



Research Article

A Comparative Study of to Alfa Kai to Omega in the Greek New Testament (Revelation 1:8) and Asante-Twi Bible

ABSTRACT

Bible Translation has been a means the Church uses to bring the Gospel into the language of the recipients to help improve the quality of life of the indigenes. Nonetheless, it must be noted that all over the world most Bible translation materials have experienced numerous revision exercises. An example of this is the Asante-Twi versions of the Bible which has witnessed two revision works; one on the whole Bible in 2012 since its publication in 1964, and a revised New Testament version published in 2013. Even with the recent revised ones, there still exist translation problems, for some words are strange or foreign to the Asante-Twi speaking people; clear example is Revelation 1:8 which is the focus for this study. Using Mother-tongue Biblical Hermeneutics methodology, this thesis delves into the meaning of the *Alfa ne Omega* no in the Asante-Twi context and its usage in Revelation 1:8; vis-à-vis an exegesis of the Greek word τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ, to find its equivalence in the Asante-Twi. It was found from the study that *Ahyeasee ne Awiee* no is the best rendition of τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ. This work has thus added an Akan translation and interpretation of Revelation 1:8 to the knowledge of the field of mother-tongue hermeneutics; and it is being recommended that in the future revision of the Asante-Twi Bible, the Bible Society of Ghana should consider using *Ahyeasee ne Awiee* to translate τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ (*to alpha kai to omega*) in Revelation 1:8.

EMMANUEL FOSTER ASAMOAH¹

¹*Emmanuel Foster Asamoah, MPhil, Research Associate, Department of Religious Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. District Pastor, The Church of Pentecost, Antoakrom, Kumasi - Ghana.*

Email: hisdivinegrace7@gmail.com

Manuscript

Received 26th April 2020,

Accepted 18th May 2020,

Published online 20th May 2020.

Keywords: The Alpha and Omega, Bible Translation, Mother-tongue, Asante people, Asante-Twi Bible, *to alpha kai to omega*.

INTRODUCTION

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o opines that “If you know all the languages of the world but not your mother tongue, that is enslavement. Knowing your mother tongue and all other languages too is empowerment.”² This statement brings out the necessity to offer the message of the gospel to the African, who is now not under colonial rule, in their mother-tongues, for the Bible was written in the ordinary dialects of the original recipients. Such a statement seeks to decolonise the minds of Africans from setting great store of other languages than that of their mother-tongue. It brings out the need to offer the message of the gospel to the African in African mother-tongues. This has led to the translation of the Bible into different languages which seeks to make scripture applicable in an African culture and worldview for a better understanding to the African Christian.

BIBLE TRANSLATION INTO MOTHER TONGUE

Thomas Atta-Akosah communicates that God’s desire to reaching the whole world to get to His own is through their heart languages.³ This enables Bible translation to be an essential mechanism that cannot be done away with as long as the Gospel is being propagated in Ghana and Africa at large. Translating Scriptures into mother-tongue aids the local

² Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, “Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o in his own words,” Huffpost homepage, March 3, 2017, accessed November 23, 2017, http://www.huffingtonpost.co.za/2017/03/03/9-powerful-things-ngugi-said-at-his-public-lecture_a_21872421/

³ Thomas Atta-Akosah, “The Language factor in African Christian Mission: Bible Translation and Biblical Interpretation in the Church in African Church,” *Journal of African Christian thought*, Vol. 15(2), (2012): 20-22.

indigenes to accept the gospel message and identify themselves with it, for when Scripture is translated into a mother-tongue it become foreign no more to the receptor culture. It becomes part of the culture since it uses categories from that very culture.⁴

David Dewey gives two suggestions for Scriptures to be understood in a different environment other than the original audience of the writer; either one learns the biblical languages or accesses the Word of God in its translated form.⁵ Since people shun away from learning the biblical languages as they see it as a difficult task, Dewey's second choice of accessing God's word in its translated form turns out to be an ideal substitute for Christian worship among Africans. But accessing the Word of God in its translated form is at times problematic and can lead to wrong theologising. In situations where the translated texts were not done properly, Bible users resort to such translations without their knowledge; hence take them to be the appropriate one. Again, where original texts are not translated properly, but borrowed and 'loaned' into a particular language, indigenes take such words as without error or non-foreign, and wholly accept them as such. This article critically examines τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ (to alpha kai to omega) in the Greek New Testament (Revelation 1:8) and Asante-Twi Bible (AsTB).

The Asantes (Ashantis) form part of the Akan ethnic group and are native to the Ashanti Region in Ghana. The Asantes speak the Twi language which is a commonly spoken language in Ghana.⁶

METHODOLOGY

The mother-tongue biblical hermeneutics approach which uses exegesis was used for this study. This approach is an offshoot of African Biblical Studies, and employs several disciplines which includes Biblical studies, Bible translation studies and Biblical language studies along with indigenous African or Ghanaian languages.⁷ As a way of ensuring that translated texts are closely related to the original texts, this method examines the text exegetically, and looks into how the text has been translated accurately into the indigenous language (mother-tongue) for readers to understand in their own language as intended by the author(s) of the biblical text.

A mixed method was engaged in this research to collect data. Primary data were collected from one hundred and five (105) people; one hundred (100) were through questionnaires in Amansie Communities—East, West, Central and South—in Ashanti Region, and five (5) were by interviews. Those interviewed were educationists, scholars and traditional rulers. Secondary data were obtained from lexicons, commentaries, Bible dictionaries, books, journal articles, and any other relevant materials that were useful in the research.

All the hundred respondents do not read Greek so a summary of the text τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ (to alpha kai to omega) was rendered in English to bring out the exact meaning to them to know how they would have translated τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ (to alpha kai to omega) to Asante-Twi considering the context of the text.

Exegesis of the Text

Brief Background to the Book of Revelation

The book of Revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ was received by John at Patmos, a Roman penal colony,⁸ between 92-96 CE⁹. In the Roman law, any religion was illegitimate, illegal or unofficial outside its country of a starting point.¹⁰

⁴ Ibid, 20-22.

⁵ David Dewey, *A User's Guide to Bible-Translations: Making the Most of Different Versions* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 29.

⁶ John D. K. Ekem, *Early Scriptures of the Gold Coast (Ghana): The Historical, Linguistic and Theological Settings of the Ga, Twi, Mfantse and Ewe Bibles* (Manchester: ST. Jerome Publishing, 2011), 50.

⁷ See: Jonathan E. T. Kuwornu-Adjaottor, "Comparative study of the translation of *Pleeroustheen Pnuemati* in some Ghanaian mother tongue translations of Ephesians 5:18", (2014): 87. , "Mother-Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics: A Current Trend in Biblical Studies in Ghana," *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies* 3 (4): 575-579. _____. "Doing Biblical Studies using the Mother-tongue Approach," *Journal of Applied Thought* 1(1):55-80.

⁸ Roland J. Faley, *Apocalypse Then and Now. A Companion to the Book of Revelation* (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), 5; John Hunt, *Concise Church History* (USA: AMG Publishers, 2008), 32; Donald C. Stamps and John Wesley Adams, *Life in the Spirit Study Bible* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2003), 2036. This is however argued by Barker who thinks there is no evidence alluding to the fact that Patmos was used as a penal settlement in the first century AD. See: Margaret Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (London: T & T Clark, 2000), xii.

⁹ The date for writing of the book of Revelation has generated two main schools of thought among scholars; the early-date (pre-70 CE), others hold on to a late-date (92-96 CE). The early-date holds that the book was written in response to Emperor Nero's brutal persecutions in the mid-60s, and towards the destruction of the temple in 70 CE, all in the First Century. See: R. B. Moberly, "When Was Revelation Conceived?," *Bib* 73.3 (1992): 376-393; R. C. Sproul, *The Last Days According to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000). However, this date was not the leading position of the church. See: David E. Aune, *Revelation* 3 vols. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997/1998), 1: Ivii. Proponents to the later-date such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Victorinus of Pettau, and Eusebius, and so for most recent scholars are of the opinion that the book was written in the final years of Domitian's reign, between 92-96 CE. Irenaeus, being the earliest and most important voice in the external witness also affirms the later-date. See: *Irenaeus Against Heresies* 5.30.3 in A. Cleveland Coxe, *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Translation of The Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325, vol. 1 (Buffalo, NY: The Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1885), 1117-8. The Greek is preserved in Eusebius, *Church History*, 3.18, Accessed May 17, 2020 http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0265-0339,_Eusebius_Caesariensis,_Church_History,_EN.pdf

¹⁰ J. P. M. Sweet, *Revelation* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1979), 28.

Adherents of Christianity, which is an offshoot of Judaism, took advantage of this freedom to shelter under the canopy of the Jewish religion as a Jewish sect for their meetings and other activities.¹¹ But this could not continue when two unfortunate incidences happened which severed the relationship between the Jews and Christians: the dreadful inferno that broke out in Rome in May 64 AD, fuming for six days and seven nights of which Christians, under the influence of the Jews, were accused, and the Jewish War that broke out in 66-70 AD, where Christians did not want to associate with the Jews.¹² After the war, Judaism closed its ranks with all Christians, and took a step ladder to eliminate all heretics from the synagogue, especially the Christians.¹³ This brought an enmity between the Christians and Jews leading to a long-standing disengagement.¹⁴

The synagogue outside Palestine had long appealed to Gentile adherents, but then Christianity began to snip them with the proposal of what had seemed to the Jews as cheap salvation, which is receiving salvation without the compulsion to be circumcised and keeping the Law of Moses.¹⁵ The Jews who were peeved from the activities of these Christians became jealous of the way and manner people were trooping for the cheap salvation at the expense of the Jewish religion.¹⁶ This took the practice of legal accusation by informers and theological controversy.¹⁷ Christians who were accused by informers were to be executed if they declined to renounce their faith in Jesus Christ.¹⁸ To escape this excruciating situation and avoid legal harassment, some Christians were tempted to adopt a Jewish lifestyle to reduce their rate of an evangelistic campaign.¹⁹ But this was to have an attack on their theology which would have been abandoned. While some Christians mentioned by informers left without ever confirming their identity, others said they had given up some years.²⁰ Similar pressures were mounted in the province of Asia, where the seven churches were to be situated. Recanted Christians who were apostates were cheered to declaim a prayer to the gods, and to make supplication with incense and wine to the statute of the emperor, and above all to curse Christ.²¹ However, other Christians remained aloof and did not mingle their faith with that of the province which was an atmosphere infused by the symbols of the old fertility cults and of the deified state and emperor.²²

Another problem pertaining to the times was posed by trade guilds, which were many in Thyatira.²³ Wherever guilds were found, idolatry and immorality—the two great enemies of the early church—were virtually always present too. Membership involved religious ceremonies which were no doubt merely conventional to most members, including ‘staunch’ Christians.²⁴ The question as to whether Christians could partake or back out was a debate in the times. Backing out meant resistance to the state.²⁵

It was from this backdrop that the author, who had been exiled by Emperor Domitian for his Christian missionary activities of admonishing fellow Christians to live a godly lifestyle and testifying of Jesus Christ as the saviour of the world, wrote the book of Revelation as an inspiration and encouragement to the churches that were suffering from this increasing hostility and as a caveat to those Christians who careless, and those who felt like leaving the faith for the world. This message was given by God through an angel in symbols.²⁶ Among these symbols was τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ (to alpha kai to omega) which God used to disclose Himself to His own via John to show that He is the One who controls at the start and close of time.²⁷ And is rightly recognised as the Lord of everything that occurs through time.

Revelation 1:8

Greek Rendition

Ἐγὼ εἶμι τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ, λέγει κύριος ὁ θεός, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ παντοκράτωρ.

Transliteration

Egō eimi to alfa kai to ō, legei kurios ho Theos, ho ōn kai ho ēn kai ho erchomenos, ho Pantokratō.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid, 29.

²¹ This is described in the letter of Pliny, governor of Bithynia, to Emperor Trajan, See; T. D. Barnes, “Legislation against the Christians,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 58, 1968, quoted in J. P. M. Sweet, *Revelation* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1979), 29.

²² Sweet, *Revelation*, 31.

²³ Blount, *Revelation: A Commentary*, 9.

²⁴ Ibid, 9.

²⁵ Ibid, 9; J. P. M. Sweet, *Revelation*, 33.

²⁶ Alan Bandy, “The Hermeneutics of Symbolism: How to Interpret the Symbols of John’s Apocalypse,” *SBJT* 14.1 (2010): 46-58.

²⁷ “Omega Symbol/Sign and its Meaning,” Accessed from <https://mythologian.net/omega-symbol-sign-meaning/> on October 23, 2019.

Delimitation of the Text

The text under consideration in the remotest context falls within the first part of the book of Revelation which describes the post-resurrection ministry of the glorified Lord (1:1-20). In the immediate context (1:4-8), the narrations contain John's greetings to the seven churches in the province of Asia from the triune God. This was to remind them that it was the triune God who had saved them, and would keep them as they faced the fiery trials of suffering.²⁸ He afterward gave a description of Jesus Christ as the faithful witness, the first to rise from the dead, and the ruler of all the kings of the world (v. 5). He then touched on Jesus' blood shed for humankind, and gave praise to His name for such a sacrifice, which had translated them to become kingdom of priests for God the Father (v. 6). The author drew the attention of his hearers on the return of Jesus Christ, who is the head and avenger of evil deeds, to defeat all evil and establish His reign (v. 7). The author closes his salutation by redirecting his hearers' attention unto God, who gave Jesus Christ the apocalypse and was given to John by an angel (1:1), for Christians to know who God is (v. 8). He (John) disclosed God as *the Alpha and the Omega* to make it clear that He is certainly able to work out His divine purposes in human history.²⁹

Structure of the Text

The text gives a description of who God is; as the One who overrules all the earth. He does not cease to exist, is unchangeable, and above all has an unlimited power. The whole text under consideration is considered as titles given to God to make it clear that He is certainly able to work out His divine purposes in human history.³⁰ The text could be treated in two main sections—first section [independent clause] and second section [dependent clause]. The independent clause introduces God as saying, *Ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ* (Rev. 1:8a).³¹ The dependent clause gives additional description of God as *ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ παντοκράτωρ* (Rev. 1:8b). The second part derives a complete meaning from the main clause. This article is limited to the first section of the text, for it contains the text under study.

Self-disclosure of God's Lordship – Rev. 1:8

The Greek word *Ego* in its nominative case when joined to a verb, generally have force and emphasis, or indicate antithesis as in Matthew 3:11 and Mark 1:8.³² By parsing, *Ego* is a first person singular personal pronoun in the nominative case. This is very significant, for it identifies the speaker as the subject of the sentence. As a subject, it gives more emphasis of the verb *eimi*, which as a substantive verb has the force of a predicate meaning, “to be,” which is “to exist” as in Hebrews 11:6; “to stay, remain, be in a place” as in Matthew 2:13, 15; “to live” as in Matthew 23:30; and “to be found”.³³ This means that the subject of the text (in this case, God) exists, lives, or remains in the place, and does not cease to exist. As a copula, *eimi* connects the subject with the predicate, to show who or what a person or thing is with respect to their character, nature, disposition, race, power, dignity, greatness, age, etc.³⁴ This means that the subject of the text, which the narrator tells us as God exists as someone with great power. By parsing, *eimi* is a first person present active singular verb that indicates that the speaker is referring to himself to be in existence.³⁵ Thus, the narrator wants us to know that God exists and continues to exist. Giving a force to the subject, *Ego eimi* expresses emphasis, and it is accompanied by a predicate in most cases as in John 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5, 6, 8.

ἄλφα (*alpha*) is a letter that begins the Greek alphabet. According to Thayer, *ἄλφα* (*alpha*) opens the series of the Greek alphabet.³⁶ *ὦ* (*omega*) is the symbol for *omega* and is the last letter of the Greek alphabet. *ὦ* (*omega*) is used for closing the Greek alphabet.³⁷ The narrator used these two Greek letters for God as symbols of the first (or beginning) and the last (or end) meeting in Him. Thus, just as *ἄλφα* (*alpha*) agglomerate on to *ὦ* (*omega*) and *omega* comes back again to *alpha*, so He might show that both the evolution of the beginning and the end is in Him, and again the return of the end to the beginning.³⁸

ἄλφα καὶ ὦ (*alpha kai omega*) are qualified each by the definite article *τὸ* (*to*), translated as “the,” to serve as a determiner. As a determiner, the narrator used *τὸ* (*to*) to introduce or refer to a specific noun, which is *Alpha and Omega*. This is very important in this research, as the narrator's selection of *τὸ* (*to*) was to place much emphasis on the

²⁸ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament* (Colorado Springs: Kingsway Communications, 2007), 1037.

²⁹ Ibid, 34.

³⁰ Ibid, 1038.

³¹ William H. Davis, *Beginner's Grammar of the Greek New Testament: Revised and Expanded Edition* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publication, 2005), xxxiii.

³² Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 167.

³³ Ibid, 175.

³⁴ Ibid, 176.

³⁵ William D. Mounce, *The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993), 407.

³⁶ Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 1.

³⁷ Ibid, 678.

³⁸ J. E. Harry, *Alpha and Omega*, Gen. Ed. (International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, 1915), accessed June 15, 2019 from <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/alpha-and-omega/>. Cited in Cyprian, *Testim* ii.1; vi.22, iii.100, Paulinus of Nola Carm. xix.645; xxx.89; Prudentius, *Cathem.*, ix.10-12.

letters chosen for God. According to Blount, John used *the Alpha and the Omega* to give a political counterpropaganda of the title that were used for celebrating a deity as lord.³⁹ And since God is Lord (Lev. 18:4, 30; Num. 15:41; Ps. 100:3), the narrator coveted the title and placed on it much emphasis to separate it from the other deities that were celebrated; giving Him the name, the Alpha and Omega. Hence, God gives a self-disclosure of Himself as Lord over all lords.

God being *the Alpha and the Omega* also signifies His role as the One who exclusively exists at the beginning and end of all time.⁴⁰ It signifies God as both the Creator and the Redeemer, and the Final Judge of all things.⁴¹ That is to say, God created the world and everything in it, and will bring everything on earth to an end as the final judge of the world. He is the one who controls at the start and close of time, and is rightly recognised as the Lord of everything that occurs through time.⁴² He is the first and the last in terms of history (cf. Isa. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12). It also refers to God’s sovereignty and eternal nature as being the First and Last, and the Beginning and End.

καὶ (kai) was inserted between *ἄλφα* and *ὦ* to connect these single words as in *Pharisaioi kai Saddoukaioi* (Matt. 16:1).⁴³ *kai* could also mean “even,” “also,” “so then too,” “both,” “indeed,” “moreover,” or “therefore.” But in this context, the author brings the connection between the two letters. *legei* comes from the root word *legw* which is “to say or speak”. As a third person present singular verb, *legei* is translated as “he/she/it is saying or speaking”. This brings out clearly that only one person is speaking, and he is God. In context, “he is saying” best fits.

The verb *legei* qualifies the noun nominative masculine singular *kurios ho Theos* translated literally as “the Lord God”; to make it clearer that the Lord God is the one speaking in the text.

Problem with the Asante-Twi Translation of Revelation 1:8

The name or title “*the Alpha and the Omega*” is translated into the Asante language as *Alfa ne Omega no*. Characters in the text were replaced with the nearest equivalent characters of the Asante-Twi language. This brings out the lack of Asante-Twi language portrayal for God’s title or name; generating differing meaning of the text among Asante-Twi Bible users. Struggling for the meaning of the text leads to varied opinions for understanding the text. Again, the current translation of the text makes it difficult for God to have an Asante name, as He is acknowledged in other languages.⁴⁴ This a clear example of not giving God a “home”⁴⁵ in the Asante language, let alone, speak the Asante-Twi.

FINDINGS

A questionnaire on four (4) different translations of Revelation 1:8 of Asante-Twi was retrieved from one-hundred (100) Asante-Twi mother-tongue readers in some of the Amansie Twi speaking communities, to test their understanding of Revelation 1:8 in the Asante-Twi Bible.

A. *Mene A ne Y no...* (*Aa ne Ye no...*) [The first and last of the letters of Asante-Twi alphabet (Asante-Twi atwerεδεε)] [I am the A and the Y...].

B. *Mene Ahyεaseε ne Awieεε no...* [I am the Beginning and the End...].

C. *Mene Deε edi Kan na εtwa toε no...* [I am the First and the Last...].

D. *Mene Odikanfo ne Okyidifo no...* [I am the Leader and the Defender...].

The results are as follows:

Table 1: Understanding and Interpretation of Revelation 1:8

Probable Translations	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative
A	7	7%	7%
B	65	65%	72%
C	8	8%	80%
D	12	12%	92%
E (None of the above)	8	8%	100%
Total	100	100%	

Source: Field data, June 2019

³⁹ Blount, *Revelation: A Commentary*, 34.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 39.

⁴¹ Herbert Lockyer, F. F. Bruce and R. K. Harrison (eds.), *Illustrated Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1986), 36.

⁴² Blount, *Revelation: A Commentary*, 39.

⁴³ Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 315.

⁴⁴ God is acknowledged as “Imi ji kekleele nε kj nyagbe nε” and “Nyee nye Gbātε ganye Mlεεε” in the Dangme and Ewe languages for “the Alpha and the Omega”.

⁴⁵ A place where the gospel message is giving a cultural name, a local language, received cultural education, and conformed to the cultural mores of the indigenes. That is to say, stripping off the heavenly culture of the ‘Word’ and making it to accept the culture of the people.

The responses show the massive endorsement of Option B: ...*Ahyeasee ne Awiee no*... [...the Beginning and the End...], accounting for sixty-five (65) representing 65 percent of the respondents against Option D: ...*Odikanfo ne Okyidifo no*... [...the Leader and the Defender...] which recorded 12 percent. Option C: ...*Dee edi Kan na etwa to no*... [...the First and the Last...] recorded 8 percent. Option A: *A ne Y no (Aa ne Ye no)* (the A and the Y), recorded 7 percent, and makes it the least suitable translation for ‘the Alpha and Omega’ in Revelation 1:8 of the AsTB. From the presentation shown above, 65 percent of the respondents opted for *Ahyeasee ne Awiee no* as the most suitable translation for τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ (to alpha kai to omega) in Revelation 1:8.

DISCUSSION

A Comparative Study of Revelation 1:8 in other Southern Ghana Translations

Asante-Twi (1964)⁴⁶: Awurade se: Mene Alfa ne Omega no, dee ɔwɔ hɔ, na ɔwɔ hɔ dada na ɔreba, adee nyinaa so tumfoɔ no [I am the Alpha and Omega, says the Lord who is and was and is to come, the Almighty].

Asante-Twi (2012)⁴⁷: Awurade se: Mene Alfa ne Omega no, dee ɔwɔ hɔ, na ɔwɔ hɔ dada na ɔreba, adee nyinaa so tumfoɔ no (I am the Alpha and Omega, says the Lord who is and was and is to come, the Almighty).

Asante-Twi (2017)⁴⁸: Awurade se: Mene Alfa ne Omega no, dee ɔwɔ hɔ, na ɔwɔ hɔ dada na ɔreba, adee nyinaa so tumfoɔ no [I am the Alpha and Omega, says the Lord who is and was and is to come, the Almighty].

Asante-Twi (2018)⁴⁹: Awurade se: Mene Alfa ne Omega no, dee ɔwɔ hɔ, na ɔwɔ hɔ dada na ɔreba, adee nyinaa so tumfoɔ no [I am the Alpha and Omega, says the Lord who is and was and is to come, the Almighty].

The Holy Bible New Testament: English – Twi (Ghana), 2013⁵⁰: Mene Alpha ne Omega, Awurade Nyankopɔn na ɔsee, dee ɔwɔ hɔ, na ɔwɔ hɔ dada na ɔreba, ade nyinaa so Tumfoɔ no [‘I am the Alpha and the Omega,’ says the Lord God, who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty].

Akuapem-Twi (1964)⁵¹: Awurade se: Mene Alfa ne Omega no, nea ɔwɔ hɔ, na ɔwɔ hɔ dedaw, na ɔreba, ade nyinaa so tumfoɔ no [The Lord says: I am the Alpha and Omega, the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty].

Akuapem-Twi (2012)⁵²: Awurade se: Mene Alfa ne Omega no, nea ɔwɔ hɔ, na ɔwɔ hɔ dedaw, na ɔreba, ade nyinaa so tumfoɔ no [The Lord says: I am the Alpha and Omega, the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty].

Mfantse (2008)⁵³: Emi nye Alpha nye Omega, Ewuradze Nyankopɔn na ɔse, nyia ɔwɔ hɔ, ɔwɔ hɔ dada, na ɔreba no, adze nyina do Tumfo no [I am the Alpha and Omega, says the Lord God, the one who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty].

Ewe (2010)⁵⁴: Afetɔ Mawu, Dusɛkatɔtɔ, si li fifia, si le anyi tso gbe ade gbe, eye w`ole vava ge la gblɔ be: “Nyee nye Gbɔtɔ ganye Mlɔetɔ.” [The Lord God Almighty, who is, who was and who will come again says “I am the Beginning and the End.”].

Dangme (2013)⁵⁵: Nyɔmtɛ Mawo Ope ɔ, nɔ nɛ nge sa a, nɛ e nge amlɔ nɛ ɔ, nɛ e ma aba a ke, “Imi ji kekleele nɔ ke nyagbe nɔ.” [Our glorious God, who lives forever, who is today, who is to come says, “I am the First and the Last”].

From the exegesis discussed above, Blount posits that John used *the Alpha and the Omega* to give a political counterpropaganda of the title that were used for celebrating a deity as lord.⁵⁶ And since God is Lord (Lev. 18:4, 30; Num. 15:41; Ps. 100:3), the narrator coveted the title and placed on it much emphasis to separate it from the other deities that were celebrated; giving Him the name, *the Alpha and Omega*. Hence, God gives a self-disclosure of Himself as Lord over all lords and as the One who exclusively exists at the beginning and end of all time.⁵⁷ Hence, in the light of the above discussions, τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ (to alpha kai omega) is most suitably translated as *Ahyeasee ne Awiee no*, and not *Alfa ne Omega no* as translated in the AsTB. This is evident by the majority endorsement of *Alfa ne Omega no* (Option B) as the most suitable translation for τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ (to alpha kai omega) by the respondents.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the research show that τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ (to alpha kai omega) is most suitably rendered as *Ahyeasee ne Awiee no* in the Asante-Twi Bible; it is the widely used Twi Bible in Ghana. Bible translation is not without semantic

⁴⁶ Asante-Twi *Twerj Kronkron* (The Asante-Twi Full Bible, BSG/UBS, 1964)

⁴⁷ Asante-Twi *Twerj Kronkron* (The Asante-Twi Holy Bible, BSG/UBS, 2012).

⁴⁸ Asante-Twi *Twerj Kronkron* (The Asante-Twi Holy Bible, BSG/UBS, 2017).

⁴⁹ Asante-Twi *Twerj Kronkron* (The Asante-Twi Holy Bible, BSG/UBS, 2018).

⁵⁰ The Holy Bible New Testament: English – Twi (Ghana) (Ghana: New Word Publishing Ltd., 2013).

⁵¹ Akuapem-Twi *Kyeraw Kronkron* (The Akuapem-Twi Full Bible, BSG/UBS, 1964).

⁵² Akuapem-Twi *Kyeraw Kronkron* (The Akuapem-Twi Full Bible, BSG/UBS, 2012).

⁵³ Mfantse *Nwoma Kronkron* (Mfante Holy Book, BSG/UBS, 2008).

⁵⁴ Ewe *Biblia* (The Ewe Full Bible, BSG/UBS, 2010).

⁵⁵ *Baiblo Aloo Ngmami Klucukluc* (The Dangme Full Bible, BSG/UBS, 2013).

⁵⁶ Blount, *Revelation: A Commentary*, 34.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 39.

problem, for there is no perfect translation. However, translation should be as close as possible to the original text in its thought and should also take into consideration the portrayal of the language of the indigenes. It is recommended that future revisions of the AsTB can consider the rendition of τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ (to alpha kai omega) as Ahyeasee ne Awieeē no to express the thoughts originally intended by the author in Revelation 1:8 which also reveals the language portrayal of the Asante-Twi indigenes. It is being recommended that the BSG should consider adopting the findings of this research in the future revision of the Asante-Twi Bible. This is important because God has given to each tribe in the world a special language [mother-tongue (cf. Gen. 11:7)] and expects everyone to relate to Him. Since God speaks all the languages (cf. Rom. 6:11, MSG), it makes no language superior to others. This makes it important for every people group to have the Bible translated into their mother-tongue to help users hear God speak to them in their own.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Akuapem-Twi *Kyerâw Kronkron*. The Akuapem-Twi Full Bible, BSG/UBS, 1964.
- Akuapem-Twi *Kyerâw Kronkron*. The Akuapem-Twi Full Bible, BSG/UBS, 2012.
- Asante-Twi Twerε Kronkron. The Asante-Twi Holy Bible, BSG/UBS, 2012.
- Asante-Twi Twerε Kronkron. The Asante-Twi Holy Bible, BSG/UBS, 2017.
- Asante-Twi *Twerε Kronkron*. The Asante-Twi Holy Bible, BSG/UBS, 1964.
- Asante-Twi *Twerε Kronkron*. The Asante-Twi Holy Bible, BSG/UBS, 2018.
- Atta-Akosah, Thomas, “The Language factor in African Christian Mission: Bible Translation and Biblical Interpretation in the Church in African Church,” *Journal of African Christian thought*, Vol. 15(2), (2012): 20-25.
- Aune, David E. *Revelation* 3 vols. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997/1998.
- Baiblo Aloo Ngmami Klouklouo*. The Dangme Full Bible, BSG/UBS, 2013.
- Bandy, Alan, “The Hermeneutics of Symbolism: How to Interpret the Symbols of John’s Apocalypse,” *SBJT* 14.1 (2010): 46-58.
- Barker, Margaret, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*. London: T & T Clark, 2000.
- Barnes, T. D. “Legislation against the Christians,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 58, 1968, J. P. M. Sweet, *Revelation*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1979.
- Coxe, A. Cleveland, *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Translation of The Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325, vol. 1. Buffalo, NY: The Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1885.
- Davis, William H. *Beginner’s Grammar of the Greek New Testament: Revised and Expanded Edition*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publication, 2005.
- Dewey, David, *A User’s Guide to Bible-Translations: Making the Most of Different Versions*. Illinois: InterVasity Press, 2004.
- Ekem, John David K. *Early Scriptures of the Gold Coast (Ghana): The Historical, Linguistic and Theological Settings of the Ga, Twi, Mfantse and Ewe Bibles*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 2011.
- Eusebius, *Church History*, 3.18. Accessed from http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0265-0339,_Eusebius_Caesariensis,_Church_History,_EN.pdf on May 17, 2020.
- Ewe Biblia. The Ewe Full Bible, BSG/UBS, 2010.
- Faley, Roland J. *Apocalypse Then and Now. A Companion to the Book of Revelation*. New York: Paulist Press, 1999.
- Harry, J. E. *Alpha and Omega*, Gen. Ed. International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, 1915. Accessed June 15, 2019 <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/alpha-and-omega/>. Cyprian, *Testim* ii.1; vi.22, iii.100, Paulinus of Nola Carm. xix.645; xxx.89; Prudentius, *Cathem.*, ix.10-12.
- Hunt, John, *Concise Church History*. USA: AMG Publishers, 2008.
- Kuwornu-Adjaottor, Jonathan E. T. “Doing African Biblical Studies with the Mother-Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics Approach,” *All Nations University Journal of Applied Thought*, Vol. 1, no.1 (2012): 55-75.
- _____, “Comparative Study of the Translation of *Pleeroustheen Pnuemati* in some Ghanaian Mother Tongue Translations of Ephesians 5:18”, (2014): 86-89.
- _____, “Mother-Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics: A Current Trend in Biblical Studies in Ghana,” *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS)* 2012, 3(4): 575-579.
- Lockyer, Herbert, F. F. Bruce and R. K. Harrison (eds.), *Illustrated Dictionary of the Bible*. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1986.
- Mfantse *Nwoma Kronkron*. Mfante Holy Book, BSG/UBS, 2008.
- Moberly, R. B. “When Was Revelation Conceived?” *Bib* 73.3 (1992): 376-393.
- Mounce, William D. *The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993.

Omega Symbol/Sign and Its Meaning. Accessed October 23, 2019

<https://mythologian.net/omega-symbol-sign-meaning/>

Sproul, R. C. *The Last Days According to Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000.

Stamps, Donald C. and John Wesley Adams, *Life in the Spirit Study Bible*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2003.

The Holy Bible New Testament: English – Twi (Ghana). Ghana: New Word Publishing Ltd., 2013.

Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ wa, "Huffpost" last modified March 3, 2017, Accessed November 23, 2017.

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.za/2017/03/03/9-powerful-things-ngugi-said-at-his-public-lecture_a_21872421/

Wiersbe, Warren W. *The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament*. Colorado Springs: Kingsway Communications, 2007.