



For God and Glory: Perceptions on Indigenization of Clerical Vestments in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)

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ABSTRACT

Religious personnel have always been unique in their costumes that depict ranks, nature of ceremony and roles in a given cultic rite. That the splendid vestments have always been culturally related and significant accounts for debates and modifications. For Africans, when it comes to the fabrication of liturgical attires, the focus is not necessarily on the need for change as much as the nature and extent of the Africanness in Christianity. This paper appraises the perceptions of what the contemporary styles of liturgical vestments like the chasuble, stole and cope in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) should be. The work evaluates calls for contextualization, nature and extent of such changes in the materials, colours, embellishment, symbolism, and implications. The authors adopted the qualitative approach, carried out a bibliographic survey and conducted interviews with a focused group and key informants. Data collected was limited to purposively selected priests, parishioners and vestment makers across Yoruba land, South-Western Nigeria. The findings reveal divergent views on cravings for indigenization of the priestly sartorial spectrum, what constitutes quality, and ingenuity. The authors recommended more appreciation of traditional textiles and elements by the church.

Keywords: Clerical Vestments; Yoruba Textiles; Indigenization; Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion.

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INTRODUCTION

The world over, religious functionaries have always been unique in their costumes which significantly depict the status, role, season and nature of cultic rites. The evolution of each costume is intertwined with the origins and development of the religion in which each personnel operates. This makes priestly clothing culturally symbolic and associated. Also, it accounts for denominational differences, as the case with the various groups within Christianity like Roman Catholicism and Protestants and even the strands within each major category. Common to all denominations is the fact that the religious personnel are the ordained intermediaries between the divine and the earthly. Cultic workers necessarily *share* the attributes of the god or goddesses they serve. Their dress is one particular area where this *sharing* is weighty and symbolic. In the case of Christianity, priestly costumes and their symbolism significantly vary from denomination to denomination. The costumes are far from the

ordinary but stand as the emblem of the holy. The Anglican Church is often referred to as a *Communion* due to the two major *parties* within the Fellowship: Anglo-Catholics (High Church) and the Evangelicals (Low Church). The distinction is determined by the attitude towards Catholicism, particularly in liturgy. Anglicanism started in England during the 16th Century Reformation as an offshoot of the Roman Catholic Church.¹ In response to the requests of ex-slaves who had re-settled in Yoruba land, the Anglican Church spread to Nigeria in the 1840s through the activities of its evangelical arm, the Church Missionary Society (CMS).² The Church proliferated to other parts of modern-day Nigeria and became an autonomous Province in February 1979. Presently, the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) consists of fourteen provinces made up of 161 dioceses; it is regarded as the fastest-growing province within the Communion³ and Nigeria's largest denomination.⁴

This paper critically examines perceptions about the use of local fabrics by the clergy of the Anglican Church in Nigeria. The aims are to appraise the calls for the indigenization of liturgical materials of Anglican priests in Nigeria; identify the local materials useable in the fabrication of clerical vestments; evaluate attitudes to colour symbolism of liturgical costumes, and examine the likely challenges and prospects in the use of local fabrics in making liturgical vestments in Nigeria. The paper is organized into five sections. Section two follows this introduction focusing on literature reviewing the biblical priesthood, local fabrics like *aso oke*, *adire* and *Ankara* and priestly vestments in the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion. The third section discusses the methodology; while the fourth analyses and interprets the data. Finally, section five gives the conclusion and recommendations.

The following questions guided the study.

1. Deliberate on the indigenization of liturgical fabrics of Anglican priests.
2. Identify indigenous textiles to fabricate clerical vestments.
3. Highlight perceived attitudes to colour symbolism and embellishment of liturgical costumes of Anglican priests.
4. Describe challenges and prospects in the use of local fabrics in making liturgical vestments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The term 'Priest' has its roots in the Greek presbyter, an "elder", while the Hebrew *cohen* means priest, prince or minister. The Greek *hiereus* [translated priest] means one who offers sacrifice and is the custodian of the temple or shrine. The Latin *sacerdos* is also rendered as a priest, though it literally means that which is sacred. A priest is the authorized intermediary between men and God. Biblically, the priesthood was first established in the family of Aaron; he and all his sons were ordained as priests. Their beautiful and colourful vestments show that people of the Ancient Near East (ANE) were skilled in spinning, weaving and use of dyes, delicate embroidery and precious stones. According to Exodus 11:2-3, they sourced all the materials used in the dress and the making of the Tabernacle (Tent of Meeting) from Egypt and Sinai. The costume of Aaron and his sons consisted of linen, blue, purple and scarlet colours intermingled with white, precious stones and flowery fashioned (Exod. 28:39,40; 39:2; Ezek. 44:17-19). The curiously and carefully designed garments showed the fineness and kingship of God through their magnificence.

The early church, as an offshoot of Judaism, did not lay a premium on any unique dress until the era of Emperor Constantine the Great who declared Christianity *religio licita* (legal or official

¹ Cf. Nick R. Needham, *2000 Years of Christ's Power: Renaissance and Reformation*. Part Three. (London: Grace Publications Trust. 2nd Imp. 2010), 383-391.

² Ian Fleck, *Bringing Christianity to Nigeria: The Origin and Work of Protestant Missions*. (Bukuru: ACTS, 2013), 43.

³ Francis O. Falako, "HIV/AIDS and Theological Education: Appraisal of the Role of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)." In Ayegboyin, D.; Agbanu, H. and Nihinlola, E. (Eds.). *Globalization, Technology, HIV/AIDS and Theological Education in Africa*. (Ibadan: WAATI, 2010), 166.

⁴ Gary S. Maxey and Peter Ozodo, *The Seduction of the Nigerian Church*. (Lagos: WATS, 2017), 36.

religion) in AD 311. The declaration led to greater use of exclusive materials in public worship. Said to be flamboyant himself, Constantine encouraged the use of costly garments as proof of the imposing dignity of the clergy; public worship became greatly enriched and adorned. Special vestment by the church was first reported about AD 350 when Emperor Constantine gave a splendid garment to Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem.⁵ However, by AD 423 Pope Celestine complained of the use of unique dress by some leaders; he sharply condemned the practice and admonished that the clergy should be distinguished ‘by how we live, not by what we wear; by the purity of thought, not by special clothes.’⁶ The fact remains that vestment as an integral part of clerical habits evolved from the Jewish priesthood and the everyday attire of a Roman citizen of the first or second century. Clerical robes have become a recurrent subject of many synodical enactments, hence the apparent differences in almost every country. For example, the Roman Catholic Church promulgated the Code of Canon Law in 1983 that allows clerics to ‘wear suitable ecclesiastical garb in accord with the norms issued by the conference of bishops and in accord with legitimate customs.’⁷

In the Anglican tradition, vestments (from the Latin *vestire* “to clothe”) are like “church uniforms” with historical and symbolic significance. Much like any other uniform in the larger society, the vestments symbolize beauty, order, office and duty or function in any given service. Vestments are not for any personal expression or casual use because they are specially fabricated with ‘certain sacred design patterns’ and should not have ‘personalized messages, political messages/symbols, sports or patriotic related colours/symbols, or iron-on pictures.’⁸ The 2003 Anglican Bishops’ Conference on Theology and Liturgy resonated that vestment is of significant value to the clergy for three reasons: It is the means of communication, it portrays the personality traits of the individual and symbolizes the religious tradition.⁹

The three vestments that are often amendable to adaptations and have been variously adapted are Cope, Chasuble and Stole. The word cope is from the Latin *cappa*, which means a long outdoor cloak. The cope is made of silk, cloth of gold, velvet, or other precious pieces of stuff. It is magnificently embroidered, jewelled, and enriched with precious metals.¹⁰ The chasuble is an ornamented sleeveless outer garment often used when celebrating Holy Communion. The word chasuble is from the old French term *chesible* and Latin *casubla*, which means a ‘hooded cloak or little cottage’, diminutive of *casa* ‘house’.¹¹ The stole is likewise an embroidered vestment worn over the shoulders and hanging down to the knee or below. The word was baptized into English from Greek *stolē* ‘clothing’, and Latin *stollein* ‘array’.¹² As an external sign of dignity, the stole is the priest’s symbol of authority, duty and care.¹³

⁵ Nick R. Needham, *2000 Years of Christ’s Power: The Age of the Early Church Fathers*. Part One. Newly Revised Edition. (London: Grace Publications Trust, 2011), 182.

⁶ John H. Dobson, *A Guide to Exodus*. 9th Imp. (London: SPCK, 2002), 143.

⁷ Clerical Dress (Canon Law). *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. Accessed 9th May 2022

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/clerical-dress-canon-law>

⁸ Anglican Pastor, What are the Anglican Vestments? Updated August 21, 2018. <https://anglicancompass.com/what-are-the-anglican-vestments/> (accessed May 9, 2022).

⁹ James A. Popoola, *2004 Presidential Address, Diocese of Osun, Church of Nigeria* (Anglican Communion), 52.

¹⁰ Herbert Thurston, "Cope." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 4. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1908. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04351a.htm>. (accessed Nov. 8, 2022).

¹¹ Herbert Thurston, "Chasuble." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 3. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1908. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03639a.htm>. (accessed Nov. 8, 2022).

¹² Joseph Braun. "Stole." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 14. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14301a.htm>. (accessed Nov. 8, 2022).

¹³ Paul Scotf, ‘Vested Struggles: The Social and Ecclesiological Significance of Stoles in Seventeenth-Century France.’ *Church History, The American Society of Church History* 77:1, 54-72, (2008), 58. doi: 10.1017/S000964070800005X (accessed May 7, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

Being qualitative research, the authors carried out a bibliographic survey, conducted interviews with a focused group and key informants. Data were limited to fifteen (15) purposively selected participants made up of four (4) vestment makers, seven (7) priests and four (4) parishioners of the Anglican Church across Yoruba land. Between April and July 2022, the authors collected data through in-depth interviews involving pre-set structured interview guide using a tape recorder. Of the participants in the survey, eleven (11) were male, while the remaining four (4) were female; all were practising Anglicans based in Yoruba land. The interviews were conducted in English and Yoruba languages; most did not go beyond 20 minutes. While the majority of the discussions were face-to-face, telephone conversations were made with a few of the participants. A trained research assistant did the transcription. The names of respondents who granted approvals reflect where necessary.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Many participants were enthusiastic about the development of the indigenization of Christianity in general and liturgical fabrics in the Anglican Church in particular. During visitations to some parishes in Lagos, Abeokuta and Ibadan, the researchers saw pieces of evidence of the use of home-grown materials in which the use of *aso oke* for offering bags and covers was prevalent.¹⁴ A member of the Guild of Stewards (Ushers), an Igbo lady, attested to this novelty with admiration of the beauty and durability of the fabrics.¹⁵ In another parish, a priest was sighted with an *aso oke* fabric-made stole. The priest noted that the material was donated to him at his ordination over a decade ago; buttressing that such fabrication has been on for quite some time.¹⁶ The Conference of Anglican Bishops on Theology and Liturgy pondered extensively at its meetings in June and July 2003. On clerical vestments, the Conference observed that these and other utensils were becoming costly due to high foreign exchange and the global trend that ‘many churches all over the world are making efforts to use local materials to the cut-down cost and to build up the local economy.’¹⁷

Furthermore, the Bishops recognized the availability and usability of indigenous materials ‘which could be used as clerical vestments and Episcopal Habits. Such materials could also be used in the church as lectern and pulpit covers as well as altar frontals.’¹⁸ The Bishops reported the outcome of these meetings widely in the dioceses. The researchers view the outcomes as official approval of the indigenization of vestments in the church, which explains why most respondents subscribed to it. Nevertheless, some participants who frowned at the practice did not strictly negate indigenization *per se* but worried about the ‘indiscriminate employment that doesn’t give room for uniformity.’¹⁹ When probed further, the respondent preferred mass production of a specific fabric for the purpose. Contrariwise, another respondent viewed this as a tall order not only because it disregards individual preferences but also infringes on the artistic and aesthetic composites of worship.²⁰ The worries seem more pronounced among the Anglo-Catholics (High Churchmen) than the Low Churchmen or Evangelicals.

The researchers took up the task of identifying the materials available and utilizable, particularly among Yoruba Anglicans. This task became necessary because the Conference of Bishops did not specifically mention any type of local fabrics. Findings show different traditional and culturally-specific clothing systems in Nigeria whose histories predate contact with Europe. Examples are *akwete* in Igbo land, *ukatt* of the Ibibios, the Fulani’s *khassa*, and the Yoruba’s *adire* and *aso oke*.²¹

¹⁴ See Figure 1 in the Appendix. Pictures taken 7th May 2022 at All Saints’ Anglican Church, Makoko, Lagos.

¹⁵ Mrs Gladys Ogodu. (Interviewed 7th May, 2022 at Makoko, Lagos).

¹⁶ Venerable Kehinde K. Ogundile. (Interviewed 9th May, 2022 at Yaba, Lagos).

¹⁷ Popoola, 2004 *Presidential Address*, 52.

¹⁸ Popoola, 2004 *Presidential Address*, 52.

¹⁹ Damilare Eribake, Cherika Vestment Ventures. (Interviewed 25th May at Yaba, Lagos).

²⁰ Samuel Oniyide Aina, Church Vestment Nigeria Limited, Lagos. (Interviewed 25th May, Yaba, Lagos).

²¹ F.O. Ibeto, and S. R. Ogunduyile. ‘Design and Marketing of Textile and Clothing in Nigeria.’ *Nigerian Journal of Clothing and textile* (NIJOCT), Vol. No.1. (2015). 2. (accessed May 10, 2022).

The term, *aso ilu oke* or *aso oke*, means ‘cloth from the up-country.’ Research shows that the production of *aso oke* started centuries ago predominantly amongst the people of Iseyin in Oyo State. The cloth is made of pure cotton yarn, with additional threads of heavy texture with contrasting colours to achieve a decorative effect.²² Distinctively, ‘*Aso oke* is a warp faced fabric, which means that the face has more ends than picks; the stripes in the fabric are made when setting up the warp yarn with brocading done using supplementary weft.’²³

Respondents identified three different available, relevant and usable colour types of *aso oke*. They are i) *Sanyan*: (greyish/taupe), woven from the beige silk obtained locally from the cocoons of the local silk *anaphe venata* moth, forming a pale brown or creamy-brown beige cloth. *Sanyan* is the most expensive as this saying confirms, *Sanyan baba aso* (*sanyan* is the king of textiles). ii) *Etu*: is a deep blue, and almost black, indigo dyed fabric often with thin light blue stripes. iii) *Alaari*: usually, crimson and white is woven from magenta waste silk or dyed in red cam-wood dye. In Yoruba land, *aso oke* is the most esteemed traditional dress for important occasions like marriage, burials, birthdays, and chieftaincies. The *aso oke* that is weaved by women is believed to possess spiritual and medicinal powers. Such *aso oke* is used as a symbol of religious activities and to cover shrines and effigies.²⁴

Also, Yoruba masquerades like *Gelede* and *Egungun* use this fabric in their attires because of its purity, aesthetics and superiority. A laity corroborated the perceived *sacredness* of *aso oke* fabric underscoring its choice by the divinities and masquerades.

Yusuf’s submission that *aso oke* is not everyday wear because the heavyweight and coarse texture make it hard to launder has been countered by Fadipe and Obiana that the industrial revolution has made the production of lightweight fabric possible. They argued further that,

*Aso Oke has continued to gain acceptance in casual wear clothes for both adults and children. Peoples now wear it to churches, markets, offices and other places of interests as fashion is moving towards that trend. In some cases the fabric is combined with other clothes either as Gele (headgear) and Iborun (a type of shawl). It can be joined and sewn together with other fabrics. Through creativity and innovation, different types of products such as fancy bags, shoes, slippers, and sneakers are produced from the Aso Oke.*²⁵

During interrogation with people, the authors took some pictures of samples of a stole made of *aso oke* materials confirming its relevance, acceptance and adaptation in the church.²⁶

Ankara is another popular fabric useable in priestly garments in Yoruba land, as attested by our respondents. The *ankara* textile started as a mass-produced imitation of the Indonesian batik and is today the favourite of many Africans.²⁷ People embrace *Ankara* due to its affordability, adaptability and climate-friendly texture. Furthermore, the preference for colour designs allows the production of vibrant images. A respondent showed the pictures of the Bishop of his Diocese on a stole and chasuble of *Ankara* material. The customized *Ankara* was used as *Aso Ebi* to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Diocese.²⁸

Lastly, *adire* is another ranked, available and usable fabric. *Adire* is a product of the indigo dyed cloth and is essentially a feature of the cultural heritage of the Egba-Yoruba of Ogun. The word

²² Afusatu O. Yusuf. ‘Acceptability of Adapted Traditional ‘Aso-Oke’ in Constructing Garments for Contemporary Youths in Oyo State, Nigeria’. (A Dissertation Submitted to the School of Postgraduate Studies Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State, 2017), 1.

²³ E. O. Fadipe, and U. V. Obiana, ‘Promoting the Beauty of Yoruba Traditional Fabric of Aso- Oke for International Consumption and Sustainable Development.’ *International Journal of African Society, Cultures and Traditions*. 9(1). (2021), 41. (accessed May 9, 2022).

²⁴ Aretha O. Asakitikpi, ‘Functions of Hand Woven Textiles among Yoruba Women in Southwestern Nigeria.’ *Nordic Journal of African Studies*. 16(1): (2007), 101–115. (accessed May 13, 2022).

²⁵ Fadipe and Obiana, ‘Promoting the Beauty of Yoruba Traditional Fabric...’ 43.

²⁶ See figure 2 in the Appendix

²⁷ Ayokanmi M. T. Oyedele, and Babatunde Obisesan, ‘The Resurgence of Ankara Materials in Nigeria.’ *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(17). (2013), 166-170. www.iiste.org (accessed May 9, 2022).

²⁸ See Figure 3 in the Appendix.

Adire means ‘tie and dye’. *Adire* was first produced by Chief Mrs. Miniya Jojolola Soetan, the second *Iyalode* of Egba land. Also known as African indigo resist, *Adire* has many techniques grouped into three types: *Oniko* or tied, *Alabere* (stitch with raffia), and *Eleko* or painted. Nowadays, what started as a family heritage is the trademark of the Egba who in their entrepreneurial and artistic powers, manufacture various designs for both the local and national markets.²⁹

On the attitude to local fabrics and colour symbolism, all participants in the focused group discussion agreed that *aso oke*, *adire* and *ankara* materials are customizable in these four liturgical colours: Red, Green, White and Purple. They observed that black is not always used for Holy Communion though it could also be designed. A vestment maker corroborated that local textiles could be specifically designed/patterned in the preferred liturgical colour.³⁰ Participants showed no negative feelings against the shades, embroidery and their symbolic significance. Yoruba worldview is not antagonistic to the liturgical colours because of the apparent emblematic similarities. In their milieu, white which stands for purity is the preferred colour of *Orisa Nla* (that is, *Obatala*); red stands for fire, the representation of *Sango*, the god of Thunder; and black depicts mourning and, or death. The use of seasonal colours in the Anglican Church does not entirely correspond with the Yoruba milieu, though each *Orisa* has its day (weekly) or season (yearly) for commemorations.³¹

Lastly, the participants were quite aware of the challenges and prospects in the efforts toward the indigenization of liturgical vestments. On the challenges, a lay member called attention to the fact that non-Yoruba priests may prefer *ankara* stuff to *aso oke* or *adire* because of ‘ethnic considerations’. Akinmoye, Ojo and Ogunduyile confirmed this challenge that non-Yorubas formed a ‘clog in the wheel of utilization of the handcrafted textile products as group attires for ceremonies.’³² This stand may shift if a particular fabric is chosen in the parish or Diocese. What happened in the Diocese of Egba (Anglican Communion) as reported above shows that ‘ethnic considerations’ may give way to solidarity on such occasions.³³ Also, findings show that the quality (durability), beauty and affordability of the material may significantly and positively influence ethnic stands.

On their part, the clergy identified uniformity, quality, the weight of *aso oke* in particular, and durability as challenges. On uniformity, a priest observed that this should not be a severe challenge since the emphasis is on colour and symbolic appropriateness of embellishments and not on any particular fabric. The fear of too much load of clothes in the tropical is making some priests sue for lighter materials made of fewer yarns. The idea of a ‘Church minister in a tropical climate like ours ‘at 4 p.m.’ in the month of February, dressed in a heavy black woollen blazer jacket, with his dog collar on, perspiring profusely as he walks along the street’ has been vigorously condemned by Omoyajowo.³⁴ The notion that the *ideal priest* is one who dresses in the Western version is a misconception because the *hood does not make the monk* as the saying goes.

The garment makers presented well-articulated encounters in the employment of local fabrics. Their views centred on poor packaging; inability to embellish *Ankara* fabrics in particular because it usually comes with its concepts except it is customized; difficulties in ornamenting local textiles on the available machines; inordinate cravings for imported materials; non-availability of the materials that necessitate bookings; lack of investors; and the perception that local fabrics are inferior and that whoever adorns them is poor. Not a few studies have confirmed the unfavourable attitude of Nigerians

²⁹ Zakaree S. Saheed, ‘Adire Textile: A Cultural Heritage and Entrepreneurial Craft in Egbaland, Nigeria.’ *International Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Research* Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development (www.ea-journals.org). Vol. 1, No. 1, March (2013):11-18. (accessed May 9, 2022).

³⁰ Interview with Samuel Oniyide Aina, Church Vestment Nigeria Limited.

³¹ The principal seasons and relevant liturgical colours in the Anglican Church are: Advent and Lent (Violet/Purple), Christmas and Easter (White), Epiphany and Trinity (Green), and Pentecost (Red). Colours for occasional services are: White (Marriage, Birthday, Baptism), and Black or Purple (Burial).

³² O. Akinmoye, E. B. Ojo, and S. R. Ogunduyile, “Consumers’ Preferences for Contemporary Textile to Handcrafted Textile Products in Abeokuta South Western Nigeria: A Case Study of Group Outfit (Aso-Ebi).” *Online Journal of Art and Design*. Vol. 4, Issue 4. (2016):15-26. (accessed May 9, 2022).

³³ See Figure 3 in the Appendix.

³⁴ Joseph A. Omoyajowo, *Religion, Society and the Home*. (Ijebu-Ode: Vicoo Int. Press. 2001), 65.

to local products and the unbridled penchants for imported substitutes. This posture has been blamed partly on insufficient product packaging and inferior quality. In the case of local fabrics, it was observed that manually done “fabrics do not guarantee uniform standard in terms of colour fastness, durability, innovation and creativity ... Even the contemporary textiles that are produced with machines still have to contend the usage of appropriate chemicals...the truth is that the absence of some chemicals in fabrics can make them diminish in quality.”³⁵ In an assessment of the acceptability of made in Nigeria textile fabrics, Yusuf found out that local materials “are only of moderate quality as against the expected high quality (a measure of the international quality assurance) which is what makes textile acceptable all over the world.”³⁶ Nonetheless, garment makers are optimistic that the challenges will be over with more investment, innovation and creativity.

All participants addressed the advantages of local textiles, like the prospect of cultural identity or *Africanness*, affordability, durability, appropriateness to the tropical climate, employment generation, and saving the country from capital flights. A participant noted that using local fabrics would make people “value African products more than foreign products, which will, in turn, boost the economy and reduce borrowings (that is, foreign debts). Also, Christianity will not be seen as a foreign religion as such usages mean we are contextualising the faith.”³⁷ In addition to the use of African languages, songs and drums in worship, many now clamour further for the use of local fabrics instead of foreign materials. In addition, the application of local fabrics will enhance cross-cultural enrichment and portray African fabrics in good light. African theologians like Idowu have taken up the need for contextualization though they have not agreed on the term itself and the range of contextualization.³⁸

However, they appeal for liturgical revolution as a form of contextualization that supports the employment of traditional elements in worship. For instance, the acceptance and speedy growth of the African Independent Churches (AICs) among the Yoruba are credited to their intentional use of Yoruba elements in worship.³⁹ The Independent Churches employ drums, native songs, profuse clapping, and ecstatic dancing; their dressing styles are modest, beautiful, symbolic and attuned to the climate.

Employment generation is one uncontroversial prospect in the use of local resources. One participant observed that the production and use of local fabrics would develop the economy by creating jobs. When asked to mention those who gain, directly and indirectly, the participant specifically said farmers who grow cotton, wood and loom makers, fabric makers, retailers/marketers, advertisers, tailors, etc. To Olutayo, Akanle and Fasina, the production and use of *adire* and *aso oke* as indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) are alternative approaches to development. They argued further that traditional industries and artefacts are essential for sustainable development or *development from below*.⁴⁰

CONCLUSION

This paper has assessed the views of what the contemporary styles of liturgical vestments like the chasuble, stole and cope in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) should be. The findings of the study have revealed the varying opinions on the desire for the indigenization of the priestly sartorial spectrum, as well as what constitutes quality, and ingenuity. From the Bible days, priestly garments were designed for glory and beauty, symbolizing the transcendence and immanence of God. Liturgical theology, under which this study falls, is essentially about indigenization with ripple influences on the artistic and aesthetic quality of worship on one hand and the creation of jobs, creativity and the nation’s economy on the other. The liturgical revolution of this brand would add aesthetic value reminiscent of the traditional African mode of worship to the Anglican Church. One major task before the Church in

³⁵ Ibeto and Ogunduyile, “Design and Marketing of Textile and Clothing in Nigeria.” 9.

³⁶ Yusuf. ‘Acceptability of Adapted Traditional ‘Aso-Oke’, 34

³⁷ Richard Ogunfeyimi (Interviewed via phone on 16th June, 2022).

³⁸ Emmanuel B. Idowu, *Towards an Indigenous Church* (Ibadan: OUP, 1965).

³⁹ Omoyajowo, *Religion, Society and the Home*. 13.

⁴⁰ A. O. Olutayo, O. Akanle, and O. A. Fadina, ‘The Socio-Economic Developments of Aso-Oke of South-Western Nigeria.’ *Asian and African Studies*. Vol. 26, No 1, (2017), 41-68. (accessed May 2, 2022).

Africa in general and Nigeria, in particular, is to advance cultural appreciation towards the indigenization of the Gospel.

APPENDIX



Figure 1: Colourful offering bags made of aso oke



Figure 2: Embroidered stoles (purple and white colours) made of aso oke



Figure 3: A cope and a chasuble made of customized Ankara

Left is the Rt. Rev. Dr. Daisi Adekunle, Bishop of Egba Diocese (Anglican Communion) and a priest of the Diocese on chasuble of Ankara material. Note that the stole, cope, mitre, and chasuble are made of the Ankara designed and used to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Diocese in 2016.

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