conceive the Pentecostal movement as a religion that orients itself around the social rather than the spatial. Considering Smith's argument, one can maintain that the lack of a territorial center facilitates the emergence of an imagined place that the individual believer can potentially inhabit and through which he can construct a spiritual relationship with Jesus. Accordingly, I argue that occupying an imagined space, is situated within the dialectic relationship between the believers' religious ideal self-identity as missionaries and their social and political lived experiences as immigrants in Rome.

Hierarchies of mission- directions of movement

I maintain that the pervasive silence in church services about the hardship of the lives of the African immigrants (chapter one) is crucial for understanding the tension between the believers' reality as immigrants and the ideals and expectations that arise from calling oneself a missionary. For West African Pentecostals, mission is embedded in hierarchies derived from the historical Christian mission in Africa as briefly discussed in Chapter one.

Jean and John Comaroff write that in the early part of British colonial rule, there was, at least in the eyes of the missionaries, a clear division of labor and separation between politics and religion. Evangelists in South Africa understood politics as involving the control of sovereigns and parliaments over the affairs of men, whereas religion entailed the effort to gain converts, spread moral enlightenment and "civilize": "Any confusion between

the two was itself profanation" (1991: 252). Nevertheless, the ideological convictions of these two spheres were very similar; both were unyielding protagonists of imperial rule (1991: 291). The Comaroffs' study of nineteenth-century mission in South Africa unravels the European connotations of the term "conversion." Tswana people had no alternative but to be introduced into forms of European discourse through positivistic knowledge "and empirical reason at the core of bourgeois culture" (213). For Ghanaians in Europe, however, mission entails a very different meaning from that which white missionaries in South Africa had, and is no longer part of the civilizing project. Yet, in current Rome as in South Africa, mission is embedded in a moral discourse.

Considering the Comaroffs' account, Asad notes that it is important to recognize the profound displacement produced by the "conversion process." Thus, the changed epistemic structure brought about by conversion to modernity exposes a range of possibilities that are not adequately captured by the simplicity of imposed conversion and the model of "passive reception by subjects" (Asad 1996: 264-265). Following Asad, I show that 'mission' is also imbued with agency and possibilities of mobility (spiritual, geographical and social). The same European discourse described by the Comaroffs that placed the converts in the epistemic structure of the conversion process also enables the Pentecostal missionaries in Rome to share an ethical discourse with their host society. They too are Christians, and in so, share their hosts' moral stature. It is a modern Western epistemology that traveled from Europe to Africa and is now making its way back to Europe. These networks portray Pentecostalism as a process though which lines are drawn, crossed and redrawn, lines of religious, political, geographical and imagined borders. Yet, despite of the

opportunities of mobility that are embedded in the concept of mission, the examination of

the European context shows that these opportunities are restricted for immigrants,

especially those who come from the Global South. An immigrant in Europe will hardly ever

be able to become a citizen.

Immigration to Italy (referring mostly to African migrants both north and south of the

Sahara) is framed through political discourses as a security issue, which allows Italy to

justify its extreme restrictive policies, which in turn has major implications for human

rights and social inclusion (BBC 03/7/ 2009). Making immigration a security issue which

aims to protect the citizens of the host country is an act that marks borders of exclusion

and frames the immigrants as non-citizens.[61] Miriam Ticktin (2011) writes that one can be

either a citizen or human, but not both. Although based on her research in France, her

argument makes an important statement about the use of humanitarian discourses in the

larger European Union. Ticktin situates her argument within the context of the *sans-papier*

movement and the discourse on immigrants and refugees in France at the end of the 20th

century and the beginning of the 21st. She states that "once one is affirmed as part of

humanity and protected by humanitarian clauses, one loses one's political and social right"

(Ticktin 2006: 44).

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[61] Immigration is not always regarded by host countries as a threat to their national security or as a
problem. For example, at the beginning of 2017, in light of the American presidential elections' results
and the ban on immigration to the USA, Canada accepted an influx of refugees and immigrants. Its prime
minister, Justin Trudeau, said that "Canada welcomes refugees… diversify is our strength" implying that
the refugees our potential future citizens of Canada (thinkpoll.ca 01/28/17).

Among the measures that have been a cause for concern among EU partners is the Italian government's decision to declare a state of emergency in Rome, Milan and Naples in the summer of 2008, deploying troops in the streets as part of a crackdown on illegal immigration, making illegal immigration a criminal offence (BBC, 07/3/2009). A debate about immigration and immigrants' rights has been in the headlines throughout Europe and the Mediterranean.[62]

The movement of the *Sans-Papiers* in France, as well as other small demonstrations by immigrants throughout Europe, signify agency, which in public eyes, separates them from objects and positions them as humans; yet in both cases, their movement was announced as illegal and was monitored by immigration authorities who threatened to interrupt it and deny them the privilege which is reserved only for citizens. They indicate also the difficulty of ignoring them and therefore also of dehumanizing them. The stories of African immigrants in Europe reveal that the categories of 'missionary' and 'immigrant' operate in a dialectical tension reflected in the African Pentecostal believers' silence about their experiences as immigrants, which, nonetheless, shapes the believers' religious lives as missionaries.

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[62] Such stories are available throughout Europe and the Mediterranean for example in December 2013 a group of illegal Eritrean refugees in Israel started a protest of the Israeli government. They were denied a refugee status and therefore were denied a permit of stay, let alone work. The government at that time, designated a detention center (*Mitkan Cholot*) in which the Eritreans had to report and sign twice a day: in the morning and upon return in the evening. Only that the detention center was located in the south of Israel away from any work or social opportunity. The protest initiated a great public debate about the refugees "problem." On top of the humanitarian debate what stood up in the Israeli media was the disbelief that the refugees organized the protest on their own, especially given that the protest was so well organized and so-far reaching. Being a refugee and at the same time being an activist did not seem possible in the public's eye.

Considering the entanglement of these two categories, I suggest that the mobility

embedded in the role of a missionary allows us to think of another form of citizenship, not

one that is determined by the sovereignty of the nation-state, but rather one that

internalizes the exact same discourse of citizen-rights and utilizes it in order to present

another sort of legitimacy enacted by a Christian citizenship. This Christian citizenship

enables the crossing of borders and supplies the immigrant "bare life" (Agamben 1995,

2005) with the grounds to be active. Moreover, I argue that this form of Christian

citizenship further explains the growth of the Pentecostal movement throughout the world.

Due to, or rather despite the immigrants' inability to receive citizenship in their host

country, they are not part of what is sometimes referred to as 'diaspora churches,' as I

showed in chapter one. Their children who born on Italian soil are or will be part of the

Ghanaian diaspora in Italy,[63] and their churches might become diaspora churches.

However, these first-generation churches are a reminder of the migrants' original mission.

Positioned in between countries, the power folded within their Christian citizenship grants

them a sense of authority throughout the world.

The extraordinary mobility of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christian movements in the past

two decades has been largely enabled by globalization and its fluid transnational networks

that facilitate the transportation of religious messages across the world (Huwelmeier and

Krause 2010). For Ghanaian migrants, this movement is formed by the networks they

created between churches in Europe, throughout the world and back, and their home

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[63] For a broader discussion on Italian citizenship and migrants' children ability to become citizens in Italy, see chapter five.

churches in Africa. Pastors and members travel frequently within these created geographies, which in turn involve flows of money, commodities and spirit (Knibbe 2010).

Horizontal movements and the geo-politics of religious spaces:

During my initial survey of immigrant churches around Rome, I learnt about an Ethiopian church not far from my neighborhood, on the outskirts of one of Rome's largest immigrant areas. The church was located in a large Catholic center surrounded by a gate. When I asked the gatekeeper of the compound about the location of the church, he pointed and nodded: "over there." When I also asked if he knew the church or if he talked to its members, he said "*Io*[me]*? NO*," as he pointed his finger to his heart, and shook his head. When I pressed him to explain, he laughed and said "*non voglio nessuno con loro"* [I do not want anything to do with them] and did the infamous Italian gesture of the palm of the hand flicking from the chin out indicating his dismissal. When I later talked to the pastor of that church, he expressed, like many other pastors I had interviewed, his congregation's desire to get their own place for worship. They wished to buy a property where they could permanently settle their church and 'not be bothered anymore by the Catholics.' Very few of the church communities I visited were able to buy a property of their own, but many of them continued to mention it as a principal ambition. In reality, their need to rent a place meant that churches are forced to adapt themselves according to time, area, and sometimes the grace of churches of other denominations. As result, Pentecostal immigrant churches were often forced to leave and change their location within the city space.

Many of the churches that rented a venue for worship do so in areas in the city where transportation is accessible. They often rent their hall from Catholic churches that stand vacant most days of the year. Their presence in the space is clearly noticeable as their loud singing attracts the attention of passersby, even if just for a moment. Yet, their presence in the church building depends on the grace of their Italian (and often Catholic) landlords, who often protest that they get complaints about noise from residents and nearby businesses – a common dynamic between Pentecostal migrant churches and local residents (Smit 2009). However, sometimes this dynamic actually reinforces the visibility of African Pentecostal members in the urban landscape. For example, the landlord of *Elim Temple*, a small size church that rented a prayer hall in a building from another Presbyterian church in the center of the city, told the pastor that "they were perfect tenants" and when the pastor apologized that they might have been too loud sometimes, the minister reportedly replied that "we [Presbyterians] are too cold and quiet and when we hear on the fifth floor your loud singing [the Pentecostals] it pulls us up in spirit."

The pastor of the CoP's branch in Rome, which is one of the largest and oldest Ghanaian churches in Italy, described how they too, at first, rented a place from a Catholic church, but went through many hardships worshipping there. He added: "people did not even greet us hello, and were just looking for an excuse to kick us out." They finally were required to leave as their form of worship, they were told, "was too loud."

Years after they bought a warehouse that they converted to a church in the city's southern part, the church also attempted to open a second branch in Rome. Planting a new church or

expanding to further churches depends on networks that locally and globally form a transnational network of churches. If a church member, for example, were to work for a company and be offered a new position which requires him to relocate to another city or another country, he would be encouraged to plant a new daughter-church[64] in order to support the church where he was spiritually fed.

One of the members of this church was Mila, a Filipino woman who converted and joined the church thanks to her Ghanaian co-worker. Mila was also a singer and in her musical concerts, she linked her gospel singing to her new devout Pentecostal belief. In one of the concerts, some of her Filipino friends, moved by her candid singing, also showed interest in her new belief. The pastors and members of the church who were present at the event took it as a sign of growth and saw it as an opportunity to plant a new daughter church in the city, one that would be more accessible to the potential Filipino converts. They found a small venue – a community cultural center, in the northern part of town in a neighborhood close to the Vatican and more importantly in proximity to the Filipino Embassy, assuming it will be more convenient to potential Filipino comers. Some of the more fervent members of the church were selected to go to the new location and help "plant" the new church, fulfilling their missionary role. In their first meeting, on a cold Sunday morning, I wrote in my fieldwork journal:

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[64] See a more through discussion on the significant of idioms such as 'planting'; 'daughter-church'; 'vessel' and 'nourishment' on chapter 1.

It is a little before 10 am; the members gathered in the canter, which was the bottom floor of a residential building. Typically, in this church, one walks in and the noises of squeaking shoes, the dropping of bags and the sounds of coats been taken off blend into the sounds of ecstatic worship and the tambourines; yet it was awfully quiet and all the participants were sitting down and talking quietly; not the 'quiet' that is created from an intimate prayer. One woman, in response to a verse someone quoted, spontaneously started to sing (as is often expected) and everybody immediately shushed her. The pastor explained: "this morning when we wanted to start worship we were told we are not allowed to sing before 11AM so that we will not disturb the neighbors who rest on Sunday morning." The members seemed bothered by it and so was the pastor, which repeated the story to emphasize the message of his preaching and the lack of morality in the general society.

At the end of the official service, the members stayed for another hour to discuss the option of '*planting a church,*' a term that describes the establishment of new churches or church branches. The church members who attended, considered whether planting a church, in general and specifically in this location, was a good idea. There was a heated argument, given that no Filipino person appeared. Some members said it is impossible to worship this way; others said that they want to go back to their church so they can properly 'show the lord the glory he deserves;' and others, reminding the rest their duty as missionaries, explained that they should not give up-- planting a church is always hard and if they cannot worship early they will start next week at 10:30 so that by 11 they can start worshipping the way they need to. They agreed to this and made a plan how to get new Filipino

members to come. Volunteers were selected to make mission statement cards and others to evangelize in the morning of the service at the nearby streets.

Despite their decision, the following Sunday there was no meeting. During the passing week it was decided that it was "not a good spot" and thus, "not a good timing" to plant a church. When I later met Mila, the Filipino member who initiated the move, she said: "the members decided it was just not a good location. It might still happen at some point just not now," she added. And with that decision – the nearly new branch was closed. Mila was right. She did gain access to the Filipino community a year after this incidence, when she left the church of Pentecost and joined Lighthouse Chapel International, another Ghanaian Pentecostal Church,[65] where she brought in with her several Filipino members and became a leading member of the church.

Location and attendance

As can be seen from this vignette, the manner of worship of African Pentecostal church members is conceived loud and disruptive for the Sunday morning peace and quiet of the city's neighborhoods. To worship this way, believers end up traveling every Sunday morning all over the region. When a church is finally able to buy a space for their congregation, they often relocate to less populated areas, where they can freely praise and worship as loud as their body and spirit direct them. The market price of the land in Rome

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[65] Light House Chapel INTL., the same church that the Pastor and his family attended in Bolgatanga, Ghana, is a well-known Ghanaian Charismatic Mega-Church that opened a branch in Rome a few months after I finished my fieldwork.

and the city's social and economic demographics create a geography in which the buildings

of the Pentecostal churches are, by and large, located in the southern suburbs and in the

southern outskirts, further distant from the city's center. The churches in the southern

parts of the city are usually found in structures that are repurposed as worship places, but

had in the past or may still have during the daytime a different purpose. These church

structures are like the "storefront churches" established by immigrants in inner city

neighborhoods like Harlem, NYC in the 1930's (Harvell 2010). Like the storefront churches

in the USA, here too churches are associated with the mass migration of Africans to Europe.

However, unlike the storefront churches in NYC, the African churches' location in Rome,

often is not meant to create a sense of accessibility to the passersby. In fact, sensitive

immigration situations, as well as the prevalence of race-based-violence require a sense of

confidentiality and caution.

Figure 9, 10, & 11.
Pentecostal African churches in various locations in Rome. Top left: Entrance to a church in an   industrial zone. Bottom left: Aurelia, the cultural center where the new sister church of CoP was   intended to open (01/2014); Right: a street in the southern part of Rome, where one of the Ghanaian Pentecostal churches is located (05/2014). Photos by author.

The new place of the COP was located for years in the middle of an industrial zone on the

outskirts of Rome. One could pass by without ever guessing there was a church there, lost

between the warehouses and the dingy motels, especially during weekdays, when the

church's doors were closed. This was not unusual. Most churches I visited were located in

basements and garages that when closed gave no sign that a vibrant church meets there

every Sunday. Such geography completes a circle that marginalizes these churches and

their members even further by making them less visible in the public space. As one

member said to me, "If they [the Italians] do not see us, we do not bother them, how do you say in America? —'Out of sight out of mind'."

On the other hand, the small rented churches are often located in the city center and in northern Rome. *ICGC*, for example, was located right in the middle of the *Centro Storico*. Yet, their location was perceived as a limitation rather than an opportunity, as it dictated the conditions of their services and in their eyes, also limited their ability to expand. Since they rented the prayer hall from an active church, the Pentecostal service could only took place in the late afternoons, from 3pm-6pm, as in the morning the church was in use, and after 6 PM, there were often musical concerts. Given its location right in front of Castello San Angelo and on the route to Vatican City, the church often attracted many tourists who visited the area. Passersby hear the singing and walk in, hoping to take some pictures of an active church in the city, where churches have long become tourist sites. However, they are surprised to find inside an African congregation. Nevertheless, before leaving, they take some pictures of the dancing, and perhaps stay to listen for a few minutes, dancing a bit and wiggling with their backpacks excited by the 'exotic' church they found. At first, every time someone walked in, a member would hand them a bookmark with pictures of the church, contact numbers, and a blank member page to fill in (which they never did), perhaps hoping to gather a few more members.[66]

In a conversation I had on the way back from a service, Brother Michael, the teacher of the Bible lessons, said to me: "if we could only get our own place we would for sure get more

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[66] The same card and member page that was handed to me the first time I visited that church.

members. Us Africans are used to worship in the morning. This is what we do in Ghana. SUNDAY MORNING YOU GO TO CHURCH." Reconsidering his words, he then added: "The devout believers would come anywhere and no matter what time, but all the rest… even if it would be much further away from the city center, people would come if we could worship in the morning, for as long as we want. And our sister would not have to leave early so she can catch the train back home, or not make it because there is a marathon that day and the city is closed for transportation."

The literature on migrant churches often portrays the church members as powerless in their host society (Levitt 2003; Okyerefo and Perry 2014). However, the churches I encountered view their mobility and their spatial location, in spite of it being "forced," as a form of moving forward. They do not ask for the help of authorities or complain of being unrecognized as a church registered as mere 'cultural centers.'[67] Rather, they see themselves as active agents of religion. Their "forced" mobility is an opportunity to move forward, to pray harder, and to work towards buying a place. The goal of buying a permanent property and setting "the facts on the ground" is reinforced by their geographical movement. Knibbe (2010) shows that buying a property is important to creating transnational spaces and geographies. The acquisition of a new prayer house for a

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[67] According to the Italian constitution all religious groups have the freedom to act, however, there are only several other non-Catholic denominations and religious groups that are recognized by law as religious institutions. These include: Judaism, Seventh day-Adventists, Lutheran, Waldensian/ Methodists, Hindu, Buddhist, Apostolic and Orthodox. All other religious groups are registered not as worship places but as cultural centers belonged to cultural organizations. In this manner, Pentecostal churches are recognized as cultural centers.
http://www.senato.it/documenti/repository/istituzione/costituzione_inglese.pdf

Nigerian church in Amsterdam might be, then, linked to the European head church in London and to the prayer city near Ibadan, Nigeria. In fact, it can be interlinked with all those other buildings and campgrounds that are planned to become prayer cities - a city-like area that is established around a certain mega church, organized by affiliated members all over the world. In doing so, such networks of buildings create a tangible worldwide geography (Knibbe, 2010). An affiliation with this created-geography of networks provides the believers a form of legitimacy for their actions around the world.

Many Pentecostal churches understand prosperity and being born again as two sides of the same coin. They represent God's blessing (Marshall–Fratani 2001; Maxwell 1998; Meyer 2004). Prosperity is interpreted on many levels - from flashy cars and expensive suits worn by pastors to the Churches' buildings and spaces of worship. As Brother Michael's statement implies, property ownership is an indication of the growth of the church and more importantly indicates to the members their prosperity, both financial (they managed to buy a plot) and spiritual (they have done so with the grace of God), thus, moving to a higher level. [68] The triumph in owning their own property transforms the believers - literarily and metaphorically - from guests to landlords in their new land. Knibbe's (2009, 2010) discussion describes how the issue of owning a place was central to the missionary discourse she encountered in the large Nigerian church she visited in London. The notion of 'owning' reinforces the life stories that pastors narrate, of how, for example, they gave up a

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[68]Why churches do not manage to buy a place if it is direct indication of their blessing? This question is not asked as it might be interpreted as unholy doubt that has no place for true believers in a church. But for someone from the outside, such secular question usually would get you an answer of this sort: God is all mighty and he is always with you, even when you think you feel you are alone, but remember his ways are not your ways and until then you need to show your devotion and trust his ways".

successful career in banking in Nigeria in order to come to Europe. They, thus, came as (successful) missionaries and not helpless migrants. However, in reality, aside from the church leadership, most church members come as labor migrants looking for financial opportunities. This aspect is important, as it illuminates the limitation in which one can be considered a missionary. Considering the importance of locality in the analysis of displaced people,[69] if we think of Pentecostal missionaries in general, and specifically African Pentecostals in Europe, as displaced from their homeland as many labor migrants are, we might situate the transition from migrant to missionary as parallel to the relationship between center and periphery. At the entrance to the church, the believer leaves his peripheral immigrant status and becomes a central disciple of God.

The ability to buy a place is not one that can be achieved in the near future, and often remains as a long-term goal of the congregation. It depends on the believers themselves, as they need to fulfill the promise to be able to supply those empty seats with believers. Examining the Seventh-Day Adventist Ghanaian Church in Amsterdam, Koning (2009) distinguishes between 'space' and 'place' in relation to the gap between the mission statement of the church and their actual success in gathering of outside members. She refers to space as 'potentiality' and to place as 'actuality' and argues that mission or missionary identity is embedded in the dialectics of potentiality and actuality (Koning 2009). In doing so, she reminds us that spatial practices are important for configuring the material practices of global Pentecostalism, and suggests how these transnational networks are built.

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[69] For the importance of locality on diasporic religion see for example Tweed (1997)

However, we should note not only when churches succeed in obtaining their own place, but also the many cases of churches that fail to do so, as they too intersect with local networks transforming the cities' religious landscapes and affect local policies. Koning's argument is situated within a larger discussion in Anthropology about 'space' and 'place;" yet, her central contribution to refining the two terms is rather in her attempt to link between 'place' and its meaning to the growth of the Pentecostal movement. Following Koning's argument, I suggest that while actual 'places,' like the prayer home of the Church of Pentecost, the rented hall of the ICGC, or more expansively, the planting of new churches throughout the world – too contribute to the potentiality of making a transnational space for the Pentecostal movement. This network of 'places' or church buildings creates a transnational space organized by affiliated Christian-Pentecostal members all over the world.

The building of the church is significant not only as a transnational space making, in which members "contribute" their place to form a Pentecostal network; but equally so, on the local level of the host country. Owning a place allows the believers to transition from guests to landlords, if not bureaucratically as citizens of the Italian state, then metaphorically. Yet, owning a place does not make them landlords in Italy or European citizens; rather, to the contrary, it positions them as second class citizens in Italy. This ownership does, however, position them as landlords spiritually, and to an extent, reinforces their belief as citizens of God's kingdom. The duality of a person's identity as a missionary and an immigrant makes

the church both physically and ideally a place that generates moments in which one can become a missionary.

Members of the church often talk about the church as their home, a space where they feel the happiest. The creation of a physical place for the congregation resembles the process of 'home-making.' Yet, the assembled setting clearly depends on the status of that physical space in relation to its inhabitants. When a place is owned, it is decorated to create a sense of permanency, whereas when a church is rented, the setting is reconstructed each week. In both cases, the setting is comprised of impermanent objects that include a sound system, monitors, and other electronic equipment, as well as banners, signs, and fabrics. When the church is set in a temporary site, the materials are more compact so they would be easy to pack away at the end of the service and reassembled at the beginning of the next one.

Back on the Trenini

Coming off the *trenini* and looking for the Church of Pentecost, I walk through the street that goes off a main route. The instructions that were given stated that "you will see the auto factory on the corner so you'll know this is the right street." It was an industrial area on the southern suburbs of the city. I walk through piles of waste spilling out of the streets' large green garbage bins; behind me are a few residential buildings scattered among the closed auto shops and warehouses deserted for the weekend. On a small alley of what looks like another warehouse, I find a small sign on the wall written in red bold letters – '*The church of Pentecost*' and underneath it in Italian: *'Chiesa Pnetecostali'* with an arrow

pointing left. I hear the singing but see nothing on the outside that indicates of the church. I follow the voices and find myself at a gated warehouse; a few kids play on the outside. A small restroom structure was added next to it; a few women gather there and rearrange their dresses. I walk inside through the glass double doors into a dark large room illuminated by the white florescent fixtures. The walls are covered with burgundy and light blue colored satin curtains stretched from the ceiling down, decorated with shiny red white and blue gift bows.

As I walk in, I am overwhelmed by the loud shrieking sounds coming out of the four speakers, set on each corner of the room. The volume is turned on louder and is controlled by a large sound system set at the back, right next to the door. I feel a cold chill on my skin and notice the small white air-conditioner boxes surrounding the room; they operate on full power, making a sharp contrast to the steaming temperature outside. Still at the entrance, my eyes wander to the stage located right in front of the entrance; above it hangs a large banner informing whoever walks in where they are and what is the business of the place:

<div align="center">
The Church of Pentecost- ROME DISTRICT
District theme for the year 2013: PREPARE TO MEET YOUR GOD!
International Theme 2013: Worshiping in Spirit and in Truth
</div>

On stage, there is a speaking podium made from clear plastic, with the symbol of the church engraved on it. Behind it are five chairs for the church elders. The middle one - larger than the others and padded with decorative pillows - is reserved for the pastor. Lines of black plastic chairs are arranged between the stage and the entrance; their back is marked with the initials 'CoP' in white paint. There are about 12 rows of chairs cut in the middle by a red

carpet - leading all the way to the stage and dividing the room into two halves. The chairs on the left of the carpet are for the men, and the women sit on the right. In total, the hall could sit over 120 people. On the foot of the stage there is some space; on the left side is the band and their instruments, and on the right side there is one line of chairs parallel to the wall, which is where the Pastor's wife and a few of the other elders' wives sit. The setting creates a space that is completely isolated from the outside world; even the single small window on the left wall was covered with curtains as part of the wall's burgundy panel. The banner hanged from the high ceiling and the marking on the chairs all attest to the ownership of the space. Like a family-name-sign at the doorway of a house, they tell visitors about its residents. The pots of (plastic) flowers scattered on stage add the personal touch of a vase on the dining table. They are here to stay.

Unlike the CoP, who owned the church's structure, the facility in which ICGC meet was originally designated as a church. Architecturally it looks like what one would expect a traditional church to look like especially in Rome. A central altar made of carved stone rises about 7ft above the floor; marvel pillars; rows of dark wood benches with kneeling steps and hymn books tacked on their back; mosaic floors and stained glass windows. There is a large wooden cross the center, hanging exactly above the podium of the altar guarding the churches' shepherd. The outside is a beautiful stone building with heavy arch wooden doors, resting on the banks of the Tiber River looking towards Vatican City. The space reflects everything you would expect from a church in Rome, but not from an African Pentecostal church.

The silence and order dictated by the architecture and the interior are contradictory to the joyful Pentecostal aesthetics. The tight rows of benches restrict the movement of the believers preventing them from dancing as they worship. The tall ceilings create a vibrating echo with the loud singing; even the whiteness of the walls creates an atmosphere of restraint which does not blend in with the colorful African fabrics of the women's gowns. Every service starts with repurposing the setting. The pastor's children and some of the church's members help carry and set the computer, a screen and portable sound system with several microphones. Two large African drums are placed next to the black grand piano; a bag of tambourines and shakers are also added spread around the benches. A large box containing forms and advertisement material is placed on the back bench; it holds the small red cash box that contains the church's funds including offerings collected during praise and the monthly tithes, a portion of the member's salary that is given to the Church. At the end of service each week, all the members help pack up the equipment, leaving the space clear of any trace of their presence.

The materiality of the church's space allows the members to reconstruct a complete "material world" (Fehervary 2013) each week. In her analysis of Post-socialist Hungary, Fehervary uses "material worlds" instead of using "space." In doing so she emphasizes the experienced materiality of the home as an inhabited place which includes the smells, sounds, furnishing, décor, and the felt presence of other inhabitants along with the awareness of the external context which shapes the place (2013: 246). Her analysis shows that the dwelling, which is called home, offers on the one hand, shelter from the outside world, and on the other, has the ability to construct the outside world (2013: 233).

The church building in many ways provides shelter from the outside difficulties and the hostility of the host society and its harsh bureaucratic policies. Members of the church never stop being immigrants in the eyes of their host society; yet in their own eyes, they never stop being believers either. In 'nesting' their own place, members turn a general space to their own place "making it into a church" that becomes part of the network of places of the transnational world and facilitates the transition of becoming a missionary. In so, members help construct the outside world where they missionize. Indeed, in addition to the materiality of church décor and dress, language is another component of the materiality of the church as a home, which, in turn, indicates, on the one hand, the presence of its inhabitants and provides them with shelter as immigrants, and on the other hand, constructs the outside world from a religious perspective.

While the service usually takes place in English and Twi, both official languages of Ghana, they are often translated into Italian as well. When I first arrived at the church of Pentecost, a woman came to me to ask if I speak Italian: *"parla italiano, vero?"* I did not realize she was trying to verify that I am Italian, and therefore, I answered yes. As a result, the service took place in English and was translated to Italian, mainly for me. However, services often were given at some level in the three languages, English, Twi and Italian. While Twi and English were regularly present in services, Italian the host country's language, was accommodated only at the presence of "potential Italian converts", and in church was the alien language.

Language unfolds here on two different levels; it first annotates the missionary purpose of the church, but also expresses the notion of "own" and home making, a place where one can return to his/her native language. Twi, for example, is spoken to accommodate the church community, the vast majority of it Ghanaian.[70] Even though members of the church came from different regions of Ghana and therefore spoke different languages such as Ga, they all (as far as I know) also speak Twi. Twi is a "familiar sound that reminded you of your real-home" as one member told me; it was familiar and comfortable. This notion of home is further emphasized when examine how each language is used, beyond the regular translation of the service. In many of the services I attended, when humor was used during preaching, the pastor or the speaker often switched to Twi. In addition, Twi was used occasionally when members gave testimonies, often when those were related to family members or travel to Ghana indicating their personal nature. In ICGC, which rarely had Italian translation during their services, Twi was used in songs members dedicated to other individuals in certain occasions such as birthdays or as personal prayer songs (however, prayer songs sang collectively in church were almost exclusively sang in English).

Yet, beyond the personal affect language had on members inside the church, English and Italian purposed different goals. English was a universal 'lingua franca' or a mission language to make service accessible for any new believers that might come. This was true

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[70] Twi is an Akan language spoken in southern Ghana. While the variety of languages in Ghana is wide, and some of the members' mother tongue was not Twi, but rather Ga, it was assumed that all members knew Twi. While I do not have statistical information on all the church members, this aspect correlates with the presence of Christianity in Ghana, which is widespread in the south and less so in the Northern regions. Thus, we can assume that if not all, certainly the majority of members in the Rome branch were southern Ghanaians.

in every Pentecostal West African church I visited throughout Italy and Europe. English

represented the worldly orientation of these churches. Italian was used much like English

as a mission language that was specific for the local context; its purpose was to

accommodate new local potential converts. Thus, language serves an important component

in the mission statement even if at times it represents only potentiality. Paradoxically,

throughout the entire time of my fieldwork in the Church of Pentecost, I can recall only

three services where Italians were present - one of which was during a wedding, when the

couple who renewed their vows to each other invited several of their local friends, who

probably were not potential converts. Yet, the consistent use of Italian in the in services is

an indication of the church's missionary vision.

Vertical movement - moving to a higher level

While the horizontal movement is reflected on the institutional level, the vertical

movement, from migrants to missionaries, lays at the very heart of the Pentecostal belief in

Rome. Beyond the horizontal geography of the city, mobility amongst African immigrant

Pentecostals necessarily involves a vertical movement, or in other words, "moving to a

higher level" as the believers refer to it. It denotes the transcendental movement of the

body and the spirit during prayer, enabled by the person's belief and facilitated by the

pastor and other members.[71] This movement can also be facilitated through music

(Ramirez 2004) and images (Meyer 2010a).

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[71] I rely here on the work of anthropologists studying Pentecostalism in West Africa that showed its focus on sensational experiences of the body and the self (Meyer 2010b; Marshall 2009; Witte 2008), as well as the role of space, place and territories (Knibbe 2010; Koning 2009; Smit 2009; Van Der Meulen 2009).

The movement of the body, spirit and self, facilitates the believers' transformation into Pentecostal missionaries. Such 'body-movement' as a form of communicating is learnt at a very young age as can be seen from the children's song-dance taught in one of the churches' Bible schools in Rome:

> *Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones*
> *Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones*
> *Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones*
> *Now, hear the word of the Lord!*
> *The toe bone's connected to the foot bone;*
> *the foot bone's connected*
> *to the ankle bone;*
> *and the ankle bone's connected to shin bone[...]*
> *and the knee bone connected*
> *to the hip bone,*
> *and they're all joined to serve the lord...*
> *and the hip bone connected*
> *to the back bone and back back bone connected*
> *to the shoulder bone, and the shoulder bone connected*
> *to the neck bone, and the neck bone connected*
> *to the head bone and they're all joined to serve the lord!..."*

The children all dance together, placing hands on the body part that was named and finally lifting their hands up in the air. The movement of the body as instructed in the song is similar to the body movements an older member of the church conducts during prayer, channeling the entire body into the act of worship. These bodily practices continue later in the believers' lives, in various forms of prayer and worship, and reassert one's conversion.

Building on these I aim to show how the movement of the body, spirit and self-facilitate the believers' transformation to Pentecostal missionaries.

Once in a while (usually on a yearly basis) pastors baptize a number of members from their church, who wish to convert or reaffirm their conversion by being baptized for the second time. The first baptism occurs when the believers are babies if they were born to a Christian family, whereas the second conversion expresses the believers' individual choice to be born-again and their personal relationship with Jesus and his acceptance as their sole savior. The baptism takes place in a park (which changes every year) on a river in the Lazio area. Members arrive wearing white. The pastor and another member stand in the water and invite each member one by one to come into the water; the pastor and an assistant support the member who is being baptized from each side. The pastor lays his hand on the member's forehead and then he and his assistant quickly dunk the believer into the water, and immediately assist him or her to get up.

During the baptism, the entire church stands on the bank of the river praying and singing. The preparation for a baptism starts several weeks prior to the event. In the service before such a baptism, the pastor anointed the eight members who were about to be baptized, saying:

> As far as the east is from the west, you are far from your past; from today you are a new person. Your past is gone. TODAY! The devil will come remind you of your past, but tell him that it was long time ago, you are now with JESUS!! You are headed towards paradise! That is your destiny! TODAY! You are now fighting souls for heaven, for Jesus! People share things on Facebook and all these places, you too, say: **I – WILL – SHARE!! - I – WILL – SHARE!!...** If we had our own space we would have a party and dance all night [All respond by AMEN, followed by repeating the word "WINNER! WINNER! WINNER! ... Louder and louder]

These physical worship practices as well as the pastor's speech do not only identify the body as a vessel between the believer and the Holy Spirit, but also express the

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transformation that believers undergo in church with their responsibility to missionize (or

"share"). This can be seen for example in the following excerpt taken from the Prophetic

declaration of the ICGC:[72]

O LORD MY GOD HOW MAJESTIC
IS YOUR NAME IN ALL THE EARTH
YOU SUBDUE THE WAVES
YOU CALM THE WINDS
YOU SATISFY THE MOUTH WITH GOOD THINGS
THEREFORE I OFFER MY LIFE; MY ALL
YOU ARE MY BEGINNING AND MY END
YOURS IS THE KINGDOM
THE POWER AND THE GLORY
FOREVER AND EVER, AMEN.[73]

This 'Prophetic Declaration,' based on psalms from the book of Solomon, calls members to

take ownership of their religious and everyday lives and to dedicate their lives to the

mission of God. It is recited every week in service and in particular services that emphasize

the role of members as victorious missionaries rather than as powerless immigrants. The

notion of victory in both descriptions is part of members' identity as Christian citizens.

Movement as aesthetics

Hardin examines practices of Kono ideas of preference and value in Sierra Leone (1993).

She focuses on the interplay between structure and action and considers both agency and

the practices through which individual actions are set into the social and cultural forms

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[72] Capitalized in original
[73] This prophetic declaration is based on psalms from the book of Solomon. It is idiosyncratic to use psalms and verses to explain certain events in the believers' lives.

that in turn structure future action. Hardin argues that aesthetics is what mediates

between structure and action: "a dynamic force in constituting sociocultural formations

rather than a mere reflection or after effect of such formations." Aesthetics, she explains, is

often found in the form that is considered art in a Euro-American setting and is separated

from everyday experiences. Her approach does not denounce the artistic altogether; rather

it seeks to emphasize the linkage between it and everyday experiences.

In referring to aesthetics in the Euro-American setting, Hardin in fact conceives aesthetics,

as it is commonly understood, in the way Kant addresses it as the domains of art, which can

be shared by others. Relying on Kant's perception of aesthetics, Weber draws in *The*

Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism a distinction between the "magical religions"

that link the practice in rituals and objects (such as Catholicism), and the "salvation

religions," which focus on the experience, and therefore, denounce objects, and with it, the

concept of aesthetics (such as Protestantism) (Weber [1905] 2012: 105; also see Weber,

[1920] 1951: 226-227). In her recent call to reconsider religion as aesthetics, Birgit Meyer

(2010) takes a step further from Hardin and from Kant. She suggests that by relating to

aesthetics as sensory aesthetics, which includes sensations and knowledge, or 'all that can

be grasped in the five senses,' as originally described by Aristotle, rather than the modern

perception of aesthetics as explained by Kant, we can allow a new understanding of religion

that challenges the Weberian separation between *magical religions* and *salvation religions.*

This separation assumes that salvation religions leave aesthetics and form behind, a

separation that guides scholars of religion to this day and is misleading when considering

Pentecostalism. Specifically, this new-old examination of aesthetics permits a more comprehensive framework for studying Pentecostalism.

In using this understanding of aesthetics, I refer to the wider array of practices that are inherent to Pentecostal religiosity including movement as I will discuss here, and temporality[74] as I will show in the following chapter. In the section above on vertical movement, aesthetics involves practices of sensational forms and a moral sense such as ecstatic prayer, joyful sounds, and bodily gestures through which worshipers experience the Holy Spirit (Meyer 2008, 2010). I suggest that while social mobility and accessibility have long been characteristics of charismatic religions, another aspect of mobility and movement and its relationship with place should be considered as part of Pentecostal aesthetics. Movement and its relationship with place as I have discussed in this chapter are intertwined in shaping and facilitating those practices of Pentecostal religiosity. A Pentecostal place (a church) influences aspects of noise and the setting, which, in turn, facilitate the believers' transformation from immigrants into missionaries. Moreover, I argue that movement and place as they were presented in this chapter can significantly contribute to the understanding of the global spread of Pentecostalism.

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[74] In chapter four I continue the discussion of Pentecostal aesthetics and add to it the element of temporality. Examining practices of spatiality and temporality allows a new understanding of aesthetics in general and particularly the Pentecostal aesthetics. Such aesthetics I argue is crucial for understanding the Pentecostal believers as Christian citizens.

Religion as a process of socially configured space

Smith (1987) suggests that religion can be understood as an ongoing cultural process in which individuals and groups map, construct and inhabit worlds of meaning followed by emotional bonds with spaces and places. He argues that territory is dominant in the study of religions because it is an ordering master rubric. However, are there religions that are not organized around territory? The Pentecostal community is spreading around the world; although there are religious centers, it is primarily oriented towards social configurations, rather than territorial orientation. Considering the first part of Smith's argument, one can infer that the lack of a physical territory permits the availability of an imagined place, which one can inhabit potentially and through which one can construct a spiritual relationship with the divine. However, Smith's argument addresses religions that are tied to a "place," whereas Pentecostalism is in its current formation and as it continues to evolve, a globalized religion. Still, place is an organizing category and plays a significant role in the way believers interact with the divine. Perhaps then, we might take Smith's argument a step further and offer an interpretation of space as an element of the material and a form of aesthetics. The space believers weekly construct or imagine indicates the materiality of the religious experience (or the constraint of it). The material constrains of encompassing an imagined space result from the dialectic relationship between the ideals of believers' religious self-identity as missionaries and their social and political lived experiences as immigrants in Rome. As a result, members move from immigrants to missionaries, or in other words, from social periphery to the center. Contextualizing African Pentecostalism in a dominantly Catholic white society raises interesting questions of belonging, assimilation and moreover, the aesthetics of religiosity. In the Italian sphere,

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Pentecostal believers move within a local form of Catholicism. Thus, in spite of, or perhaps because of its positionality within, and in contrast to the Catholic realm, the Pentecostal aesthetics becomes even more explicit.

In *To Take Place (1987)*, Smith opens his discussion with Eliade's analysis of the Axis Mundi as it is presented in the myth of Northern Aranda Tjilpa, an aboriginal group in Australia. According to this Myth, the Tjilpa have a pole, which, Eliade argues, represents a sacred axis that makes territory as "habitable" by maintaining contact between heaven and earth and thus creating a center to the cosmos, which in turn organizes the sacred and the profane. If the Pole breaks, it would represent the death of the ancestors and thus the end of the world (Eliade 1957). Smith, however, argues that Eliade's reading of the Tjilpa myth is misguided and that Eliade's analysis disregards elements of event and memory that create an etiology for a topographical feature in the aboriginal landscape of today and by extension, ways of conceiving of place in the study of religion (Smith 1987: 10). Smith says that the emphasis of the myth therefore is not the dramatic creation of the world out of chaos by transcendent beings, or the rupture of these beings from humans, as Eliade argues, but rather the transformation and continuity through the creation of places in which, the ancestors remain accessible. In so, there is only structural limitation, such as attention and memory on the number, of "places" of ancestral objectification created by the group, which generates some sense of arbitrariness of place (Smith 1987: 15).

While arbitrariness may reflect, the place assigned to founding a sacred space, the meaning that is attributed to the place is far from arbitrary, nor is the meaning and consequences

that it carries in the social realm. Smith's analysis of the religious place is particularly

beneficial since he examines ritual in relation to place. He stresses the importance of place

in constructing ritual environments and transforming "empty" spaces and actions into

rituals (Smith 1987). Smith's theory shows how spaces in the city become meaningful

religious places. In this way, owning a space for the African Pentecostal churches in Rome

does not only indicate their moving forward in terms of ownership in a new land, but also

allows them to construct a place that will allow them to preform ritual and spiritually move

forward, that is, "moving to a higher level."

Moreover, Smith's theory explains, on the one hand, why owning a place receives such a

significance for African Pentecostal churches. This is evident in the discussion above

regarding the idea of owning a place and the materiality invested in it. Yet, on the other

hand it emphasizes the insignificance of the location of the space used by the church, or

more accurately, the seemingly arbitrariness in choosing the location.[75] Thus, place

becomes both significant in certain aspects of generating spirituality and distinguishing

immigrant life from mission life, and insignificant as the ordering rubric of the 'center of

the cosmos.' Its insignificance in that sense allows flexibility of location (even imagined),

which rather emphasizes the transformation and continuity through the creation of places

where the ancestors remain accessible as Smith argues. Therefore, planting churches and

daughter churches that in themselves become centers of the cosmos, allow the Pentecostal

believer to move to a higher-level anywhere around the world. Thus, this duality of

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[75] In 'arbitrariness' I do not aim to suggest that it is random, there are many factors influencing of the location- such as availability and price. However, it terms of religious purposes and theology, the location is not important as long as it allows access for believers.

significance and insignificance in relation to place creates an ethic of mission and aesthetics of movement that are crucial for configuring the Pentecostal global outreach.[76]

Conclusion

This discussion has sought to continue the work of recent studies that aim to reveal more particular aspects of the global Pentecostal phenomenon, and to add a deeper analysis to the broad explanation of the movements' growth that has dominated the scholarly debate in the past decade. Examining African Pentecostal aesthetics in Europe raises questions about what it means to be a missionary and what mission is. The aesthetics of Pentecostal missionaries and their work forces us to move away from a perception of "immigrant churches," a term that does not reflect what "Pentecostal aesthetics" stand for. In the process of moving to a higher level, believers are transformed from powerless immigrants to missionaries, even if just for a few hours, within the confines of their church.

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[76] The relationship of the Pentecostal movement with place sharpens the fact that the African churches in Europe are not diasporal churches.

Chapter IV:

Becoming Christian Citizens

> "Now therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." (Ephesians 2:19, KJV)

In the previous chapters, I presented the idea of Christian citizenship and discussed the church as a space through which a global Christian citizenship is being shaped and preformed. In this chapter, I suggest that this Christian citizenship embodies moral conduct, which forms a discourse of moral distinction between the missionaries and the host nation state. Moreover, I show that Christian citizenship unfolds in it a Pentecostal temporality of the "near future." For the African Pentecostal migrants, such temporality is used to mediate between the dissonance of being an immigrant and being a missionary.

First, I continue the discussion of Pentecostal aesthetics which I started in the previous chapter, and briefly compare it to the Catholic aesthetics as the dominant Italian religious framework.[77] In this part, I show that there seems to be a rhetoric of distinction in regard to Pentecostal immigrant churches, which is used by Italian churches to differentiate themselves from the African Pentecostal churches. I further continue with the discussion of Meyer's understanding of aesthetics, which I started in chapter three, and suggest that in

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[77] According to Garelli (2012) more than 86% of Italians declare themselves Catholic. However, Butticci shows that the level of participation and the degree of commitment to the Catholic church varies greatly (Butticci 2012)

addition to space, time functions as another significant facet of aesthetics.

Next, I show that a discourse of moral distinction is also employed by the African churches, who use it to distinguish themselves from their host society. Members view Europe and their host city as "immoral" and viewing Italian Catholics as "idol worshipers." Their hosts' immorality stands in contrast to their own moral behavior, which enables them to build themselves as moral citizens, and thus, Christian citizens. I examine how Christian citizenship corresponds to national citizenship, exploring elements of sovereignty, governmentality, and citizenship participation. I build on recent scholars' understanding of employed morality as forms of participating in Christian citizenship. Thus, the Pentecostal African believers' non-citizenship in their host society is countered by their Christian citizenship, which is manifested and affirmed in moral behavior in the form of praying, giving tithes, donations and other social contributions.

In the last part of this chapter, I explore how the discourse of morality as discussed in church services is viewed as confirming the idea that believers can directly influence their future- not only their afterlife, but rather their "near-future" (Guyer 2007). In opposition to the Catholic temporality which offers the moral believer currency for the next world- the "eschatological future," acts of Christian citizenship by the Pentecostal believers represent a different mode of temporality- the "near-future." The Pentecostal temporality of the "near-future" recognizes church members as immigrants at the present, yet who are becoming through moral conduct Christian citizens in the "near-future." Although some of the elements of aesthetics are used as means of exclusion as discussed above, I

demonstrate that both local and African Pentecostal churches share a notion of temporality of the "near future." However, unlike the local Pentecostal churches, for the African Pentecostal believers, such temporality mediates the dissonance of their identity in their host society. Thus, I argue that while their immigrant state is a form of being, the "near future" is a process of becoming. It allows the members to mediate between their consciousness as immigrants and their consciousness as missionaries. In other words, the process of becoming Christian citizens is what allows members to be missionaries in their host society. Returning to Meyer's notion of Pentecostal aesthetics, I suggest that the "near future" temporality can be considered an aspect of aesthetics.

Aesthetics

On an early Sunday morning, I visit one of the few Pentecostal Italian churches in Rome. The church is located on the brinks of the San-Lorenzo quarter, historically a working-class neighborhood, where many of its original residents still live alongside newcomers, mostly students from the nearby Sapienza University. Following a dark suited crowd, I walk into a building through a small heavy wooden door that forces me to bow my head when stepping in- a common feature of many Catholic churches throughout the city. The benches are quietly being filled with older men and women. Their grey and black suits blend with the maroon tone of the benches, differentiated only by the delicate white lace head covers floating on the women's heads. The silence and the magnitude-feel of the hall give, in the first glance, an impression of a Catholic church. The hall is dark with few sun rays coming in through the round window in the tall ceiling, lighting the stage and the large organ situated above it. From the foot of the stage, all the way through the entrance on the opposite side,

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rows of wooden benches are arranged in precise lines, each equipped with a kneeling step

and a pocket for the Bible and hymn books.

At second glance, one notices the absence of oil paintings and decorations on the beige wall,

and mostly the absence of the fundamental altar and its' embellished cross. The latter is

often used by Pentecostal believers to argue that Catholicism is simply another form of idol

worshiping. This absence functions as a stark reminder for the visitor that this is not a

Catholic church. The hall is built in a descending angle; the stage is at the bottom; and the

small round window in the ceiling places a spotlight on the pastor who is standing on the

stage. As people continue to flow in, the pastor gestures with his hands for everyone to take

their seat. Exactly at 10:30, all rise to sing as a unified a-cappella choir. Another lifted finger

orders all to prepare for prayer, and with the united sound of the wood knocking on the

floor everybody kneels. The service continues alternating between a hymn reading, bible

reading, and a monotonous preaching. Then, a few people rise to give testimonies: a

woman in her late 70s from Livorno stands up and narrates her story. She says she was

very ill in her legs for two months, and now, after she prayed in church and at home all

week long, she is completely healed. She describes her story in detail; how it was hard for

her to walk up the stairs and get out of bed and even, she laughs, carry her basket from the

market. Yet, she particularly pays attention to describing her devout praying: "I prayed

sincerely, kneeling on my knees even though my legs were hurting, asking Jesus to help

me."[78] She adds in her story common invocations to justify the practice stating that "Jesus

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[78] In Italian: Gesù decidono di morire al peccato. Gesù il re, vive è morto per te. Questa mattina, vivere per sul meglio la vita Cristiana e una scelta.

died for your sins, he lived and died for you. This morning, we live for better Christian life and choice tomorrow." One testimonial after the other- all emphasize stories of personal sickness that was healed through prayer. An hour later the last hymn ends the service. The pastor, wearing a white gown heads to the door, and only then everybody quietly leaves. They meet the pastor as he nods to each member on his way out, who then greets the pastor back with a *"buona domenica."*

Three hours later, on the other side of town, I visit another Pentecostal church, located across the Castello San-Angelo, only a few minutes away from the Vatican City. I am welcomed by another heavy wooden door. A few members help the Ghanaian pastor carry the equipment inside and 'set up' the church. They open the computer and the projector, set microphones and speakers, take out the pamphlets from the bag and set them on a chair in the back row near the entrance, awaiting to be given to newcomers or passerby. The church dwells in a beautiful old building, the main prayer hole is arranged with rows of wooden prayer benches and a central stage. At first, only a few members arrive, but members keep trickling in throughout the service. They take off their coats revealing colorful traditional gowns made from African fabrics. The service starts each Sunday at 3pm since the space is free for their use only after the morning service of the Adventist church that owns the building ends. The service is comprised of bible study, individual testimonies, and praise. Three hours later, service ends when members are dancing in a conga snake line around the room with tambourines and castanets and shake each other's hands and hug. Ending at approximately 6pm and sometimes slightly, but not much later so that members coming from the small towns surrounding Lazio, Rome's region, can catch

their trains and buses back home.

In North America, many Pentecostal migrants join existing local Pentecostal and neo-
Pentecostal churches, blending in and, thus finding a new venue for community and
support (Espinosa 2014).[79] One might assume that a similar process would take place in
Italy- that the Pentecostal local Italian churches, themselves a minority in Italy,[80] would
readily embrace the influx of Pentecostal believers arriving in their country. In doing so,
these Italian churches could potentially expand the number of their followers, which might
allow them to gain more political influence in Italian society. However, the opposite occurs.
Many Italian churches keep their distance from the Pentecostal immigrant churches. The
Italian non-Catholic churches had conducted a long struggle to be recognized along the
lines of Catholicism.[81] They believe that being associated with the immigrant churches
would jeopardize their achieved status.[82] Moreover, Italian believers with whom I have
spoken argue that the ecstatic and visual divergences between their local churches and the
African churches make the two inherently different, and thus, the two cannot be combined

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[79] Although there are certainly ethnic oriented churches in the USA such as the Latino- Pentecostal churches, Korean Pentecostal churches as well as African Pentecostal churches, still Pentecostal churches often are characterized with a diverse crowed.

[80] Saunders (1995) indicates that there approximately 350,000 Pentecostal adherents in Italy, and that the majority of them converted from Catholicism.

[81] In 1929 a Concordat, also known as the Lateran treaties was approved by Mussolini, by which the Catholic faith was declared to be the "only state religion." In 1984, a revision was formalized maintaining the principle of state support for religion which, can be extended if approved by the parliament to non-Catholic religions. Following the revision, a special Intesa granted specific benefits to the Waldensian Church, The Seventh Day Adventist church, and Assembly of God (1988), Jews (1989), Baptists Lutherans (1995), Mormons, Orthodox and Apostolic (2012) and to Buddhists and Hindus (2013) (Butticci 2012).

[82] In fact, every statistical data regarding the religious division in Italian society that addresses evangelical/Pentecostal/charismatic churches always involves an asterisk stating that the data does not include immigrant churches.

even if the Italian churches would open their doors to immigrants. The "*loud churches*" as the African churches are often described by Italians, are indeed more colorful, more ecstatic, and can be considered more hectic by some. Or in other words, they offer a different mode of aesthetics. Moreover, when it comes to church services, time itself seems to be perceived differently, in the immigrant churches in comparison to their Pentecostal Italian counterparts.

In the previous chapter I introduced Meyer's conception of aesthetics (2010) that suggests it includes sensations and knowledge, and I linked it to spatial practices. Meyer calls to examine sensational forms, which define and organize access to the divine and relationships among members of the community. Her perception of aesthetics thus, makes it a central component to the formation of personal and collective modes of being and belonging (Meyer 2010: 759). Accordingly, I would like to examine next, how such modes of "belonging" in aesthetics can rather create, on the other hand, a discourse of separation and exclusion. If we follow Meyer in examining the sensational elements (sound, color and bodily axis) of African Pentecostal worship, we find that the Italian Pentecostal churches are a strikingly different 'form' from the African Pentecostal 'form.' While they are Pentecostals in theology, they embody much more an Italian Catholic aesthetics expressed in the silence during worship, the restraint of the body during prayer, the harmony of the singing and the pace of the melody, the dress code, and the structure and even the length and duration of service. Such elements are in line with the Catholic form of worship, presented in churches throughout Rome, for whom, the African churches are considered too 'loud.' Furthermore, these divergences between the two churches are not only a matter

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of where one prays and how one belongs. Aesthetics in this sense is used by the native

Italian Pentecostals as a rhetoric of exclusion and distinction. In public discourse and in

official Catholic declarations, African Pentecostalism is often described as a "non-religion,"

an "African-thing." Pope Benedict XVI said that the African Pentecostal churches cannot be

considered proper churches since they suffer from a "defect" (Butticci 2012: 95).[83] Such

statements which question the Pentecostal churches' religious authority reflect the de-

legitimization of these churches and their estrangement by the Catholic Church and the

Italian state, and by extension, a blunt reminder of the non-citizenship of the African

Pentecostal members.

Moral Citizenship

Parallel acts of distinction are also employed by the African Pentecostals themselves. Many

of them see their host society as immoral and describe the Italian Catholics as idol

worshippers, which is the same terms they often use to consider non-Pentecostal people

from their home country.[84] Mila, who at the time I interviewed her was a new convert to

Pentecostalism and had recently joined the CoP, had been born to a Catholic family in the

Philippines. In our interview, she spoke about her conversion to Pentecostalism from the

Catholic faith:

> "My question is- when I was in the catholic faith, why didn't they tell us
> the truth? Because I would come to church [referring to the Pentecostal
> church after she converted], and before [I would come] I would read the
> bible and tell my sister [her Ghanaian Pentecostal mentor] in the

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[83] While the Vatican is not technically part of Italy and is a separate entity, the Pope has a significant sense of authority in Italian society, which is reinforced by Vatican city's location in the center of Rome.
[84] See for example the Ghanaian Pastor from Bolgatanga and his description of the ancestral shrine in one of the children's home described in Chapter 2, which he considered as idol shrine rather than ancestral shrine.

conversation: 'oh, we used to do this, we had sacrifice, we roasted pig, we had saints we prayed for them' and she [her mentor] said: 'oh, my sister, this is idol worshiping, don't you know?,' And I asked 'what is that? I didn't know about idol worshiping,' and I was doing it, and I didn't want to do that. You know, in my high school the teaching was different, they made us memorize. We had 'saint this' and 'saint that.' My first question was, why didn't they give each of us a bible and why did they hide the truth from us? The bible says the first, the most important commandment: 'I am the Lord your god, you shall not have other gods before me, you should not cast an image and mold it in shape into an idol.' So, if this is what the Bible says, why the Catholic faith- they have the Bible aside? why do they have the images the Lord detests so much in the church? And the only ones who read the bible are the priests, and they read and they don't explain it. That's why the people are asleep! Here they give you your own [bible], and you know the truth! My whole family are idol worshippers!" (September 2013)

Images and discussions about idol worshiping are constantly present through services and during the members' conversations. They refer to idols both in Italian context- in the form of Catholicism, and in the Ghanaian context- mostly in the form of ancestral and fetish worship. Just as presented in Mila's interview and in the church services, many Pentecostal believers believe that being a Catholic means not being a true Christian. Since Christianity is the only morality that is accepted, the fact that in Italy the only religion that is fully legitimized by the state is Catholicism reflects in the eyes of the African believers the entrenched immorality of their host society.

Many services use biblical references to emphasize the analogy between immoral behavior and the members' everyday lives. For example, Rome experienced in January 2014 particularly wet and harsh winter conditions, with flooding damaging properties throughout Lazio. Following one of these weeks, the pastor chose to address the story of Ruth in his service:

I heard there were floods in Rome and some houses got ruined; I did not

hear of anyone here that was affected by this! Let's thank Jesus for his protection. The versus are read in Twi followed by English: we have been placed among those people on the land of Beit–Lehem, and the land of Israel, at the time there was no king and everybody did as they please. That's why there was a famine. What were the terrible things they did? Hedonism, Idolatry; they forgot the word of God and pushed it aside. The lord said every time you will not obey me – he will allow sickness to be upon them. If you will respect God and take his word he will respect you and your problems will be his problems. Your houses will not be flooded. Beit-Lehem means the house of Bread in Hebrew, that is the meaning of abundance of bread—and now there was a famine! So, if you are a true Christian and then you start to disobey God, God can take away your luck. You may say: "After all the problems in the world –now they talk about tithes?" I want you to understand that your job is only because of God's grace, your house of bread, Beit-Lehem, the house where you have abundance of food is because of God's grace. Do not be like Naomi, please do not disobey your husband, give him the word of God. If in this everyday life, if in this present day you have no money and you have no job and you decide to go somewhere bad remember that the bible says that every day you do not serve God can result in something bad- so whatever you do seek God's faith first! Now, today and tomorrow, might be hard here in Rome, but soon suddenly we might have abundance! [The pastor continues telling the story of Naomi and Elimelech and compare it to Italy today]; Look at Italy, worshiping idols, leaving girlfriend-boyfriend, Italy is struggling, there are no jobs. hopefully Italy will not be like this forever, and God will be visiting us soon, the famine that is happening now in Italy, happened before in Beit-Lehem, and God let the righteous be free. Have the same determination and courage Ruth had and follow the Lord. Be righteous!

The pastor uses the story of Ruth to talk about the moral behavior expected from a true Christian. However, he places that morality in opposition to the immorality of modern Rome. Naomi represents the immoral woman disobeying her husband, and by extension the city of Rome. Whereas Ruth represents the pure and moral and by extension the members of the church, as evident from his final call to the members to "be righteous and not to be like Naomi." The conduct that Pentecostals consider immoral-leading a promiscuous social life or simply not being a true Christian (by being Catholic, for example) are linked according to the Pastor to the lack of employment and the financial crisis Italy is

experiencing, as well as to natural disasters such as flooding. The following service that was led by a guest pastor illustrates that such distinction is established not only between the believers and the immoral Rome but with all other non-Christian people:

> I advised a person who once came to see me: he married an [Italian] white woman and received all his papers and documents and his life was good. He said: 'now I will bring all my family.' And he did bring a lot of people but they kept asking him: now everybody suddenly remembered that they are related to him. God told him: 'you need to stop bringing your family, which only takes advantage of you. Stop bringing them so you and your wife will get your peace. Today he is the owner of a whole farm in the south. Before, he was a poor taxi driver. Be careful who you care for; care for your own child, and if you will be good now, god will be good to you and will help you just like he helped Abraham. Expel all the spirits in your head, and people who pretend that they are Christians but they are actually full of black magic; tell them to pack their bag and leave!! Remember, he continues: Abraham did not mind the difficult time; he continued believing in God.

In this service, the pastor emphasizes not only the importance being virtuous, but also that of isolating oneself from immoral people, even when they are one's kin. In another part of the service, the pastor discusses Matthew 1 "*The Parable of the Mustard Seed*" to discuss the characters of the kingdom of God where "the good are collected and the bad are cast away." Thus, being Christians and members of the kingdom of God means being good, creating another distinguishing marker between the missionaries, on the one hand, and their host society and other non-Christian members, on the other. This distinction is reinforced and granted further legitimacy through the idea of Christian citizenship, as is stated in Philippians 3:20: "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."

In the website of the Headquarters of Church of Pentecost, the Apostle Mark Obeng Andoh, who is the head of The Church of Pentecost in the Sunyani area,[85] references this same verse in Philippians in relation to being citizens of Heaven. He asks believers to "switch to the heavenly economy when the earthly poses hardship to them," further stating "when your birth country has so many hardships, all you need to do is to change your citizenship. Start thinking about heaven and all its goodness; live your life and behave like a citizen of heaven and God will respond to your need."[86]

Citizenship in this sense is a biblical category which dictates behavior. It is used by the pastor to enhance one's belonging to the divine, but also to explain the believers' earthly existence and recognize it. Thus, it corresponds to the national citizenship rather than aims to replace it. Since this category was also used by my interlocutors, I chose to use this category as an emic analysis, in order to interpret belonging on other aspects of their lives. This concept is especially illuminating since my interlocutors' status as immigrants in their host society is measured in terms of belonging – represented by the category of citizenship- according to which, as immigrants they are positioned at its furthest end.

Scholars have been concerned with how different definitions of citizenship apply in the changing globalized world. From movements of border crossing and the reception of migrants in host-states due to global conflicts, on the one hand, to the social imagination of

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[85] Sunyani is a city in the Southern Ashanti uplands of Ghana, it is located just a little Northwest of Kumasi.
[86] http://thecophq.org/expo_churchnews.php?id=1814#sthash.MbJZVGif.dpuf

the transnational community, on the other end. Can citizenship exist beyond the nation-state? In *Sovereignty Without Territoriality*, Appadurai's examines territoriality as a problem for the modern nation-state. Historically, sovereignty in the nation-state was examined by territory, which grounded the jurisdictional governmentality. However, the relationship between the nation and the state are disrupted when the local is redefined by the trans-local community and its globalized construction of locality (Appadurai 1996a). Ong, in response to Appadurai, asks whether imagination- as a social practice- can be autonomous from national, transnational, and political-economic structures that direct the flow of people, commodities, and ideas, especially since the 'nation' and the 'state' are still very much bound to each other (Ong 1999: 11). Accordingly, the concept of Christian citizenship challenges national conceptions of territoriality as Appadurai suggests; yet, it also does not ignore them. Instead, it bares the tension that inevitably exists, as Ong emphasizes, between such nation-based "territoriality," according to which immigrants are seen as non-citizens, and the "de-territorialized" religious base it is bound to, which, thus forms the alternative consciousness of a transnational pious community.

Governmentality and sovereignty

Scholars dealing with citizenship in American society emphasize how poor populations such as native Americans, African Americans and women have been excluded from citizenship (both legal and social)[87] based on race and class. More recent scholarship

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[87] in social citizenship scholars have addressed the participation (and the ability to participate) in the public sphere, while legal citizenship refers to official status of citizenship by the nation state. Thus, for example, while women were legal citizens, they were excluded from participating in different aspects of the public sphere such as the labor market and political activity.

explores aspects of cultural citizenship, which is shaped on the basis of the idea of the "right to be different," in relation to the norms of the dominant national community, yet without compromising individual's right to belong. Immigrants often fight for the ability to practice such cultural membership preserving their ethnic and cultural practices as demonstrated by the battle of Muslim women for wearing the veil in France (Scott 2007). However, Ong argues that culture (or race, ethnicity, gender) are not the main domain through which one might examine how citizenship is constituted. Rather, it is necessary to identify the various domains in which these preexisting aspects of race, ethnicity, and gender are reorganized to govern and define the modern subject (Ong 1999: 6). Church is such a domain. It governs cultural forms such as gender and race. In the domain of the church, they are both performed by, and shape Christian citizens.

To honor of the 2014 New Year, the Church of Pentecost in Rome held a special communion sacrament. The pastor opens the service in apologizing to the three members who were baptized the previous week since "we did not have time to properly give them their certificates." He invites them over and talks about their advantages and moral character. After the sermon, everybody stands, and the pastor requests members to examine their flaws before coming in front of him. As he speaks, the electricity falls and the church hall becomes dark. But the believers continue to quietly sing. He invites the elders and Deacons to eat from the holy bread and drink from the wine; he then continues to the members. The sound-speakers squeal as he declares:

> "if you have not been baptized, please wait and don't come to the table; if you live in sin please don't come to the table; if there is something in your heart that is not pure or you are not convinced by the holy spirit don't come to the table. If there is nothing of this sort,

God invites you to his table, if the Holy Spirit presented itself to you and proved that you are convinced, then you have the right to come dine at God's table. He, then, quotes Ephesians 2:19: "So, then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household."

In this special communion, governmentality, in the Foucauldian meaning, is carried out in terms of a communal regulation of the members' behavior (Foucault 1982: 790)- which is re-examined and publicly recognized (*"If you live in sin don't approach... only if there is nothing of this sort you are invited to the table").* The pastor links moral behavior to the popular verse of Ephesians 2:19. He describes what comprises moral conduct, and only members who embody such morality can be baptized and later take part in the communion ceremony. The certificate of baptism, proof of their moral conduct, becomes a certificate of their Christian citizenship. In another Sunday service the pastor read the following passage from Hebrews:

They are strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who speak thus make clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city. (Hebrews 11:13–16)

Appadurai and Ong's discussion shows that the tension between the territorialized nation-state and the de-territorialized Christian citizenship is addressed through aspects of governmentality and sovereignty. While, for the believers, as is shown in the passage from Hebrews, sovereignty is above all reserved for the transcendental entity, the definition of citizenship deals with the members' rights and obligations. Such perspective raises the question of what it means to be a citizen in a country that does not recognize this form of citizenship, that is, where the authority of the Christian citizenship is not recognized and

the authority of the host-society is expected to be followed above all others. Such tension is even more prominent in light of the status of the African Pentecostal churches in Italy as cultural centers that have no recognized religious authority, thus as discussed above, signaling their marginality in Italian society. Once again, the scriptures became the main sources for grappling with this question of authority. Verses of Peter such as the following, are often quoted referring to which authority should members adhere:

> I urge you, as foreigners and exiles...live such godly lives among the pagans that, though they may accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us. Submit yourself for the Lord's sake to every authority...live as God's slaves. Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, and honor the emperor." (1 Peter 2:11-17)

The story of Peter, who calls the people to respect the local rule of the Roman emperor, is compared with the life of believers in Italy, where they are subordinate to the Italian government and the European Union authority. Governmentality in the domain of the church is internal, executed and monitored by members of the church. Yet, it acknowledges and operates within the limits of the Italian government and European Union's laws. Mahmood (2005) argues that women in the piety movement in Egypt are not looking to free themselves from structures of male domination in the mosques by contesting or consolidating norms. She suggests that "norms are performed, inhabited and experienced in a variety of ways" (2005: 22) allowing women notions of agency and self-governmentality. African Pentecostals use other means to contest nation-state governmentality. Christian citizenship acts as a mode of governmentality in the level of action and conduct for members of the church. It allows them, on the one hand, to challenge the value of Italian governmentality by conceptualizing it as immoral and religiously

corrupt, and to participate in it and contribute to it, on the other hand. Their civil

contribution often described as fitting in the gap that church members experience between

their moral values and the values they see as normative in their host society. For example,

the tension between aspects such as Italy's joy of gluttony, value of leisure, and the current

political corruption on the one hand, and the West-African Christian Pentecostal ethos of

chosen-ness, piety, hard labor, and moral conduct. As reflected in statements such as the

one told by Grace, a Ghanaian woman from church: "Italians prefer to hire us, Pentecostal

Ghanaians then themselves. Look at Berlusconi and the government, you can't trust them

as workers; my boss even said that to me. We are hard workers, we don't drink, we are

honest, when they hire an Italian half the work day is wasted for their nap in the middle of

the day. They should thank us for being here [laughs]." In Grace's eyes her Christian

morality- represented by her work ethics, is the way she contributes her part to Italian

society, and thus participates in it.

Political participation: Good Citizenship

In her work on flexible citizenship, Ong defines citizenship as a social process of a mediated

production of values concerning freedom, autonomy, and security (Ong 2003: xvii). In

doing so, she explores citizenship beyond the legal context. Similarly, I explore how

Pentecostal immigrants-missionaries shape ideas about what it means to be Christian, and

how they can use this understanding and translate it to participating in their host-country

despite their national limitations as would be expected in civil participation. Here, I build

on recent research that discusses employed morality as a way of being active participants

as Christian citizens. The non-citizenship of the Pentecostal African believers in their host

society is countered by their Christian citizenship, which is manifested in moral behavior in the form of praying, giving tithes, donations and other social responsibilities.

Several scholars have looked at the relationship between Christianity and citizenship. They often set the two as two distinct worlds (especially in the Western world where most countries hold a separation between religion and the state), but emphasize the didactic relationship of Christianity to citizenship via congregants who apply their church teachings to the public sphere as citizens (de Tocqueville 2004). Others have looked at Christianity as a motivation for civic action (Bercovitch 1978 in O'Neill 2009; Marshall 2009). Nevertheless, they all maintain a separation between Christian belief and citizenship. A few scholars have, however, suggested a new approach to the relationship of Christianity with citizenship arguing that Christian believers exemplify good citizenship and perform virtuous citizenship within the church. These scholars provide a good perspective on the way Christians participate in the nation-state and govern themselves at the same time on a transnational level (Daswani 2015; Fumanti 2010; O'Neill 2009, 2010). The approach of these is reminiscent of Appadurai's understanding of globalization, according to which, the world is comprised of de-territorialized populations and the relationship between space, place, nation, and citizenship is reconsidered and offers a new perspective on global economy (Appadurai 1996a, 1996b, 2001). Thus, citizens exist within new geographies of governmentality, which operate at the transnational level.

Fumanti (2010) has described how the membership in the Methodist church in London mediates, for the Ghanaian Methodists, a sense of citizenship, which is based on moral and

ethical performance. They achieve such virtuous citizenship by abiding the law, hard-work, and active involvement in Methodist fellowship through acts of caring (Fumanti 2010: 16). Thus, members of the Methodist church feel themselves, regardless of their legal status, to be citizens of Britain as Methodists. The church, constitute for the migrants a transnational polity, both British and Ghanaian, rooted in the history of Methodism as a British mission in Ghana.

Fumanti relies on Aristotle's sense of virtue to describe the good citizen. Moreover, the Ghanaian Methodists in London, also perform their moral role as part of their virtuous citizenship by bringing back the word of God to Britain. Church membership and achieving virtuous citizenship help the believers to make sense of their diasporic condition (ibid). What is particularly significant in Fumanti's argument is that citizenship is linked to agency and participation, rather than to formal status and papers.

O'Neill's research (2009) in Guatemala City offers a similar approach. He suggests that Christian citizenship as a living category arguing that Christianity and democracy continue to bond at the level of citizenship. His research examines Christian citizenship as a mode of governmentality at the everyday levels of action and practice. Moral registers that promote citizens to govern their own conduct, and by extension, these attempts of governmentality of behavior constitute citizenship participation (O'Neill 2009: 432). Daswani as well offers similar notions of political participation as a competing citizenship-discourse, which transcends national and legal authority. Despite illegal stay in the UK of some members, of

the London based Church of Pentecost, the members perceive themselves as active citizens, who contribute to the society by reciprocating the gift of salvation.

 Praying and evangelizing became in this scheme central expressions of good citizenship. They pray for themselves, for family members, and for Ghana, as well as for the wider community and to the world. Such a responsibility and presentation of care are manifested in carrying prayer for the larger, global community. In fact, many churches have a separate office dedicated to social welfare. The CoP, for example, have disaster prevention & relief support services, which are handled by their voluntary organization of Pentecost Social Service (PentSOS). In addition, collective prayers for the welfare of victims are often enacted during the services. During the period of my fieldwork, prayers were placed for victims of the Ebola epidemic at the end of 2013, the Ita cyclone that struck in April 2014, and the series of Tornadoes that struck during May 2013 in the USA, as well as other small-scale disasters such as storms and floods occurring throughout Europe during the winter months.

Responsibility and care for the general public are also expected on a local scale. During a discussion on the importance of offerings and tithes in ICGC, the pastor said that he knows that many people in the church are struggling; However, as long as one is working, one can always find ways to give a portion to others. He emphasized that this should not remain only within the church, but also contribute to the general community outside of the church. According to the pastor, if the members would go outside and see all the people walking around in Termini and in the streets of Rome, "you will realize how grateful you are for the

love and protection you have, and it's time to give back." Furthermore, he stated, "a leader is one who leads by example, so others know to follow him: Jesus is our example of leadership, the ultimate example, and he is generous; look at all he gave us [...]." The pastor continues stating that: "I want everybody for next week to come back and tell me how they did good [...] I want you to buy an extra orange in the store and give it to someone in need. If you have an extra coat in the house go outside and find someone who needs it to keep them warm. We follow Jesus example; He continues to describe the value of caring for others as ambassadors of the Lord: 'Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us' (II Corinthians 5:20)."

Similar to prayer, evangelizing is part of the moral duty of each church member and is considered part of the church's mission. By evangelizing- spreading the love for Jesus- members reciprocate to the world what they received as Christian citizens. It is repeatedly emphasized that Jesus sacrificed himself for believers, and that now, the members should do the same. The call to evangelize is, therefore, a form of accountability towards the divine and is a fulfillment of God's covenant (see also Daswani 2010). The call to evangelize is also inscribed in the first covenant of the CoP from 1931 when the church was founded. the first three out of eight promises of the covenant deal with the selection of the CoP to be a spearhead to the world through their mission (In Daswani 2010: Location 3466).[88]

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[88] "1. That He God would raise a nation out of Africa that would be a spearhead and light to the world, heralding the 2nd Coming of Christ Jesus our Lord; 2. That the Gold Coast has been chosen to fulfil this eternal will and purpose of God; 3. He God would accomplish this through a White Missionary from Europe who would come to lead the group in the future, and the group would become a great International Pentecostal Church, which would send out missionaries from the Gold Coast to all parts of Africa and the world as a whole." (CoP book of songs. 2000 In Daswani 2010, kindle location 3466).

Among other good behaviors of Christian-citizens, paying tithes in the church and donating generously to the church are considered fundamental to the relationship of a true Christian with God and to insure the continuation of the church. By extension, they assure the structure that enables members to fulfill their accountability to the divine.

The Near-Future

In the beginning if this chapter I described the structure of services in both African and Italian Pentecostal churches, and showed that while very different in form, both the Italian Pentecostal and the African Pentecostal members' testimonies, confirm a perception in which, members can regain control over their destiny- such as in the event of personal sickness or a lack of financial resources to find new accommodation. Believers content that both cases were resolved through devotion and prayer. Saunders, in his comprehensive research on Italian Pentecostal churches, shows that the conversion narratives of Italian Pentecostals from Catholicism depicts a crisis of presence that entails a loss of control over their own existence (Saunders 1995). The crisis of presence is described as a problem of consciousness with moral dimensions. The Italians conversion to Pentecostal Christianity allows them to resolve the crisis by constructing a new relationship with time and history. It allows them to live in the present moment, as "inner-worldly" activists (Saunders 1995). Like the Italian Pentecostals, the African Pentecostals too seek to establish in prayer and service a sense of control over their destiny, which shapes their conception of time. In contrast to the Italian Pentecostals, however, for the African Pentecostals, this emphasis on control over the presence and future aims to resolve a different aspect of their existence.

One Sunday in Church, after several members presented their testimonials from the past week, Mila, a recent Pilipino convert and member of the Church of Pentecost, stands up and shares a vision she had the night before:

> The vision starts with an eclipse of the moon: It was dark and red. Mila stands up, holding the microphone in her hand, and only then continues: then, I saw a lot of white souls, lined up, rising, and underneath them lines of naked men, wounded, lying on the ground. Lines and lines of people and at the end a staircase going up, and Jesus was climbing up the stairs but only a few were going after him. All the members at the service are amazed and gasp with astonishment as Mila continues talking: God then gives me vine leaves. I pick them up and asks what should I do with them; He does not answer, but then a sudden wind comes through and collects the leaves and arranges them on the floor in a circle. The pastor interrupts with the call let us pray!! Pray!!; Then Mila continues: the leaves then turn into Gold. The members all respond in amazement and Mila's voice becomes even louder: The Gold turns into fire that touches the people, and people are being burnt and turn into ashes. God is trying to tell us that he is coming soon and if there is something wrong that we are doing we need to stop today, because we don't know what tomorrow will bring us. The entire crowd shouts "Amen," while Mila returns to her seat.

> The head Apostle of the CoP in Italy was visiting the Rome branch that day. He stood up with his bright stripe grey suit, and said: listen to this prophecy! No matter where you are now, if you have no job, you have no money- listen to the prophecy; act now; show your moral duty, so your tomorrow will change. He calls Mila back telling her: we want to pray on you that God will continue reaching to people through you. The church's elders stand in a circle around Mila and lay their hands on her head, chanting: may the power of the lord be upon your head [...] She is bringing God, you sent her to us and she is an instrument wherever she starts to minister give her boldness, give her change; we commit her life; be with her, protect her, use her. Today we dedicate her to evangelizing. You are a missionary of God. May the power be upon you in Jesus' name.

The pastor contextualizes Mila's vision in a timeframe of immediacy; he reads the vision as urging the members to act in their immediate future. While acknowledging their immigrant status, they are encouraged to act upon it, and change their tomorrow via religious

practices and moral conduct. Daswani writes that the Church of Pentecost in London, is "a site where the near future (as migrants in London) and the more distant future (as Christians in heaven) are embodied and simultaneously negotiated. The near future […] concerns an attachment to a world in which they have no controlling share, where, as migrants, they exist in a state of […] fantasy in an age of late liberalism" (Daswani 2015: place 3376). Daswani demonstrates that the concern over moral conduct is an expression of the idea of Christian citizenship, Yet, unlike Daswani, I argue that the Christian citizenship is not a matter of the 'distant future,' or as he conceptualizes it, as citizenship of heaven, but rather as Mila's dream demonstrates and as interpreted by the pastor, Christian citizenship in Pentecostal Rome is embedded in the "near future." Members are constantly engaged in palpably shaping this immediate future through their every single act as Christians.

Guyer (2007) argues that the postmodern condition had us focus on the present, creating patterns of "immediacies" through representations of violence and eruption. In social research the "origin" and "horizon" were reduced to be the sides of the "present." Thus, in the gap that was left, she suggests, anthropology has now the means to develop an ethnography of a less explored temporality- the near future.[89] An ethnography of the near future she argues, can focus on: "the emergent entailments and dissonances that constitute life in attenuated temporal space in which everyday intelligibilities are forged" (2007:410). Guyer mentions that the near-future has been banished from the evangelical literature by

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[89] Guyer herself works on economic temporality but her theoretical conceptualization of time, as she suggests herself, can advantage thinking on multiple domains from law to livelihood and in this case to religion (2007:410)

the concept of prophetic time (Harding 2000; Robbins 2004) that left little space to examine the near-future.

For Evangelical Christians, the interval between the first and the second coming of the Messiah is the time where the present life is lived, but in an everlasting position of waiting. This interval also known as the 'Time of the Church,' is described by Guyer as the "parenthetical period" referring to two verses in Daniel 9:26-27 that describe the two periods; when it all ends and when it all restarts with the return of the Messiah.[90] Guyer argues that the present is what takes place in this interval. The temporality here is similar to the secular temporality that is referenced in economic: an event in the past, and distant future. Guyer references several ethnographic works on Christianity that describe the rejection of the idea of mediating the gap by waiting (Carpanzano 2003; Harding 2000; Meyer 1999; Robbins 2004). While prophetic time is depended on the "gap," it does not prevent the articulation of the near future. In fact, the "near future" (Guyer 2007) is described quite meticulously and becomes a means of negotiating other temporalities and dissonances in the flow of time; the near future becomes, in other words, "a regime in its own right."

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[90] "And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined" (Daniel 9:26). The Following verse describes the return of the Messiah "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" (Daniel 9:27, KJV).

For Pentecostal believers in Rome prophetic time is crucial, but they too, reject the idea of waiting. Believers actively negotiated and articulated the 'near future' on a daily basis as can be seen from the following story Mila portrays about her interaction with her family after she converted:

> I told my family: I don't won't to bow my head. Please, I explained to you why, I gave you the message, but if you want to continue, please, go ahead but exclude me. Eventually because we are a whole family, all my aunts and uncles we are all staying together, we are like a compound. So, I was praying to the lord and I said: lord please get me out of here because it is suffocating to stay there when they are all there, because they are all angry at you, they say it verbally, when you read the Bible you will grow mad […] I told my husband let's find a house, I want to live separately. Before, we were looking for a house, we were searching but it is hard to find cheap ones here in the city. And I prayed and I said lord get me out of here, we can't find a house we have no money. She laughs, it was amazing! if you pray and you pray and you believe the lord will help you. Tomorrow we had the money, I didn't know how it happened. I said: praise god. Then we were packing. … one of my uncles said if you want to follow this Jesus make sure you make it because we will not support you. I said ok, but I'm going. It was ok.

Mila's story exemplifies the ability of members to influence their destiny in the near-future; Mila prayed and the next day she had enough funds to support her move with her husband to an independent residence. Her story is just like the story of Sarah who prayed and God came to her favor, - a story that is often used in services (Genesis 15:2) such as the following service:

> "Sarah was an old lady Abraham was medically impotent but God made it possible: say with me: LORD I BELIVE ALL IS POSSIBLE. Nothing is forgotten but all is possible with the lord. Just like God said to Sarah. I will come to you- and he did. Pray and devout yourself like Sarah did and God will heal you and your misery now. In response to a roar of Amen from the members, all the men go up on stage and start to sing: "all difficult will end!! God will show you that he is with you!!"

Examples of such usage are abundant. In one testimony, a member reported that she was

on a train and felt ill. She prayed and felt better and was able to get to work. Another member was out of work. He prayed and helped a neighbor in need, bringing her food even though he did not have much money and had no job. The next month he found a job that was better than anything he expected. And for another man, who did not have funds to buy a car which he needed to get to his work outside of the city, praying and fasting helped make funds available and he was able to buy a car. Through righteous behavior and prayer members believe they can change their tomorrow.

A process of becoming: the near future

The idea of Christian citizenship is not identical with being a Christian. In chapter two, I described in detail how the process of conversion depicts how one becomes a Christian. I also argued that when one converts to Pentecostalism, he also becomes a missionary. Thus, members of these churches become missionaries once they convert which sometimes happens at an early age and sometimes only after they have arrived in Italy. However, once they converted, they are continually in the process of becoming Christian citizens in their near-future. Thus, one's Christian citizenship is constantly performed and reaffirmed.

The story of Paul is one of the most referenced stories in church services. In one of the Church of Pentecost services, the pastor depicts Apostle Paul as moving his church forward and discusses especially his last trip to Jerusalem and his arrival in Rome for the trial: "people were plotting against Paul, God has already sent him an Angel." The pastor continues as if he was Paul: "you set idols? God told the Israelites you need to move, and you may think that Jesus has not come to help you, but he is ready for you whenever you

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need him." There was complete silence in church after the visualization of Paul's story and its analogy to the life members in Rome nowadays. When the silence is finally broken, the members begin shouting and calling Amen. The pastor continues: "so, put your trust in God. And if things do not work out in this world, keep doing more—and hope that in heaven you have done enough for God."

Pentecostal temporality as it is takes shape at the church recognizes the present of its members as immigrants; yet, through bible stories, the members also make a leap towards the near future in which they become righteous citizens. Unlike Catholic temporality where there is the past and the present that are conditioned by a divinely future (Pöltner and Link- Wieczorek 2011) the Pentecostal theology allows for a temporality of the near future, which allows believers to influence their destiny. The examples above illustrate that the process of influencing one's future is not a one-time goal. The near future is almost here, but it is never quite here. One can always do more; pray harder; be more righteous. Thus, the 'near future' is a constant process of moral self-regulation (Robbins 2004). Therefore, while is an immigrant in the present, he is also constantly in the process of becoming a Christian citizen.

On another Sunday service, the Pastor of the CoP, tells the story of the patched corn, which illustrates for us, how elements of the near-future are embedded in services in church. It further illuminates how the moral discourse, which fuels the near-future, represents the believers' role as missionaries:

> On another Sunday in the CoP, the pastor asks: "do you know what
> the patched corn symbolizes? He talks about the mana God gave

the Israelites on their way from Egypt to Cna'an. He next says: if God is speaking to the church of Rome about corn, it is a good sign. We need to grow; we must grow. When a Christian is not growing, it makes God sad. When parents have a child and he is not growing it makes them sad. Can you imagine someone in their 20's and sill in diapers? Everybody laugh and he continues: this day god invites us to chew corn; he invites us to grow. Have hard food. Pastors can grow; members should grow; the church itself needs to grow, growing is not optional it is mandatory, and it never ends, you can never grow enough. You do not come to church for pastor, you come for Jesus. Because if you come because of pastor I advise you to change your mind and come with focus for Jesus. If you do not have money—the word of God will change you. Come without money, come and pray **and you will have money**. So how do we grow? he asks and answers: Let's look at the bible: If you are boyfriend and girlfriend –stop it! The bible does not allow it. If you have one character or another? Stop it! The bible says the hypocrites will be sat out! Like a new baby who is anxious to drink the pure milk- this is how we should be about the bible- to fill your hunger and thirst and help the church grow.

The story of the patched corn ties the elements we have discussed throughout this chapter. The church becomes a place for separating the righteous from the hypocrites, the moral from the immoral. It demonstrates how even at the present, although they are immigrants without money, if members engage in moral conduct such as prayer, they will have monetary evidence. Moreover, it shows that it is a process of becoming that never really ends, in which an individual never finishes growing. Growth here refers both to the personal moral conduct of the believer as well as the growth of the church which is achieved through evangelizing.

The moral responsibility to evangelize therefore receives primary significance. Members of the church are expected to pass the word of God to others everywhere and particularly in their host society. Being missionaries is the most significant obligation of the virtuous

citizenship, in which the members engage. The duty to share the gift of salvation or as the

pastor points out in this vignette "help the church grow," is further reflected in sermons

and prophecies. The head Apostle who addressed Mila's prophecy stated: "fulfil your moral

duty! Listen to this prophecy and join her," and "She is bringing God, you sent her to us and

she is an instrument wherever she starts to minister give her boldness, give her change, we

commit her life, be with her, protect her, use her. Today we dedicate her to evangelizing.

You are a missionary of God." Through Mila's prophecy, the Apostle reminds the members

to fulfill their moral duty to pass on the word of God.

The near future in which, one becomes a Christian citizen through moral conduct, is an

ongoing process which mediates the two consciousness, that of **being** an immigrant and

that of **being** a missionary.[91] It provides for the believers a global universal way of

participating in the world, enabling them to establish themselves as missionaries, while at

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[91] There is vast debate on the categories of being and becoming as ontological and epistemological
categories, much more then this dissertation can address. With no intention to over simplify Nietzsche
and his understanding of these concepts, I'm particularly intrigued by his interpretation in relation to the
discussion I propose above. Especially, relevant is Nietzsche's approach of the fixed entities produced by
the category of 'being,' which are denied in the state of 'becoming,' because 'becoming' is a state of
chaos (Cox 1999:188). In the Nietzschean sense, being in the state of an immigrant in Italy produces fixed
entities such as bureaucratic laws, borders and fixed notions of movement. Although, idea of the
'consciousness and the body as one' is also appealing to consider here, when thinking of "becoming
Christians" as a state of consciousness that is connected to the spiritual body, yet is disconnected, to an
extent, from the immigrant metaphysical body. Although, Heidegger criticizes Nietzsche's interpretation
of being and becoming (see for example Catanu 2010), for both there is a clear physical dimension to
becoming. In fact, for Nietzsche, 'becoming' is an aesthetic phenomenon and not a morality (Cox
1999:189-190). Although both aspects are appealing to my argument, in this case, I rather use 'becoming'
as an organizing category, which generates meaning to the category of 'being.' Similar to the Deleuzean
sense of becoming, in which, the past, or history is only a set of preconditions, that one leaves behind in
order to 'become' (Deleuze 1995:171 in Bihehl and Locke 2010). In doing so, 'becoming' is used as a
way of exceeding power and knowledge in a difficult day-to-day reality (Bihehl and Locke 2010) and is a
constant process of moral regulation (Robbins 2004: 159).

the same time, they are bound to a microcosm as immigrants in Italy. Examining religious

practices such as praying, giving tithes and evangelizing, helps them to counter notions of

estrangement and displacement. These practices explain to the members how to live a

virtuous and prosperous life, to which they are entitled by virtue of their Christian

citizenship, and especially as they are faced by limits that are deemed as disadvantageous

because of their legal status. Christian citizenship thus becomes the means and the

objective of differentiating themselves from "immoral Catholic Italy," the hosting nation-

state. By becoming Christian citizens and demonstrating their Christian citizenship, they

can be the Christian missionaries bringing Christian values to a mainly immoral Rome (Ter

Haar 1998; Van Dijk 1997).

Chapter V:

Migrant Women, Cooking Classes and Discourses of Italian Citizenship

"Today we are making *Lenticchie e pasta, polpettone con le patate al forno* è *torta di mele e pere*," the instructor says, as she passes along white sheets with lists of ingredients. The women gather around in the small white kitchen; some of them are sitting on the few chairs that are scattered around the square wooden table; the rest lean on the wall behind the table. A young Senegalese in her early twenties looks at the recipes and asks: "what is *Parmigiano*?" She has only been in Italy for a few months. The question remains hanging in the air until one of the older Ethiopian women quietly explains to her. None of them find the question odd.

The instructor, an Italian woman in her sixties, demonstrates what to do, and the women all follow her steps. She asks them to peel and cut the carrots for the lentils. Mimy, a thirty-five-year-old from Ethiopia, takes a vegetable knife and scratches the skin off the carrots. The instructor stares at her. Scrunching up her nose and looking perplexed, she briefly runs her hand through her hair, moving aside her fashionably cut blonde-grey bangs. She sighs and quietly reproaches Mimy in Italian: "No, this is not good; the carrot is not properly peeled this way. It is too bumpy and rough, and not good for the sauce. Every time you use

carrots, use this. This is a vegetable peeler," she says. The other women chat while she peels. They talk about peeling techniques in Africa. Sitting at the other end of the square table, is Lydia, an Ethiopian woman in her late forties. She starts cutting the parsley. She has been in Italy the longest - for about eleven years, and is fluent in Italian. She bunches the parsley into one ball of greenery and chops. The instructor stands with her back to the women while cooking over the stove. She turns around and notices Lydia's chopping. Approaching her, she says: "like this." She undoes the ball, straightens the leaves and chops, in a line.

Figure 12.
Cooking demonstration by the instructor

In this final chapter, I focus on a group of African migrant women and their interactions with Italian institutions through the case of the hygiene and cooking courses that are

supported by an Italian aid organization for refugees and immigrants (FCEI).[92,93] Aid

workers often refer immigrants to such courses that aim to help the immigrants assimilate

and adjust to Italian life. The course I participated in was designed to introduce the

participants to Italian culture and equip them with basic skills that, in turn, would help

them obtain a job, most likely as domestic workers. Yet, the women I met participated in

the course for other reasons. "We really don't have anything better to do" was the answer

that I was often given. Most of the women were unemployed at the time, allowing them to

participate in a course that was held in the middle of the day. Moreover, a cooking course

meant that there was a free meal at the end of the session, something that many of the

participants could not take for granted. Every meeting ended with the women and the

instructors sitting down together for a lunch made of the food that they cooked during the

morning class.

The health, hygiene and cooking courses provide a glimpse of the way the Italian state and

various institutions perceive the new immigrants, and a framework to examine the kinds of

discourses of citizenship that are invoked by the various players. As one can see in the

above vignette, *Parmigiano-Reggiano* or Parmesan cheese, perhaps the most famous Italian

product after pasta, becomes a cultural marker that delineates the cultural differences

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[92] FCEI- federazione della chiese evangeliche in Italia

[93] In this chapter, even more than other parts of the dissertation different categories that describe placements in a new land are used. Such categories include immigrants, migrant workers, refugees, and undocumented immigrants/migrants, during my fieldwork I mostly heard migranti (migrant), rifugiati (refugees) and by organizations and institutional workers also immigrati irregolari (illegal immigrants). The distinction between these categories is often blurry, and a person can come as a labor migrant but turn into an immigrant later in his stay. Yet, at large, different categories represent different considerations by institutions, different opportunities and different motivations and desires by the people they represent. For a more in depth discussion about these categories and an explanation to why I choose to use certain categories over others (such as undocumented over illegal) see the introduction.

between immigrant women and their host society. The majority of the women in the course are also members of Pentecostal and charismatic churches, through which I came to know them.

In the previous chapters, I discussed the role of African immigrants as missionaries. In this chapter, I discuss the interaction of African immigrants with Italian institutions outside of the church. Outside of church, immigrants are no longer missionaries and are simply immigrants or refugees. The institutional encounters, which will be discussed in this chapter, allow us to better understand the conceptual gap between immigrants and missionaries. Both categories (mission and immigration) represent a level of otherness in relation to the host society. However, missionaries are often perceived as contributors to their host societies (for example, by delivering religion, giving support, providing education), whereas immigrants are often seen as individuals positioned on the receiving end of the host society (for example, receiving welfare, protection, food, and shelter). According to this 'economy of migration' these believers are 'merely' immigrants who ask for assistance. As immigrants, they cannot contribute to the Italian society and thus cannot be considered missionaries.

As I will show below, while these courses declare their goal as facilitating immigrants and supporting their assimilation into Italian society, they further solidify the outsider-immigrant status of the participants, implicitly emphasizing instead that as immigrants, they would never be able to truly become Italians and therefore will also never fully belong. These encounters are informed by larger debates over naturalization and citizenship for

immigrant populations in Italian society. Such spaces of encounter between African immigrants and Italians, especially at the institutional level, reveal the logics of inclusion and exclusion. Courses such as *Italian Cooking* or *Health and Hygiene*, which aim to "Italianize" the immigrants, further mark the immigrants as the non-Italian Other, and therefore, also as non-citizens.

Throughout this dissertation, I examine the practices that shape time and space for Pentecostal missionaries and how those are illustrated through the idea of Christian citizenship. I thus argue that being a Pentecostal missionary in Italy entails and invokes a different temporality than that of the immigrant. This chapter sheds light on the temporality of African immigrants in Italy and how it is shaped through ideas of Italian citizenship. Analytically, the borders illustrated by the interactions described, and the lack of possibilities as migrants in Europe, enhance the possibilities enabled by the idea of a Christian citizenship, or in other word, how Christian citizenship enables the African immigrants in Europe.

This chapter is based on the historical background of the way Italian citizenship policies were shaped during Italy's unification and the postcolonial period which was described in the introduction. In the early 1900s Italy aimed to join the colonial conquests in Africa (Labanca 2002) and elements of culture, civility and race immerged in the Italian colonies and their inhabitants in East and North Africa. Italian colonialization in Africa was conceived as a civilizing mission, aiming to transform "the uncivilized colonial subjects"

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from to "civilized" citizens. [94] The citizenship policies that were enacted in 1912 which

granted citizenship based on bloodlines *(jus sanguinis)* rather than birth on the land *(ius-*

soli), invited a reconsideration of the status of the Italian subjects in the colonies

emphasizing the inferior civilization of the local population (Donati 2013). These policies

set the foundation for contemporary discourses about citizenship in Italy and form the

context in which the immigrants' ability (or lack of it) to become Italian citizens is

understood in Italian society today. I then examine two models of citizenship offered by

Giordano (2008) who examines migrant women in Turin, Italy, and suggests two

competing models for Italianizing the immigrants: confessional and cultural citizenships.

These two models represent competing discourses: the first discourse, which Giordano

calls the confessional citizenship,[95] views the immigrants as savages and urges them to

become civilized Italians, while the second discourse, the cultural citizenship, urges them to

remain "exotic" and preserve their culture. Although I found Giordano's two models to be

relevant for the courses in which I participated, I argue that the two models are not

separated from each other. Rather, I maintain that they are two sides of the same coin. Both

discourses exist at the same time in the institutional level as can be seen in the courses

offered to the new immigrants, and are at the core of the integration policies promoted by

the state (Giordano 2006). I demonstrate these discourses through various elements such

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[94] See further discussion on the influence of Italy's history since unification through the colonial and imperial endeavors and its influence on current aspects of Italian citizenship on page 26-30.
[95] Giordano calls the 'civilizing' model "a confessional citizenship," as the practice that accompanies this model for the women she studied, mainly immigrant sex-workers, to confess by give-away their traffickers. As I have not worked with sex workers, the "confession" element is not relevant to my interlocutors. However, the characteristics of such model of citizenship stand pertained beyond the bureaucratic procedures. Thus, I take from the confessional citizenship model, its emphasis on civilizing the women.

as food (both in terms of food preparation and consumption), speaking and language, and personal hygiene practices. Finally, I show that the immigrant women use these courses as a space to challenge the discourses of their host society. They emphasize their un-belonging and uncover the true agendas of the courses and their hosts, by discussing racism, friendship and cultural misrepresentations during the course.

Migrants and Italian Citizenship

In the introduction, I described the process of Italian citizenship from unification of the Italian state, especially in relation to its imperial and colonial subjects in Africa. However, after WWII, the question of citizenship arose again, following a series of internal migrations, which included the management of displaced non-Italians who sought refugee status, the repatriation of Italian nationals from former properties, and the migration of rural southerners relocating to northern Italian cities in search after jobs (Ballinger 2007). During the post war period, in the aftermath of decolonization, political education, national identity, and citizenship were all seen as bound together giving rise to attempts to remake the Italian citizen. The aftermath period redefined what 'Italianess' was consisted of, who belonged to Italy, and who could belong, in both social and legal terms (Ballinger 2007: 715).

The question of citizenship of the repatriated Italians is distinctively different from that of the African immigrants nowadays. Despite such renegotiations of the boundaries of Italian citizenship, repatriated Italians were, nevertheless, still conceived of as Italians. The question was not whether they could return, but who had the right to return. Yet, this

debate influenced the perception and definition of Italianess and thus, also defined the

national borders. Thus, the right to return to Italy on the basis of kinship (*jus sanguinis)*,

which became a law in 1912, alongside other developments in the Post Fascist Italian

nationality, shaped later processes that affect today's immigrants in Italy, for example, law

no. 91, which was instated in 1992 and continues to regulate in nowadays issues of

residency and naturalization (Calavita 2005).

Although *jus sanguinis* or citizenship based on bloodline remains the main condition for

receiving Italian citizenship nowadays,[96] the notion of citizenship based on *ius soli* – law of

the land has remained a point of controversy. At the start of 2012, there was an attempt to

reform the law, which is still being debated. If the reform will be accepted, people who are

born on Italian soil would be able to receive citizenship, and thus children of immigrants

and undocumented immigrants born in Italy would be automatically considered citizens.

The attempts to redefine the law triggered much public debate, responses in blogs, and

street conversations. For example, a blogger posted a response to a newspaper article

discussing the reform in ius soli. He titled his blog entry: "It may say 'Italian' on a piece of

paper... but you will always be *foreigners*" ("*potete pure dirvi italiani su un pezzo di carta...*

ma sarete sempre stranieri"). The reform was also followed by statements of politicians

from both sides (Notizia Fuori Del Ghetto, Carta Di Roma). The topic remains controversial,

as can be seen from the New Year public announcement by Cecile Kyenge, the Minister for

Integration. Kyenge, who is also known as a strong advocate of the introduction of the *Jus*

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[96] Other conditions apply to the process of naturalization in which criteria for citizenship are set largely based on contribution to the state (such as residence and employment in Italy, serving in the Italian army etc').

Soli law to grant citizenship to children of immigrants born on Italian soil, posted at the end of 2013 on Twitter her main goal for the New Year: "2014 towards a new citizenship: those born and/or raised in Italy are Italians" (ilGiornale.it, 26/12/2013).

The historical background of colonial citizenship in Italy suggests that the experience of migration for both Italians and immigrants is situated within a pre-existing context. The views and attempts of Italian authorities to manage the new immigrants are not novel but rather part of Italy's old configuration as a nation-state and a colonial power, and its definitions of citizenship. What more, the initial wave of Italian colonialization in Africa first under the Minister of Foreign Affairs Mancini in 1882, and later under Senator Michele Carta Mameli in 1903, was conceived as a civilizing mission. The invasions aimed to transform "the uncivilized colonial subjects" from their low status to "civilized" citizens: "introducing the subjects to our civiltà and eventually acquire our nazionalità" (Donati 2013: 139). The Italian colonial endeavor in the civilization project of the natives, was highly contested. Additionally, Wong (2006) shows that the Italian civilizing project was seen by other nations as a paradox in which, the "still uncivilized Italians" of the South attempting to "civilize the backward Africans." Thus, the Italian civilizing mission in Africa was intertwined with the "Southern question." In this sense, Wong argues, that colonial expansionism became a unifying factor for the divided Italian colonizers. Making race and skin color a much more prominent visible difference between the European Italian and the African, than the difference between the Northern Italian and the Southern Italian (Wong 2006: 92-93). Some of these effects are clearly seen today in the debates over the laws of citizenship and over 'who is' and 'who can' become a citizen. Like other parts of Europe,

Italy's immigrants can be naturalized and become citizens, but only after fulfilling certain conditions, which for many are impossible to achieve.

Immigrant women discussed in this chapter, much like most immigrants I met within African churches, do not become citizens. They have a better chance to become legal residents, a status that is annually renewed. Many of them arrive first alone. Only after obtaining their paperwork and receiving a permit of stay (*permesso di soggiorno*), they can apply for family reunification, which allows them, once approved, to bring their spouse and children. A residency will grant a person some temporary benefits such as access to public health care and the ability to find employment. After ten years of residency one can apply for citizenship; however, for refugees, the time shortens to only five years. Yet, children of undocumented migrants who were born in Italy are undocumented and according to the current *ius soli*, cannot become citizens. The timespan required for naturalization is relatively long in comparison to other EU countries.[97] yet, one of the documents migrants need to submit to start the process, is proof of financial ability, which many of them are unable to show and some will never be able to. The amount of years a resident must wait until he is eligible for applying to become a citizen, symbolizes to a certain degree, the level of integration expected to take place within Italian society. An examination of the courses that are designated for new immigrants reveals the types and kinds of knowledge that is viewed necessary to be included in the path to Italian integration.

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[97] For example, in France, the period for the eligibility for naturalization for immigrants is 5 years of residency, which can be shortened or waived all together for refugees. In Germany, it is 8 years and can be shortened as well for refugees to 6 years of residency.

Confessional and Cultural Citizenship

In her study of rehabilitation institutions for migrant women in Turin, Giordano (2008) suggests that obtaining citizenship in the long run (and residency in the short run), especially amongst migrant victims of human trafficking, is accompanied by two ideas of citizenship from an institutional point of view. The first type of citizenship, promoted mostly by Catholic and legal institutions, views "becoming legal" not only as a bureaucratic process but also a moral process which reflects a form of emancipation and moral redemption. To become residents, women are required by these institutions to file charges against their traffickers and go through a program of reeducation, which includes language and household training. Giordano refers to this form of obtaining citizenship as 'confessional citizenship.' On the other hand, other institutional settings such as the ethno-psychiatric clinic in which Giordano worked, promote a different model of citizenship. While in 'confessional citizenship' the concern is to Italianize the women and thereby rewrite their cultural affiliation, in the clinics the migrant women are instead expected to reactivate connections and forms of belonging with their culture of origin. Reconnection, therefore, is a condition for healing, which will lead to a better adaptation to the host society. She refers to this model as 'cultural citizenship' (ibid 2008: 589).

Giordano's analysis suggests that 'confessional citizenship' entails making migrants into Italians whereas 'cultural citizenship' implies remaking them into the Other. In what follows, I discuss an immigrant women-training course and consider approaches towards inclusion and exclusion of immigrants in the host society and by extension, paths towards Italian citizenship. I examine the training program considering the two models suggested

by Giordano, and argue that unlike Giordano's argument, the two forms of citizenship

cannot be separated. While there is a clear approach of aid organizations, like the one that

organized the courses I attended, towards integration of the migrants, the way these

programs are conducted and the language and scheme of the lessons are essentially geared

towards the preservation of the migrants' "alterity" and their remaking them into

subalterns.[98] Training courses that represent integration and by extension, paths towards

becoming citizens,[99] seem to combine approaches of indigenous cultural preservation

together with integration through Italianization.

Moreover, I argue that these courses shape the "Other" in accordance with romantic ideas

rooted in earlier periods, in which the Orient is depicted as exotic and uninhibited by

modernity. While rewriting a person's cultural affiliation to make one an Italian, on the one

hand, and preserving an individual's indigenous identity, on the other, may seem

contradictory, I argue that the process of preserving the African immigrants as an exotic

other creates a situation in which they are essentially incorporated into Italian society.

Indeed, by remolding the immigrant women as the other does not mean to exclude them

from Italian society, but rather to include them, albeit in order to actively place them within

a particular marginal position. Courses such as the cooking course, position immigrants

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[98] When using the term subaltern, I adopt Spivak's critique (1988), and do not simply mean 'oppressed' or discriminated, but rather, I see the African migrants in Italy especially in the context of Italy as a post-colonial space, as others who are at the margins (if at all) of Italian society. Given their immigrant and/ or refugee status they are denied agency, which is only given to them on terms of participating in different governmental and other institutions.

[99] The courses I attended do not officially grant citizenship to the participants. However, there is an assumption in these kind of courses, that they equip the participants with tools to successfully integrate in Italian society. Thus, according to such approach, full integration means becoming Italians first culturally and then legally.

within particular jobs. Women need to know how to prepare Italian food in order to work in restaurants or as domestic aid for Italian families. Finally, I argue that despite the attempt to mold African immigrants into the exotic and the marginal, the women who participated in the courses used these courses to challenge and contest the image that enforced on them by their hosts.

The training included cooking lessons every Wednesday and hygiene lessons every Friday for two months, in addition to external language courses that were offered separately. The courses I attended were proposed as aid for refugees and immigrants by a religious organization and were similar to other courses that were offered throughout Rome by different organizations, many of them religious as well. Although this course (and others) is organized by a Christian institution, participants do not need to be Christians to participate, nor is the content of the course religious. The course is open to all immigrant women regardless of their time of immigration and their origin. That said, all the women attending this course during my study were of African origin, and except for one Moroccan immigrant, all were from sub-Saharan Africa. Can these courses create a notion of belonging for these women? And does learning to cook Italian food makes one Italian?

Be Italian

 The cooking course I attended offers an interesting linkage between food and belonging, and highlights the place of food related practices (such as cooking, eating and shopping) to creating national and cultural borders. Moreover, not knowing what is Parmigiano-Reggiano or Parmesan cheese, as described in the opening vignette of this chapter, is not

simply a culinary question, but rather an identity marker between "Italians" and "Immigrants." Furthermore, practices taught at the course mark one identity as superior to the other, by placing certain knowledge as granted and as correct versus others as incorrect.

Literature on the anthropology of food reveals that different foods are much more than culinary traditions. Analyses range from classical studies linking cuisine to social class (Goody 1982) and memory (Holtzman 2006), to more contemporary studies exploring influences of globalization on food (Philips 2006) such as marketing (Renne 2007), consumption (Bellasco and Scranton 2002) and importing, exporting and global food regulations. Recently, numerous studies have explored food as a symbol for creating imagined communities (Murcott 1996). La Cecla's (2007) study, for example, shows that in Italy certain foods were used to unify the nation and have become an important identity marker, particularly outside of Italy where Italian food is what makes one Italian. Similarly, Cusack (2000) shows how food and recipes of African cuisine are used as a tool for nation – building. Identity is marked through food not only on a national level; often the way food is performed is tied to ethnicity and religious identity (Bahloul 1989).

Although the literature on the anthropology of food is quite vast, little emphasis is placed on the preparation of food. The encounters in the kitchen described above reveal the importance not only of what is being cooked, but also the meaning associated with food preparation and cooking techniques, that is, the 'right way' or the Italian way to peel and cut. Renne's (2007) research, for example, discusses influences of globalization on food

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preparation in the African diaspora in the United States. Her research on West African food shows that mass production technologies are incorporated and replace labor-intensive techniques of African food preparation. Although it focuses on the marketing of African food, it shows that food preparation practices change with movement and mobility. In the case of West African immigrants in the United States, for example, it changes in order to suit Western lifestyles. Simple statements like "whenever you cook with carrots, use a peeler" which were repeated during the cooking classes, indicate that to a certain extent, the women are expected to adopt the cooking techniques not just for the preparation of Italian dishes, but also apply it to their own cooking. They are being taught how to cook, not just how to cook Italian food.

Diner's study (2009) of nineteenth century immigration to the USA explores food as a validating site of ethnic resilience, emphasizing memories of hunger in structuring immigrant experience. In the cooking course, after the instructor corrected the way of cutting and returned to the stove, the woman who was sitting next to me quietly said to me that she does not understand what the difference is in cutting this way or another, as everything ends up mixed up in your stomach, and the important thing is one having food to eat. Here too, food emphasizes an immigrant experience, and is linked to memories of the migration journey. For the instructors, a cooking course is essential to inculcate a new habitus (Bourdieu 1977), in which exposing the immigrants to culture through the taste buds is a part of teaching immigrants how to be Italians and therefore doing things the way Italians do them. However, the way to introducing this new habitus is informed by hierarchy. Correcting the women in the process of food preparation is an act of distinction,

more than an act of teaching. Cooking techniques and culinary knowledge are one form of knowledge that is used to position cultural supremacy (Bourdieu 1984). Similar practices are seen in the topics of language and hygiene.

To speak Italian (or not to speak at all)

Most aid organizations "meet" prospective participants for these kinds of courses in free assistance and information centers that they operate on scheduled hours during the week. A social worker and volunteers usually man these centers. In one of these centers I met Katia, a volunteer. She had been going to the church that offered the assistance and this is how she started volunteering in the information center. Katia herself was not an Italian. She was Croatian but spoke Italian fluently and moved to Italy to work and complete her MA in political science. When we met at the center, she had large folders packed with information that she gave to the immigrants and the refugees who stopped by.

The *FCEI* assistance center operated twice a week from 10am until noon. It was located in a large church hall on the bottom floor of an old building close to Termini station. I planned to arrive a few minutes before 10AM. Around 10:15 I met Katia as she was putting down her bags on the grey terrazzo flooring so she can unlock the massive dark wooden door; I followed Katia and we walked into a large hall with tall ceilings. The elongated windows far above the eye level allowed only a bit of sunlight to filter inside, leaving the room dim. She placed some folding chairs around the room and one portable plastic table where she arranged piles of pages stacked with information; Italian language classes, shelters, social workers, training courses and places that help with visa applications. A few people quietly

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trickled in collecting information and asking questions in English or French mixed with broken Italian. Most of them were African refugees.

As we were about to leave and Katia locked the door, an African man arrived. She told him that they just closed so he should come back on Wednesday. Katia paused and looked at him for a few seconds and then asked him what exactly he was looking for. The man started crying and said that he had heard they help refugees. A few minutes later his wife arrived holding their toddler son in her arms. The man said that they do not know where else to go. Katia asks if they speak Italian. He answers in English that they don't know Italian. She sits down on the steps next to the entrance of the building and takes out one of the folders that are placed in the tote bag hanged on her shoulder. She asks him how long they have been in Italy. They only came three weeks ago, "BUT," he quietly utters, almost whispering, "We have our refugee papers." Katia takes out a stack of papers and shows him a list of language institutes. She says that it is important that he learn Italian so he can get a job. He starts crying again and says that he heard that they help with food here, "only for the boy and the wife," he asks. "We don't give food here." She answers briefly as she flips in the stack of papers and shows the man some addresses with shelters where they can go get a meal and a bed, as long as they are not full. Her answers are brief and firm. He thanks her, and she sighs. Her face becomes softer. she tells him to come back on Wednesday and they will see what they can do. He did not come back on Wednesday. After they leave I walk towards the metro station with Katia. She says to me: "I feel bad for them, but really, they can't expect us to help them if they don't know how to speak [Italian]. Without the language, they will never be able to manage and find a job, and of course, they will not be able to belong. They

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need to show that they are serious about living here. Most of them learn Italian very quickly. They have to," she adds.

Hygiene

On Fridays, the women meet in the church's courtyard with another instructor for a series of classes of *"sanitaria e igiene"* literally translated as health and hygiene. Only six women came this week. It seems that there less women come to these sessions in comparison to the cooking classes that tend to have full attendance. I join the women and we sit in one of the small conference rooms around an oval table. Based on last week's *igiene* session that focused on nutrition, the instructor asks the women: "do you remember where we find carbs?" The women answer: "pasta, bread, sugar." "Where do we find protein? If a friend is vegetarian what does she have to eat?" The women seem confused by this: "why would someone not eat meat?" they ask. The instructor continues to talk about fats and oils and explains how much of each of these components a woman is supposed to eat. She talks about portions in grams: "about 40 grams of protein and 50-100 grams of carbs every day," and then moves to discuss calorie intake. The women start whispering among themselves and Raquel, an Angolan woman in her mid-40s, loudly asks: "do women actually do this every day?". "Do what?" the instructor asks. Raquel moves her hand as if she is taking a portion of some food with her hands and pretends to weigh it: "40 grams," she says and pretends as if she is eating the food she just weighed. The instructor smiles but does not answer as if she assumes that Raquel is just joking and is not seriously asking.

The instructor asks the women if they heard of the Mediterranean diet, this is what we have here in Italy. She says UNESCO declared it as protected [cultural heritage][100] because it is considered very nutritious: "there is a little bit of everything: some meat, some pasta, a lot of fruits and vegetables." There is a lot of variety. "What do you eat in Africa? Let's compare it to Italy," she says. "In Angola," Raquel says, "we eat baguette with butter and coffee for breakfast, or fried plantain. For lunch: rice, lots of fish, plantain, tomatoes or chicken. We eat a lot of fish, A LOT. And coffee. Angola is the first country that exported coffee and sugar." She says proudly. "At night, we eat *fufu,* it is kind of like polenta," she explains.

"Do you ever eat sweets?" the instructor asks. "Yes," Raquel answers, "but only on occasions," she emphasizes, "such as weddings and celebrations." "Do you eat fruit?" - "No, there are not a lot of fruit. If you eat a lot of fruits it causes problems; we have mango and cocoanut. And there is no specific time when you eat fruit," she explains to the instructor foreseeing her next question. Some of the women nod in agreement. "Fruit is important for you; it has a lot of vitamins that you need to stay healthy," the instructor responds.

In this conversation between the instructor and the participating women, African cuisine is distinguished from its modern counterpart in Italy by detaching food and consumption from culture and taste. Breaking down nutrition into the components of calories and nutrients, and organizing it in food groups, repositions food within the field of science,

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[100] In 2010 UNESCO declared the safeguarding of the Mediterranean diet, represented by Italy, Spain and Morocco, and entering it to the list of Intangible Cultural Heritages.

rather than, in in the realm of the palate, and moreover, presents a specific set of behaviors and food related practices as scientific. In doing so, what guides the way one should assemble a meal is not by what is appetizing or accessible within the local (African) setting, but rather the diet that would supposedly promote one's growth, development, and health. The question presented by Raquel, "do women really do that every day?" confirms the women's perception of the course as a reflection of how Italian women plan their daily meals. Meal planning just like practices of cutting and the acquisition of language direct the participants how to become Italians: cut vegetables in the right way, speak the right language, and change your diet based on western science. Moreover, by dismissing the significance of the 'availability of food' as negligible and primitive, the instructor portrays the Italians' way of eating as superior. By bringing UNESCO's choice of the Mediterranean diet, the instructor further justifies a notion of authority.

While *igiene* is the Italian word for hygiene, it is mostly used in the sense of cleanliness as well as 'personal care.' The wider meanings of *igiene* can explain the inclusion of aspects of nutrition within the content of the course. Cleanliness and personal care then become an integral part of the socialization of immigrants, particularly those coming from the southern hemisphere. Studies show that in the past, hygiene was a central feature of Western modernization projects including Europe, the USA, and the colonial world. In these projects, public health was an instrument of civilizing and controlling subordinate population (Arnold 1993; Burke 1996; Corbin 1988; Hunt 1999; Hirsch 2014; McElhinny 2005). Hirsch (2009, 2014), for example, writes that during the British Mandate in Palestine hygiene was metonymic to Western progress and the hygienic man was identified

with civility and modernization. The popular discourse of hygiene conceived hygiene education as part of a larger project of modernizing and Westernizing Jewish subjects. Moreover, she argues that such approaches that contribute to the construction of oriental otherness serve to produce a coherent image of the occidental self (Hirsch 2009, 2011). Studies show that in the beginning of the twentieth century the hygiene repertoire included not only cleanliness, but also entailed a broader category of knowledge, which provided models of conduct for everyday behavior including sleeping, washing, cooking, eating and organizing time. Today hygiene is a more limited category though the Italian courses for immigrants I attended reflected a similar, expansionist rational of *igiene*. While these everyday acts may not be identified as proper hygiene related, they are associated with what constitutes the civilized subject.

Be Exotic

Edward Said's work on orientalism conceptually addresses how Eurocentric perspectives produced the justification for the domination of the other by means of colonialism. The imagined geography of the Orient, Near East, as Said shows was filled with images of savages (Said 1978). In *On the Post-colony,* Mbembe's (2001) however, identifies another notion of exoticism, slightly different from that of Said, one that envisions Africa as the "fantastic other." In the Fascist era in Italy, romantic literature discussed Africa as an exotic land, which reflected Fascist aspirations to be released from the defects of modernity (such as capitalism). In doing so, it paired the savage with the exotic, thus continuing romantic-racist ideas from the liberal era regarding the African other. Sartini-Blum (2003), for example, examines several colonial texts by Marinetti that embody a clash between

orientalist nostalgia and futurist "modern *Italia*." Her work discusses the elaboration of fundamental paradoxes of fascist era culture in the colonial setting and demonstrates how the literature in this period attempted to stage the exotic as a site of heroic self-fulfillment. This view of the exotic as a fantasy of the ideal self, a desire to be the Other, was related to the European avant-garde's rejection of liberal bourgeois culture as well as to the Nietzschean call for a new barbarism (Sartini-Blum 2003: 140). Thus, Africa becomes "the mythical stage in which the heroic, sovereign individual unhindered by the fetters of modern democracy- can affect an ingenious fusion of savagery and progress" (Sartini-Blum 2003: 147). Africa is portrayed as a space of ambivalence and phobia. The combination of incorporation and objection found in Marinetti's African texts exposes the violent "unconsciousness" of the Orientalist discourse. Sartini-Blum further argues that Africa reflected in the Fascist period the paradox embodied by the Fascist state, that is, how to keep with the self-definition of fascism as a cultural-political revolution, which includes building a powerful industrial mass society, but one that keeps the old values that are salvaged from the impact of modernity's twin plagues of capitalism and Marxism. Italy's African colonies, then, become a testing ground for the newly molded Fascist subject. Exoticist literature reflects an attempt to salvage the Italian individual by displacing it to Africa, a land beyond the reach of modernity.

Ifekwuigwe (2004) has noted the troubling similarities between early 19th century colonial stereotypes and current images of African immigrants, especially of women of color, as the exotic and the sexually uninhibited. Imagining African women as "Black Venus," an image that has a long history in Italy, adds to the image of fantastic–exotic Africa. In the image of

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Black Venus, and its current subsections, "black women embody the dynamics of racial-sexual alterity" (Sharpley-Whiting 1999: 6), and thus, represent a subject of sexual-desire for Italian men. Italian men often identify African women walking by themselves as sex workers, and they attempt to solicit the women. Local Italian women too accuse the migrant women of competing with them over their men (Merrill 2006). This has implications for the way migrant women perceive themselves in their host countries. For example, African migrant women often believe that in terms of employment in European countries, aside from sex work or domestic work, there are no other possibilities open for them (Ifekwuigwe 2004). This exoticism of Africa migrants continues to be prevalent in various aspects, as I will show next.

African food is too spicy

In the class before the final cooking-course meeting, the instructors told the women that in the last session they would be cooking 'their authentic food.' The women seemed a bit confused and said their food takes a long time to make unlike Italian food. The instructors laughed and explained: "no, we will make a celebratory last meal; each will make a dish at home that is typical of her country, and bring it with her to the next session." The women got excited and started to discuss between themselves what they were going to make. The instructor added that they will invite everyone to join their celebration: Franca (the head of the organization) and Lucia (the organizer of the program) as well as Michaela (the social worker) and Maria - the other instructor from the hygiene course. 'We' have cooked for you so far, now you cook for 'us': you can present us your country through your food.

The next week, the women gather in the office just like the previous weeks. Emmy asks another woman if she brought food. The woman answers that she did not; none of the women that come in after her seem to be carrying any bags or dishes with food. It turns out that only Emmy and two other Ethiopian women got together to cook and brought food for the group. Some of the women talk between themselves and leave the office; they announce that they will meet everyone in the kitchen. When we get to the kitchen all work together to get the room ready for lunch before the guests arrive. A few women take out the tables from the closet, assemble them and clean them. They organize square tables of four, and scatter them around the room to make it look a bit like a café. They spread flowery vinyl tablecloths on top of each of the plastic tables, and set chairs around them. Finally, they organize a large table on which the food is supposed to be presented.

In the meantime, Mimy, Hywat and Lydia, the three Ethiopian women assemble their dishes on trays in the kitchen. They uncover a huge round platter of rolled *injera*, a soft spongy flatbread made of teff flour and heat up a spicy red lentil stew *(mesir wat)* to serve with it. Although Mimy and Lydia are from two different ethnic groups in Ethiopia - one is Oromo and the other is Tigrayan - they agreed on this as representative of Ethiopian food; but they make sure that we know that there is no "one Ethiopian cuisine," and Oromo and Tigray have very different foods. I am surprised at the large quantity of food they cooked and when I mention it, they are eager to tell us how long it took them to make it. Nadia, the woman from Morocco, comes in late; she brings with her a bowl of couscous and cooked vegetables and sets it on the table. Her food is foreign, yet seems familiar to the instructors and they immediately start a conversation on working class restaurants around Termini

station that serve North-African food. Most of the women know these restaurants and mention how good the food is, and they especially emphasize that you can have a full meal for a little cost.

It is almost eleven o'clock; the guests are invited to come at eleven thirty. The women who left earlier come back with baskets. It turns out they went to *Mercato Esquilino*, Rome's largest ethnic market, located near Termini station about half an hour walk from the Scottish Church's kitchen, where the classes were held. The instructors look surprised and ask them if they are going to start cooking now. They laugh of embarrassment and quickly go into the kitchen. While they take out sardines and a whole chicken out of their basket, they say that they did not realize the instructors were serious about them bringing food for the final class; they simply did not think that they would be interested in their food. But one of them tells me that they wanted to cook for the other women, with whom they spent the past few months.

The women quickly set a large pot of oil and start frying plantains, a common snack in large parts of West and Central Africa, and another pan for frying fish and chicken. Once they are done, each takes out the food she prepared and sets it out on the large table. The serving table is organized in a form of buffet. The tables leaning against the wall, and the prints of the Italian bread on the vinyl cloth that covers the table are slowly being hidden behind the various African dishes. The instructor asks them to write a note with the name of the food. Lydia volunteers to do it and she walks around, asking them how to spell or describe the different dishes.

Figure 13.
The "ethnic" last meal

Two of the guests stand next to each other whispering and laughing; they take some of Nadia's vegetables, and some of the stuffed grape leaves I made to contribute my own share to the meal. The rest of the food is left almost untouched by the Italian guests and is eaten only by the other participants. One of the women asks the instructor if she didn't like the food. In response, she apologetically says that the African food is too spicy for her, explaining the untouched leftover stew on her plate, but mentions the stuffed grape leaves as really-good without knowing who made them. In anthropological literature, food is often a means of bringing people together, and the last meal in this course as well, can be seen as a vehicle for commensality. Yet the inability to incorporate "foreign" food by the guests signifies to an extent their difficulty to incorporate the Other (Bourdieu 1984).

In one of the previous classes, Raquel, a Congolese woman, complained during a discussion about making friends in Italy that for Italians, all Africans are the same. The Italian do not realize the differences between Africans — "all are Ghanaian or Senegalese." In that sense, indeed, the Italian guests and the instructor assume African food to be one; the familiarity of the North African food brought by Nadia as well as the vine leaves which are a typical Mediterranean dish become an identity marker in the presence of the Italian guests, next to the unfamiliarity of the tastes, colors, and smells of the various sub-Saharan African dishes presented on the table and clustered together simply as "African."

The availability of African ingredients within the reach of a hand, only a ten minutes' walk from the course's kitchen, create a notion of a global imaginary, or at least a culinary one. Yet, like Raquel said several weeks earlier at the hygiene course, the Italians are interested in African food only as tourists when in Africa. However, here in Italy, they want nothing to do with it. Her statement illustrates how global imaginaries are not just created, but also challenged as people move (Phillips 2006). The reactions of the Italian guests to the African dishes raise questions about the role of "traveling food" in producing and reproducing notions of identity (Hirsch 2009; Renne 2007).

Unlike ideas about "eating the Other" or "food colonialism" adopted by scholars mainly to discuss logics of distinction in relation to Western consumption (Goldman 1992; hooks 1992), when food travels with the people who make it, it can create instead segregated cultural borders. Moreover, one might argue that acquaintance and consumption facilitate

acceptance. Thus, when the Italian guests alienate themselves from the *fufu* and the *injera* on the table, they distinguish themselves from the women who brought it, and in so doing, establish the food of the Other as a marker of Otherness (Narayan 2013).

Like in your village

In one of the sessions in the course, Lucia, the administrator of the course, and Paula, another social worker who works with immigrants in a different program, came to do a special activity that included the screening of a movie followed by a discussion about child rearing. We watched the movie *Babies,*[101] a film that recorded the first two years in the lives of four infants in four locations around the world: Mongolia (Bayanchandmani), Japan (Tokyo), USA (San Francisco) and Namibia (Opuwo). Much like the anthropological work of Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, this movie too tries to show child rearing practices through the perspective of cultural relativism; however, the images, are simultaneously used to exoticise parental practices. The movie and what is chooses to show emphasizes the different and the strange rather than the common and the mundane. By screening the movie in the course, the guest instructors intended to provide the women a space to identify with their own image that was "supposedly" represented in the film in the women of Namibia and to compare it with their Italian host society, represented by the USA. Instead, the screening generated a stage for challenging these representations.

The women organize the chairs in a circle around the projector and screen; there seems to be an interest in doing something different this time. Some of the women get excited when

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[101] Balmès Thomas (Director). *Babies*. USA. 2010.

they find out that the activity is a movie. One of the instructors asks if anyone has ever seen the movie before; none of the women have seen it. Nadia arrives late and apologizes. She brings her 7-year-old daughter with her and explains that she did not wake up in time for school so she is with her today. All the women circle around her and remark how pretty Nadia's daughter is and how well behaved. They both join the circle to see the movie; Nadia's daughter sits in her lap. While the movie plays, the women talk to one another about it. "Owww," one of them makes sounds expressing cuteness. Others laugh or comment in Italian how cute the babies look and how funny the things they do are. They continue to talk throughout the movie and make comments among themselves in their own language. They keep getting up and walk in and out of the room: to smoke, to talk, to go to the bathroom. The instructor asks if the film is not interesting and if they would like to stop; the women look surprised by her question and say that it is very interesting. Lucia seems confused and can't figure out why the women keep moving. She finally says: "please sit through the movie until we get to the end and try to be quiet so everyone can hear it." "This is how we watch movies here," she explains juxtaposing their different expectations of what is the proper behavior in a movie screening.

When the film ends, one of the women turns the lights back on. Lucia asks what the women thought about the movie: "did you like it? Most of you are from Africa - is it similar in your country like in 'that village'?" She continues, "what do women do here? Is it like the part of the American family?" She does not mention which village but it is clear she is talking about the baby in the Namibian village. The movie shows scenes of Namibian women seating together on the sand in the shade of a tree in a compound of mud huts. The women in the

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film sit and chat among themselves while grinding grains, and their older children are running around them while the babies crawl in the dirt. When one of the babies wants to eat, he comes to the mother and she attaches him to her exposed breast, while continuing to chat with the woman sitting next to her. As was the case with the food display in the last cooking session, in the movie screening, too, Africa is portrayed as an exotic land where women can walk around naked. Partridge (2009: 344) writes that "Blackness especially in Europe, must always represent some exotic *there and not here,* since the implication is that Black bodies have traveled from somewhere else in order to come here." The women sitting in the room watching the movie are assigned a fantasy image of how they were before they arrived in Europe. Depicted as savage women wearing nothing but beads, they represent some exotic fantasy *there* (Partridge 2009). Yet unlike the fantasy assigned to their black bodies through the image of black babies and mothers in a faraway village *there*, the women sitting in the room bring with them stories that are far from fantasies; and they are right *here*.

Naked women and mud huts

The women now realize that Ponijao, the Namibian baby, was supposed to represent them and the "African" way of childrearing. There is an awkward silence following Lucia's questions. A minute or two later, one of the women says very loudly: "NO, maybe there are some places like that in my country, BUT I don't know about it; I grew up in the city and the city does not look like that; we have hospitals; women don't go around wearing nothing. And we live in houses." There is a bit of a hubbub and other women join her: "not in Ethiopia either, we grew up in the city, so we never saw that, only on TV, or through

pictures made for tourists." A woman from Angola uses her body to show her contempt for

the idea; she raises her lips, makes a 'ufff' sound and shakes her head while crossing her

hands on her chest and leaning backwards in her chair. By assigning the women to the

image of the one village in Namibia, and the Italians or Italianess to the American family in

the movie, the instructors re-validated the perception of Italy as the "advanced West," and

the immigrant women as the "savages of the Third World" (Silverstein 2005).

The women are offended by the suggestion made by the instructors. None of them grew up

in a rural village, they are all from the city, and this *Ponijao* does not represent their Africa.

Lucia's question uncovers her assumption about how the lives of African immigrant women

looked like before their arrival to Italy. To a degree, it reflects a common image in Italian

society (and to an extent - Western) about African lives, and by extension, the lives of the

immigrants arriving in Italy. The instructor is struck by the resistance in the class; she

insists on continuing with the course of discussion and asks the women what they think is

different in what they just saw in the movie and in the part dedicated to Ponijao from what

they see today in Italy: "do you think it is better to grow up like that in the village? What

elements are better here or there?" She then explains that it seems to her that African

childrearing is done in a communal way, where women raise children together and help

one another, whereas it feels that in the USA (referring to the part in the movie about the

family from San Francisco) and in Italy, women must go to arranged places to meet other

women with children such as playgroups. Her assumption positions Italy as equivalent to

the USA and portrays Africans as savages. Yet her questions reveal some sort of romantic

and exotic feeling to the Africa that is portrayed in the movie; she attempts to highlight the positive aspects of that image.

The conversation about the movie continues and the instructors further ask how many of the immigrant women have children in Italy. Since few of them do, it opens another stage in the discussion regarding the ability or possibility of having children in a situation of migration. Mimy answers: "why would I bring children—to what? to this? There is no hope here in Italy; how can I bring my child to be part of this situation?" Other women answer more directly, and say that here in Italy, the grandparents take care of the children (i nonni). Aside from the grandparents, the parents have no one else to help them, they do not have the community support. However, one of them says, "at least the children have access to healthcare - if they need it." Franca jumps in in response to Emmy's words. "YES," she says, "it seems that in Africa, the whole community is helping the mother raising the child. They are helping each other. In Italy that doesn't regularly happen."

Ideas about friendship and community also emerged during one of the hygiene classes, further emphasizing notions of exoticism. In one of the earlier meetings, the hygiene instructor asked the women if they ever had Italian friends over for dinner. The women all shook their heads for no. The instructor looked surprised and said: "do you not have Italian friends?" The women said: "we do, but we have never been to their house." Raquel adds: "When people come to Angola they want to eat African food to experience, but here, they do not want to know or see our food and our neighbors complain that it smells." At the end of this class, the instructor wraps up by stating to the women that it is crucial for them to

familiarize themselves with the food. She explains, "food helps us open-up, it is important for assimilating yourself better in Italy." In this interaction 'local friends' are presented as cultural brokers or sponsors of assimilation, and hygienic behavior and approaches towards nutrition and food are supposed to provide a shared everyday behavior for immigrants with local Italians, just like the last meal. The instructor then adds, "however, it is also very important for you to keep making your traditional food to preserve your identity."

Both situations give the women opportunities to contest some of the images that are widely spread in Italian society. A discussion about hosting and serving food quickly becomes a point of rejecting the romantic view of food as bringing people together showing that to the contrary, food can create borders between groups and people. What the last meal as well as the discussion about having local friends tell us, therefore, is that when consumed by tourists in African countries African food becomes ethnic and exotic, but becomes strange and foreign when consumed by Italians in Italy. There is no place for the immigrants to voice their resentment over the way the host society has accepted them. Many conversations I had with immigrants during my fieldwork that mentioned attitudes towards Italian society and Italian authorities ended with the reservation that one should not complain; their lives are better in Italy. However, these sessions enabled a space for women to voice concerns and in so, negotiate some of the exotic images that they experience on a daily basis. The resistance of the women to the instructors' presentation of Africa is possible only through their participation in the course.

The orientalist discourse excludes the voices of the people about whom it talks, and in so, turns them into subaltern (Said 1978). Scholars debate whether the subaltern can speak. As suggested by Sharp in *Geographies of Post Colonialism* (2008), the subaltern gain a voice via an adoption of western ways of knowing in various post-colonial situations. Viewing the African migrants' life in Europe as a post-colonial situation, one notes that the African women participating in these programs are only heard if they speak through cultural Italian filters. The women's discussion of the movie *Babies*, expresses their resistance to the colonial image of savage Africa by portraying a rather urban picture of hospitals, buildings, and schools in Ethiopia and Angola. They are expressively repelled, in their discussion with the instructors, by the different practices described in the Namibian portion of the movie such as babies crawling in the dirt or birthing on the floor, which feed the savage African image.

Conclusion

Going back to Giordano's two models of the paths towards becoming citizens, the various examples illustrated in the vignettes above illustrate the amalgamation of the two approaches to citizenship she discusses. There is a constant tension between "erasing" and "preserving." Acts of "erasing," like food preparation techniques, eating habits, and language, are created to facilitate assimilation into Italian society, and acts of "preserving" as demonstrated, for example, in the discussion that followed the movie about child rearing, are aimed at maintaining the immigrant women's alterity within Italian society. The elements of the two models, according to which 'confessional citizenship' implies making migrants into Italians, and 'cultural citizenship' implies re-making them into

Others, are not separate, but rather intertwined as I showed through the integration classes. Thus, while women are introduced to western diet, they are also called at the same time to maintain their indigenous cuisine and preserve their identity. Practices reflected in these courses constantly express both the inclusion of the immigrants as potential-future Italians, and their exclusion as African foreigners, and ultimately, noncitizens. The women are incorporated into Italian society; yet they are also placed at its margins and distanced from their hosts. The margins allow, to an extent, the maintenance of social hierarchies (Bourdieu 1977).

Citizenship projects do not only articulate strategies to forge citizens from above, but the language that is used in these projects shapes the ways people understand themselves and relate to themselves and others (Giordano 2006: xxxxix). They are a site of identity production of the foreigner within European Italian society. The women participating in the programs understand themselves in the context of their host society. Unlike the African immigrants, who in their role as Pentecostal missionaries, remain silent about their experiences as immigrants in Italy, the women whom I met in these programs that are intended to support the immigrants' social integration, insisted on their status as immigrants and as the "other." In doing so, they were able to challenge some of the representations, de-exoticize themselves and reveal elements of racism in the Italian host society. These programs become a venue for challenging existing perceptions on Africa and Africans, to the extent to which their claim to being missionaries challenges similar perceptions of the host society. Yet, at the end, neither the formulated representation of the African, nor the contested representation of it by the women, seem to be enough to enable

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social change in relation to the lives of Africans as European citizens. Partridge (2012) discusses the construction of Afro-German identity and its constraints on discourses of citizenship and the production of noncitizens. We should similarly ask here if the African Pentecostals' construction of themselves as missionaries in Europe will enable them to break away from the nation-state paradigm and change their status as noncitizens.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

Telling a Story

Missionaries to the City of God tells a story of migrants in Europe, one that is less often told. African migrants find their way to Europe mainly for economic reasons, but sometimes for other reasons. However, in addition to their political and economic motivations in Europe, they also lead pious Christian lives, which they aspire to pass on to their host society. As migrants, they experience a paradox of two conflicting statuses that originate from their positions, on the one hand, as "migrants" who come to better their lives economically and on the other, as "missionaries" a status that originates in their religious life as Pentecostals, who believe that their role is to bring Christianity with them and spread it to their host society. They navigate this terrain by assuming the status of "Christian citizens." Originally a biblical term which refers to the afterlife of the believers in heaven (*"For our citizenship is in heaven; from which also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ"* Philippians 3:20), "Christian citizenship," becomes more than a religious concept for the Pentecostal migrants. Rather it provides a way for them to challenge and negotiate their "non-citizenship" as immigrants in Europe. Believers become Christian citizens based on their mission, moral conduct, and piety, while citizenship can be understood as a metaphor for belonging. Where one belongs and how belonging can be defined are aspects that are challenged in the globalized 21st century world, and with it, the notion of "home."

Pentecostal migrants link the concept of citizenship as it is often interpreted in relation to the nation-state – that is, a form of belonging to and participating in the state - to their religiosity instead. In doing so, the Pentecostal believers in Rome challenge their non-citizenship in the nation-state and counter the hegemonic narratives of exclusion of African migrants in Italian society. As believers, they come to see their moral conduct as a counterweight to the immorality of their Italian host society. It thus represents an alternative manner for contributing to and participating in the host society, ultimately enacting and fulfilling the migrants' Christian citizenship.

In telling the story of African migrants in Rome, I suggest a concept of citizenship that goes beyond the nation-state, but is not independent from it. While it is shaped in relation to the nation-state, Christian citizenship provides an alternative manner for contributing and participating in Italian social life Christian citizenship also takes into consideration different forces such as transnational migration and religious global connections that not only affect our current understanding of citizenship, but also challenge such understandings.

I argue that Christian citizenship operates according to different perceptions of space and time. Moreover, as Ingold (1993) notes, space and time are deeply interlinked. *Missionaries to the City of God* also seeks, therefore, to unfold another story, that of Pentecostal-African temporality. The dichotomy between "immigrant" and "missionary" is dictated not only by the limits of the nation-state's conceptualization of citizenship, but also by the state's articulation of sovereignty, space, and time. In other words, Christian citizenship reflects a

counterpoint to the limitation of transcendental authority in this earth-bound world. And the affiliation with a transnational network embodies the possibilities of Christian citizenship. Thus, believers constantly move between those different levels of citizenships, that of Christian citizenship and that of the migrant non-citizenship in order to mediate that tension. Thus, these two levels, that of the missionary and that of the migrant, are not necessarily contradictory but rather are seen as a way to allow for dealing with earthly limitations.

A key finding from this study is that for Ghanaian Christian immigrants to Italy, temporality is deeply interlinked with their perceptions of the spatial. Mission and migration are set on different scales of time and are best illustrated by concepts of citizenship. In my discussion of children's conversion in northeastern Ghana, I begin to illustrate the political economy of Christianity in Ghana and how it is interlinked with space. Christianity is widespread mainly in the south of Ghana and offers opportunities of mobility that are not available for the rural villagers of the North. Such temporality continues as believers from Accra and Kumasi travel for better opportunities outside of Africa, ultimately to the West. I continue this discussion by examining the transcendental space of the believers, "moving to a higher level," which unfolds a Pentecostal temporality of the near future that embodies piety and moral conduct. Both are intertwined with the concept of Christian citizenship. Finally, I expose another facet the juxtaposition of space and time by examining the migrants' temporality: How long does the journey to a 'better' land take and how long until one becomes (potentially able to become) a citizen, a member of the host society? The migrants' temporality is contrasted by the limitations of the national space and their

confinement to the nation's geographical and political borders, setting the migrants as "non-citizens" in the margins of the Italian state. Ultimately, this dissertation portrays a picture of temporality of mission and temporality of migration, which shape the world of the believers, and through which they operate, shifting back and forth from one status to another.

Beyond citizenship

Citizenship, as well as temporality, raise further questions that are worth pursuing in future research. One aspect that is particularly worthy of investigation is a more nuanced observation of when and where one "operates" each type of citizenship. Such social transformations require closer observations, outside of the church, of believers in their everyday interactions, a research which I hope to conduct in the future. Another aspect of this project that requires further investigation is the way that prayer is enacted as a form of moving between the two temporalities, what believers call "prayer time- sacred time." Although I offer some insights into prayer in my discussion on aesthetics and movement, further inquiry is required in order to understand how and where prayer takes place, and what sets of meanings it creates for the believer.

Further research might also be pursued in order to he clarify the picture of religious citizenship in a nation-state such as Italy where various forms of Catholicism prevail. This a study would contribute to an understanding of the role that religion plays in the configuration of Italian and European citizenship, particularly, since most migrant and refugee programs in Italy are run by Catholic organizations. Furthermore, a comparison

with other Northern countries would provide a broader understanding of the role of religion in migration to Europe.

The meaning of citizenship as it has developed in 21st century Ghanaian society would provide a historical context for the use of Christian citizenship by Ghanaian migrants in Italy. As I have argued, Ghanaians themselves bring with them a competing understanding of citizenship—as "Christian citizenship"—compared with that employed by their Italian hosts. It would be worthwhile to consider the ways that citizenship historically developed in Ghana, thus examining the Ghanaian perception of citizenship. Furthermore, examining aspects of internal Christian migration in Ghana, especially from the South to the North can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of processes of charismatic and Pentecostal mission, not just outside of Africa but internally, within Africa.

Finally, a more nuanced understanding of the connections between the national, the global and the religious would considerably add to our comprehension of the massive global expansion of Charismatic movements in the late 20th and early 21st century. Such an approach would shed light on the juxtaposition of the global level through which Charismatic Christianity operates as the "first true global religion" (Casanova 2001), with the limitations of geopolitical and national forces, in which Charismatic and Pentecostal adherents are entangled.

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