



Nigerian Pentecostal Megachurches, Prayer Cities and the Environment: Assessing the Ecological Footprint of the Redeemed Christian Church of God's Redemption City

Babatunde Adedibu¹ 

¹ Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy, Redeemer's University, Ede, Osun State, Nigeria; Department of Religion and Theology, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the environmental mission and public role of Nigerian Pentecostal megachurch leaders, explicitly focusing on Redemption City of God within the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Nigeria. Since the 1980s, these megachurches have sought to sanctify social, economic, and agricultural spheres, thereby altering Nigeria's religious landscape. This transformation, however, has resulted in the commercialisation of nature through spiritual activities, campgrounds, and large congregations, a phenomenon scholars term 'ecological sin'. Despite apparent environmental degradation, leaders and members frequently show indifference to ecological concerns. The research explored the disparity between the considerable religious influence of churches and their ecological responsibilities, identifying internal and external challenges to environmental stewardship. Using a descriptive method that integrated secondary literature review with primary data from discussions and interviews with church leaders, the study found that while creation care is occasionally mentioned in teachings, actual ecological stewardship is minimal. The emphasis on rapid growth, economic development, and spiritual empowerment often eclipses environmental responsibility. Campgrounds and religious sites, intended as sacred spaces, frequently contribute to deforestation, waste accumulation, and ecological imbalance. The research contributes to the discourse on religion and ecology in Africa by highlighting the contradiction of Nigerian Pentecostal megachurches: powerful social and religious actors with significant potential for positive ecological impact yet remaining largely disengaged from environmental responsibility.

Correspondence

Babatunde Adedibu

Email:

adedibub@run.edu.ng

Publication History

Received: 5th June, 2025

Accepted: 17th October, 2025

Published online:

29th December, 2025

To Cite this Article:

Adedibu, Babatunde.

"Nigerian Pentecostal

Megachurches, Prayer

Cities and the

Environment: Assessing

the Ecological Footprint

of the Redeemed

Christian Church of God's

Redemption City." *E-*

Journal of Religious and

Theological Studies 11,

no.12 (2025): 603 – 617.

[https://doi.org/10.38159/](https://doi.org/10.38159/erats.202511122)

[erats.202511122](https://doi.org/10.38159/erats.202511122).

Keywords: Ecological Degradation, Ecological Sin, Nigerian Pentecostal megachurches, Prayer Cities

INTRODUCTION

Religious movements, particularly Pentecostal megachurches, have redefined the urban landscape across most of Africa, especially in Nigeria, through their embeddedness in economic, social, and agrarian spheres. Yet, they face peculiar challenges of religious consumerism, noise pollution, and religious competition. However, African urban cities have been under the purview of various researchers not only because of the changing landscape of globalisation and modernity, but also

because of migration trends and their social and economic implications.¹ Moreover, African urban cities like Lagos have “unregulated growth, limited opportunities for gainful employment in the formal economy, severe environmental degradation, lack of decent and affordable housing, failing and negligent city-management, and increasing inequalities.”² Myers and Murray's assertion aligns with Lagos being adjudged the world's fourth-worst city to live in by the European Economic Intelligence Unit, a sister publication of The Economist of London.³

However, as Ukah, de-westernising urban theory on how urban cities should be in the future, “must draw from the lived experience of the people and not from the musings of urban theorists”, requires a change of paradigm in the narrative of the challenges of African urban cities.⁴ Due to the skewed perception of the present, Robinson strongly advocates the “need to construct (or promote) an alternative urban theory that reflects the experiences of a much wider range of cities”.⁵ Therefore, to evaluate a city's significance, it might be more helpful to understand the varied experiences of its residents rather than emphasise the world's supremacy in politics, the economy, and technology. Furthermore, Ukah takes issue with the reasoning of Western urban scholars who study African cities by categorising them as “economic function in the neoliberal system” into “global,” “world,” or “sub-global” cities.⁶ As Gifford and Nogueira-Godsey's position, this result excludes African cities, stripping them of rights and labelling them as evolving and insufficient.⁷

Despite the complexities and urban challenges, religious movements, particularly Pentecostal megachurches, employ various interventionist approaches to address the Nigerian state's socio-economic, developmental, educational, and infrastructural gaps. Nigerian megachurches, through their diaconal services, are development actors leading the socio-economic transformation of their cities.⁸ Various scholars have explored the nexus between religion and development, particularly Pentecostal megachurches, which are often seen as motors of development.⁹ Part of the social transformation by Pentecostal megachurches is that urban cities in Nigeria are fast becoming the amphitheatres for mega ecclesiastical hubs as three Nigerian megachurches, notably Salvation Ministries, Port Harcourt, Dunamis International Gospel Centre, Abuja and Winners Chapel, Ota, hold the position of the first, second and third largest church auditorium in the world.¹⁰ Therefore, it could imply that, despite the dwindling economic fortunes of the Nigerian state, Pentecostal megachurches seem to thrive, repositioning the movement not only as agents of urban architectural change but also as a force in Nigerian megachurches' global reckoning.¹¹ Nevertheless, the proliferation of Pentecostal megachurches' sacralisation of spaces is no longer an urban phenomenon, as some of these churches

¹ Krista Paulsen, Anthony Orum, and Xiangming Chen, *Introduction to Cities: How Place and Space Shape Human Experience* (London: Wiley Blackwell, 2012), 6f.

² M. Murray and G. Myers, *Cities in Contemporary Africa* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

³ Economic Intelligence (EIU), “The Global Liveability Index 2023,” 2024, [https://fij.ng/article/report-lagos-is-worlds-4th-worst-city-to-live-in-below-war-hit-kyiv/#:~:text=The EIU stated that the, and environment%2C education and infrastructure.&text=According to the report%2C Lagos,2022 to the fourth worst.](https://fij.ng/article/report-lagos-is-worlds-4th-worst-city-to-live-in-below-war-hit-kyiv/#:~:text=The%20EIU%20stated%20that%20the,environment%20education%20and%20infrastructure.&text=According%20to%20the%20report%20Lagos,2022%20to%20the%20fourth%20worst.)

⁴ Asonzeh Ukah, “Building God's City: The Political Economy of Prayer Camps in Nigeria,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 40, no. 3 (May 19, 2016): 524–40, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12363>.

⁵ J. Robinson, “Global and World Cities: A View from off the Map,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Studies* 26, no. 3 (2002): 531–34.

⁶ Ukah, “Building God's City: The Political Economy of Prayer Camps in Nigeria.”

⁷ P Gifford and T Nogueira-Godsey, “The Protestant Ethic and African Pentecostalism: A Case Study,” *Journal for the Study of Religion* 24, no. 1 (September 26, 2011), <https://doi.org/10.4314/jsr.v24i1.70018>.

⁸ 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; Benson Ohihon Igboin and Babatunde Aderemi Adedibu, *Nigerian Pentecostalism and COVID-19: Dynamics, Worship, and Creativities (PDF)* (Glienicke: Gerlag Velag, 2022).

⁹ Ignatius Swart and Elsabé Nell, “Religion and Development: The Rise of a Bibliography,” *HTS Theologesie Studies / Theological Studies* 72, no. 4 (May 31, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v72i4.3862>; Philipp Öhlmann, Wilhelm Gräb, and Marie-Luise Frost, *African Initiated Christianity and the Decolonisation of Development* (New York: Routledge, 2020), 1, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367823825>.

¹⁰ Babatunde Aderemi Adedibu, “Nigerian Pentecostal Megachurches and Development: A Diaconal Analysis of the Redeemed Christian Church of God,” *Religions* 14, no. 1 (January 4, 2023): 70, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14010070>.

¹¹ Adedibu, “Nigeria's Neo-Pentecostals' Religious Creativity and Innovations through the Lens of Indigenous Ontology in the Development of Grassroot Theologies.”

establish prayer camps on the outskirts of major cities to accommodate their religious idiosyncrasies, which are multifunctional sites for ritual, religious praxis, and ecology.¹²

METHODOLOGY

The research used a descriptive approach. It combined a critical review of the existing literature with primary data collected from discussions and interviews with church leaders. These sources were examined to understand the Redeemed Christian Church of God's Redemption City of God ecological mission, stewardship practices, and involvement with environmental issues.

Study Sample and Population

The study included leaders involved in developing and managing Redemption City of God in Mowe, Ogun State, Nigeria. Residents and community stakeholders who are directly affected by the area's ecological changes were also part of the population. A purposive sampling technique was used to include participants with experience, decision-making roles in environmental care and church activities.

Data Collection

Data collection was done from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected through semi-structured interviews. The interviewer looked at views on ecological care, awareness of environmental damage, and church policies or practices related to sustainable land use. Secondary data came from church publications, official statements, government reports, scholarly articles, and media coverage associated with RCCG and Redemption City. Field observations documented environmental changes, such as land clearing, waste management practices, and infrastructure development within the city.

Data Analysis Procedure

The study used qualitative data analysis techniques. Interview transcripts were thematically coded to find patterns, essential themes, and differing views on ecological care. Data were categorised into major themes: "sacralisation of space," "commodification of nature," "environmental damage," "public testimony," and "creation care." Secondary sources were matched with primary data to confirm findings and ensure reliability. Descriptive analysis helped summarise the evidence, while interpretive analysis placed the findings within broader discussions of Pentecostalism, megachurch growth, and ecology in Africa.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were assured of confidentiality, anonymity, and the voluntary nature of their participation. Care was taken to handle sensitive information from interviews to prevent misrepresentation of participants or institutions. The researchers aimed for cultural and religious sensitivity in interactions, recognising the sacred nature of church spaces and practices. The research adhered to ethical principles of fairness by highlighting both the positive contributions and the environmental challenges associated with RCCG's Redemption City.

DISCUSSION

Religious Gentrification through the lens of Nigerian Pentecostal megachurches.

Religion permeates the social and cultural fabric of life in Nigerian cities and their urban fringes. Struggles over representations of urban space and the social life of the town.¹³ The connection between

¹² Ukah, "Building God's City: The Political Economy of Prayer Camps in Nigeria."

¹³ Wale Adebani and Ebenezer Obadare, *Encountering the Nigerian State* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2010), <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230109636>; A. Farber, "Low-Budget Berlin: Towards an Understanding of Low-Budget Urbanity as Assemblage," *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 7, no. 1 (March 1, 2014): 119–36, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rst034>; Ukah, "Building God's City: The Political Economy of Prayer Camps in Nigeria"; David Garbin, "Introduction: Believing in the City," *Culture and Religion* 13, no. 4 (December 5, 2012): 401–4, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14755610.2012.751789>.

urban space and religion has been explored previously. These all show how faith-based the companies' activities are in shaping urban culture and daily life.¹⁴ Examining the politics of prayer in the city of Lagos, Janson and Akinleye examined the politics and economics of prayer camps in the city's periurban region.¹⁵ The sole emphasis of these articles is on whether religious activities influence the reshaping of cities across various temporal and spatial dimensions, and on how city planning and bureaucracies respond to religiously motivated spatial variation, as the twenty-first century heralded a new dawn with the rise of religious movements, particularly the urbanisation of Nigerian Pentecostal megachurches.¹⁶ Pentecostal megachurches' socio-economic responsiveness to the myriad existential realities of Nigerians, such as poverty, systemic infrastructural decay, inequality, and insecurity, as they serve as beacons of hope, mobilise fiscal and human resources, and provide socio-psychological support to urban dwellers to cope with the associated realities of urban life.¹⁷ Thus, it is a response to the gaps left by the deficiencies of the Nigerian state's statutory institutions or to the development of such infrastructures that entrepreneurial initiatives have emerged.¹⁸ Nigerian Pentecostal megachurches have had to request more land and placemaking to fit their religious mosaic into the urban fabric of most cities, indicating a need for a reconceptualisation of urban planning and management.¹⁹

Nevertheless, today, Pentecostal megachurches in many cities in Nigeria are located in residential areas, reflecting their initial small-scale functions intended to serve particular residential neighbourhoods or small villages.²⁰ However, the recent development of mega-edifices, according to Kirby and Ukah, frequently entails enormous land grabs, particularly by Nigerian transnational Pentecostal megachurches, which might be economically motivated and represent the intersection of religion, globalisation, and neoliberalism.²¹ This assertion complements the observable increase in megachurches' quest to acquire land for prayer camps in Nigeria.²² Nevertheless, it is apt to posit that the drift of Pentecostal megachurches to peri-urban cities for placemaking might also be a byproduct of rising property values, overpopulation, the need for more land for ritual and religious praxis, and the complex challenges of space contestation in urban cities in Nigeria.²³

Megachurches have evolved in residential and commercial spaces in urban cities in Nigeria, such as Trinity Towers, Victoria Island, built by the City of David, a parish of the Redeemed Christian Church of God. Although Trinity Tower does not have a seating capacity like the 100,000 seater Dunamis International Gospel Centre, Abuja, led by Pastor Paul Eneche, nor Pastor David Ibiyomie's

¹⁴ Olufunke Adeboye, "'A Church in a Cinema Hall?' Pentecostal Appropriation of Public Space in Nigeria," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 42 (January 1, 2012): 145–71, <https://doi.org/10.2307/41725468>; Ebenezer Obadare, "The Uses of Ridicule: Humour, 'Infrapolitics' and Civil Society in Nigeria," *African Affairs* 108, no. 431 (2009): 241–61.

¹⁵ Marloes Janson and Akintunde Akinleye, "The Spiritual Highway: Religious World Making in Megacity Lagos (Nigeria)," *Material Religion* 11, no. 4 (October 2, 2015): 550–62, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17432200.2015.1103484>.

¹⁶ Taibat Lawanson, "Planning and Pentecostalism in the Spatial (Re-)Configuration of Lagos," in *Theorising Urban Development From the Global South* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021), 221–45, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82475-4_10; Tim Keller, "How Do You Reach Cities?," Lausanne Movement, 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_mlkyVgjBw.

¹⁷ Garth Myers, *African Cities* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2011), <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350218123>; AbdouMaliq Simone, *For the City Yet to Come* (Duke University Press, 2004), 234, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1198xq5>.

¹⁸ Cephas N Omenyo, "African Pentecostalism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*, ed. Jr Robeck Cecil M. and Amos Yong, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 138, <https://doi.org/DOI:10.1017/CCO9780511910111.011>.

¹⁹ Patrick Brandful Cobbinah and Prosper Issahaku Korah, "Religion Gnaws Urban Planning: The Geography of Places of Worship in Kumasi, Ghana," *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development* 8, no. 2 (July 2, 2016): 93–109, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19463138.2015.1074581>; Heidi Hoernig, "Worship in the Suburbs: The Development Experience of Recent Immigrant Religious Communities" (University of Waterloo, 2006).

²⁰ C. Ashley, "Planning for Religious Purposes: An Examination of Contentious Development Proposals" (University of New South Wales, 2009), 11.

²¹ Leslie Fesenmyer, "Bringing the Kingdom to the City: Mission as Placemaking Practice amongst Kenyan Pentecostals in London," *City & Society* 31, no. 1 (April 23, 2019): 36, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ciso.12196>; Birgit Meyer, "Christianity in Africa: From African Independent to Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33, no. 1 (October 1, 2004): 447–74, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.33.070203.143835..>

²² Omenyo, "African Pentecostalism," 136.

²³ Daniel Monroe Sullivan and Samuel C. Shaw, "Retail Gentrification and Race: The Case of Alberta Street in Portland, Oregon," *Urban Affairs Review* 47, no. 3 (May 9, 2011): 413–32, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1078087410393472>; Nadia A. Mian, "'Prophets-for-Profits': Redevelopment and the Altering Urban Religious Landscape," *Urban Studies* 45, no. 10 (September 1, 2008): 2143–61, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098008094877>.

120,000-seater auditorium of Salvation ministry or Prophet Joshua Iginla's 800,000 capacity Champions Royal Assembly, Abuja, Dunamis, Ukah argues that these megachurches espouse "capital and profit above piety, virtues or ethics".²⁴ According to Madu, Trinity Towers was:

Built at a cost of over N12 billion, it has unique features such as a 4,500-capacity auditorium, a multi-storey car park that can accommodate 673 cars, a rooftop terrace, a helipad, automated and integrated lighting, and a workable sound and video system. It also offers short and long-term leases for commercial space, including a gymnasium and wellness centre, a classic restaurant, a quality medical centre, a recreation zone and others.²⁵

Nigeria's Pentecostal scene is dynamic and ever-folding as religious competition and consumerism have led to the reimagining, innovation, and creativity of ritual praxis and the sacralisation of social, economic, agrarian, and industrial spaces in various parts of Nigeria. Since 1980, the search for prayer camps by Nigerian megachurches has increased. However, the establishment of prayer camps by Nigerian megachurches is part of the 'entrepreneurial religion' and place-making.²⁶ However, Ukah posits that these churches utilise their "material successes stemming from the creative deployment of neoliberal practices such as the privileging of profit, the integration of business and market logic with evangelism and doing God's work".²⁷ The politics of accessibility and expression are involved in the reconstruction of space by a religious imagination.

Christianity was and continues to be a variety of spatial practices intended to alter and reconfigure the surroundings, much like the colonial endeavour. The innovative methods that Pentecostal megachurches use for "spatial appropriations" in Lagos are the thrust of Olufunke Adeboye's article.²⁸ She contends these actions are "Pentecostal counter-public" actions. However, Ukah repudiates Adeboye's perspective, arguing that the "expansive urban development that involves the creation of numerous residential estates [in RCCG Redemption City] is engagement with the neoliberal market, embodies what Comaroff and Comaroff characterise as 'millennial capitalism': the ability to generate (economic) value through less tangible means".²⁹

While Pentecostal rites can be conducted in commercial settings, such as hotels, warehouses or entertainment venues, referred to in counter-public conversations, the most extreme Pentecostal megachurches initially take religious or secular spaces. Since then, Pentecostal megachurches have elevated this kind of public appropriation to a new degree by establishing religious cities and prayer camps outside urban areas.³⁰ The emerging spatial placemaking and embeddedness of the prayer camps of Nigerian Pentecostal megachurches in various parts of the country is not a redefinition of spatial configurations but also a shift from "forms of parochial spatial practice, which are often at variance with extant planning regulations" in urban cities.³¹ The import of this development is the "changing morphology and land-use reconfigurations at both the micro and macro scales" in urban and peri-urban cities where prayer camps are situated.³²

The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway is one of several locations in Nigeria where prayer camps for various religious movements are located. Although the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway is 146 kilometres long, it is the major highway linking the southern part of the country with adjoining cities and connecting to the northern part of the country. Ogunleye notes that "about 20% of the length of the [Lagos-Ibadan] expressway falls within Lagos State, 60% falls within Ogun State, and the remaining

²⁴ Ukah, "Building God's City: The Political Economy of Prayer Camps in Nigeria."

²⁵ Victor Madu, "RCCG Completes 14-Floor Trinity Towers in Lagos," *Guardian Nigeria*, 2023, <https://guardian.ng/property/rccg-completes-14-floor-trinity-towers-in-lagos/>.

²⁶ Stephan Lanz and Martijn Oosterbaan, "Entrepreneurial Religion in the Age of Neoliberal Urbanism," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 40, no. 3 (May 20, 2016): 487–506, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12365>.

²⁷ Ukah, "Building God's City: The Political Economy of Prayer Camps in Nigeria."

²⁸ Adeboye, "'A Church in a Cinema Hall?' Pentecostal Appropriation of Public Space in Nigeria."

²⁹ Ukah, "Building God's City: The Political Economy of Prayer Camps in Nigeria."

³⁰ Ukah, "Building God's City: The Political Economy of Prayer Camps in Nigeria."

³¹ Lawanson, "Planning and Pentecostalism in the Spatial (Re-)Configuration of Lagos." ; Katsaura, O. "Theo-urbanism: Pastoral power and Pentecostals in Johannesburg". *Culture and Religion*, 18(3), (2017); 232–262

³² Lawanson, "Planning and Pentecostalism in the Spatial (Re-)Configuration of Lagos."

20% falls within the Oyo state territorial boundary”.³³ Pentecostal megachurches such as Redeemed Christian Church of God, Redemption City, Mountain of Fire and Miracles, Prayer City, Foursquare Gospel Church, Camp at Ajebo Deeper Life Bible Church, Campground, Mowe, Gospel Faith Mission Campground, Christ Embassy Campground African Indigenous church like Celestial Church of Christ and another religious movement such as Pentecostal-Islam- *NasrulLahi-ilFathi Society of Nigeria* (NASFAT) Camp are some of the numerous religious movements which represent a microcosm of the diversities of religious movements that own prayer camps in Nigeria. Previous scholarship observed that there are 36 prayer camps/cities along the Lagos–Ibadan peri-urban axis alone.³⁴

Interestingly, the first Camp Ground on the Lagos–Ibadan Expressway was the National Youth Camp, owned by some American Missionaries and now owned by the Foursquare Gospel Church in Ajebo, Ogun State.³⁵ However, the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Redemption City, and Mountain of Fire and Miracles, Prayer City, are the most visible on the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, based on religious tourism to the two campgrounds. Nevertheless,

The RCCG appears to be the most consistent Nigerian megachurch committed to placemaking and the transposition of Redemption City within Nigeria, as the denomination has acquired vast hectares for its campgrounds in Abuja and Port Harcourt. Place-making and space contestation for the deployment of RCCG principles through the reproduction of Redemption City has become an international phenomenon in Lusaka, Zambia; Douala, Cameroon; Floyd, Texas, United States; and the recently purchased Campground in the United Kingdom. The move of Redemption City across the Atlantic further cements the positive correlation between religion and transnational connections, and the complex forms that this takes, among religious movements such as the RCCG and their inventive, cross-border particularities, religious creativities, and ritual practices.³⁶ Religious movements have been de-territorialised and should “no longer be conceived as geopolitical territorial spaces but rather as interrelated communicative spaces within a single world” due to the pressures of globalisation and technological advancements.³⁷ That said, transnationalism has undoubtedly generated a good deal of religious novelty, hybridity, and reconfiguration within and across cultural boundaries. Because Redemption City has been moved to other countries than Nigeria, the RCCG can participate.

[T]he alternative places of belonging that the religious ideas and symbols make possible, and about how these sacred spaces in which these holy landscapes interact with the boundaries of political and civil life....³⁸

Given the transnational missionary ethos of RCCG and its deep commitment to transposing Redemption City as a model of emplacement in the global religious economy, the next section of this study examines Redemption City of God, its origin, growth, and transformation into a city, and the issue of ecological degradation.

The Redemption City of God, Eco-Theology and Ecological Degradation

The Making of Redemption City of God

RCCG is perhaps one of the fastest-growing indigenous Pentecostal churches in Nigeria and Africa, with transnational networks of churches in North and Latin America, Europe, and Asia and a presence

³³ Bamidele M. Ogunleye, “The Impact of Religious Camps Development on Residential Property Values: Case Study of Lagos-Ibadan Expressway,” *International Journal of Education, Learning and Development* 7, no. 8 (2019): 1–13, 3.

³⁴ Lawanson, “Planning and Pentecostalism in the Spatial (Re-)Configuration of Lagos.”

³⁵ Babatunde Aderemi 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 Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 75, no. 2 (December 12, 2019): a5428, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v75i2.5428>.

³⁶ Adedibu, “Sacralisation of the Social Space: A Study of the Trans-Border Expansion of the Redemption Camp of the Redeemed Christian Church of God.”

³⁷ J. Cassanova, “Religion, the Axial Age, and Secular Modernity in Bellah’s Theory of Religious Evolution,” in *The Axial Age and Its Consequences*, ed. R. Bellah and H. Joas (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2012), 191–221.

³⁸ P. Levitt, “Between God, Ethnicity, and Country: An Approach to the Study of Transnational Religion,” in *Paper Presented at Workshop on ‘Transnational Migration: Comparative Perspectives’, 30 June–01 July, 2001, 2001, 5.*

in 197 countries worldwide.³⁹ RCCG metamorphosed from a prayer group called Ogo Oluwa (The Glory of God), led by Rev. Josiah Akindayomi. RCCG historiographies have been chronicled by various scholars in Africa and the diaspora.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, it is appropriate to provide an overview of RCCG's history and the nexus between Redemption City, which falls within the purview of this study. RCCG, under the leadership of Rev. Josiah Olufemi Akindayomi, was a pietistic movement that started at 1A Cemetery Road, Ebutte Meta, Lagos. RCCG, as of 2 November 1980, had only 39 church networks in the South West, Nigeria. The incumbent General Overseer, Pastor E. A. Adeboye, was announced as the successor to the founder on 21 January and consecrated on 2 March 1981. RCCG, through its missionary ethos, has evolved over the years with unparalleled growth in African Pentecostalism through its transposable mobile practices and commitment to church planting, religious innovations and creativities of its ritual praxis, massive mobilisation of laity, as well as the redefinition of its churchmanship from a pietistic movement to a prosperity-oriented Church. One of the hallmarks of RCCG is its commitment to transnational place-making with the transposition of Redemption Camp in Floyd, Texas, United States and the United Kingdom, which further reinforces the emplacement of RCCG as a global missionary player and the “value of property, infrastructure, and other endowments in these invented religious spaces is quite enormous and monumental”.⁴¹

Redemption Camp was pioneered by Pastor E.A. Adeboye and Pastor Mrs Folu Adeboye in 1983 due to the growth of the denomination, as the auditorium at Ebute Metta was no longer adequate to host its teeming adherents. The search culminated in various attempts to acquire land in Moforija, Epe, Lagos State, and the National Youth Camp in Epe, owned by American missionaries but now owned by the Four-Square Gospel Church at Ajebo, Ogun State. The initial hectareage of the Redemption camp was 4.25ha of land at Mowe, Obafemi Owode Local Government, Ogun State, for 6,000 naira. Further acquisitions of land spanning almost four decades have now increased to:

1687 ha, with 10% comprising water bodies, and over 2500 physical structures, including administrative buildings, an orphanage, and educational facilities.⁴² The land use analysis of Redemption Camp indicates that it comprises the following: 229.7 ha (13%) as residential; commercial 10.8 ha (0.6%), institutional 143.9 ha (8.5%); industrial 3.3 ha (0.2%); conservation strip 434.2 ha (25.8%), open space 712.4 ha (42.2%), recreation 11 ha.⁴³

The camp was the impetus for extensive urban growth, resulting in multiple residential estates spanning around 104 kilometres from Lagos to Sagamu.⁴⁴ Religious organisations like RCCG are implementing a different planning strategy in response to their demands for annexation and growth. The ecology of Redemption City has changed significantly over the years due to the gradual deforestation and disruption of the forest's natural fauna to pave the way for the construction of auditoriums, buildings, and ancillary facilities in pursuit of RCCG's religious innovations and creativity. In four decades, RCCG has constructed three auditoriums, the first auditorium built at the entrance of the Redemption with a size of "150 ft × 300 ft. In 1985, it was expanded to 200 m × 300 m to accommodate the expanding congregation.”⁴⁵

The re-sacralisation of the acquired land heralded a new sacred space, distinct from the indigenous traditional worshipper's appropriation, akin to sacrifices and veneration to their gods.

³⁹ Adedibu, “Sacralisation of the Social Space: A Study of the Trans-Border Expansion of the Redemption Camp of the Redeemed Christian Church of God”; B.A Adedibu, “The Urban Explosion of Black Majority Churches: Their Origin, Growth, Distinctives and Contribution to British Christianity” (North West University, South Africa, 2011).

⁴⁰ Adedibu, “Sacralisation of the Social Space: A Study of the Trans-Border Expansion of the Redemption Camp of the Redeemed Christian Church of God”; 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; Ukah, “Building God’s City: The Political Economy of Prayer Camps in Nigeria”; Adeboye, “‘A Church in a Cinema Hall?’ Pentecostal Appropriation of Public Space in Nigeria.”

⁴¹ A. Adogame, “The Redeemed Christian Church of God: African Pentecostalism,” in *Global Religious Movements across Borders*, ed. S. Cherry and H.R. Ebaugh (London: Ashgate, 2014), 51.

⁴² Ukah, “Building God’s City: The Political Economy of Prayer Camps in Nigeria.”

⁴³ Adedibu, “Sacralisation of the Social Space: A Study of the Trans-Border Expansion of the Redemption Camp of the Redeemed Christian Church of God.”

⁴⁴ Janson and Akinleye, “The Spiritual Highway: Religious World Making in Megacity Lagos (Nigeria).”

⁴⁵ Adedibu, “Sacralisation of the Social Space: A Study of the Trans-Border Expansion of the Redemption Camp of the Redeemed Christian Church of God,” 3.

Therefore, Adeboye and his wife built the first three-bedroom bungalow in the Redemption Camp in 1985, very close to its pristine habitat, where wild animals and reptiles were encountered daily.⁴⁶ A further 10 ha of land was procured for N10,000, with another 10 ha for N9,000. Due to an increase in religious tourism and the quest for religious consumerism among RCCG adherents, the second auditorium was completed in 1995 at 395 m × 500 m and later expanded in 2001.⁴⁷ Congress arena, the third auditorium, which is referred to as Old Arena, was built at the cost of about US \$60 million, according to Ukah, which is now used as a viewing centre for the signature events of RCCG, which are the Monthly Holy Ghost Services, March Special Holy Service and Congress held during the second week December of every year.⁴⁸ However, the ecclesiastical mosaic of RCCG changed with the construction of the 9KM (3 km by 3 km) auditorium announced during the "2013 August Convention of the denomination in Nigeria, which is located on 90 ha of land in Agunfoye village, off Rev Josiah Akindayomi way, area of the Redemption Camp. The new auditorium was estimated to cost approximately N35 billion (or US\$112 million)."⁴⁹

The ecclesiastical hierarchies of RCCG have redefined the pristine ecological state of Redemption Camp. Redemption Camp was initially planned as a quiet, sacred site for spiritual development, but it has now metamorphosed into a city with all the features of a town. The continued functional sustenance of Redemption City's basic facilities, such as electricity, water, security, and safety, provides a haven for the RCCG community of sentiments domiciled on the campground. This development repudiated the Nigerian state's inability to provide basic social and educational infrastructure for its citizens. It led to the formation of alternative states within the Nigerian state by religious organisations like RCCG. The failures of statutory agencies and the Nigerian government have made Pentecostal megachurches earn the respect and credibility of their adherents.⁵⁰

Redemption City of God and ecology of space.

Given the urbanisation of the Redemption Camp, now known as the Redemption City of God, it has become a confluence of social, economic, religious, political, and educational spaces. Thus, amid the multifaceted developments in Redemption City of God, the pertinent question is: What are the policies and procedures of the ecological mission, and what is the modus operandi of the eco-theology of RCCG to mitigate environmental degradation in Redemption City of God effectively?

Pentecostalism, inclusive of the megachurches strand, affirms the involvement of God in creation as espoused in their doctrinal stance (Gen 1:1-2; Gen 1:9; Gen.1:1-31; Heb. 11:3; Rev. 4:11; John 1:3; Col.1:16). Therefore, Conradie (2010) posits that God's salvation plan for humanity includes the love of God for creation. Hence, Christians and Church leaders, including Pentecostal megachurches in Nigeria, should be interested in ecological theology. Ecological theology is the "theology of place where there is a connection between the social aspects of the people and the space they occupy".⁵¹ Hence, it implies that humans, particularly Pentecostal megachurches, should demonstrate their stewardship of the spaces they inhabit, including re-sacralised spaces of worship and ritual spaces, in accordance with God's creation. Eco-theology implies that Nigerian Pentecostal megachurches with prayer camps, such as RCCG, should exercise a duty of care towards the locations or re-sacralised spaces utilised for their religious practices, given their commitment, as stated in their statements of faith, that God is involved in the creation of the earth. These megachurches must align their actions with Conradie's perspective by making a concerted effort to mitigate against environmental hazards such as the possibility of global warming, the depletion of the ozone layer, disposal of nuclear, destruction of natural fauna, rapid loss of biodiversity and dumping of toxic

⁴⁶ Samuel O Adeboye, "Media, Worship, and the Risk of Consumer Christianity," *African Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 4, no. 2 (2022): 77–92.

⁴⁷ O. Olubiyi, *RCCG: A City on the Hills, Lagos, Redemption Light*, (Lagos: Redeemed Christian Church of God, 2015).

⁴⁸ Ukah, "Building God's City: The Political Economy of Prayer Camps in Nigeria."

⁴⁹ Adedibu, "Sacralisation of the Social Space: A Study of the Trans-Border Expansion of the Redemption Camp of the Redeemed Christian Church of God."

⁵⁰ Benson Ohihon Igboin, "Nigerian Pentecostalism, Alternative State, and the Question of Accountability," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 46, no. 3 (December 24, 2020): 1–25, <https://doi.org/10.25159/2412-4265/7886>.

⁵¹ Ernst Conradie, "Towards a Theology of Place in the South African Context: Some Reflections from the Perspective of Ecotheology," *Religion and Theology* 16, no. 1–2 (2009): 3–18, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156973109X449967>.

materials in waterways, the virtual destruction of the rainforests and other ecosystems and a host other ecological challenge of contemporary concerns.⁵²

The urbanisation of the Redemption City of God has visibly transformed into perhaps one of the largest private estates in the country. Redemption City boasts of eighteen estates, seven commercial banks and two mortgage banks, several preparatory and primary schools, secondary schools with boarding facilities, a theological institution, a college of technology, several guest houses, hotels, eateries, and several para-church structures of RCCG raise fundamental questions concerning how management of the city is responding to ecological challenges.

Given the limited land area, it is apparent that space contestation within the Redemption City is a significant challenge, as waterways are increasingly appropriated for other uses. Waterlogged areas are now being utilised for the construction of residential estates, raising fundamental questions about the continued deforestation of virgin lands and the destruction of the city's natural biodiversity. This has led to the "creation of interim spaces of social innovation" focused on satisfying human needs, which tend to elaborate alternative discourses and actions.⁵³ Interestingly, this has given members of RCCG with residential homes or businesses in the Redemption City of God the opportunity to remodel their social and economic environments.⁵⁴

The para-church business projects of the RCCG are open to the public for a fee and charge fees at market rates, evidencing neoliberal tendencies. However, the RCCG has a Physical Planning Unit that seeks to mitigate the problems caused by land abuse by ensuring the church complies with the Ogun State government's statutory physical planning standards. The physical planning unit of the RCCG also provides urban management services, such as garbage disposal, water supply, security, and environmental beautification. As a result, there is substantial demand for real estate. However, some sections of the Redemption city of God urgently require remodelling, as some residential houses in the Joy to the Wise area and adjoining sections on Canaan road are overcrowded and lack recreational space for residents.

Nevertheless, religious organisations at various levels have emerged as significant political actors. They often work with, circumvent, and even replace state planning bodies.⁵⁵ The circumvention of statutory planning regulations poses many challenges to the ecology of space. To this end, the RCCG has presented a master plan for Redemption City to the Ogun state government for approval. Lawanson posits that RCCG:

Encountered challenges regarding regularising its land titles, chiefly because some of its acquired land falls within government acquisitions and government-planned schemes. In order to rectify this, the Church prepared a physical development plan and has now approached the government for approval. According to a member of the master plan committee, RCCG is the first and only corporate body in Ogun state to request [...] government approval of its camp master plan without any push from the government. This was done in July 2020.⁵⁶

The approval primarily reflects that the management of RCCG Redemption City adequately mitigates against appropriate land use and its associated challenges. Although the researcher observes the absence of green areas in the Redemption City, in a personal conversation with the National Overseer of RCCG, Pastor Sunday Akande, states that the "church [RCCG] is working assiduously to designate some of the forest areas remaining in the city as a green area". Redemption City has all the features of an urban city, including management facilities such as water supply, electricity generation

⁵² E.M. Conradie, "How Can We Help to Raise an Environmental Awareness in the South African Context?," *Scriptura* 82 (2003): 122–38.

⁵³ F. Moulaert et al., "Social Innovation and Governance in European Cities," *European Urban & Regional Studies* 14, no. 3 (2007): 40.

⁵⁴ D. Martin, *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish* (Oxford; Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000).287.

⁵⁵ Filip De Boeck, "The Sacred and the City: Modernity, Religion, and the Urban Form in Central Africa," in *A Companion to the Anthropology of Religion* (Wiley, 2013), 528–48, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118605936.ch28>; Mary Hancock and Smriti Srinivas, "Spaces of Modernity: Religion and the Urban in Asia and Africa," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 32, no. 3 (September 3, 2008): 617–30, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2008.00800.x>.

⁵⁶ Lawanson, "Planning and Pentecostalism in the Spatial (Re-)Configuration of Lagos," 232.

via a turbine, waste management, and environmental beautification, which are ancillary functions of the RCCG's physical planning department.

To ameliorate ecological degradation in Redemption City, RCCG established the Environmental Health Services Department, led by Simidu Adeshina, a PhD holder in Public Health. The department provides guidance, direction, and oversight to ensure adherence to federal, state, and local environmental health regulations. Similarly, the department oversees the creation and application of organisational procedures and rules that support environmental stewardship by resolving ecological health and safety issues.

Simidu gives a vivid outline of the various efforts of the Environmental Health Department of Redemption City, including the following:

- (a) Environmental Health Audit and Sanitary Inspection of Regulated and Non-Regulated Premises. Detect nuisances, and we abate.
- (b) Public Health Vector and Pest Control: We embark on the General Decontamination and Disinfection of Redemption City.
- (c) Burial of Dead Bodies: insurance of the compound burial permit, burial certificate, and General of the memorial garden,
- (d) Bioremediation and Clean Technology: Waste to Wealth: Recycling, Reuse, and Reduction.
- (e) Environmental Epidemiology: Data Collection and Bioinformatics on Epidemiological Diseases, Surveillances, Collection, Transportation, and Final Disposal of Bio-Medical Waste, Electronic Waste.
- (f) Environmental Health and Instrumentation.
- (g) Health Jurisprudence and Environmental Law: We use a Code of Conduct for our non-compliance
- (h) Food Hygiene and Safety: regulation of food premises, dairies, eateries, and water factories. We confiscate and seize unwholesome food items, expired food items that are not good for human consumption.
- (i) Municipal and special waste management: waste to wealth: recycling, reuse, and reduction in their categories,
- (j) Environmental monitoring and pollution control: We carried out an Environmental laboratory analysis. We regulate noise pollution, EIA, EHIA, EAR, Health, Safety and Environment.
- (k) Population health and emergency management: RCCG mitigates, responds to, and assesses the vulnerability and preparedness of emerging and re-emerging epidemiological diseases.
- (l) Promotion and Enforcement of Environmental Health: We ensure proper enforcement against defaulters.
- (m) Clearing of major drainages and canals around Redemption City periodically against floods.⁵⁷

RCCG Redemption City seems to be committed to an ecological mission. However, the RCCG Environmental Health Department was established in 2021. However, the department operated as a unit within the RCCG's public health department. It is worth noting that some of the 13-pronged approaches to mitigating the ecological degradation and environmental health of Redemption City enjoyed the support of the General Overseer, Pastor E.A. Adeboye. Adeboye, during some of the sermons, emphasised the importance of environmental health and its impact on ecological degradation. For instance, during the August 2023 Ministers conference held before the annual convention of the denomination, Adeboye charged his congregants that “please let us clear all drainages, no household waste should be disposed of in the water canals, but in the designated waste collection areas, we should avoid flood and its associated problems”.The endorsement of Adeboye aimed to ensure that the policies of the Environmental Health and Maintenance departments of RCCG are given credibility in the eyes of stakeholders and that compliance is expected from all and sundry. Ecological challenges such as flooding and poor sanitation have been established to have a multifaceted impact on soil and can spread diseases.

⁵⁷ Adeshina Simidu, former Director, Environmental Health, Redeemed Christian Church of God, Redemption City, Mowe sent a written response on the functions of his department to the researcher on 12th November, 2023.

Furthermore, the RCCG has a theological motif in its commitment to sustainable ecology, evident in its focus on city cleanliness and the mobilisation of the laity to serve in the sanitation department. The anchor scriptures on cleanliness, such as Exodus 19:16, Exodus 30:17-21, Mark 7:3-4, John 2:6, and others, are displayed on billboards and programme brochures during the annual convention of RCCG at Redemption City. Ablutions, washings, and actual and spiritual cleanliness were essential for the Old Testament Jewish ceremonies. The Hebrews saw cleanliness as an integral aspect of godliness, not something "next to" it. God's requirements for the Israelites' cleanliness affected every aspect of their existence. Hence, RCCG leadership publicly announce, recognises and celebrates the cleanest Region within its network of churches, emphasising its commitment to cleanliness in its prayer city. The RCCG Sanitation Department is responsible for ensuring the cleanliness of sacred spaces and adjoining facilities during and after significant church programmes. Mobile toilets complement the sanitation at strategic locations and modern lavatories in various parts of Redemption City to accommodate the human needs of religious tourists, which are effectively disposed of by septic tank trucks owned by the Camp Maintenance department of RCCG.

From an experiential perspective, in this article and in previous work-related observations, the researcher noted that the environmental health department works with the Camp maintenance department to manage water canals. During the rainy season, they conduct inspections to identify locations where water canals and drainage systems accumulate sediments or trash. Likewise, the Camp maintenance department conducts channel modifications/improvements based on identified constraints in the drainage systems. They regularly inspect and clean up hot spots and other storm drainage areas where illegal dumping occurs to prevent flooding and associated challenges. Moreover, where there is poor drainage and sanitation is inadequate, "water runs over the ground during rainstorms, picks up faeces and contaminates water sources. This contributes significantly to the spread of diseases such as typhoid and cholera and can increase the likelihood of contracting worm infections from soil contaminated by faeces."⁵⁸

From the foregoing, it is apt to posit that Redemption City has a sustainable drainage system, a collection of management techniques, regulatory frameworks, and tactics designed to safely and efficiently remove surface water from local water bodies while reducing pollution and controlling the effects on water quality. Using environmentally friendly drainage systems is increasingly popular to reduce excess stormwater flows and the risk of contamination through overflow throughout Redemption City. Sustainable drainage systems are often designed to replicate natural drainage that existed before development, according to Olukanni and Akinyinka.⁵⁹ The management of environmental resources in Redemption City also aims to keep the ecosystem intact while ensuring ecological, moral, and economically sound resource management.

The recycling and waste management of Redemption City involves adequate provision for designated waste sites for biodegradable waste, such as materials that are organic and capable of undergoing biological processes through the activities of microbes, such as fungi, bacteria, and other living things breaking down the waste, which later decomposes and enriches the ecology. Redemption City uses garbage trucks, particularly the rear loader model, to collect different kinds of rubbish from auditoria, commercial, industrial, and residential areas for recycling or waste disposal at recycling or waste disposal centres. Bio-remediation regulates the biological breakdown and conversion of biodegradable materials into compost, a substance resembling humus. Minerals, carbon dioxide, water, and stabilised organic matter (compost or humus) are the end-products of the regulated bio-oxidation process. The heat generated during composting may destroy any microorganisms in the garbage stream, thereby mitigating potential health risks in the city and enhancing the sustainability of the land.

In the wake of deforestation paving the way for the urbanisation of Redemption City of God, a member of the Governing Council of RCCG, Pastor David Kuo, was on hand to initiate the reforestation of parts of Redemption City by planting trees on World Environmental Day in 2022.

⁵⁸ Umar Yarima, Dawa Sidi, and Abdullahi Ismaila, "The Impacts of Poor Maintenance of Drainage System in Damaturu Town, Yobe State Nigeria," *Journal of Environmental Design & Constructions Management* 19, no. 4 (2019): 250–58, 251.

⁵⁹ D. O. Olukanni and M. O. Akinyinka, "Environment, Health and Wealth: Towards an Analysis of Municipal Solid Waste Management in Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria," in *ICCEM* (Ota, Ogun State: Covenant University, 2012), 138–45, <https://repository.covenantuniversity.edu.ng/items/fb594f04-8535-4e2a-b8e3-3e4c149b6973>.

However, this should be commended for RCCG's responsiveness to global advocacy on reforestation and the associated benefits to ecology. However, the leadership must do more in light of the extent of deforestation caused by urbanisation, in Redemption City and the challenges posed by climate change. Similarly, there is an urgent need to designate green recreational spaces and Natural fauna, which contribute significantly to land ecology by improving biodiversity, food web dynamics, nutrient cycling, and plant growth, while also maintaining ecosystem balance through pollination, seed dispersal, and predation. Furthermore, the Church's planning unit should prohibit the development of floodplains for residential buildings or commercial facilities. The proposed expansion of Redemption City's sewage systems, driven by urbanisation, will significantly advance the city's continued ecological mission.⁶⁰

CONCLUSION

Nigerian megachurches not only are redefining the religiouscape with their grandiose edifices and religious idiosyncrasies in their prayer cities, but some are also very adept in ecological resource management. Ecological mission seems to be on the radar of some of these churches, such as the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Redemption City, as a microcosm of Nigerian megachurches. The RCCG has succeeded in sustainable resource management to mitigate environmental degradation. Therefore, there is a visible and concrete commitment to ecological missions. However, it is essential to note that RCCG Redemption City cannot serve as a true reflection of Nigerian megachurches that own prayer camps, given various intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Nevertheless, RCCG Redemption City might be a model of sustainable ecological missions in Nigeria. Religious organisations such as RCCG and national organisations can engage in green activities by disseminating pro-environmental values, implementing sustainability projects, and influencing political decision-making. They can also promote eco-friendly concepts among their members through sermons and educational training. This internal transformation contributes to broader social transformation processes, leading to lifestyle changes among members.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adebanwi, Wale, and Ebenezer Obadare. *Encountering the Nigerian State*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2010. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230109636>.
- Adeboye, Olufunke. "‘A Church in a Cinema Hall?’ Pentecostal Appropriation of Public Space in Nigeria." *Journal of Religion in Africa* 42 (January 1, 2012): 145–71. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41725468>.
- Adeboye, Samuel O. "Media, Worship, and the Risk of Consumer Christianity." *African Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 4, no. 2 (2022): 77–92.
- Adedibu, B.A. "The Urban Explosion of Black Majority Churches: Their Origin, Growth, Distinctives and Contribution to British Christianity." North West University, South Africa, 2011.
- Adedibu, Babatunde. "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.
- . "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*, 72–88. Routledge, 2024.
- Adedibu, Babatunde Aderemi. "Nigerian Pentecostal Megachurches and Development: A Diaconal Analysis of the Redeemed Christian Church of God." *Religions* 14, no. 1 (January 4, 2023): 70. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14010070>.
- . "Sacralisation of the Social Space: A Study of the Trans-Border Expansion of the Redemption Camp of the Redeemed Christian Church of God." *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 75, no. 2 (December 12, 2019): a5428. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v75i2.5428>.

⁶⁰ Gilbert Ekugbe, "Adeboye Seeks N10 Billion Donations for Camp Ground Expansion," 2024, <https://punchng.com/adeboye-seeks-n10bn-donations-for-campground-expansion/>.

- Adogame, A. "The Redeemed Christian Church of God: African Pentecostalism." In *Global Religious Movements across Borders*, edited by S. Cherry and H.R. Ebaugh, 51. London: Ashgate, 2014.
- Ashley, C. "Planning for Religious Purposes: An Examination of Contentious Development Proposals." University of New South Wales, 2009.
- Boeck, Filip De. "The Sacred and the City: Modernity, Religion, and the Urban Form in Central Africa." In *A Companion to the Anthropology of Religion*, 528–48. Wiley, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118605936.ch28>.
- Cassanova, J. "Religion, the Axial Age, and Secular Modernity in Bellah's Theory of Religious Evolution." In *The Axial Age and Its Consequences*, edited by R. Bellah and H. Joas, 191–221. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2012.
- Cobbinah, Patrick Brandful, and Prosper Issahaku Korah. "Religion Gnaws Urban Planning: The Geography of Places of Worship in Kumasi, Ghana." *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development* 8, no. 2 (July 2, 2016): 93–109. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19463138.2015.1074581>.
- Conradie, E.M. "How Can We Help to Raise an Environmental Awareness in the South African Context?" *Scriptura* 82 (2003): 122–38.
- Conradie, Ernst. "Towards a Theology of Place in the South African Context: Some Reflections from the Perspective of Ecotheology." *Religion and Theology* 16, no. 1–2 (2009): 3–18. <https://doi.org/10.1163/156973109X449967>.
- Economic Intelligence (EIU). "The Global Liveability Index 2023 ," 2024. <https://fij.ng/article/report-lagos-is-worlds-4th-worst-city-to-live-in-below-war-hit-kyiv/#:~:text=The EIU stated that the,and environment%2C education and infrastructure.&text=According to the report%2C Lagos,2022 to the fourth worst>.
- Ekugbe, Gilbert. "Adeboye Seeks N10 Billion Donations for Camp Ground Expansion," 2024. <https://punchng.com/adeboye-seeks-n10bn-donations-for-campground-expansion/>.
- Farber, A. "Low-Budget Berlin: Towards an Understanding of Low-Budget Urbanity as Assemblage." *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 7, no. 1 (March 1, 2014): 119–36. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rst034>.
- Fesenmyer, Leslie. "Bringing the Kingdom to the City: Mission as Placemaking Practice amongst Kenyan Pentecostals in London." *City & Society* 31, no. 1 (April 23, 2019): 34–54. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ciso.12196>.
- Garbin, David. "Introduction: Believing in the City." *Culture and Religion* 13, no. 4 (December 5, 2012): 401–4. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14755610.2012.751789>.
- Gifford, P, and T Nogueira-Godsey. "The Protestant Ethic and African Pentecostalism: A Case Study." *Journal for the Study of Religion* 24, no. 1 (September 26, 2011). <https://doi.org/10.4314/jsr.v24i1.70018>.
- Hancock, Mary, and Smriti Srinivas. "Spaces of Modernity: Religion and the Urban in Asia and Africa." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 32, no. 3 (September 3, 2008): 617–30. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2008.00800.x>.
- Hoernig, Heidi. "Worship in the Suburbs: The Development Experience of Recent Immigrant Religious Communities." University of Waterloo, 2006.
- Igboin, Benson Ohihon. "Nigerian Pentecostalism, Alternative State, and the Question of Accountability." *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 46, no. 3 (December 24, 2020): 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.25159/2412-4265/7886>.
- Igboin, Benson Ohihon, and Babatunde Aderemi Adedibu. *Nigerian Pentecostalism and COVID-19: Dynamics, Worship, and Creativities (PDF)*. Glienicke: Gerlag Velag, 2022.
- Janson, Marloes, and Akintunde Akinleye. "The Spiritual Highway: Religious World Making in Megacity Lagos (Nigeria)." *Material Religion* 11, no. 4 (October 2, 2015): 550–62. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17432200.2015.1103484>.
- Keller, Tim. "How Do You Reach Cities?" Lausanne Movement, 2011. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_mlkyVgjBw.

- Lanz, Stephan, and Martijn Oosterbaan. "Entrepreneurial Religion in the Age of Neoliberal Urbanism." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 40, no. 3 (May 20, 2016): 487–506. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12365>.
- Lawanson, Taibat. "Planning and Pentecostalism in the Spatial (Re-)Configuration of Lagos." In *Theorising Urban Development From the Global South*, 221–45. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82475-4_10.
- Levitt, P. "Between God, Ethnicity, and Country: An Approach to the Study of Transnational Religion." In *Paper Presented at Workshop on 'Transnational Migration: Comparative Perspectives', 30 June–01 July, 2001*, 5, 2001.
- Madu, Victor. "RCCG Completes 14-Floor Trinity Towers in Lagos." *Guardian Nigeria*, 2023. <https://guardian.ng/property/rccg-completes-14-floor-trinity-towers-in-lagos/>.
- Martin, D. *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish*. Oxford; Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000.
- Meyer, Birgit. "Christianity in Africa: From African Independent to Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33, no. 1 (October 1, 2004): 447–74. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.33.070203.143835>.
- Mian, Nadia A. "'Prophets-for-Profits': Redevelopment and the Altering Urban Religious Landscape." *Urban Studies* 45, no. 10 (September 1, 2008): 2143–61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098008094877>.
- Monroe Sullivan, Daniel, and Samuel C. Shaw. "Retail Gentrification and Race: The Case of Alberta Street in Portland, Oregon." *Urban Affairs Review* 47, no. 3 (May 9, 2011): 413–32. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1078087410393472>.
- Moulaert, F., F. Martinelli, S. González, and E. Swyngedouw. "Social Innovation and Governance in European Cities." *European Urban & Regional Studies* 14, no. 3 (2007): 40.
- Murray, M., and G. Myers. *Cities in Contemporary Africa*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- Myers, Garth. *African Cities*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350218123>.
- Obadare, Ebenezer. "The Uses of Ridicule: Humour, 'Infrapolitics' and Civil Society in Nigeria." *African Affairs* 108, no. 431 (2009): 241–61.
- Ogunleye, Bamidele M. "The Impact of Religious Camps Development on Residential Property Values: Case Study of Lagos-Ibadan Expressway." *International Journal of Education, Learning and Development* 7, no. 8 (2019): 1–13. <https://www.eajournals.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Impact-of-Religious-Camps-Development-on-Residential-Property-Values.pdf>.
- Öhlmann, Philipp, Wilhelm Gräb, and Marie-Luise Frost. *African Initiated Christianity and the Decolonisation of Development*. New York: Routledge, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367823825>.
- Olubiyi, O. *RCCG: A City on the Hills, Lagos, Redemption Light*. Lagos: Redeemed Christian Church of God, 2015.
- Olukanni, D. O., and M. O. Akinyinka. "Environment, Health and Wealth: Towards an Analysis of Municipal Solid Waste Management in Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria." In *ICCEM*, 138–45. Ota, Ogun State: Covenant University, 2012. <https://repository.covenantuniversity.edu.ng/items/fb594f04-8535-4e2a-b8e3-3e4c149b6973>.
- Omenyo, Cephas N. "African Pentecostalism." In *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*, edited by Jr Robeck Cecil M. and Amos Yong, 132–51. Cambridge Companions to Religion. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. <https://doi.org/DOI:10.1017/CCO9780511910111.011>.
- Paulsen, Krista, Anthony Orum, and Xiangming Chen. *Introduction to Cities: How Place and Space Shape Human Experience*. London: Wiley Blackwell, 2012.
- Robinson, J. "Global and World Cities: A View from off the Map." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Studies* 26, no. 3 (2002): 531–34.
- Simone, AbdouMaliq. *For the City Yet to Come*. Duke University Press, 2004. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1198xq5>.

Swart, Ignatius, and Elsabé Nell. "Religion and Development: The Rise of a Bibliography." *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 72, no. 4 (May 31, 2016).

<https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v72i4.3862>.

Ukah, Asonzeh. "Building God's City: The Political Economy of Prayer Camps in Nigeria." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 40, no. 3 (May 19, 2016): 524–40.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12363>.

Yarima, Umar, Dawa Sidi, and Abdullahi Ismaila. "The Impacts of Poor Maintenance of Drainage System in Damaturu Town, Yobe State Nigeria." *Journal of Environmental Design & Constructions Management* 19, no. 4 (2019): 250–58.

ABOUT AUTHOR

Babatunde Adedibu is a Professor of Church History and Missiology in the Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy at Redeemer's University, Ede, Osun State, Nigeria. He is a Professor Extraordinary with the Department of Religion and Theology at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. Adedibu is co-editor of the book *Megachurches in Africa: Trends, Politics and Pandemic* (2024). Adedibu's research interests include interrogating the new dynamics of spiritual experience(s) and expression(s) in Africa and the African Diaspora, with a particular focus on Pentecostalism, as well as the interconnectedness between theology, religious creativity and innovation, development, mission, migration, globalisation, media, and civil society.