

# The Impact of Migration on African Traditional Religion

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## Abstract

*Migration almost always affects religion. This is so because when people migrate to a new place, they alter routines of daily life, and new experience inevitably acts upon even the most tenaciously held religious traditions. Religion often inspires migration too. The paper looks at the impact of migration on African religion. The main aim of the paper is to examine the positive and negative impacts of migration on African religion. The paper adopts the descriptive and phenomenological methods of analysis drawing information from secondary sources. In the course of the research, it was discovered that there is intersection of African religion and migration especially as it affects migration. That, African traditional religious practices are moved to the cities during migration through a familial linkage of home and city with tremendous consequences. That, migration has a lot of impact on the cultures of different people. Migration has caused the distortion of the cultural fabrics of Africans by the cosmopolitan nature of the urban centres. This is because many migrants abandon their cherished African lives and indulge in foreign cultural lifestyles that are not African but found abroad. The paper concludes that migration has both positive and negative impact on African traditional religion. Migration has impacted African traditional religion in many areas. The African-ness in the lives of migrants of African origin and those who have been submerged by the expansion of cities always makes it difficult for them to discard their culture even if it means secret indulgences. This has brought about religious syncretism. The paper recommends that Africans need to be educated and given orientation to always return or remember their roots even in a foreign land. That, documentation of research on African religion and migration is key in understanding not just migration issues but African religion in particular. Therefore, more research on issues of migration and African religion should be carried out.*

**Keywords:** *Impact, Migration, Religion, African Traditional Religion*

## Introduction

Migration is a world-wide phenomenon. It is a phenomenon because, all people and races migrate from one place to another based on the prevailing situations around them. On the other hand, migration itself as a human way of life is not a one directional life situation. It could be urban-rural and urban-urban as well depending on how the immigrants and emigrants view it. Since human beings are dynamic and life situations also keep changing, migration has become part of human existence. This is because people keep changing their places of abode for various reasons which are social, political, psychological, religious, economic, and environmental. All these can lead to migration.

Another area of interest under this study is the involvement of African religion in migration with its attendant effects. This can lead to debate because most scholars have only concentrated their works on those factors that are considered as the push and pull factors of migration without considering how these have impacted on African religion and vice versa.

## Conceptual Clarity

The main terms which need clarification in this paper are: migration and African religion.

## What then is Migration?

According to Iwena<sup>1</sup>, “Migration is the movement of people from one geographic area to another, involving permanent or temporary residence or settlement”.<sup>1</sup> Also baring his mind on what migration is, Udo avers that, “migration is the permanent or semi- permanent change of residence from one administrative unit (district, country, province, state or country) to another”.<sup>2</sup> The Central Statistical Office (CSO) classifies migration as internal and international characterised by change of residence within a nation and across national borders respectively.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Iwena OA, *Essential Geography for Senior Secondary Schools, 8<sup>th</sup> edition*, (Ibafo: Tonad Publishers, 2018):169.

<sup>2</sup>Udo RK, *The Human Geography of Tropical African*, (Ibadan: Heinemann, 1982):206.

<sup>3</sup>Central Statistics Office (CSO). “World Migration Statistics”. Last updated 19.10.2021,

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The main thing here in the definition of migration is that the region where people are leaving is called the origin or source region while the region where people are entering is called the receiving region or the destination region. The movement in migration may involve short distance of less than 10 kilometers to 100 kilometers. Scholars of population like Onokerhoraye<sup>4</sup> and Olomo and Kadiri<sup>5</sup> have agreed that migration is an important component of population. It is also a major determinant of population profile, especially the age and sex composition of the population of those areas which receive large numbers of migrants. As with Iwena above, Olomo and Kadiri opine that migration which may be permanent or irregular, require lengthy change of residence, usually more than one year; and temporary when it is for less.<sup>6</sup> Distance bias is key in migration as shorter distance enhances more people migrating to such areas and longer distance inhibits larger population moving to the area. Therefore, migration is the movement of people from one place (country or city) to another permanently or temporarily.

### **African Religion**

African religion according to Ekwunife<sup>7</sup>:

Is institutionalised religious beliefs and practices which are rooted in the past... religious culture, a religion that was transmitted to the present overt and covert votaries by successive...forebearers mainly through oral traditions (myths and folklores, songs and dances, liturgies, rituals, proverbs, dances, pity sayings and names, sacred spiritualists and persons, initiation rites, festivals, sacred places and objects and religious works of art; a

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<sup>4</sup>Onokerhoraye AG, *An Outline of Human Geography: The Geography and Planning History of Study Notes*, (N.P. 1985):55.

<sup>5</sup>Olomo RO and MA Kadiri, *Population Geography: A Basic Textbook*, (Ibadan: Daystar Publishers, 2000):55.

<sup>6</sup>Olomo RO and MA Kadiri, *Population Geography*, 60.

<sup>7</sup> Ekwunife ANO, *Consecrism in Igbo Traditional Religion*, (Enugu: Snaap Press, 1990):1.

religion which is slowly but constantly updated by each generation in the light of new religious experiences through the dialectical process of continuities and discontinuities.

According to Awolalu<sup>8</sup>: African Traditional Religion is the religious beliefs and practices of the Africans. It is the religion which resulted from the sustaining faith held by the forebears of the present Africans, and which is being practiced today in various forms and various shades and intensities, by a large number of Africans; including individuals who claim to be Muslims or Christians.

African religion also called African Traditional Religion, is the indigenous religion and original religion of the African people. It was founded by Africans for Africans, and it is practiced by Africans. The religion is handed on by word of mouth from one generation to the other due to the absence of sacred texts. While African religion is not a religion of the books like the Koran and the Holy Bible, it is nevertheless, written on the hearts of Africans and can be seen in other sources which include: songs, myths/legends, idioms, wise sayings, and arts/symbols. Various aspects of African religion include beliefs in God who is called by different names across Africa, beliefs in spirits, deities, ancestors, magic and witchcraft and traditional African medicine.<sup>9</sup>

### **Global Migration**

An overwhelming majority of people migrate internationally for reasons related to work, family and study. These migration processes largely occur without fundamentally challenging either the migrants or the countries they enter. In contrast, other people leave their homes and

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<sup>8</sup>Awolalu JO, *West African Traditional Religion*, (Ibadan: Onibonoje Press, 1979):1.

<sup>9</sup>Shishima SD, Dzugba A and Akper, GI, *CTH 491: African Traditional Religion and Culture*, (Abuja: National Open University of Nigeria, 2012): 4-5.

countries for a range of compelling and sometimes tragic reasons, such as conflict, persecution and disaster. While those who have been displaced, such as refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), comprise a relatively small percentage of all migrants, they are often the most in need of assistance and support.

### **Factors for Migration**

There are many causes of migration and they are complementary. These involve both “push” and “pull” factors both at the origin and destination of the migration which may defy simple distinction. Waugh and Bushell have identified seven push factors and seven pull factors. The push factors are political fears, not enough jobs, few opportunities, natural disasters, wars, unhappy life and shortage of food (99).<sup>10</sup> These are the factors that push people out of their rural settlements to urban centres. The pull factors are hope for a better way of life, chances of getting good jobs, improved living conditions, education, better housing, medical care and family links. Revenstein adds that bad and oppressive laws, heavy taxation and unattractive climate, uncongenial social surrounding and even compulsion (slave trade, deportation), all have produced and are still producing currents of migration; but none of these currents can compare in volume with that which arises from the desire inherent in most men to better themselves in material respects. Wegh<sup>11</sup> is also of the agreement that there is family link in the cities as members who move to cities first know where they can find accommodation and these continue to identify with their familial links as long as they live abroad.

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<sup>10</sup> Waugh D and T Bushell, *Key Geography Connections*, (England: Stanley Thornes Publishers, 1992):99.

<sup>11</sup> Wegh SF, *Between Continuity and Change: Tiv Concept of Tradition and Modernity*, (Enugu: Snaap Press, 2003):199-200.

## **The Impact of Migration on African Religion**

Migration affects African religion either positively or negatively. This is because when people migrate to new places, they change routines of daily life and either take on new life experiences or combine both the old lifestyle and the new one in the new place including religion. For the African, he/she takes his/her religion/culture along anywhere he/she is going to. Even if the African has found a new faith, he/she may still combine with his/her own religion – the African religion and practice the two together. Migration has a lot of impact on African religion, especially in the following areas:

**Religious impact:** Africans are notoriously religious and they carry their religion anywhere they go.<sup>12</sup> Thus, Africans arriving a new land may accept the established religion of the land but at the same time may retain a few elements of their religion. This is what the African slaves imported into North America to work on plantations did. This could be called “religious syncretism”.

### **Religious Syncretism**

Constituting the basic ingredients within the varieties of religious syncretism known as Afro-Brazilian cults, Yoruba beliefs and practices have experienced a widespread acceptance on the part of a broad spectrum of Brazilian society which cuts sharply across racial and socio-economic class lines.<sup>13</sup> African influence has played its profoundest role in the formation of modern culture more in Brazil than any other part of America. African religion is evident throughout the fabric of Brazilian society due to the high percentage of African descendants in the population.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Mbiti, JS, *African Religions and Philosophy*, (London: Heinemann, 1969):2

<sup>13</sup> Sturm, Fred Gillette, “Afro-Brazilian Cults” in Booth Newell S (ed). *African Religions: A Symposium*, (New York: Nok Publishers, 1977):217.

<sup>14</sup> Sturm, Fred Gillette, “Afro-Brazilian Cults”, 217.

Another form of religious syncretism involved Amerindian societies and Afro-Brazilian communities. The Tupi-Guarani peoples of Southern Brazil practiced a form of ancestral spirit possession in which the heroic chiefs and warriors of the past returned to provide guidance and assistance for the living. This resembles the ancestral spirit possession practiced by the Bantu.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the Yoruba concept of the high god *olorun* who works through the intermediaries (*orisas*) was identified with the idea of the Christian creator (God) who works with his son Jesus Christ. Hence, Jesus is seen as the Christian equivalent of *orisa*. This gave birth to many Afro-Brazilian cults. These cults have different ways of worship.

They however, follow these general steps according to Sturm:

1. An offering is made to *Esu* to guarantee the opening of the avenue of communication and block any interference
2. Purification of the altar, the mediums and persons who are present to attend service with incense. This is known as the act of *defumacão*.
3. A chant (*pontocantade*) to *Ogun* follows to insure the strength and safety of the circle. Sons of the Saint are lined on one side, daughters on the other, both lines facing the altar.
4. The opening prayer (*prece de abertura dos trabalhos*) is intoned consisting of a general invocation of all spirits of light.
5. Greetings (*saudacoes*) follow to the protector spirit of the *terreiro* to the leaders of the community, to the drums, to the altar in form of chant and song.
6. The “work” itself then begins. This involves the invocation of a particular line of spirits, proper drum beat sounding, sons and daughters dancing and singing until one or

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<sup>15</sup> Sturm, Fred Gillette, “Afro-Brazilian Cults”, 219

more experiences the descent (baixar) of the spirit. This is the time that the spirit performs the work of healing and other demands are met.

7. The sons and daughters are purified at the conclusion of the “works”.
8. A closing prayer (prece de encarramento) expresses appreciation to the spirits which had descended and graciously offered assistance in the service.<sup>16</sup>

Public services of this nature are liturgical acts through which the spiritual forces of nature meet with the living and interact for the benefit of the living. Infact, the Afro-Brazilian cults have entered into programmes of social outreach. For instance, they provide medical assistance to people freely, assist the orphans and elderly, publish newspapers daily/weekly, etc. Due to these humanitarian services, the membership of the Afro-Brazilian cults keeps increasing on a daily basis in Brazil.

### **Voodooism (Voodoo)**

Again, some Africans take on a different strand of African religion in a new land or a different form of African religion. This is what the Africans who entered the Caribbean Island and Haiti did. They started practicing voodoo (Vodun) and this religion has impacted the world over. Voodoo has a lot of impact on Haitian people. The word voodoo is from ewe and refers to the lesser deities of the “Dahomean pantheon”. For Haitian people, vodun stands for the gods and spirits of all the major peoples of Africa who make up the Haitian nation. At vodun service, the priest calls the gods of Dahomey and gods of Nigeria like Shango or Ogun as well as gods of the Congo.<sup>17</sup> At the centre of voodoo is a priest called Houngan who is both feared and respected. His female counterpart is called Mambo and has the same authority as Houngan. Voodooism has become a major religion in the Caribbean Island, Haiti

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<sup>16</sup> Sturm, Fred Gillette, “Afro-Brazilian Cults”, 230-231.

<sup>17</sup> Barrett, Leonard, “African Religion in the Americas: The “Islands in Between”. Newell S. Booth (ed). *African Religions: A Symposium*, (New York: NOK Publishers, 1977):199-211.



and Jamaica. It has impacted African religion and the world over either positively or negatively.

**Cultural Impact:** Migration has a lot of impact on the cultures of different people. For the Africans, since they cannot separate their religion from culture, the African religion and culture thus, has impacted the world over in areas like African language, folklore, music, songs and dances. Other areas are traditional African medicine, witchcraft, charms and magic.

**Language:** Throughout the Caribbean, languages spoken today contain thousands of African words that have been retained. The unofficial language of the Caribbean is Creole, a product of the meeting of Europe and Africa. Many of the names of the African gods were transported to the Caribbean in their original form. In Jamaica Island, you hear names like Cudjoe, Kwaku, Cuffie or Quasia, Kamie – names of Akan people of Ghana.<sup>18</sup>

**Folklore:** African folklore as well as proverbs have impacted the world positively especially from the North to South America. Examples can be given from Jamaica of the Ashanti proverbs:

- i. “It is the Supreme Being who pounds fufu (mush) for the one without arms” appeared in Jamaica as: “when cow lose him tail, God Almighty brush fly”.
- ii. “When a fowl drinks water, it first shows it to the Supreme Being” appears in Jamaica as: “when fowl drinks water, him say thank God. When man drinks water, him say nutten or chicken member God when him drink water”.
- iii. “Wood already touched with fire is not hard to set alight” appears in Jamaica as: “Ole fire stick no hard fe light”.

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<sup>18</sup> Barrett, Leonard, “African Religion in the Americas...”, 209.

- iv. “The hen’s foot does not kill her chicken”, appears in Jamaica as “foul tread upon him chicken, but him no tread too hard” or “hen neber mash him chicken too hot”.
- v. “When a great number of mice dig a hole, it does not become deep”, appears in Jamaica as: “too much rat nebber dig good hole”.
- vi. “All animals sweet, but the hair on them causes us not to notice it”, appears in Jamaica as: “darg sweet, but long hair cober it”.
- vii. “When too many people look after a cow, hunger kills it” appears in Jamaica as: “too much busha, darg crawney”.<sup>19</sup>

**Marketing:** This has also impacted migration positively. Africans meet in market places for religious festivals, prayers, and perform religious rituals which also affect people globally.

**Traditional African Medicine:** Traditional African Medicine has global impact on many people and not just Africans alone. African herbal medicine has been improved upon and now it is processed and packaged in form of drugs and syrups. African traditional medicine is easily accessible and cheap. People have faith in Afro-Caribbean medicine.<sup>20</sup> This is a combination of African Traditional Medicine and Brazilian medicine. One must remember that many of the drugs now manufactured by the Orthodox medicine/doctors have their origin from traditional African medicine. On a similar note, traditional divination has a lot of impact on the people globally. Since there is no laboratory in African healing, the diviners are the laboratories and they are doing the work of diagnosing ailments very well. The diviners called *Babalawo* in Yoruba and *Orshor* in Tiv are well recognised globally and respected.

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<sup>19</sup> Barrett, Leonard, “African Religion in the Americas...”, 209-210.

<sup>20</sup> Barrett, Leonard, “African Religion in the Americas...”,211

**Music and Dancing:** According to Barret, the music of Africa was probably the major source by which the Africanisation of the Caribbean was accomplished.<sup>21</sup> Africans love music and dance. They sing and dance at all times, in times of joy and sorrow. During religious festivals, the drums, bells, horns and other musical instruments call on the gods to come to the aid of the Africans. In the Caribbean and Haiti Islands, they sing and dance as the drums begin to sound. It is said that music began in Africa. Africa is the foundation of music like the shuffle, foxtrot, jazz, mento, calypso, rock and roll and present day “soul”.<sup>22</sup>

Other areas that migration has impacted African religion and culture include, charms, magic and witchcraft. Infact, the belief in and use of charms has earned African religion the name fetishism. Witchcraft is African wisdom which has also impacted people both positively and negatively. Magic is the ability to control nature for good or bad. This has also impacted the world as some Europeans refer to African magic as black magic. The migration figures below show how migration has impacted Africa and African religion globally.

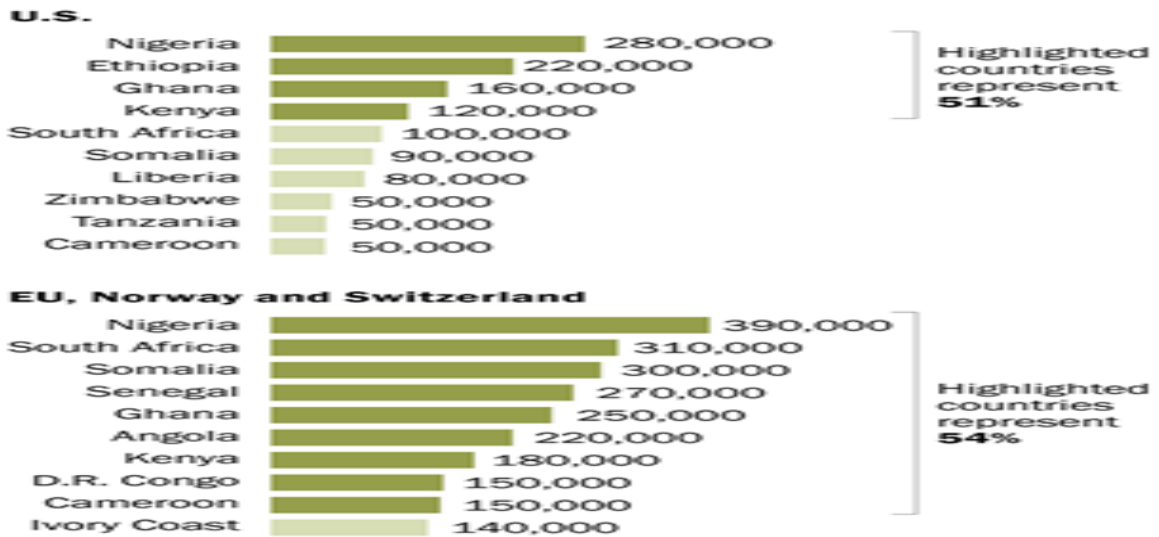
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<sup>21</sup> Barrett, Leonard, “African Religion in the Americas...”,211

<sup>22</sup> Barrett, Leonard, “African Religion in the Americas...”,213

**Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa and Kenya stand out as origin countries for sub-Saharan migrants living in both the U.S. and Europe**

*Top countries of birth of sub-Saharan migrants living in the U.S. and the European Union, Norway and Switzerland in 2017, in thousands*



Notes: See Appendix B for list of countries in sub-Saharan Africa included in this analysis. Estimates rounded to the nearest 10,000. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of United Nations data accessed on Dec. 23, 2017. "At Least a Million Sub-Saharan Africans Moved to Europe Since 2010."

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: Pew Research Center March 21, 2018; [https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2018/03/22/at-least-a-million-sub-saharan-africans-moved-to-europe-since-2010/ph-03-22-18\\_africa-final-02/](https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2018/03/22/at-least-a-million-sub-saharan-africans-moved-to-europe-since-2010/ph-03-22-18_africa-final-02/)

Other areas which migration has impacted African religion include the following:

**Use of body Protectors in War**

Body protectors are forms or magical arts which are used for personal ends. They are believed to bring good luck and give protection to their owners. There are different types of body protectors. Some enable one to escape from instant harm in a motor vehicle accident. A person in possession of this type of body protector can turn into a bird or any animal and escape from accidents. Some of these charms can be for success in trade, examinations, love, marriage, or simply for physical strength.

There are thus war charms which are believed to give protection against gun shots, metal and iron attacks. With such charms or body protectors, the effects of bullet, knives, spears, arrows and machet are neutralised. These charms are mostly used during war as they are believed to keep the enemy at bay. In this time of heightened insecurity globally, the body protectors are very useful. As a result, the use of magic and other superstitious instruments has increased worldwide. Migrants from Africa have brought magical instruments, charms and other superstitious materials to different parts of the world and they are heavily patronised.

### **Secret Societies**

There are other traditional secret societies that are very important in the lives of Africans. Since these are traditional, they were mostly practiced by the rural dwellers only to be transported to other parts of the world. These are the Ekpe and Ekpo among the Efik and Ibibio; Oro, Ogboni, Osugbo among others for the Yoruba; Akombo and Adzôv for the Tiv, etc. Laguda explains that secret societies as found in Nigerian traditional set up perform many functions. They boost the psychological wellbeing of the initiates, increase social status and value, licence to secure government favour in business and economy.<sup>23</sup> Laguda also avers that there are also imported secret societies whose members are mainly elites and educated members of the society who are in Europe and America. These are Freemason, Roscicrucian, AMORC, Temple Solaitre, Shepherhill, etc.<sup>24</sup>

### **Marriage Customs**

Marriage customs are deeply religious in Nigeria. Many people on this note that traditional marriage behaviour is the exclusive preserve of the rural areas. But research has shown that it

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<sup>23</sup> Laguda DO, "Power and Secret Societies in Nigeria Indigenous Religious Traditions." In S.D. Shishima e.d *African Religion in Modern Scholarship*, (Kuru: NIPSS, 2012):79

<sup>24</sup> Laguda DO, "Power and Secret Societies in Nigeria Indigenous Religious Traditions", 84.

is practiced by the urban dwellers as well. Gbenda avers that, “no matter the amount of Westernisation, people usually start with traditional marriage ceremonies before wedding in the church”.<sup>25</sup>

No group in Africa has completely neglected traditional customs regarding marriage in our modern society. The marriage institution in Africa has religious connotations. All the traditional marriage rituals are duly followed to pave way for successful marriage which the end product is procreation and stable home. When neglected, the repercussions are there such as divorce, barrenness and many of such absurdities of life that could have been initially averted. All these traditional marriage practices are practiced globally and have impacted migration and African religion.

The negative impact of migration is the distortion of the cultural fabrics of Africans by the cosmopolitan nature of the urban centres. Many migrants abandon their cherished African lives and indulge in foreign cultural lifestyles that are not African but found abroad. They are isolated from their relatives and hardly go back to the rural areas. They acquire higher education and see nothing good in the traditional cultural way of life. The manner of eating, dressing, worship and even speaking is un-African. Some of these migrants abandon their religion and follow foreign religions such as Eckankar, Goddianism, Grail, Bahai and even Christian and Islamic religions. Some of them mix up African religion and Christianity and practice the two together. They identify with these new ways of worship either for financial gains or social status changes. These and many more have negative impact on African

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<sup>25</sup> Gbenda, J.S, “African Christian Faiths in Dialogue: The Nigerian situation.” In S.D Shishima. ed. *African Religion in Modern Scholarship*, (Kuru: NIPSS, 2012):32.

religion. Whatever is the case, these impacts are minimal and have not completely obliterated the very foundation which African religion has laid in the lives of Africans.

Witchcraft practice has been condemned by many people as non-existent especially by adherents of other religions. One then asks why are they preaching against it in the first place? Witchcraft practice which has been taken to Europe and America is not an exclusive preserve of African migrants. Many Europeans and Americans practice it.

Africans and Europeans buy witchcraft relics from shops in towns, keep them or send them home to be made more efficacious with sacrifices. This connection links both Africans and Europeans together. For the Tiv, they buy artefacts (*imborivungu* and *Ityough ki Ayu*). These artefacts are dangerous but beneficial to the owners and their relations. These artefacts have the promise of wealth, prestige and general success. If not properly handled, may breed fighting, both physical and spiritual and may lead to many deaths.

There is another dimension to witchcraft which Shishima calls “neo-witchcraft”. To him, “this act is practiced by the educated elites as well and in our urban centres, and our institutions of higher learning”.<sup>26</sup> Examples abound in this practice such as denial of promotions, hiding of people’s files, writing petitions against other people, rape, killing, failing of students in examinations and reducing students’ scores in examinations and wicked acts of dismissal from places of work by the leaders. All these acts have negatively impacted African religion and migration.

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<sup>26</sup> Shishima, S. D. “Neo-Witchcraft and Development in Nigeria: The Benue Experience.” In S.D. Shishima. ed. *African Religions in Modern Scholarship*. (Kuru: NIPSS, 2012):4

### **Consequences of Rural Urban Migration**

Many population scholars have explained that consequences of migration are on the source or origin and on the receiving areas. Iwena<sup>27</sup> and Onokerhoraye<sup>28</sup> have identified a summary of the effect of migration on the origin and receiving centre. These are: it reduces population pressure on agricultural land at the source region. It reduces population pressure on the few social amenities at the departure areas. It causes food shortage at the source areas as those workable populations move to foreign lands leaving the aged that cannot work on the farm. It also leads to economic and social problems in the source areas. It supplies migrants labour at the receiving region. It leads to the development of social amenities at the receiving region. It boosts markets at the receiving region. It also promotes cultural integration such as inter-marriages at the receiving region. Migrants do also contribute to the source region. Several examples exist to demonstrate the fact that returning migrants may bring changes to their area of origin.

### **Conclusion**

That migration is carried out by human beings and Africans in particular is important to their thoughts and practices. One such thinking is the African-ness in the lives of migrants and those who have been submerged by the expansion of cities. It is always difficult for them to discard their culture even if it means secret indulgences. In this instance, one can aptly say that migration has both positive and negative impact on African religion. Migration has impacted African religion in many areas. Some of these areas include religious syncretism, African traditional medicine, folklore, witchcraft, language, etc. It has tried to erode the very foundation through which African life stands on. This is discerned from the way of life of

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<sup>27</sup> Iwena, O.A. *Essential Geography for Senior Secondary*, 170.

<sup>28</sup> Onokerhoraye, A. G. *An Outline of Human*, 58.



most Africans who live abroad. Even when they finally return back to Africa, their lifestyles do not agree with that of other Africans. Some even refuse to return to Africa except their corpses when dead. Therefore, Africans need a lot of orientation and education on the need to always remember their roots even in a foreign land.

### **Recommendations**

1. Africans need to be educated and given orientation to always return or remember their roots even in a foreign land.
2. More research should be embarked on, on the issue of migration and African traditional religion.
3. Documentation of research on African religion and migration is key in understanding not just migration issues but African religion in particular.
4. Specialists in African traditional religion (medicine-men, diviners, priests, etc.) who are the main custodians of African religion should be more open in their practice of the religion. They should demystify the practice of the religion and also handover their arts to their younger ones for continuity of the religion.

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