



Changing Glocal Scape through the Lens of the Nexus between Religion and Migration in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the nexus between religion and migration within a world in constant flux, now more so with the advent of artificial intelligence (AI). Focusing on the global flows of migration and the ways that religious identities, practices, and institutions adapt to and shape them, it explores the role of AI technologies in mediating, entrenching, or interrupting these processes. Through interdisciplinary work across migration studies, Artificial Intelligence and digital sociology, the article frames religious migrants as active participants as well as objects of techno-cultural changes. The theoretical framework employed is Nyamnjoh's concepts of incompleteness and mobility, which offer profound insights into accounting for human interdependence and sociocultural processes in diverse contexts. It suggests that AI not only automates systems of border control or digital evangelism, but also reframes ethical discourses, concepts of belonging, and spiritual solidarity across diasporas. Ultimately, the paper identifies the ways in which the nexus of religion and migration, through the lens of AI, reconfigures glocality—how global technologies meet local spiritual and migratory experience in new and contested ways. This study contributes to ongoing discourse and scholarship on the nexus between migration, religion and the complexities associated with the use of artificial intelligence in immigration management.

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INTRODUCTION

To commemorate the world-shaking events of the year, Bob Dylan's acclaimed song "Things Have Changed" was released as a single on 1 May 2000 and was given the Academy Award for Best Original Song and the Golden Globe Award for Best Original Song. Interestingly, earlier in 1964, Bob Dylan had released a seminal track titled "The Times They Are a-Changin'." Dylan's two songs strongly emphasise the dynamic nature of change. Dylan's albums typify the non-static continuum of social, economic and technological advancements that have continued to redefine the world. Indeed, the technological advances of the twentieth century changed from the Industrial Revolution era; it is incomparable to the continued technological advancements of the twenty-first century. Today, one can sing with Bob Dylan's "The Times They a-Changin'!" and "Things Have Changed." The contemporary society has been shaped by the forces of globalization, technological advancements, particularly the age of artificial intelligence, ease of travel, communication and migration.

Migration is as old as human existence, right from the Palaeolithic age to contemporary development. Moreover, human migration is a fact of history, and the history of migration is that of humans. McNeil argues that when the ancestors first fully became human, “they were already migratory in pursuit of big game.”¹ The archaeological remains of human ancestors, like the iconic Lucy, who supposedly walked the earth 3.2 million years ago, are a reflection of the role of mobility of the human species. Her remains indicate that Lucy was on the move when she died! For good reason, migration has been described as an irrepressible human urge”.² Thus, migration is central to human existence, rooted in the multifaceted transformation of our society. The historical trajectories of human beings are not devoid of migration due to various existential realities such as natural disasters, famine, civil war; economic flight helps to explain why migration influences history and developments, but might be underestimated.

The global migration trends in the last six to seven decades rightly position the dispensation to be referred to as the “age of migration” due to the scale and the diversity of migration since the middle of the twentieth century.³ Nevertheless, it is imperative to posit that the mode of migration to a large extent has been transformed through the forces of technological advancements, yet some of the technological advancements, like Artificial Intelligence (AI), serve as an effective tool for the management of migration, particularly in Europe and North America, though characterized by ethical quagmires and other challenges.

Human migration has played a pivotal role in the rise and spread of world religions because migrants travel with their religious backpacks.⁴ Stuart, for instance, asserts that “religion permeates human life since obscure and prehistoric times.”⁵ Before the Transatlantic slave era, Africans had various religious subscriptions which they transposed with them into the New World. Successive migrations worldwide have contributed to the immense religious pluralism and practices in diverse contexts.

Religion and migration are both contested concepts that take cognizance of the inadequacies of Bellwood's perspective of migration, which focuses on colonization. However, within the purview of this discourse, religion is construed generally as a set of belief systems, a wide range of emotions, relationships, organisations, associated with faith in power, and belief in realms that are beyond the present human reality, characterized by one or more forms of spiritual ideals. However, migration can simply be defined as a change in human residence across local, national or international boundaries motivated by various existential realities, which might include economic, political, educational, social and other factors. Migration is both a reversible process and an outcome that can vary from temporary to permanent, from voluntary to forced, and from individual to collective. It can also be associated with the formation of Diasporas, with asylum seekers, internally displaced persons or refugees. The World Migration Report of the International Organisation for Migration states:⁶

The United Nations estimates that there are about 281 million international migrants in the world, which equates to 3.6 per cent of the global population. But increasing numbers of people are being displaced, within and out of their country of origin, because of conflict, violence, political or economic instability, as well as climate change and other disasters. In 2022, there were 117 million displaced people in the world, and 71.2 million internally displaced people. The number of asylum-

¹ John T McNeill, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Westminster John Knox Press, 1960), 1.

² Robert W. Kirchoff et al., “Spiritual Care of Inpatients Focusing on Outcomes and the Role of Chaplaincy Services: A Systematic Review,” *Journal of Religion and Health* 60, no. 2 (April 11, 2021): 1406–22, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-021-01191-z>, 14.

³ S. Castles and M.J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 4th ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009).

⁴ Babatunde Adedibu, “Origin, Migration, Globalisation and the Missionary Encounter of Britain’s Black Majority Churches,” *Studies in World Christianity* 19, no. 1 (2013): 93–113; Babatunde Adedibu, “Migration, Identity, and Marginalization: The Case of Britain’s Black Majority Churches,” *Journal of Africana Religions* 2, no. 1 (2014): 110–17; Babatunde Adedibu, “Mission out of Africa: The Case of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in the United Kingdom,” *Interkulturelle Theologie* 44, no. 1 (2018): 6–23; Babatunde A Adedibu, “Sacralisation of the Social Space: A Study of the Trans-Border Expansion of the Redemption Camp of the Redeemed Christian Church of God,” *HTS: Theological Studies* 75, no. 2 (2019): 1–11.

⁵ Stuart Wilson, “Taming the Constitution: Rights and Reform in the South African Education System,” *South African Journal on Human Rights* 20, no. 3 (January 7, 2004): 418–47, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19962126.2004.11864828>.

⁶ Nomatter Sande, “African Diaspora Pentecostals Deliverance Practices and the Lived Reality in the United Kingdom,” *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences* 5, no. 16 (December 24, 2024): 3057–66, <https://doi.org/10.38159/ejass.202451630>.

seekers has risen from 4.1 million in 2020 to 5.4 million in 2022, an increase of more than 30 per cent.⁷

The statistics are compelling over the years, as migration is multidirectional. For instance, in the 2018 World Migration Report, 2 million immigrants from Africa are living in North America. However, in 2020, the World Migration report indicated that approximately 3 million African-born migrants lived in North America, with Europe and Asia hosting 11 million and 5 million, respectively. Furthermore, migration within Africa is equally dynamic, and this illustrates the complexities often missed by some scholars due to their propensity to situate the discourse within the Global South and Global North lens. For instance, “the latest available international migrant stock data show that around 21 million Africans were living in another African country, a significant increase from 2015, when around 18 million. Africans were estimated to be living outside of their country of origin but within the region.⁸ The number of Africans living in different regions also grew during the same period, from around 17 million in 2015 to over 19.5 million in 2020. This further illustrates the complexities associated with migration, which is not limited to movements from developing economies to developed economies only.

Within the Nigerian context, migration has a common lexicon deriving from *Pidgin* English, called *Japa*. *Japa* syndrome has recently emerged in the Nigerian socioeconomic and political lexicon, which means the act of Nigerians emigrating to other countries due to the declining fortunes of the Nigerian economy, characterised by systemic leadership corruption, poor infrastructural facilities, and security challenges. The popular use of the word *Japa* within the Nigerian socioeconomic space was accentuated by one of the songs of Nigerian British-born songwriter and artiste, Azeez Adeshina Fashola, professionally referred to as Naira Marley, who sang *Japa*. Marley inserted in *Japa* a phrase about migration thus: “*Japa japa lo London // Japa japa ja wo Canada // Japa japa, ja wo Chicago // Japa ja lo si Africa*.” Naira Marley’s lyrics are not only about migrating to the West but also highlight the multi-varied realities of migration that it is everywhere, including Africa.

However, Olayinka posits that *Japa* is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria, as he notes that “the last time Nigeria recorded a positive Net Migration Rate with more people entering the country [Nigeria] was the period of 1974 till 1980, which in retrospect coincided with the oil Boom Era in the country.”⁹ Olayinka argues further that that “net Migration Rate for Nigeria has been consistently negative, indicating that more individuals are leaving the country than those entering.”¹⁰ While the Net Migration Rate for 2023 was -0.273 per 1000 population, the corresponding Net Migration Rate for 2022 was -0.280 , for 2021 -0.288 , for 2020 -0.295 and for 2019, -0.303 .” From Olayinka’s submission, one can note that various factors largely influence migration, such as employment opportunities, inadequate entrepreneurial support, inadequate security for lives and properties, declining economic fortunes, low GDP and a host of others. Migration to a large extent will continue to developed economies for the foreseeable future. However, the illegal migration to Europe and North America might be increasingly difficult in the age of artificial intelligence since it is largely automated in the management of migration into several countries in Europe and North America.

This study is divided into five sections: The first is the introduction, setting the stage for the background to the discourse on migration and religion. In contrast, the second section is the theoretical foundation of this study, focusing on the concepts of incompleteness and mobility as articulated by Nyamnjoh and Igboin regarding the endless nature of technological advancement, migration mobility that parallels the ongoing evolution of religion.¹¹ The third and fourth sections explore developments in religion and migration studies, and the age-long narrative of human displacement is shaped by various

⁷ United Nations, “International Migrant Stock Data,” 2020.

⁸ United Nations, “International Migrant Stock Data,” 2020.

⁹ Adedayo Olayinka Theodorio, “Examining the Support Required by Educators for Successful Technology Integration in Teacher Professional Development Program,” *Cogent Education* 11, no. 1 (2024): 2298607.

¹⁰ Theodorio, “Examining the Support Required by Educators for Successful Technology Integration in Teacher Professional Development Program,” 1.

¹¹ Jantina de Vries, “Centering Africa as Context and Driver for Global Health Ethics: Incompleteness, Conviviality and the Limits of Ubuntu,” *Wellcome Open Research* 9 (July 10, 2024): 371, <https://doi.org/10.12688/wellcomeopenres.22508.1>; Benson O. Igboin, “The Illusion of Limitlessness: Engaging Cornel Du Toit’s Perspective on Transhumanism and Being,” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 46, no. 3 (January 22, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v46i3.3351>.

push and pull factors. The fourth section employs a binary approach to critically analyse the influence of artificial intelligence on migration management alongside the compelling intersection of ethical quagmires. Religion, transnationalism and placemaking highlight the role of migrants in their country of departure and host countries and their contributions to foster transnational religious commitments and placemaking, which have changed the face of religious diversities and spatial reconfiguration in the host context. The final section is the conclusion.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Nyamnjoh's concepts of incompleteness and mobility offer profound insights into accounting for human interdependence and sociocultural processes in diverse contexts. Nyamnjoh's concept of incompleteness strongly reminds us of the understanding that life and knowledge are relational and based on interactions across various groups.¹² Incompleteness and mobility call to mind that no group or person is whole in knowledge or fulfilment without engagement with others, an engagement that is necessary in a globalised world where mobility constitutes an ever more significant portion of human experience. Nyamnjoh accounts for this interdependence in the rubric of conviviality, whereby the encounter of differing identities and cultures enhances our shared lives.¹³

As one of the overarching themes of Nyamnjoh's work, mobility remains increasingly relevant in socio-political instability and environmental stress on city dwellers, such as those in conflict-ridden areas like Bamenda, Cameroon. Resident mobility can be a fundamental resilience strategy, pointing to how populations adapt to evolving circumstances while maintaining relational links with other features, which resonate amongst migrants across various cultural frontiers.¹⁴ This resilience also continues a broader narrative describing how individuals use mobility (migration) to navigate and sometimes transcend the systemic barriers of strict national or socio-political borders, thereby creating a sense of identity and belonging, as evidenced by the appropriation of religious resources by migrants.¹⁵ Moreover, the concept of "frontier Africans" portrays the adaptive strategies of migrants who negotiate their identities and relationships to pursue more respectable livelihood opportunities, thus summarising the significant interdependence characteristics and conviviality in their daily lives.¹⁶

Furthermore, expanding digital connectedness represents another facet of mobility, where individuals leverage technology to establish and maintain relationships across geographical boundaries. In the digital age, mobile phones serve as tools that enhance individual agency and collective identities, demonstrating that social media and technology can bridge communication gaps created by distance and socio-political borders.¹⁷ The growing interconnectivity enabled by mobile technology fosters a continuous reconfiguration of experience and identity, aligning with Nyamnjoh's arguments on the importance of engaging with the complexities introduced by global mobility resulting from multi-directional migrations.¹⁸ Thus, in the context of this discourse, AI, religion, and migration are in a constant state of flux.

Nyamnjoh's ideas of incompleteness and mobility are necessary for understanding human connection and identity complexities in a rapidly changing world. By foregrounding relationality and conviviality, his body of work urges us to reconsider what we know about knowledge production,

¹² de Vries, "Centering Africa as Context and Driver for Global Health Ethics: Incompleteness, Conviviality and the Limits of Ubuntu," 15.

¹³ de Vries, "Centering Africa as Context and Driver for Global Health Ethics: Incompleteness, Conviviality and the Limits of Ubuntu."

¹⁴ Adedibu, "Mission out of Africa: The Case of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in the United Kingdom," 1-16; Adedibu, "Origin, Migration, Globalisation and the Missionary Encounter of Britain's Black Majority Churches," 405-423.

¹⁵ Adedibu, "Origin, Migration, Globalisation and the Missionary Encounter of Britain's Black Majority Churches"; Rachel Ayala Guzman et al., "A Cross-Sectional Examination of Race, Gender, and Intersectionality on Protective Behavioral Strategies and Alcohol Outcomes among Black and White College Students.," *Experimental and Clinical Psychopharmacology* 32, no. 6 (December 2024): 682-92, <https://doi.org/10.1037/pha0000712>.

¹⁶ Francis B Nyamnjoh, "Incompleteness: Frontier Africa and the Currency of Conviviality," *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 52, no. 3 (2017): 253-70; de Vries, "Centering Africa as Context and Driver for Global Health Ethics: Incompleteness, Conviviality and the Limits of Ubuntu," 258.

¹⁷ Charlotte Hawkins, *Ageing with Smartphones in Uganda: Togetherness in the Dotcom Age, Ageing with Smartphones in Uganda: Togetherness in the Dotcom Age* (UCL Press, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.9781800085138>.

¹⁸ D. Moyo and B. Mutsvauro, "Can the Subaltern Think? The Decolonial Turn in Communication Research in Africa," *Theoretical Approaches to Participatory Communication in Africa* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

resilience, and the impact of globalisation on individual and collective lives. This perspective applauds the virtue of intercultural dialogue, arguing that our understanding is enhanced when we accept our interdependencies and the complexities that arise from different encounters. Moreover, Igboin argue, “Scientific arguments on the one hand, and ultra-fundamentalist religious on the other on the other hand, are a work in progress, unfolding and being unfolded.”¹⁹ Thus, within the context of continued technological creativity and innovativeness of AI, continual upgrades to eliminate human weakness are in a state of incompleteness, which also resonates in religious movements that are ever evolving, as well as migrants' experiences associated with social, economic and geographical discontinuities. Interestingly, science will always complement religion, and religion complements science, while humanity and its enterprise rely on technological advancements to shape its context. The next section of the study explores the intersection of religion in the Age of AI.

Changing Faces of Interdisciplinary Studies- Migration and Religion

The various theories of migration address the antecedents and complexities of international migration. Some of these theories include the non-classical economic perspective based on the dynamics of demand and supply. Similarly, the historical–structural approach emphasises political and economic power inequalities. At the same time, social capital theory revolves around the socio-economic networks appropriated by migrants around them in dealing with the social, economic and geographical discontinuities.²⁰ Nevertheless, migration systems theory examines the migration dynamics in specific contexts, regions, metropolises or between a specified country. The foregoing highlights the complexities of international migration, which, to a large extent, has been shaped by historical ties and colonial relationships.

Beckford argues that the twenty-first century has “witnessed a growth of sensitivity among social scientists, politicians, religious authorities and policy makers to the importance of religion’s multi-stranded interweaving with migration”.²¹ The apparent implication of Beckford’s assertion is reflected in the pluralities of scholarly outputs.

Acknowledging the dynamic discourses that have emerged over the years on migration and religion is imperative. The assimilation of immigrants into American institutions and ways of life through identification and affiliation with religions was emphasised in some of the first studies of religion and immigration to the United States.²² Political issues of inclusion and exclusion were given more attention in Europe, particularly in light of the increasing number of Muslim immigrants from South Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa.²³ However, the frequency and volume of studies on other regions of the world only started to increase towards the end of the 20th century. The millennium turn heralded a new phase in academic outputs on migration and religion. Some of these scholars include Connor, Gallo, Kivisto, Vilaça et al., Ebaugh and Chafetz, Haddad, Smith, and Esposito, Leonard et al., Cadge and Ecklund, to mention a few.²⁴ Furthermore, special issues of scholarly journals as varied as the *Journal of*

¹⁹ Igboin, “The Illusion of Limitlessness: Engaging Cornel Du Toit’s Perspective on Transhumanism and Being,” 2.

²⁰ Babatunde Adedibu, “Nigeria’s Neo-Pentecostals’ Religious Creativity and Innovations through the Lens of Indigenous Ontology in the Development of Grassroot Theologies,” in *Faith, Spirituality, and Praxis* (Routledge, 2024), 72–88, 18

²¹ James A. Beckford, “Religions and Migrations – Old and New,” *Quaderni Di Sociologia*, no. 80 (August 1, 2019): 15–32, <https://doi.org/10.4000/qds.2599>.

²² Philip D Parker et al., “Inequity and Excellence in Academic Performance: Evidence from 27 Countries,” *American Educational Research Journal* 55, no. 4 (2018): 836–58; D. Hammond-Tooke, *Rituals and Medicines* (Johannesburg: A Donker, 1989).

²³ Albert Bastenier and Felice Dassetto, “Hypothèses Pour Une Analyse Des Stratégies Religieuses Au Sein Du Monde Migratoire En Europe,” *Social Compass* 26, no. 1 (1979): 145–70.

²⁴ Phillip Connor, *Immigrant Faith: Patterns of Immigrant Religion in the United States, Canada, and Western Europe* (NYU Press, 2014); Maria L Gallo, “How Are Graduates and Alumni Featured in University Strategic Plans? Lessons from Ireland,” *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education* 22, no. 3 (2018): 92–97; Peter Kivisto, *Religion and Immigration: Migrant Faiths in North America and Western Europe* (John Wiley & Sons, 2014); Inger Furseth et al., *The Changing Soul of Europe: Religions and Migrations in Northern and Southern Europe* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2014); Jacqueline Hagan and Helen Rose Ebaugh, “Calling upon the Sacred: Migrants’ Use of Religion in the Migration Process,” *International Migration Review* 37, no. 4 (December 1, 2003): 1145–62, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2003.tb00173.x>; Maha Zakhour et al., “Association between Parental Divorce and Anger, Aggression, and Hostility in Adolescents: Results of a National Lebanese Study,” *Journal of Family Issues* 44, no. 3 (2023): 587–609; Lay Myint and Gabriella Keczer, “Professional Development of Teacher Educators in Europe and Myanmar,” *Andragoske Studije*, no. 1 (2022): 83–104, <https://doi.org/10.5937/AndStud2201083L>; Karen Isaksen Leonard, *Immigrant Faiths: Transforming Religious Life in America* (Rowman Altamira, 2005); Wendy Cadge and Elaine Howard Ecklund, “Immigration and Religion,” *Annu. Rev. Sociol.* 33, no.

Refugee Studies (15, 2, 2002; 24, 3,); *American Behavioural Scientist* (49, 11,); *African Studies* (68, 2,); *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (33, 3,); and "International Migration" (51, 3,) have focused on religion and migration.²⁵ Apart from the aforementioned scholars, various research institutes, university courses, research centers, and blogs are interested in the nexus between religion and migration.

Religion and Migration in Today's Globalised World

People have been on the move forever—moving for survival, in search of better opportunities or simply for a more promising life. Think about it: the ancient Exodus of the Israelites, or the Hijra when Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his close companions left Mecca for Medina in 622 CE. That journey was not only a way out of persecution, but also laid down the foundations of a fresh, unified community and even marked the start of the Islamic calendar.²⁶ Generally speaking, the Hijra is not just a historical event—it is a lesson about facing hardship with persistence, sticking together in tough times, and keeping strong faith, which still guides many Muslims today. Today, as groups find themselves forced to relocate because of political strife, rough economic times, or environmental issues, these deep-rooted values continue to resonate.²⁷ In other words, migration is not merely about physical movement; it carries significant religious, spiritual, and social meaning that shapes communities over time.²⁸

Migration increasingly responds to environmental disasters, economic inequality, political unrest, and conflict. The Syrian refugee crisis, for instance, serves as a contemporary illustration of the intersection between religion and migration.²⁹ Millions of Syrians have fled their homes in search of safety and stability, with many crossing into neighbouring countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey and even further into Europe.³⁰ In this context, religious communities frequently lead efforts to provide humanitarian aid and refuge. Christian organisations, including the Catholic Church and Evangelical churches across Europe, have opened their doors to Syrian refugees, offering shelter, food, and medical assistance.³¹ Likewise, Islamic Relief, a prominent international Muslim humanitarian organisation, has played a crucial role in assisting migrants, regardless of their religious affiliation, exemplifying Islam's focus on charity and helping those in need.³²

Religious institutions often provide a sense of belonging for displaced individuals, particularly those uprooted from their cultural and spiritual contexts.³³ For example, Christian and Muslim communities in the West have welcomed newly arrived refugees by organising religious services, prayer groups, and fellowship opportunities that help migrants develop a sense of community.³⁴ Similarly, Jewish

1 (2007): 359–79; Ruth Owino and Boniface Kirema Karani, "Conflict Sensitive Journalism and Elections: Analysis of the Media Coverage of the 2017 Elections in Kenya," *Kabarak Journal of Research & Innovation* 11, no. 3 (2021): 299–307.

²⁵ S. Al Sakk heb, "The Impact of Syrian Refugees on Host Countries: A Review of the Literature," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 33, no. 2 (2020): 184–206; Carolyn Logan, "Selected Chiefs, Elected Councillors and Hybrid Democrats: Popular Perspectives on the Co-Existence of Democracy and Traditional Authority," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 47, no. 1 (2009): 101–28; S. V. Ubisi, "The Impact of Migration on Providing Adequate Housing in South Africa," in *The 4th Annual International Conference on Public Administration and Development Alternative, 03-05 July 2019* (Southern Sun Hotel, OR Tambo International Airport, Johannesburg, South Africa: IPADA, 2019), https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Kambidima-Wotela/publication/336798705_Design_and_implementation_of_the_'Separation_of_Powers_Governance_Model'_at_the_local_sphere_of_government_The_case_of_the_City_of_Johannesburg_Metropolitan_Municipality/links/5db2aec0299bf111d4c82104/Design-and-implementation-of-the-Separation-of-Powers-Governance-Model-at-the-local-sphere-of-government-The-case-of-the-City-of-Johannesburg-Metropolitan-Municipality.pdf.

²⁶ Robert D Sege et al., "Predictors of Corporal Punishment during the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Pediatric Reports* 16, no. 2 (2024): 300–312

²⁷ Frederic Noel Kamta, Janpeter Schilling, and Jürgen Scheffran, "Insecurity, Resource Scarcity, and Migration to Camps of Internally Displaced Persons in Northeast Nigeria," *Sustainability* 12, no. 17 (August 23, 2020): 6830, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12176830>, 3.

²⁸ Beckford, "Religions and Migrations – Old and New," 15-32.

²⁹ Elżbieta M. Goździak and Izabella Main, "What's God Got to Do with It? Debating Religion and Forced Migration Entanglements," 2023, 1–17, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-23379-1_1

³⁰ Al Sakk heb, "The Impact of Syrian Refugees on Host Countries: A Review of the Literature," 184-206.

³¹ Kathryn Kraft and Jonathan D. Smith, "Between International Donors and Local Faith Communities: Intermediaries in Humanitarian Assistance to Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon," *Disasters* 43, no. 1 (January 12, 2019): 24–45, <https://doi.org/10.1111/disa.12301>.

³² Sean M Naman et al., "Bioenergetic Habitat Suitability Curves for Instream Flow Modeling: Introducing User-friendly Software and Its Potential Applications," *Fisheries* 45, no. 11 (2020): 605–13; Olufunmilola (Lola) Dada, Sarah Jack, and Magnus George, "University–Business Engagement Franchising and Geographic Distance: A Case Study of a Business Leadership Programme," *Regional Studies* 50, no. 7 (July 2, 2016): 1217–31, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2014.995614>.

³³ Umesh Kumar Bhayyalal Dubey and D. P. Kothari, *Research Methodology* (Boca Raton: Chapman and Hall/CRC, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781315167138>.

³⁴ C H Padmanabha, "Metacognition: Conceptual Framework," *Journal on Educational Psychology* 14, no. 1 (2020): 1–11.

organisations have historically supported Jewish refugees fleeing persecution, from Nazi Germany to the Soviet Union.³⁵ The bonds formed through shared religious practices offer emotional and spiritual sustenance during times of crisis, ensuring that migrants do not lose their sense of identity in the face of adversity.³⁶

However, the migration experience is not always characterised by embrace and solidarity. Religious communities, particularly in parts of Europe, North America, and the Middle East, have often been complicit in framing migrants as threats to national identity and cultural values.³⁷ In Hungary, for example, religious and political leaders have invoked Christianity to justify opposition to Muslim refugees, contending that the influx of migrants jeopardises the Christian identity of Europe.³⁸ Likewise, evangelical pastors in the United States have supported policies that restrict migration from predominantly Muslim countries, citing concerns about security and national values.³⁹

According to several North American scholars, religion can significantly shape the political positioning of naturalised migrants within the host country by fostering new ideological alliances. Ethnic and religious identities frequently influence these political coalitions.⁴⁰ Additionally, a migrant's country of origin can impact the political dynamics of the host country through their transnational relationships in the religious sphere.⁴¹ Moreover, religion can provide a foundation for global citizenship by promoting transnational activism in education, work, and health.⁴²

Hanciles argues that migration is a significant factor in the global expansion of world religions.⁴³ Migration is thus a global, multi-directional phenomenon which has redefined the concept of World Christianity as the religious movements' fortunes are significantly redefined in the twenty-first century due to the forces of globalisation and technological advancements which have transformed the communication and transport sectors globally, particularly in the developed economies.⁴⁴

AI and Migration: A New Frontier

As the world struggles with increasingly complex migration patterns driven by political, economic, and environmental factors, AI has infiltrated migration management—from border control technologies to algorithms evaluating asylum claims—and is quickly emerging as a focal point for technological innovation and ethical debate.⁴⁵ AI systems are embedded within the processes that decide who is allowed to cross borders and who is not.⁴⁶ Though AI also pose serious ethical issues, these innovations hold out the promise of increased cost-effectiveness and decreased human error in migration management.⁴⁷ AI's potential in migration management is clear: automating border control, asylum claims, and visa applications could speed up decision-making and remove the bottlenecks that frequently impede immigration systems.⁴⁸ AI systems could quickly analyse large amounts of data, improving application

³⁵ Yogesh K. Dwivedi et al., "Opinion Paper: 'So What If ChatGPT Wrote It?' Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Opportunities, Challenges and Implications of Generative Conversational AI for Research, Practice and Policy," *International Journal of Information Management* 71 (August 2023): 102642, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2023.102642>.

³⁶ Martina Olcese et al., "Migration and Community Resilience: A Scoping Review," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 98 (January 2024): 101924, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2023.101924>.

³⁷ James Beckford, "Religious Diversity and Social Problems: The Case of Britain," in *Religion and Social Problems*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2011), 1-8.

³⁸ Elżbieta M Goździak and Péter Márton, "Where the Wild Things Are: Fear of Islam and the Anti-Refugee Rhetoric in Hungary and in Poland," *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, 2018, 125–51, 136.

³⁹ Deanne K Thompson et al., "Brain White Matter Development over the First 13 Years in Very Preterm and Typically Developing Children Based on the T 1-w/T 2-w Ratio," *Neurology* 98, no. 9 (2022): e924–37.

⁴⁰ Hagan and Ebaugh, "Calling upon the Sacred: Migrants' Use of Religion in the Migration Process."

⁴¹ Sanjeev Khagram and Peggy Levitt, *The Transnational Studies Reader* (Routledge New York, 2008).

⁴² Khagram and Levitt, *The Transnational Studies Reader*, 1.

⁴³ Jehu J Hanciles, "Migration and Mission: Some Implications for the Twenty-First-Century Church," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 27, no. 4 (2003): 146–53.

⁴⁴ Adedibu, "Nigeria's Neo-Pentecostals' Religious Creativity and Innovations through the Lens of Indigenous Ontology in the Development of Grassroot Theologies," 17.

⁴⁵ Paul Kobina Annan Bedu-Addo, *Guidance and Counselling "Unmasked," Accra, Type Company Limited* (Accra: Type Company, 2000), 577-578

⁴⁶ Céline Castets-Renard and Eleonore Fournier-Tombs, "Protecting Vulnerable Migrants against the Risks of Artificial Intelligence Technologies," *The Impacts of COVID-19 on Migration and Migrants from a Gender Perspective. Geneva, Switzerland: International Organisation for Migration* (International Organization for Migration, 2022).

⁴⁷ R K Gupta, "Methodological and Theoretical Rigor in Desk Research" (ResearchGate, 2024).

⁴⁸ Castets-Renard and Fournier-Tombs, "Protecting Vulnerable Migrants against the Risks of Artificial Intelligence Technologies."

processing speed and consistency. Additionally, governments may be able to more effectively detect fraud, spot inconsistencies in migration applications, and identify possible threats with the help of AI algorithms.⁴⁹

By linking them to necessary services and support systems, AI may also help manage the growing number of refugees and asylum seekers and facilitate their integration into host nations.⁵⁰ But as AI becomes more widely used, the risks of putting it into practice also increase. It is important to consider the ethical issues AI raises in immigration policies. We must carefully consider the implications of AI for privacy, bias, and the dehumanisation of migrants as we incorporate it into migration management.⁵¹ Numerous real-world examples have demonstrated how AI systems in migration processes can reinforce prejudice and discrimination, so these worries are not just theoretical.

AI's Difficulties in Migration Management: An Ethical Conundrum

Privacy and Data Concerns: The Intrusive Nature of AI

Concerns about data collection and processing privacy are a significant problem with AI in migration management.⁵² Large amounts of private information, such as biometric information like fingerprints, facial scans, and medical histories, must frequently be gathered to use AI-driven tools.⁵³ At border checkpoints, facial recognition technology—a much-discussed artificial intelligence—is increasingly used to identify and authenticate travellers.⁵⁴ Although this technology seems effective in facilitating quicker border crossings, it poses serious concerns regarding privacy and surveillance.⁵⁵ For instance, a number of nations, including the United States and the United Kingdom, have already implemented AI-powered immigration screening at airports and border crossings, where travellers' faces are scanned for biometric identification.

However, these systems have drawbacks: research has indicated that facial recognition technology frequently performs less accurately for people with darker skin tones, especially Black and South Asian people.⁵⁶ According to a 2019 National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) study, facial recognition algorithms are more likely to misidentify people of colour, causing them to operate correctly.⁵⁷

Bias and Discrimination: Perpetuating Prejudice through Algorithms

The possible bias present in AI systems is another major worry. AI is only as good as the data it is trained on, just like all other technologies.⁵⁸ If historical biases and inequalities are reflected in the data, AI systems unintentionally reinforce these biases. In light of migration, this problem is especially concerning. For instance, AI algorithms used to assess asylum claims could replicate the biases present in the data, resulting in discriminatory outcomes that disadvantage specific groups based on ethnicity, religion, gender, or nationality. Consider the asylum applications that AI systems handle. While AI could theoretically assess asylum claims in a "neutral" manner, in actuality, a lot of migration algorithms rely

⁴⁹ Mensah Prince Osiesi et al., "Undergraduates' Educational Life and Academic Engagement in Southwest Universities in Nigeria: The Role of Gender and Perceived Poverty," *Journal of Poverty*, April 10, 2024, 1–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10875549.2024.2338175>.

⁵⁰ Xinning Wu et al., "A Meta-Analysis of Interdisciplinary Teaching Abilities among Elementary and Secondary School STEM Teachers," *International Journal of STEM Education* 11, no. 1 (2024): 38, 10.

⁵¹ Wogene Kabato et al., "Towards Climate-Smart Agriculture: Strategies for Sustainable Agricultural Production, Food Security, and Greenhouse Gas Reduction," *Agronomy* 15, no. 3 (February 25, 2025): 565, <https://doi.org/10.3390/agronomy15030565>, 1–13.

⁵² Castets-Renard and Fournier-Tombs, "Protecting Vulnerable Migrants against the Risks of Artificial Intelligence Technologies."

⁵³ Khawrin Mohammad Khalid and Abdurrasheed Sahibzada, "The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction at Selected Public Universities in Afghanistan: The Effect of Job Security on Turnover Intention," *Journal of Management and Business Education* 6, no. 3 (2023): 244–56.

⁵⁴ Nimra Khan and Marina Efthymiou, "The Use of Biometric Technology at Airports: The Case of Customs and Border Protection (CBP)," *International Journal of Information Management Data Insights* 1, no. 2 (2021): 100049, 14.

⁵⁵ Yogesh K. Dwivedi et al., "Opinion Paper: 'So What If ChatGPT Wrote It?' Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Opportunities, Challenges and Implications of Generative Conversational AI for Research, Practice and Policy.," *International Journal of Information Management* 71 (2023): 102642.

⁵⁶ Om Prasad Gautam et al., "Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Interventions: An Urgent Requirement in Post-Flood Nepal," *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* 17, no. 11 (2017): 1118–19.

⁵⁷ Lemuria Carter, Dapeng Liu, and Caley Cantrell, "Exploring the Intersection of the Digital Divide and Artificial Intelligence: A Hermeneutic Literature Review," *AIS Transactions on Human-Computer Interaction* 12, no. 4 (December 31, 2020): 253–75, <https://doi.org/10.17705/1thci.00138>.

⁵⁸ Soori Nnko and Robert Pool, "Sexual Discourse in the Context of AIDS: Dominant Themes on Adolescent Sexuality among Primary School Pupils in Magu District, Tanzania," *Health Transition Review*, 1997, 85–90, 54-70.

on data that represents societal biases or the biases of immigration laws. An AI system may learn to favour rejection for similar profiles if it is trained on data showing that people from particular nations or backgrounds are more likely to be denied asylum.⁵⁹ Even when their cases are valid, algorithmic biases may result in higher rejection rates for Black migrants or those from Muslim-majority nations.

In 2019, a startling example of this concern was when it was discovered that the UK Home Office had used an artificial intelligence tool to handle visa and asylum applications, resulting in an unfairly high rejection rate for applicants from some African and Asian countries. These differences were ascribed to the system's training on historical data reflecting the UK's unwillingness to grant Asylum to migrants from these countries. In this case, artificial intelligence was not neutral but rather reflected the structural prejudices ingrained in current migration rules.⁶⁰

AI systems must thus be thoroughly checked to make sure they do not support racial profiling or discrimination as they grow essential to migration control.⁶¹ Emphasising justice and the equality of all people, religious traditions can be strong advocates of openness and fairness in using artificial intelligence during migration operations. Religious leaders can support changes that guarantee the fair and just operation of AI systems without aggravating current migration policy inequalities.

The Dehumanisation of Migrants: From Human Stories to Cold Algorithms

AI in migration management poses a significant risk since it encourages human beings to be only data points. AI systems sometimes prioritise efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and fast claims processing in immigration procedures. Nevertheless, they might ignore the human tales fundamental to migrant experiences.⁶² For example, automated decision-making systems in particular nations decide whether an Asylum seeker qualifies for refugee designation. Although these systems examine enormous amounts of data, they may overlook important elements of a person's case, including their narrative, cultural context, or particular vulnerabilities.⁶³ The fear of persecution, family links, or long-standing ties to a community of a migrant might not be easily measured; thus, AI decisions might ignore these factors. The fear of persecution, family links, or long-standing ties to a community of a migrant might not be easily measured and result in decisions taken by artificial intelligence that overlook the whole humanity of the person seeking asylum.

The use of AI in Canada's refugee status determination process is a relevant example. Although AI-based technologies have been used to speed up the evaluation of refugee claims, numerous human rights activists have noted that these systems may miss the complex and intensely private reasons why a person flees to another nation. It is impossible to overstate how dehumanising this strategy is since it runs the risk of treating migrants more like anonymous statistics than like unique people with complex histories. Religious teachings can act as a crucial check on this tendency by reminding us that every immigrant is deserving of dignity and respect. The stories and experiences of migrants can be recognised and appreciated if faith-based organisations and leaders support laws that guarantee AI systems in migration management prioritise the human element.

Religion's Influence on the Ethical Application of AI in Migration Management

Religious organisations play a critical role in advancing moral principles and protecting human dignity in AI systems as the technology continues to impact migration management. In order to ensure that AI does not violate the rights or dignity of migrants, religious leaders can promote accountability, transparency, and fairness in its application.⁶⁴ Religious teachings on justice, compassion, and the value of human life provide a strong moral foundation for assessing AI in the context of migration. Pope Francis, for instance, has frequently denounced the dehumanisation of migrants and urged people to welcome those in need into

⁵⁹ Cameron Duodu, "Beneath The Vener of Ghana's Cultural Magnificence," GBC, 2018, gbcghanaonline.com/news/kudos-kofi-darko-asante-youve-burst-through-the-culture-of-indifference/2018/, 493–510

⁶⁰ Jorge Garza-Rodriguez et al., "Determinants of Poverty in Mexico: A Quantile Regression Analysis," *Economies* 9, no. 2 (2021): 60.

⁶¹ Moses Alabi, "Social Entrepreneurship: Balancing Social Impact and Financial Sustainability," 2024.

⁶² Castets-Renard and Fournier-Tombs, "Protecting Vulnerable Migrants against the Risks of Artificial Intelligence Technologies."

⁶³ Godwin Attah Obande et al., "Current State of COVID-19 Pandemic in Africa: Lessons for Today and the Future," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 18, no. 19 (2021): 9968.

⁶⁴ Juan J Merelo et al., "Chatbots and Messaging Platforms in the Classroom: An Analysis from the Teacher's Perspective," *Education and Information Technologies* 29, no. 2 (2024): 1903–38.

their communities.⁶⁵ His arguments, which emphasise that a society's moral character is reflected in how it treats migrants, are in line with the core tenets of Christian ethics. The Quranic exhortation to "uphold justice even if it is against yourselves".⁶⁶ It serves as an example of how Islamic teachings emphasise the need for justice and fairness for the weak.

Religious organisations can establish migration policies based on these religious precepts to ensure that AI technologies in migration management uphold rather than diminish human dignity. To emphasise this, both opportunities and challenges exist at the nexus of migration and AI. AI presents serious ethical concerns about privacy, bias, and dehumanisation, even though it may increase productivity and decrease human error in migration management. Religious organisations have a crucial role to play in ensuring that AI is used in a way that is morally and justly consistent with the values of compassion, justice, and human dignity as it becomes more and more ingrained in migration processes. Religious organisations can contribute to the protection of migrants' rights and guarantee that they receive the decency and humanity they are entitled to by promoting an open, equitable, and compassionate application of AI in migration policies.⁶⁷

AI's Ethical Consequences for Migration Management.

When incorporating AI into migration management, there are relevant ethical considerations. The ability of AI systems to process large volumes of data quickly and effectively is essential for handling intricate migration flows.⁶⁸ AI systems have the capacity to reinforce prejudice, discrimination, and dehumanisation. This is especially noticeable in automated decision-making systems that make life-changing decisions about migrant status, facial recognition technology, and predictive algorithms that evaluate asylum claims. For instance, to keep an eye on migration trends along its borders, the European Union (EU) is depending more and more on AI-based tools like *Eurosur*. Significant privacy concerns and complaints about possible racial profiling are raised by these systems, which use data and surveillance tools to identify migrants and refugees trying to enter Europe.⁶⁹ AI and surveillance technologies have also been used in the United States' immigration policies, especially during the Trump administration, to manage borders. Projects like "Operation Streamline" and the contentious use of AI-driven immigration enforcement are two examples. Human rights organisations, however, have widely criticised the use of AI in border enforcement, claiming that it may misidentify migrants, result in erroneous detentions, and dehumanise those who are subjected to these technologies.

AI tools used by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) may produce false positives and disproportionately target Black and Latino migrants, according to a 2020 report by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). These results serve as a reminder that if left unchecked, AI systems have the potential to further marginalise vulnerable groups by reinforcing long-standing biases in national immigration systems. Religious organisations are in a good position to direct the moral application of AI in migration because of their ethical frameworks and dedication to social justice.⁷⁰

Pope Francis emphasised that "migrants are not a threat, but a gift" in a recent 2021 statement on migration. Pope Francis encourages the world community to adopt moral frameworks that uphold the humanity of every person, regardless of their immigration status, by presenting migration as a chance for human solidarity rather than a crisis that should be handled with fear and exclusion. Faith-based organisations like World Vision and Caritas Internationalis have been at the forefront of the movement to treat migrants and refugees fairly, particularly in light of the Syrian refugee crisis and the growing number of migrations brought on by climate change in places like South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. These organisations work to ensure that AI technologies and migration policies respect the human rights and dignity of migrants by advocating for changes in policy and offering direct humanitarian aid.

⁶⁵ Muhammad Yaseen, Jamil Ahmed, and Adnan Riaz, "An Investigation On The Climate Change Awareness And Concerns," *Journal of Social Research Development* 3, no. 02 (December 25, 2022): 193–211, <https://doi.org/10.53664/JSRD/03-02-2022-06-193-211>.

⁶⁶ Anri Naldi et al., "Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Artificial Intelligence System in Higher Education Curriculum Management," *International Journal of Educational Narratives* 2, no. 2 (May 1, 2024): 189–98, <https://doi.org/10.70177/ijen.v2i2.792>.

⁶⁷ Castets-Renard and Fournier-Tombs, "Protecting Vulnerable Migrants against the Risks of Artificial Intelligence Technologies."

⁶⁸ Merelo et al., "Chatbots and Messaging Platforms in the Classroom: An Analysis from the Teacher's Perspective," 8.

⁶⁹ Shrutika Gandhi, "Frontex as a Hub for Surveillance and Data Sharing: Challenges for Data Protection and Privacy Rights," *Computer Law & Security Review* 53 (2024): 105963.

⁷⁰ Moses Alabi, "Ethical Implications of AI: Bias, Fairness, and Transparency," 2024.

The ethical evaluation of AI applications in managing migration should take into account the distinct migration patterns of Africa, where economic inequality, political unrest, and environmental concerns have increased migration.⁷¹ The All-African Conference of Churches (AACC) and other religious organisations have called for comprehensive solutions that take into account both the social integration of migrants in host countries and the logistical challenges of migration. Their demands for moral responsibility in using AI, particularly in border management and refugee treatment, are crucial to guaranteeing that technological advancement does not undermine the ethical treatment of African migrants.

An intriguing framework for analysing Nigeria and the African continent, particularly with regard to the difficulties of assimilation versus the demands of innovation, is created by the confluence of religion, migration, and AI. With its rich religious history and high-order migration patterns, Nigeria has a unique combination of religious belief and technological advancement in the form of AI, which can open up new development opportunities and highlight areas of stagnation. Particularly for the migrant population in Nigeria, social practice is essential to identity and social cohesiveness. Complex dynamics surround how migration affects religious socialisation in Nigeria, including the pursuit of "fulanization," a term that includes fear of cultural domination in Islamic encroachment and land grabbing.⁷² This religious migration highlights the potential for conflict with the values that are currently in vogue.

However, ethical consideration should be given to AI manipulating religious accounts, especially if doing so would cause more division than harmony.⁷³ A paradigm shift that prioritises innovation is necessary to fully utilise AI's potential while maintaining cultural and religious identity. By taking this route, Nigeria and the rest of Africa might be able to take advantage of technology to enhance traditional values without replacing them. This would establish a foundation to build subtleties between the old and the new. As the continent struggles with unprecedented demographic realignment, technological pushes, and globalisation, subtlety is crucial in religion, migration, and general social advancement. The interaction of migration, religion, and artificial intelligence in Nigeria and Africa raises important concerns about the difficulties in moving from an assimilationist to an innovative system. The ability of these systems to work together will determine whether or not they can create a society that values its history while remaining receptive to cutting-edge concepts and innovations.

Since artificial intelligence-driven systems have introduced previously unheard-of capabilities for complex migration flow analysis, ranging from predictive flow modelling to tracking integration results, this study proposes that the era of African migrants illegally migrating to the developed West may be coming to an end. The quality of the information, the bias of the algorithms, and the complex ethics involved in using automated systems for decision-making that essentially affect human existence are the most important limitations, despite the fact that there are difficulties in appropriating AI in migration management. The next section highlights the role of religious movements across borders in the changing spatial configurations of place-making and its politics as a form of social embeddedness of these religious movements in the host context.

Religion, Transnationalism and Place-making

Religion has thrived over the years and particularly in the twenty-first century due to the forces of globalisation that have enabled the emergence of fluid networks facilitating the flow of religious messages, rituals and religious idiosyncrasies from local to global audiences. Instead of being reactionary to globalisation, religion and religious practitioners generate global interconnectedness. Through migration, religious practices are transposed, renewed or transformed across borders, as migrants become global

⁷¹ Elvis Madondo and Hummerly Dhobha, "Harnessing Migration for Sustainable Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities," *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science* (2147- 4478) 14, no. 1 (February 25, 2025): 80–88, <https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v14i1.3770>.

⁷² Peter O. O. Ottuh and Onos G Idjakpo, "Migration and Religious Socialization in Nigeria: The Fulanization Dilemma," *Journal of Liberty and International Affairs, Institute for Research and European Studies - Bitola* 8, no. 3 (2022): 418–28, <https://doi.org/10.47305/JLIA2283418o>, 418–428.

⁷³ S. S. Popova, "Use of Artificial Intelligence in the Activities of Religious Associations and Control Over Them," *Journal of Digital Technologies and Law* 2, no. 1 (March 21, 2024): 101–22, <https://doi.org/10.21202/jdtl.2024.6>; A. Busalim, "Identity Formation in Educational Transitions," *Education and Psychology Journal* 29, no. 1 (2016): 88–102.

actors of religion and also religion creates and sustains transnational connections.⁷⁴ Furthermore, the aforementioned occurs because of religious transnationalism as conjoined processes of missionization, migration and mobility.⁷⁵ The sustenance of religion across borders is a major facet of many religions.⁷⁶ Christianity, in particular, has sought out members over the centuries across borders. Moreover, the Pentecostal strand of the Christian faith, with its transposable practices, rituals, religious ideals and missionizing ideals, has changed the face of the Christian landscape in Europe and North America as Pentecostal churches from the Global South. The burgeoning presence of Pentecostal Christianity has assuaged the declining church attendance.⁷⁷ Pentecostal Christianity seems to be a force to reckon with in the twenty-first century due to its Christian missionizing ethos. Interestingly, Pentecostal Christianity have grown from the regions where there seems to be rapid transformation and extreme economic challenges, such as in Latin America, Africa, the South Pacific and East Asia.⁷⁸ These Pentecostal and Charismatic movements have always been antagonistic to other spirit centred practices, but through innovation and creativity, appropriated indigenous knowledge systems in their pursuit of attracting and sustaining their membership.⁷⁹ There are four thematic fields constitutive of transnational religious networks, which are mobile spirits and portable practices, which entail the discourse on spiritual entities and the circulation of ritual objects. The second is media and mediation through which dispersed migrants connect with the religious networks and their messages from one form to the other. Thirdly, is the role of money and markets in the sustenance of religious networks and the role of religious movement in place-making, which might entail transposing religious sites in the migrants' country of origin to the host context through spatial contestation and re-sacrilisation of space. Within the purview of this study, the emphasis is on place-making, which is the spatial embeddedness of migrants' religious sites in the host context by the religious adherents.

Place-Making and Spatial Politics

Migrants have been seen to temporarily display an embodied transgression when public spaces are appropriated for religious purposes or when environments are generally sacralised. Even while they may seem fleeting to religious followers, these hallowed places are not just places of worship but also places of empowerment, freedom, and hope for the despondent. Prior research has looked at how religion affects migrants, which has piqued the interest of public policy makers, town planners, and even religious orders of different faiths, including Christianity, especially Pentecostalism in the Diaspora.⁸⁰ Different positions within global hierarchies are significantly influenced by spatial particularities, which may offer access to power dynamics and connections. Nonetheless, migrants and their religious movements need to establish themselves in places where they can engage in religious activities and engage in identity negotiation. Due to several stakeholders, statutory use constraints, and community interests that result in space contestation, the place-making process extends beyond the actual physical space. Nonetheless, religious actors are able to establish global religious spaces despite being limited by the spatial politics of their locales.

One of the most well-known churches in Nigeria, the Redeemed Christian Church of God, has brought the Redemption City model across cultural boundaries to Floyd, Texas, in the United States, and Farnham, Surrey, England, which was once the Pierrepont Centre owned by The Ellen Ministries. These

⁷⁴ Adedibu, "Sacralisation of the Social Space: A Study of the Trans-Border Expansion of the Redemption Camp of the Redeemed Christian Church of God," 1-11.

⁷⁵ Annie Deslauriers et al., "A Three-Step Procedure in SAS to Analyze the Time Series from Automatic Dendrometers," *Dendrochronologia* 29, no. 3 (January 2011): 151–61, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dendro.2011.01.008>.

⁷⁶ J. Rudolph and S. Tan, "War of the Chatbots: Bard, Bing Chat, ChatGPT, Ernie and beyond. The New AI Gold Rush and Its Impact on Higher Education," *Journal of Applied Learning & Teaching* 6, no. 1 (April 25, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.37074/jalt.2023.6.1.23>, 1977.

⁷⁷ Adedibu, "Mission out of Africa: The Case of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in the United Kingdom," 1-16; B. A. Adedibu, "From House Cell to Warehouse Churches: The Reworlding of the British Christian Landscape by African Pentecostal Churches in London," 212 - 233; *Benin, Ekpoma Journal of Religious Studies, Ambrose Ali University* 1, no. 2 (2015): 212-233; A. Adogame, *The African Christian Diaspora: New Currents and Emerging Trends in World Christianity* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 173-194

⁷⁸ Maureen Jenkins, "Across the Enterprise Boeing Is Attacking Waste and Streamlining Process. the Goal? Cost Competitiveness," *Boeing Frontiers* 1, no. 04 (2002), 2.

⁷⁹ Adedibu, "Nigeria's Neo-Pentecostals' Religious Creativity and Innovations through the Lens of Indigenous Ontology in the Development of Grassroot Theologies," 72-88

⁸⁰ Adedibu, "From House Cell to Warehouse Churches: The Reworlding of the British Christian Landscape by African Pentecostal Churches in London," 233.

Redemption Camps in Farmham, Surrey, England, Nigeria and Texas, United States are symbols of the religious landscape that represent the socio-economic standing of their respective communities. It should come as no surprise that placemaking can break out in conflict; the debates over new mosques in the US and Europe are examples.⁸¹ The fight for social equality includes the pursuit of recognition through spatial visibility. This was the experience of Kingsway International Christian Centre led by Nigerian Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo, the Nigerian-born leader of the Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC), who had planned to construct an 8,000-seat church in the Havering Borough of London, but the proposals were rejected in 2008. However, the church has called the borough's decision to reject its plans at London's Beam Reach "shocking." The church claimed that the ruling was a reflection of the unfriendly treatment of its representatives during a January 15, 2008, meeting with the borough. It is apt to posit that migrants' religious movements in diaspora urgently need to understand the role of politics of place-making in their quest for spatial embeddedness in the host country to avoid community polarization of their intentions. KICC eventually acquired a 24-acre property at Buckmore Park, Chatham, Kent, in 2012, which included 12 sizable structures and 2 foundations. This property serves as the location for the new headquarters church in Europe, and the offices were acquired debt-free for £5 million.

KICC's acquisition of the 24-acre property at Buckmore Park, Chatham, Kent, reflects the alternative approach to the contextual realities of space contestation in inner cities faced by migrant's diasporic churches in England. Since space in inner city areas is more expensive and religious groups often have challenges obtaining outright acquisition, lease, some of these religious movements move to the urban outskirts of where they apply for the use of a warehouse and subsequently apply for conversion of the property as a place of worship from the local council. The sea change to embeddedness of religious movements of migrants in spatial presence, particularly in the outskirts of urban cities, is largely influenced by the opportunities to accommodate large crowds, adequate space for car parking, avoidance of noise pollution, and community safety will enhance the success of planning permission for conversion of use of such properties.⁸²

Religious practitioners are not only involved in the re-scalarisation of space and spatial contestation but also transform secular localities. They lease or acquire leisure spaces, shopping malls, warehouses, bowling centres and cinemas that are transformed into shrines, temples, and churches to meet the religious needs of the movements.⁸³ Effective mediatisation techniques like podcasts, sermon recordings, religious films, preaching, and evangelistic campaigns using public speaker systems can likewise accomplish this reconfiguration of space.⁸⁴ By connecting churches in the diaspora with churches in the departing countries, transnational religious movements can create symbolic geographies of the sacred. For example, the RCCG churches in America and England share symbolic geography with Redemption City, which serves as the denomination's international headquarters.

CONCLUSION

There is a need to take a comprehensive approach to navigating the intersection of religion and migration, taking into account the multifaceted nature of migration and religion in the course of human movements in the age of artificial intelligence, as well as taking cognisance of the changes in the interdisciplinary studies on migration and religion over time. Nyamnjoh's concept of incompleteness and mobility offers the theoretical framework to anchor this complex intersection alongside ongoing migration and the dynamic nature of religion, with the use of AI in the management of migration and its associated ethical quagmires.⁸⁵ The challenges presented by AI's influence on migration and the intricate role of religion in guiding human dignity are not limited to theoretical discussions. They have a profound bearing on people's

⁸¹ Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Making Muslim Space in North America and Europe* (California: University of California Press, 1996).

⁸² Adedibu, "From House Cell to Warehouse Churches: The Reworlding of the British Christian Landscape by African Pentecostal Churches in London," 225.

⁸³ Birgit Meyer, "Impossible Representations: Pentecostalism, Vision, and Video Technology in Ghana," *Religion, Media, and the Public Sphere*, 2006, 290–312; N. Yakubu and S. Dasuki, "Emergency Online Teaching and Learning in a Nigerian Private University: An Activity Theory Perspective," 295; Working Paper. UK Academy for Information Systems, 2021, https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/172592/1/UKAIS2021_AT_Paper.pdf.

⁸⁴ Birgit Meyer, "Christianity in Africa: From African Independent to Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches," *Annu. Rev. Anthropol.* 33, no. 1 (2004): 447–74.

⁸⁵ de Vries, "Centering Africa as Context and Driver for Global Health Ethics: Incompleteness, Conviviality and the Limits of Ubuntu."

real-life experiences everywhere. Religion has continuously been a guiding force in providing advocacy and refuge, from the Syrian refugee crisis to the migration patterns observed in sub-Saharan Africa, where displacement is fueled by conflict and climate change. However, depending on how it is developed and implemented, technology can either support or compromise human dignity, as demonstrated by the use of AI in border control in Europe and the United States. Migration has fostered continued space contestation in the host context, shaped by the politics of place-making, while the spatial embeddedness of religious movements is a sign of visibility within the host context.

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