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A Comparative Analysis of Economic Empowerment within the African-Caribbean Pentecostal Church

By

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Thesis submitted

for the Degree of Masters by Research

2017

Abstract

This thesis is study of African-Caribbean attitudes towards economic development with specific focus on Birmingham Pentecostal Churches. Pentecostalism has maintained an inextricable relationship within Caribbean culture and this extends to the contemporary Caribbean community within the U.K. Using research methods such as discursive analysis, ethnography, and auto-ethnography, I will draw insights from personal, emotive, and experiential interactions within an African-Caribbean Pentecostal environment and contrast them with existing theories on Black economic empowerment, religious enterprise, and prosperity doctrines.

Largely, these scholastic discourses have used African-American churches in the United States as a central ethnographic observation point. Subsequently, my research will primarily consult domestic church based initiatives within the U.K., which will then form a comparative analysis between the two.

The motivation behind this thesis is to raise awareness around this topic by exploring the extent to which the trends identified within my research can be explained through auto-ethnographic observations of cultural expression. This work will be contextualised within a historical framework to assess how far British colonialism in the West Indies has impacted the contemporary psycho-religious personality of different individuals in relation to economic empowerment. This thesis then offers theoretical and practical examples of Black religious enterprise and entrepreneurship from inside and outside the Pentecostal paradigm. I will then critically assess how these case studies relate to deficiency of Black British scholarship on this topic. Finally, my intention is that this thesis will raise awareness and encourage an inner search for enlightened subjective realisations which will serve to impel prosperity and abundance as realistic possibilities.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Discourses on racism often take place within a social paradigm, whereby solutions are primarily concerned with socially integrating 'ethnic minorities' into a host majority.¹ Within this paradigm are popularised propagations of a colour-blind society, which have been disseminated into society by the likes of Stephen Colbert and others, despite having much older origins. A 2014 study published that:

Three-fourths of millennials believe that we should not *see* the colour of someone's skin, as though it's a choice. Nearly 70% believe they have achieved this and are now actually colour-blind; and the same percentage shockingly believe that we make society better by not seeing race or ethnicity.²

Indicatively, contemporary society seems to be moving towards a colour-blind society, however author Zach Stafford has responded by arguing that:

Colour-blindness" doesn't acknowledge the very real ways in which racism has existed and continues to exist, both in individuals and systemically. By professing not to see race, you're just ignoring racism, not solving it.³

My research explores the need for a conscious focus regarding discussions on racism which, similarly to the critical race theory, considers the nature of power based relationships between different groups of individuals, concerning wealth and the ownership of resources. Furthermore, it prompts us to redefine racism and contextualise our understanding of racial wealth disparities. A wealth and assets survey conducted in 2009 in Britain showed that:

¹ Heath, A., Fisher, S., Rosenblatt, G., Sanders, D., & Sobolewska, M. (2013). *The Political Integration of Ethnic Minorities in Britain*. Oxford University Press. P.1.

² Stafford, Z. (2017). "When you say you 'don't see race', you're ignoring racism, not helping to solve it." | Zach Stafford. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/jan/26/do-not-see-race-ignoring-racism-not-helping> [Accessed 12 Nov. 2017]

³ Ibid.

While the average white household had £221,000 (roughly \$350,000) in assets, Black Caribbean households had £76,000, Bangladeshi households £21,000 and Black African households £15,000.⁴

Within the U.S.A. the U.S. Census Bureau Survey of Income and Program Participation released the following:

In absolute terms, the median white household had \$111,146 in wealth holdings in 2011, compared to \$7,113 for the median black household and \$8,348 for the median Latino household.⁵

African-American author and business man Dr. Claude Anderson (speaking to the Black community) has attributed such statistics to the unequal distribution of wealth and resources, which he argues can be traced back to slavery. In an interview on *The Rock Newman Show* Dr. Claude Anderson discussed his understanding of racism as it related to African American history:

The purpose of slavery was to systematically socially engineer Black folks into the lowest level of a real-life monopoly game that was based on wealth, power and control. Slavery itself maldistributed nearly one hundred percent of all this nation's wealth power, resources, privileges controls of governments into the hands of the dominant white society.⁶

Expounding upon this he stated:

Blacks do not have enough resources to be a competitive group ... It is wealth that controls what your opportunities are going to be... nobody has ever addressed the real issues, the civil rights didn't address it, they started talking about social integration, [but] social integration wasn't the problem with Black folk... Blacks have been fed symbolic success for one hundred years without touching the structural issues...⁷

My research will consider Dr. Anderson's understanding of racism, and apply it when seeking to identify existing solutions to such issues. While Dr. Anderson's research is based within the U.S.A., it has implications for the U.K. In a review of Paul Gilroy's *Black Atlantic*, Tanya Barson suggests that:

⁴ Irr.org.uk. (2017). *Inequality, housing and employment statistics / Institute of Race Relations*. (Online) Available at: <http://www.irr.org.uk/research/statistics/poverty/> (Accessed 12 Nov. 2017)

⁵ Shin, L. (2015). *Forbes Welcome*. [online] Forbes.com. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/laurashin/2015/03/26/the-racial-wealth-gap-why-a-typical-white-household-has-16-times-the-wealth-of-a-black-one/#3fb3a9971f45> [Accessed 12 Nov. 2017].

⁶ YouTube. (2017). *Dr. Claud Anderson on The Rock Newman Show*. [online] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHx3DoIVC5I> [Accessed 12 Nov. 2017].

⁷ Ibid.

His thesis argues against essentialist versions of racial identity and racial nationalisms, in favour of a shared, though heterogeneous, culture that joins diverse communities in North and South America, the Caribbean, Europe and Africa. He proposes that the Atlantic be treated as 'one single, complex unit of analysis' which could 'produce an explicitly transnational and intercultural perspective'.⁸

This study will primarily consult the African-Caribbean experience in Birmingham, U.K., with secondary attention paid to African-American's as a comparative reference point. I have implored the use of the term African-Caribbean as a more introspective understanding of the identity of those of Caribbean descent living within the U.K.⁹ Understanding the African-Caribbean experience within Britain, necessitates an in-depth understanding of the consequences of European colonialism within the Caribbean with regards to the creation of a structurally racist system, as well as an understanding of recent Caribbean history within Britain.

Scope

My work is concerned with locating the attitudes of African-Caribbean individuals in relation to economic empowerment. Bearing in mind Dr. Anderson's economical basis for understanding racism, I will examine enterprise and entrepreneurship as potential solutions to the existing racial wealth disparities.

Valpy Fitzgerald describes economics as the critical study of production, distribution, and consumption of wealth in human society.¹⁰ Ultimately, the individual capacity to accumulate wealth is determined by the level of control one has over these three mitigating aspects. With this as a premise, we may deduce that economic progression within society necessitates that ownership and dissemination of resources. As mentioned in the above paragraph,

⁸ Barson, T. (2010). Introduction: *Modernism and the Black Afro Modern: Journey's Through the Black Atlantic*. P.9.

⁹ On occasions within the work I have implored the use of the term 'Black' in reference to a racial group. Despite more commonly exercising the terms African-Caribbean and African-American, I have implemented the word Black as a common way to describe an entire racial group rather than considered ethnic groups under that epigram.

¹⁰ Rowland, C. (1999). *The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology*. Cambridge University Press. P.218.

entrepreneurship and enterprise are two active ways in which individuals might aim to achieve this goal.

The word entrepreneur has a myriad of differing definitions subjective to various scholars. Etymologically, the word entrepreneur descends from an old French word *entreprendre*, meaning 'to undertake'. Contemporarily, the term is used somewhat synonymously with a Business Manager. Robin Lowe and Sue Marriott both indicated that entrepreneurship has its origins in economics. Referencing physiocrat Cantillion, they assert:

Cantillion saw entrepreneurs as having a key role in economic development by virtue of their having individual property rights as capitalists Cantillion saw the entrepreneur as someone who consciously makes decisions about resource allocation.¹¹

In this case, entrepreneurship infers that an individual has control of resources at least to some degree. Applying this definition to Dr. Anderson's understanding of racism, then the question of ownership and control arises. Do African-Caribbean's/African-American's have the same access to wealth and resources as those of European origin? If the answer is 'yes', then what is being done to explore this potential? If the answer is 'no' then we must explore this variable to understand why this is still the case in 2017.

The term enterprise can also trace its origins to the term *entreprendre*, however in the form of a past participle. Contemporarily, the word refers to a project or undertaking, especially a bold or difficult one. Both enterprise and entrepreneurship necessitate action and endeavour, however Lowe and Marriott are not content with this loose understanding of enterprise. They describe enterprise eclectically, suggesting that enterprise involved taking calculated risks whilst pursuing opportunities. Furthermore, they suggest that enterprise does not always refer to business, but can also refer to organisations, groups, and individuals with an end goal of improving their lives. They openly announce that enterprise can include artistic excellence, family time, or financial

¹¹ Lowe, R. and Marriott, S. (2007). *Enterprise*. Oxford [u.a.]: Butterworth-Heinemann/Elsevier. P.5.

gain. Focus will be on the pursuit of financially driven enterprise because of the nature of the discussion on racism.

Where this study will depart from a straightforward dialogue between race and economics, is in my inclusion of Pentecostal churches within Birmingham. British scholar Gregory Roberts has described Pentecostalism as the most popular religious expression of African-Caribbean peoples in the UK. He further suggests that this is to the extent to which the socio-cultural and psycho-religious underpinnings of the African-Caribbean person are amenable to entrepreneurial engagement, subject to analysis.¹²

I previously mentioned how attitudes of African-Caribbean individuals towards wealth could be consciously or subconsciously rooted within the Christian psyche. The economic disposition of African-Caribbean people's living in post war Britain has always maintained an inextricable relationship with the church. For generations, the church provided a congenial home, offering providence and escapism for those of a similar social, cultural, and economic background. Even within contemporary society the Black British church plays a conspicuously key role in the economic destiny of its millions of attendees.

The precepts of this dissertation necessitate a definitive understanding of the Pentecostal church. Pentecostalism is a significant part of global Christianity and the fastest growing segment of the Christian faith.¹³ Similarly, to enterprise and entrepreneurship, the Pentecostal church seeks to achieve certain aims and goals through endeavour and practice. Its central doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38)¹⁴ is uniquely expressed in ways that other Christian churches do not. For many Pentecostal Christians, being endowed with the Holy Spirit means

¹² Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship: An African Caribbean Perspective*. PHD. University of Birmingham.P.3.

¹³ Bbc.co.uk. (2009). BBC - Religions - *Christianity: Pentecostalism*. [online] Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/subdivisions/pentecostal_1.shtml [Accessed 28 Nov. 2017].

¹⁴ Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost". (King James Version)

comfort, inspiration, and guidance from the past into the future. Robert Beckford argues that the Black Pentecostal church in Britain offers the best focus for developing a political theology¹⁵ and this is something that my research endeavours to explore.

The Black church is one of the surviving Black institution remaining from slavery meaning that its roots are firmly planted within the foundations of Black cultural and religious expression.¹⁶ Within Britain, these once nascent organisations have flourished into established, prosperous cultural centres which are not only tax exempt¹⁷, but are often endowed with abounding financial resources due to the investment from its often-vast congregations. One of the most popular branches of African-Caribbean Pentecostalism was the New Testament Church of God (NTCG), a denomination which I have used as a critical case study.

My hypothesis asserts that African-Caribbean Pentecostal churches are the most qualified in creating autonomous wealth through enterprise, scriptural and entrepreneurial teaching, networks, credit unions, and other means. Taking this into consideration, I believe that this denomination has not done enough to create structural economic empowerment for its attendees. I furthermore, believe that African-American churches more often maintain an avid focus on economic empowerment as a necessary factor in overcoming racism unlike their British based counterparts. Using African-American churches as a point of comparison, my hypothesis is directed to testing how African-Caribbean Pentecostals in Birmingham utilise the economic power and potential held by the church. It is upon this basis that I have formulated my research questions.

¹⁵ Beckford, R. (2011). *Dread and Pentecostal*. Eugene, Or.: Wipf & Stock Publishers. P.4.

¹⁶ Anderson, C, DR. (2001) *Powernomics: The National Plan to Empower Black America*, Maryland, Bethesda: PowerNomics Corporation of America, Inc. Publisher. P.223.

¹⁷ Under the authority of UK law, all religious institutions with charitable intent are officially recognised by HM Revenue and Customs as charities and are, therefore exempt from payment of tax. In the United States, all Religious Property across all states are tax exempt. A Unanimous Supreme Court ruling in 1970 declared all non-profit organisations including museums, hospitals, libraries, religious institutions, and charitable organisations are not obligated to pay tax.

My first research question aims to gather the opinions of various scholars and academics to discern popular or trending attitudes towards this topic. In my early reading, I have discovered that there is a distinct lack of theological literature accentuating the economic potential of Pentecostal churches as a central institution in empowering African-Caribbean communities financially. My focus on Black British scholarship will identify existing patterns of altruism regarding enterprise. The majority of Black British Theologians focus upon social ontology without elucidating upon tangible practices for achieving economic liberation (self-sufficiency). Issues of religious identity take precedent with most theologians, and this is often followed by historical documentations, and utopian liberation theologies. I have examined how far these early observations are consistent with my later research.

My second research question aimed to uncover practical examples of enterprise within Birmingham based African-Caribbean Pentecostal churches. Through auto-ethnographic research I have procured, primary results which can be extensively compared to the results gathered through literature. I believe that financial enterprise and entrepreneurship does exist within African-Caribbean churches, however the scale of how often and how large these activities are remains to be seen. This research question ties in with my third and final query, which seeks to comparatively analyse enterprise within the U.S.A. and U.K. I have implemented many comparisons within this work because I intend to identify existing trends, and understand what reasons are behind them. My intention was to reveal the real-life experiences of individuals involved in this phenomenon and access it as authentic subjective evidence, despite criticisms from many scholars that such perspectives harm the validity of research.

Structure of Thesis

Chapter two provides a review of theoretical and academic attitudes towards Black economic empowerment, which is focused on answering my first research question. Chapter three then

examines the Nation of Islam (NOI) as a comparative case study which will contribute to wider assessments of African-Caribbean Pentecostal attitudes towards enterprise and entrepreneurship. I have selected the NOI because as an organisation, they were known to preach a doctrine which incisively encouraged Black economic self-sufficiency as a means of overcoming oppression. In Chapter four, I have documented my research methodology, and justified it as a necessary tool in achieving the best results for my study. In Chapter five, I have detailed my primary research obtained through my field research. I have transcribed my experiences during observational visits to churches, as well as documenting the highlights of my conversations with individuals (full versions of the transcripts can be found in Appendix A). In Chapter six, I have discussed the impact of my results, providing a thorough analysis of the results obtained through field research in relation to my literature review and hypothesis. I have examined how the results compare to my hypothesis and furthermore, how they can help me to respond to my research questions. Finally, my conclusion will present an appropriation of my ideas which will serve to respond to my research questions and hypothesis.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

This chapter will serve as a literal response to my research questions, and provide me with a foundation upon which I can make an equivoiced and detailed comparative analysis. I have illustrated this section to present a database of the existing scholarly literature which is relevant to African-Caribbean enterprise and entrepreneurship. This section has aided me in answering my first research question, which aimed to investigate existing academic thought regarding African-Caribbean and African-American enterprise. Presenting a range of sources in this chapter has helped me to form a comparative analysis of literature and auto-ethnographic research. My intention is that these comparisons will allow me to further investigate the reasons behind the trends identified within this overall thesis.

I have divided this literature review into the subsequent sections; *Economics & Theology: Empowerment theories African-Caribbean Theological Literature, African-American Theological Literature and Other Relevant Literature*. Within these sections I have presented different theories on economic empowerment from various paradigms. I have discussed these theories and critiqued them in relation to African-Caribbean enterprise within the Pentecostal church.

My Observations

I have observed many scholastic discourses focusing upon racial entrepreneurship with the United States as a didactic ethnographic reference point. Often, these works present ethno-cultural discourses within an economic paradigm, commonly contextualising African-American economic empowerment initiatives comparatively with 'other races', as a benchmark of entrepreneurial success. Patterns emerging in many of these books investigate Chinese, and South Asian 'success models' and aim to mirror it within the African-American community with the end goal of racial self-sufficiency. I will demonstrate the many examples of African-American literature indicative of this trend, and others.

Across the waters in the U.K. the scholastic scene paints a different picture with a paucity of literature pertaining to African-Caribbean financial enterprise. Whilst authors of South Asian heritage often lead the way in more mainstream discourses on ethnic minority business, I have found that the African-Caribbean voice is disproportionately underrepresented when discussing ethnic entrepreneurship.¹⁸ Some African-Caribbean calls for economic empowerment are often framed comparatively with other minority groups, a trend seen on both sides of the Atlantic.

Many Pentecostal writers have flirted with the idea of African-Caribbean economic empowerment, without fully committing to an attempt to marry Pentecostal doctrine with a tabulated tangible action plan of financial enterprise. Pentecostal discussions rarely delineate a focus on entrepreneurship, something which I will demonstrate in this chapter.

Purpose

The aim of my literature review is to identify the problem of a shortage of literature exclusively addressing African-Caribbean enterprise. Given the power of the Pentecostal church, I intend to identify a lack of attention dedicated to this topic within Pentecostal academic literature. This literature review will aid me in establishing a research problem and therefore justify my exploration of this issue. By contrasting British literature with American scholarship, I intend to justify my research as an aberration from the typically socially focused Theologians within the U.K. Much of American literature that I will cover is eclectic, and therefore it is necessary to understand in order to implement similar structural paradigms into the psyche of Black British scholarship. This literature review will serve as the basis for subsequent discourses regarding the various permutations of economic inequality. I intend to show the attitudes towards how financial disparity within a capitalist society.

Liberation Theology & Marxism

The nature of this discussion prompts us to examine two popular 20th century theories which have combined theological and economic world views. Liberation theology is a religious movement born out of Latin America, which intends to empower impoverished peoples spiritually and politically. Eddy Muskus indicates that advocates of this theology are essentially trying to establish the kingdom of God by eradicating injustice.¹⁹ This is a quintessentially a moral theory, which concerns itself with socio-religious criticisms of economic and religious structures through a historical hermeneutic.

Commonly, proponents of this theology maintain no interest in involving themselves within the capitalist monopoly board, and often identify it as the cause of systematic injustice within recent modern history. Fitzgerald suggests that liberation theologians believe that the 'Kingdom' is for the poor, and that issues of poverty were addressed in Christ's teaching of the Banquet of the kingdom.²⁰ He furthermore suggests that liberation theologians believe that capitalism is incompatible with satisfying basic needs in Latin America. The result of this is an adherence towards socialism as a more viable option despite their awareness of its imperfections.²¹ Paul Morgan argues that almost all liberation theologians advocate some form of socialism in place of the current economic order. He goes on to suggest that for many this is Marxian Socialism.²²

According to Boff, liberation theology has borrowed freely from Marxism as a socio-analytical means of contextually understanding the world of the oppressed.²³ 'These methodological

¹⁹ Muskus, E. (2002). *The origins and early development of liberation theology in Latin America*. Carlisle, Cumbria, U.K.: Paternoster Press. P.30.

²⁰ Rowland, C. (1999). *The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology*. Cambridge University Press. P.218.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Morgan, P. (1990). *Capitalism and Liberation Theology In Latin America*. [ebook]. Available at: https://www.gordon.edu/ace/pdf/MorganNoell_CapAndLiberTheoLat.pdf [Accessed 8 Nov. 2017]. P.3.

²³ Boff, L. and Boff, C. (1992). *Introducing liberation theology*. Tunbridge Wells (Kent): Burns and Oates. P.27.

pointers'²⁴as Boff labels them, are instruments in performing evaluations of the relationship between class and wealth. The use of Marxist principles has drawn much criticism from the Catholic Church. Julia Hohner writes that sceptics of liberation theology believe that the materialistic atheist ideology of Marxism makes the use of its analysis incompatible with Catholic beliefs.²⁵

On the other hand, the founder of black liberation theology, James Cone has employed Marxist thinking, as a means of socially analysing the history of African-American oppression in the United States and formulating a reformative outlook of poverty. Similarly, to the Latin American liberation theology, Cone is concerned with criticising the overall system of capitalism and achieving social justice through a combination of Marxist socialism and Biblical interpretations designed to empower African-Americans. Anthony Richard Roberts has argued that discourses on Black religion cannot take place without the inclusion of race and economics. He goes on to indicate that both Cone, Marx, and Latin liberation theologians have highlighted economics as the driving factor in oppression, and propagated the redistribution of wealth for social justice.²⁶

The calls for the redistribution of wealth, prompts us to analyse the Marxian understanding of the economic social order. According to Marx, poverty was a classist issue which involved power based relations between labour class and the ruling class (bourgeoisie) who have historically and contemporarily owned and controlled the production of capital. Samuel Bowl writes:

The Marxian model is distinct, however, in that it asserts that consideration of the ownership of the means of production, and the command over the production process which this ownership permits, is essential to a coherent analysis of the production process itself, and to the analysis of market equi- libration and competition.²⁷

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Hohner, Julia, (2015) "*Critiques of Liberation Theology: A Case Study*". Senior Honors Projects. P.5.

²⁶ Roberts, Anthony R., (2014) "*Where the Spirit of the Lord is...There is Freedom: Spirit-Baptism in Liberationist Perspective*". Masters of Theological Studies. Southeastern University – Lakeland.

²⁷ Bowles, S., & Gintis, H. (1975). *The Production Process in a Competitive Economy: Walrasian, Neo-Hobbesian, and Marxian Models. The American Economic Review*,65(2), P. 17.

His emphasis of ownership of resources is not dissimilar from many Black economic empowerment theories which I have explored later in this chapter. Marx however, alongside liberation theologians have postulated that the solution to this issue of poverty is to completely reform the entire.

Cornel West in his own 'Afro American revolutionary Christianity' has criticised some Black theologians for attempting to integrate capitalism into their theology. West suggests that these theologians do not possess an adequate social theory capable of responding to the overall makeup of America's system of production, foreign policy, political arrangement, and cultural practices.²⁸ Cristina Richie argues that Jesus's principles of living without greed can be applied to an ethic of general generosity, or a socialist theory, which both James Cone and Martin Luther King Jr. promoted in some way during the 1950s and 60s.²⁹

Tony Brown criticises Marxism in the Black community labelling it a 'quasi-religious outlook masquerading as an economic theory'. In his *Book Black Lies, White Lies*, he expresses his censure at Black leadership specifically Ben Chavis (head of the NAACP at the time) for his condemning of profit-oriented capitalism. Brown argues that Marxist socialism is ineffective in economically empowering Black people, and has suggested that its hermeneutical proponents are fuelled by the possibility of an entry into the least xenophobic white intellectual subculture available to black intellectuals.³⁰

The adoption of Marxist socialism within liberation theology provides a backdrop for understanding historical, social and economic injustice, and this is very relative to the African-Caribbean experience within Britain. Marxist thinking acknowledges of the relationship between power and the ownership of capital. Many liberation theologians have adopted this thinking,

²⁸ West, C. (2003). *Prophesy deliverance!*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press. P.25.

²⁹ Richie, C. (2010). *The Racial and Economic Theories of James Cone and Martin Luther King Jr., Illuminated by "The Sermon on the Mount."* Black Theology. P.101.

³⁰ Brown, T. (1995) *Black Lies, White Lies: The Truth According to Tony Brown*. New York: W. Morrow and Co., Print. P. 60-64.

whilst abstaining from the idea of accumulating wealth. Cornel West for example, has questioned the social morality of Black capitalism, arguing that African-American identity was constructed through an embryonic capitalist global economy that supported the absolutist monarchies and throve due to the exploitation of Black people in the Western hemisphere.³¹This is his reason for denying the use of capitalism within liberation.

On the other hand, Gregory Roberts has questioned how far liberation theology can be successful in championing any form of entrepreneurship. Roberts later contextualises this in relation to African-Caribbean's within Britain, suggesting that it is unlikely that proponents of liberation theology will ever embrace any form of market entrepreneurship within their theology.³² This suggests that a radical reinterpretation of liberation must be implored. This reinterpretation must necessarily include economic empowerment as a tool to negate the effects of racism.

African-Caribbean Theological Literature

Vanessa Howard's 1987 *Report on Afro-Caribbean Christianity in Britain* focuses on contextualising the historical and contemporary social experiences of African-Caribbean Christians in Britain. Howard locates 1987 Black culture within a Marxist historical framework which analyses the motivations behind the 'Windrush.'³ Howard has used this as a backdrop in examining the role of Black churches in inner cities when fighting racism. This work however displays no evidence of propagating practical entrepreneurship or enterprise despite raising the issue of a lack of finance within the African-Caribbean Church.³³

³¹ West, C (2003). "American Africans in Conflict: Alienation in an Insecure Culture," in African American Religious Thought: An Anthology, ed. West. C and Glaude. E.S. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press. P. 77.

³² Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship: An African Caribbean Perspective*. P.4.

³³ Howard, V. (1987). *A Report on Afro-Caribbean Christianity in Britain*. PHD. University of Leeds. P.26.

Ian MacRobert's 1989 work on the origins and functions of Black Pentecostalism is an attempt to trace the origins of Black Pentecostalism within the U.K. Importantly, this thesis was created by a Caucasian researcher aiming to understand more about African-Caribbean Christianity. This work makes use of Marxist examination of historical oppression and Black liberation responses to it, as a means of deducing conclusions about the African-Caribbean social order. The author is concerned with locating Black religious culture in the 1980s West Midlands.³⁴

Both theses have employed a Marxist analysis of history to contextualise their questioning of the racial social order. Despite prompting discussions on economic inequality, both authors have constructed their thesis within a socio-theological paradigm concerned with ethical solutions rather than economic activism. Tony Brown would criticise the use of Marxist socialism, and suggest that too much time is devoted to moral ideologies rather than strategic use of the free market system. Implementing older theses will help me to trace the evolutions of African-Caribbean Pentecostal scholarship within the U.K.

R. David Muir's 2004 work *Black Theology, Pentecostalism, and Racial Struggles in the Church of God* is a comprehensive study of racial Pentecostal Church history (Part I), the evolution of a Pentecostal identity through various doctrines (Part II), and the racial reconciliation discourse in Pentecostalism and the struggles for equality and internationalization in the Church of God³⁵ (Part III). Muir's thesis is concerned with definitively locating contemporary Black Pentecostalism within a historically racist society and assessing the influences of the past in relation to the present and the future.

Within this work Muir provides a case study of his time working within the New Testament Church of God (NTCG) as a quasi-theopolitical advisor to Black Pentecostal leaders, representing a

³⁴ MacRobert, I. (2017). *Black Pentecostalism: Its Origins, Functions and theology* with special reference to the Midlands Borough. PHD. University of Birmingham. P. 173.

³⁵ Muir, D. (2013). *Inter-personal conflict in an African Caribbean Pentecostal congregation A Pastoral Study*. PHD. Birmingham: University of Birmingham P.1-5.

Black Christian perspective on social issues.³⁶ Despite being in this position, Muir's writing does not reflect any exerted attempt to propagate any form of Black enterprise or entrepreneurship.

Deeper within this work Muir identifies with the many facets of Black liberation theology, locating it within an African-Caribbean context, and furthermore advocating a new political theology within Britain. By examining the works of Black theologians from both sides of the Atlantic, Muir has called for a didactic preaching of the gospel which is tailored towards internationalisation and the tackling of racial inequality.

This work contains many typical aspects of liberation theology. Overall, Muir's intention is to postulate new social theology which is best suited to aiding the church in its struggle for racial equality. For one reason or another Muir is not interested in utilising any Black capitalist strategies for achieving the racial equality of which he speaks. One may however question how far the pursuit of racial morality can go in revolutionising power relations between different groups of individuals.

Robert Beckford identifies himself as a Black Pentecostal Christian in Britain today, seriously concerned with Black liberation. As mentioned in my introduction Beckford argues that Pentecostalism offers the best vehicle equipped with adopting a political theology capable of emancipating African-Caribbean peoples.³⁷ His Dread Pentecostal Theology engages the adoption of Rastafarian (dread) principles into Pentecostalism. Beckford's writing is intended to encourage Christians to reflect upon their socio-political experience in Britain and marry this examination to their theological practices. Beckford suggests that the church should be a resource in aiding Christians to do this.³⁸

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Beckford, R. (2011). *Dread and Pentecostal*. P.188.

³⁸ Ibid.

David Muir described Beckford's Dread thesis as a metaphor for the uplifting of black people, however he later criticised his thesis suggesting that very few Pentecostals would find 'sufficient grounds' in Beckford's Dread hermeneutics to turn to Rastafarianism for 'theocultural' inspirations for politicisation.³⁹ In other works, Beckford has explored the area of prosperity in the *Prosperity Dub*. In this chapter Beckford seeks to examine the use of the word prosperity by proposing an alternative interpretation of the word that focuses less on material wealth and more so on common wealth, or wellbeing. While Beckford does not deny the importance of economic growth, he argues that such growth must be part of become part of a holistic tradition of general wellbeing. Beckford does concede that such a doctrine is not uniform, and that steps to be taken to make it so. Gregory Roberts has criticised Beckford for not outlining an economic plan within the holistic liberation. He writes:

There is a glaring absence of any reflection of the economic situation or aspirations of African-Caribbean peoples in the UK ... there is no attempt to delineate the economic context of the ones for whom Dread Pentecostal Theology is proposed.⁴⁰

I will now briefly discuss a few more examples of African-Caribbean Pentecostal literature. Delroy Hall and Anthony G Reddie (although a Methodist), in their respective works have called for an inclusion of Black business enterprise within Black liberation theologies. Hall, whose work focuses on solving inter-personal congregational conflict, recognises the need to utilise Black businesses as a means of drawing insights into collaborative work.⁴¹ On Reddie, Hall writes:

Anthony Reddie's methodological approach focuses on influencing the lives of Black people.⁴²

Closer inspection of Reddie's thesis tells us that he is interested in propagating a radical interpretation of the Bible as didactic agent in achieving Black liberation.⁴³ Reddie describes Black

³⁹ Hall, DW (2013). *Inter-personal conflict in an African Caribbean Pentecostal congregation A Pastoral Study*. P.120.

⁴⁰ Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship*. P.74.

⁴¹ Hall, DW, (2013). "But God meant it for good". P. 1-10.

⁴² Ibid. P. 122

⁴³ Reddie, A. (2006). *Black theology in Britain: A Reader*. Routledge: New York. P.301-302.

theology as a holistic enterprise, which for him entails black business promotion, housing provision, employment creation and health care, to mention areas of clear need.⁴⁴

Both Hall and Reddie's thesis's are grounded in James Cone's Black Liberation theology.⁴⁵ They display the typical marxist analysis of historical oppression and assess how this has holistically affected Black people. Similarly to most Black and non Black liberation theologians, both scholars have located the issue of contemporary and historical financial disparity within their thesis's, however have not elucidated upon their proclamations of encouraging black business enterprise. Economics, and finance has played a key role not just in the migration of West Indians to Britain but also in the establishment of the Black church as a central institution of culture and religion within the Black community. Furthermore, economics has always and will continue to play a cardinal role in the functionality of Black churches and it's communities, this reality however is not reflected in the writings of Reddie⁴⁶ or Hall.⁴⁷

The above observations of whom Gregory Roberts describes as 'sub-disciples of Black liberation theology', have prompted me to explore the nature of the relationship between Black theology and Black economic empowerment practices. An interesting pattern developing in my research is the identification of the financial implications of historical a contemporary racism, however a paucity of scholars extensively propagates entrepreneurship or enterprise as a means of alleviating the problems in the African-Caribbean community. My observations hitherto have identified a problem in my research, how is it that so many Black theologians are aware of the need for Black entrepreneurship and economic empowerment, yet on the surface the importance of this is not reflected in their literature? Such a problem, has justified my research as a necessary

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Cone, J. (1969). *Black theology and Black power*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

⁴⁶ Reddie, A. (2006). *Black theology in transatlantic dialogue*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

⁴⁷ Hall, DW, (2013). *"But God meant it for good."*

gap of exploration into this issue. I am curious to know whether the altruism presented in the literature is telling of the actual state of African-Caribbean Pentecostalism within the UK.

The work of Gregory Roberts is an anomaly in relation to this trend. His work is an extensive examination into entrepreneurship and its potential to resolve socio-economic issues within the Black community. Roberts has taken care to examine the many differing theories of entrepreneurship and assessed how tangible they are in relation to African-Caribbean development. Roberts has also included a section on African-Caribbean Pentecostalism and assessed its relationship with Black entrepreneurship.

In the genesis of Roberts thesis, he argues that for many persons, regardless of status and exposure, there is a reluctance to engage with economics from a theological perspective.⁴⁸ Within my own research most of the evidence suggests that African-Caribbean theologians have displayed altruism within their respective works on the topic of economics, financial enterprise, and entrepreneurship. For Roberts, a potential reason he writes:

The ends or objectives of theology include the pursuit of an understanding of God and how God works through history. Economics to a great extent sees utility, efficient allocation of scarce resources and economic growth as not just worthwhile but pre-eminent ends. This would render it at odds with the traditional views of theology.⁴⁹

I intend to explore this point in further depth when conducting my own research, as I search for the reasons behind my early observations of African-Caribbean theological altruism in context with entrepreneurship.

Within my analysis of general and Black liberation theology I have noticed a strong orientation towards socialism as a solution for financial disparity. Roberts addresses this orientation within his work. He writes:

Theological foray into economics is usually for the sole purpose of offering some critique of the dominant ideological system and how it is played out in the lives of people.

⁴⁸ Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship*. P.2.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

Invariably, poverty becomes the main subject of discussion, as if there is a resignation to the notion that 'the poor will always be with us.'⁵⁰

Roberts writings reflect the attitudes of many liberation theologians who have sought to criticise capitalism and condemn it for its role in the oppression of a particular group/race within a Marxist framework. He suggests that such approaches formulate their hermeneutics from a social perspective aimed to appeal to the morality of society rather than the blossoming of the individual.⁵¹

John McWhorter seems to indirectly question the psychological implications of liberation theology. In his book *Losing the Race* he argues that victimology is the adoption of victimhood as the core of one's identity.⁵² He goes on to argue that this mentality is like one who suffers through living in a country and who lived in a culture controlled by rich white people. The inheritance of a victim mentality has had the effect of a self-fulfilling prophecy actualised through the subconscious minds of Black individuals who adhere to the Marxist precepts of this theology. McWhorter doesn't deny the realities of the Black oppression throughout history, instead he implies that the mentality often created through liberation theology manifests a victim state of mind will attract the reality of a victim.

In response to these trends within liberation theology, Roberts identifies his own disposition which intends to promote the harnessing of the individual abilities and creativity in the pursuit of excellence. Like Roberts, I myself am concerned with the level of altruism displayed by African-Caribbean theologians. Despite a distinct awareness of the need for economic empowerment, the literature simply does not demonstrate a deep consideration of entrepreneurship as a viable in emancipating black people.

⁵⁰ Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship*. P.4.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² McWhorter, J. (2001). *Losing the race*. New York: Perennial. P.43.

Roberts has even gone as far to provide example of African-Caribbean theologians currently residing in the U.K. who have paid strict attention to a discourse in theology and economics, and postulated action on top of these discussion. Roberts uses this as a further framework to configure his questioning of African-Caribbean Theologians and their fear of the prosperity gospel. I have discovered evidence of African Pentecostals in the U.K. who have devoted the focus of their work onto the economic empowerment within the Church. Such discoveries add further weight to the need to explore the reasons behind this research problem.

African-American Theological Literature

Within African-American theological literature there is a mixture of tangible faith based entrepreneurship, as well as open discourses on utilising church resources for economic enterprise with the purpose of emancipation. While there are examples of altruistic literature comparable to some African-Caribbean theologians in the U.K., there are those who are undeniably Black capitalists interested in incorporating a political theology which will subscribe to prosperity as an absolute necessity for the advancement of an ethnic group.

Prosperity Doctrine (Gospel)

While prosperity doctrine is not exclusive to the United States, it's believed geographical origins are within the U.S., and therefore I have included this topic in this section. Bradley A. Koch described prosperity doctrine as the doctrine that God wants people to be prosperous, especially financially. Adherents of the Prosperity Gospel believe that wealth is a sign of God's blessing and that poverty is due to a lack of faith.⁵³ Paula Mcgee defines prosperity gospel within a racial context, asserting that the prosperity gospel with its prescriptions for health and wealth attempt

⁵³ Koch, B. (2009). *The Prosperity Gospel And Economic Prosperity: Race, Class, Giving, And Voting*. PHD. Indiana University. P.1.

to help African-Americans negotiate their racial and financial identities or the income line as a response to the critical white gaze of the dominant culture.⁵⁴ In examining these definitions of prosperity doctrine, it is apparent that there are polarising differences between this ideology and John McWhorter's criticism of black liberation theology as a doctrine grounded in victimisation.

The question of how far this doctrine represents Christian values has precipitated much criticism of materialism. Kate Bowler's suggests that prosperity doctrine articulates materialism and transcendence within a single breath.⁵⁵ A trend within criticisms of this doctrine is the condemning of preachers who are said to be the proponents of this gospel for their own material benefit. Often the preachers under fire are African-American preachers, who are accused of capitalising upon Black poverty as a means of pushing their own materialistic doctrine.

Shayne Lee has argued that Black Neo-Pentecostalism has undergone a dramatic change due business-savvy prosperity preacher like Creflo Dollar, I.V. Hilliard and T.D. Jakes. He furthermore identifies Frederick K.C. Price as the pioneer of prosperity doctrine, suggesting that Price's rise to national stardom through television revolutionised Black Pentecostalism and saw the creation of word churches. Word churches according to Lee promoted a message that teaches members that poverty is a curse of the devil and that the power to transform their oppression resides within their ability to appropriate their faith and take their rightful place in the kingdom of God.⁵⁶

Dr. Claud Anderson a supporter of Black economic prosperity doctrine has identified Frederick Price as an influential preacher in educating people about the relationship between race, religion, and economics.⁵⁷ Criticisms of prosperity preachers are often launched by liberationists, TD Jakes for example has been criticised by James Cone for not promoting a doctrine that challenges those

⁵⁴ McGee, Paula L. (2012). *The Wal-Martization of African American Religion: T.D. Jakes and Woman Thou Art Loosed*. CGU Theses & Dissertations. P. 42.

⁵⁵ Bowler, Kate. (2013). *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel*. New York: Oxford University Press. P. 230.

⁵⁶ Lee, S. (2007). *Prosperity Theology: T.D. Jakes and the Gospel of the Almighty Dollar*. CrossCurrents. P. 230.

⁵⁷ Anderson, C, DR (2001) *Powernomics: The National Plan to Empower Black America*. P. 228.

in power. Further censures of Jakes have suggested that prosperity doctrine promotes an individualistic focus on materialistic wealth using capitalistic enterprise rather than focusing on the systematic oppression responsible for poverty in the first place.

Sociologist Milmon Harrison contends that the prosperity gospel may be especially appealing to black churches that have had to engage both the material and spiritual needs of the members in their historical struggle with oppression and discrimination.⁵⁸ Prosperity doctrine in some ways is an attempt to change a self-oppressive mentality that many black people were forced to adopt during slavery which asserted the idea that being poor was a noble feat to be rewarded in the afterlife. The Marxists liberationists who have expressed their censure at this theology have once again excluded the possibility of theological entrepreneurship as a means of spiritual, religious, and cultural empowerment. Essentially many liberation theologians believe that this theology benefits a small number of elitist preachers at the expense of the majority. Pastor DeForest B. Soaries Jr, has suggested that prosperity theology elevates greed to a virtue instead of leaving it as one of the seven deadly sins.⁵⁹

Faith Based Economic Empowerment

Philip E. Gipson's 2001 paper *Empowering the Black Community Faith Based-Economic Development* advocates practical strategies through a prosperity doctrine as well as different form of enterprise. Gipson is interested in economically empowering inner-city congregations. Through a historical evaluation of Black economic empowerment movements, he aims to inspire the reader into reformulating past successes within contemporary society. Through his work, he stresses the importance of African-Americans having some control over the flow of economic

⁵⁸ Harrison, M. (2005). *Righteous Riches: The Word of Faith Movement in Contemporary African American Religion.*: Oxford University Press. P. 148.

⁵⁹ DeForest B., S. (2010). *Black Churches and the Prosperity Gospel.* *Wall Street Journal.* [online] Available at: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704116004575522202425314706> [Accessed 21 Oct. 2018].

funds through the community.⁶⁰ For Gipson, the church is most viable institution capable of achieving the kind of revolutionizing racial economic injustice, despite this he criticises their hitherto passive role promoting entrepreneurship. The latter half of Gipson's work is dedicated towards providing a user guide upon which African-American churches can implement tangible techniques designed to inspire economic development within the Black community. Examples of some strategies recommended by Gipson formal community development corporations (CDCs), community housing organisations, the creation of financial institutions, private charities, corporate supporters including university, religious institutions, and technical assistance providers.

Fletcher F. Moon and Laura A. Reese have both examined the state of faith based entrepreneurship in urban communities. Moon demonstrates historical and contemporary examples of faith based entrepreneurship within the Black religious experience. While his work does not exclusively focus on Black Pentecostalism, he argues that TD Jakes is the best modern example of a successful marriage of theology and economics highlighting Jakes's success in addressing socio-economic issues.⁶¹ Reese's work is concerned with faith based entrepreneurship within Detroit. She points out that examples of faith based enterprise exist, however imperceptibly. Her research suggests that churches endowed with an abundance of government funding display positive example of community economic development. Within her case study she has discovered faith based enterprise through the form of restaurants, cafes, and book store, however notes that this is not a consistent trend.⁶²

Gregory J. Reed's *Economic Empowerment Through the Church's* is concerned with encouraging Black Churches to take a more active role in the economic destiny of African-

⁶⁰ Gipson, P. (2001) *Empowering the Black Community Faith-Based Economic Development*. Master of Science (Applied Economics), University of North Texas. P. Abstract.

⁶¹ Moon, F. (2007) *Faith-Based Entrepreneurship*. Library Faculty and Staff Publications and Presentations. Tennessee State University. P. 15.

⁶² Reese, A. L. (2004). *A Matter of Faith: Urban Congregations and Economic Development*. Economic Development Quarterly. P. 50-55.

American's. Reed provides the reader with statistics which aim to encourage strategies of empowerment within the Black church. Some scholars within the U.S. seem to vary with their opinions on contemporary Black churches, some suggesting altruism whereas others finding evidence of financial enterprise within specific churches.⁶³

African-American literature boasts a holistic culmination of traditions, philosophies, and religious principles, which have been eclectically developed over the past 200 years. As demonstrated, there are many examples of African-American theologians prompting active discourse in the issue of racial economic disparity. The literature often reflects a calculated awareness of the state of the Black church deduced through historical analysis. Interesting, is the fact that many liberation theologians and faith based empowerment advocates share a similar understanding of African-American history, yet arrive at different place with regards to solutions. The common free market strategies identified by these discourses offer pragmatic solutions to achieve a level of financial autonomy against systematic injustices.

Within the U.K. literature of such focus remains imperceptible. Gregory Roberts argues that this is because African-Caribbean's in Britain are a completely different ethnic group to African-Americans and have had a completely different historical experience. He argues that because of this difference African-Caribbean's have had a different experience of entrepreneurship. He goes on to suggest that comparisons between British and American entrepreneurship fail to consider these differences. The patterns identified in African-American theological literature show a considerable difference in comparison with African-Caribbean literature.⁶⁴ This again adds further weigh too the research problem, which prompts me to understand the reasoning behind these variables.

⁶³ Reed, J.G. (1994) *Economic Empowerment Through the Church: A Blueprint for Progressive Community Development*, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House. P. 95.

⁶⁴ Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship*. 85.

Whether the experience of African-Americans and Jamaicans or indeed other African-Caribbean groups are the same in terms of the incidence of entrepreneurship. For here they share racial commonality but different ethnicity. It is this distinction that has been found to be hardly touched by the discussants of ethnic entrepreneurship.

Literature outside of Theology

PowerNomics

African-American businessman Dr. Claude Anderson was discussed in my introduction, as his approach is entirely focused on economic empowerment, I feel it is necessary to provide further details of Anderson's writings.⁶⁵ Anderson has divided his writings into two different books. The first, *Black Labour, White Wealth* focuses on providing a detailed analysis of the relationship between the White power structure and the collective economic disposition of African-Americans in the United States. His second work *Powernomics* is a pragmatic presentation of a conceptual framework and plan to lead Black America to political and economic self-sufficiency and competitiveness.

Powernomics is a holistic work whereby each chapter is designed to provide a permutation of the various ways in which the Black community can configure means of economically empowering themselves. Building upon his first book (which asserted that racism must be approached through an economic paradigm, not social) which is essentially a 5-year plan to transition penurious Black communities into prosperous self-sufficient communities. Anderson shatters what he refers to as 'Myths of Black Progress', and proceeds to analyse every aspect of Black communal functionality. For Anderson, racism insinuates group based competition, as opposed to individual prejudice. He states:

⁶⁵ Within academia Dr. Anderson is most known for his two-works entitled *Black Labour, White Wealth*, and *Powernomics: A National Plan to Empower Black America*.

Racism is wealth- and power-based competitive relationship between Blacks and non-Blacks. The sole purpose of racism is to support and ensure that the White majority and its ethnic subgroups continue to dominate and use Blacks to produce wealth and power over another group then uses those resources to marginalize, exploit, exclude, and subordinate the weaker group.⁶⁶

In response to this definition his book goes onto focus on education, economics, politics, and importantly religion. Regarding education, he emphasizes the importance of restructuring the educational system to produce competitive young adults capable of overthrowing the pattern of white institutional dominance. Regarding politics, Anderson speaks of the importance of monopolising institutions, and contractually investing in politicians who make subscriptions to invest in the empowerment of the Black community. Anderson's action plan involves making use of capitalism to benefit African-Americans, some adverse to the many proponents of liberation theology.

Chapter eight of *Powernomics* is entitled 'A New and Expanded Role for Churches'. In this chapter, Anderson emphasises the abundance of power and resources possessed by the Black church. He begins his chapter by elucidating upon the historical role that Churches played in providing sanctuary for its attendees, as well as the role the church played in pacifying African's during slavery. His intention is to highlight the power potential of the church as an entity. Some of the methodologies for the implementation of Church based empowerment scheme include out of the box religious teaching, Church centred ethno-aggregation, codes-of conduct, collaborations across denominations, fund raising, Church based lending programs and networking.

For Dr. Anderson, the term 'Out of the box religious teaching' implies a focus on the Black race as the central people of the Bible. Similarly, to James Cone, Anderson believes that Black Churches should subscribe to the preferment that the Israelites within the Bible were indeed Black and therefore share a direct lineage with contemporary African-Americans. He furthermore, propagates the promotion of Black economic empowerment using Biblical scripture. Drawing

⁶⁶ Anderson, C, DR (2001) *Powernomics*. P. 5.

upon the story of Samson in the Book of Judges, he suggests that this parable should obligate Black leaders to be more protective of their followers. For Anderson, the moral behind the story here is one of commitment and out of the box thinking, which are two attributes needed to beat an oppressive system.

Divine Economy

European-American scholar D Stephen Long proclaims his book *Divine Economy* to be the first to stimulate an active discourse on the relationship between theology and economics. Similarly, to Marx, Long maintained that theology and economics have held an inextricable relationship. Upon this he subsequently begins his exposition by dividing his work in three classes.⁶⁷ Gregory Roberts writing on Long summarises his tripartite division as follows:

The dominant strain he identifies as that which “seizes the ruling definition of the social” and “does not represent a decisive transgression against the capitalist orthodoxy.”⁶⁸

The next is that of “emergent” in which he categorises all forms of liberation theology due to their anti-capitalist disposition. Finally, residual, which referred to theologians grounded in moralism, and good virtuous conduct within human interaction. Long’s work presents an analysis of liberation theology, labelling it as socialist through its adverse stance on capitalism. Long indicates that liberation theology has given a voice to the oppressed, however makes little reference to prosperity doctrine or the use of theological capitalism to achieve emancipation. His work is more dedicated to examining ideological principles rather than practical theological economics.

European American Evangelical theologian Wayne Grudem’s *Business For The Glory Of God* is concerned with Biblical teachings on economics. He holds the controversial opinion that wealth accumulation and ownership through business is morally glorifying to God, a challenge to the

⁶⁷ Long, D. Stephen (2000) *Divine Economy: theology and the market*. Routledge, Taylor Francis. London. P. 5-10.

⁶⁸ Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship*. P.2.

view held by many liberation theologians who detest all things capitalist. Despite the ambivalence towards profit driven business Grudem maintains that proper business conduct is morally good in itself, and therefore serves God.⁶⁹ At the core of Grudem's theory is the idea of imitating God's attributes of wisdom, knowledge, beauty, creativity, love for others, kindness, fairness, independence, freedom, exercise of will, blessedness (or joy), and so forth".⁷⁰ Our natural inclination to own resources is reflective of the divinity within us versed in Genesis 1:27.⁷¹ Furthermore, Grudem argues that with this wealth we are then endowed with the capacity to help others through moral deeds. For Grudem, the attitude within one's heart is the most important aspects of business, it comes down to the intentions of the individuals.

Grudem has attempted to justify entrepreneurship through Biblical hermeneutics which enable him to deal with the question of immorality posed by many liberation theologians when referring to use of capitalism. Chee Seng Yeap has also argued that the Bible encourages financial prosperity in his book *Bible Verses on Prosperity*.⁷² To pick out an example, he references Job 1:10 which states:

Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land (Job 1:10 King James Version).⁷³

While some may articulate different interpretations of such verses, the point displays an active role by different theologians outside the African-Caribbean theological paradigm to intertwine theology and economics.

⁶⁹ Grudem, W. A. (2003). *Business for the glory of God: The Bible's teaching on the moral goodness of business*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books. P. 97.

⁷⁰ Ibid., P. 73.

⁷¹ Genesis 1:27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (King James Version)

⁷² Yeap, C. (2007). *Bible Verses on Prosperity*. 1st ed. Yeap Chee Seng. P. 1-10.

⁷³ Job 1:10: Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land (King James Version)

Ethnic Entrepreneurship

Ethnic entrepreneurship is a term used to describe self-employed business owners who are categorised as ethnic minorities within a society. Existing research within this topic analyses the relationship between ethnic minority culture and its impact upon wider society. Roger Waldinger has argued that Ethnic entrepreneurship is important due to its potential to restructure western economics.⁷⁴ Within the United States exist detailed analyses of Jewish, Chinese, and Indian entrepreneurship, however discussion on African-American entrepreneurship highlight the potential of African-American business. Steven J Gold argues that evidence suggests that African-American entrepreneurship is a viable option to solve many issues within the Black community. However, he outlines three main reasons for a low ethnic economy. The first of these reasons are cultural and psychological restrictions, referring to the work of E. Franklin Frazier Gold implores that black Americans lack 'a business tradition or the experience of people who, over generations, have engaged in buying and selling'.⁷⁵ The second reason is a lack of access to capital, and the third, western liberalism destroying the need to have black business within the mind of the African-American. Gold raises significant questions around the area of liberalism. The debate is to be had as to how far the mentality of 'we are all the same' impacts upon business and enterprise within African-American communities. Gold further argues that the success of ethnic entrepreneurship within other minority communities has created a feeling of resentment within Black communities, and subsequently prompted calls for a black replication of this success.

Within British literature, Gregory Roberts describes ethnic entrepreneurship as the study of the incidence and process of entrepreneurship by ethnic minorities in a host society.⁷⁶ Within Europe Thierry Vollery highlighted three reasons for a rise in ethnic minority business within

⁷⁴ Waldinger, R., Aldrich, H. and Ward, R. (2006). *Ethnic entrepreneurs*. Newbury Park: Sage. P.79.

⁷⁵ Steven J Gold (2016). *A critical race theory approach to black American entrepreneurship*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 39:9,1697-1718, Taylor & Francis Online, DOI: 10.1080/01419870.2016.1159708, P.4.

⁷⁶ Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship*. P. 82.

Europe. These are, mass immigration from former colonies, transformations in labour markets, and growing opportunities for ethnic minority business.⁷⁷ Monder Ram's *Ethnic Minorities in Business* identified differences in the entrepreneurial activities of African-Caribbean and British Asians, specifying a determination to use entrepreneurship, as a means of solving unemployment in contrast to a high level of inactivity within African-Caribbean communities.⁷⁸ Ward has argued that a lack of culture is responsible for this variable, tracing this phenomenology through the differences in British colonisation of Asia and West Africa (namely the slave trade).⁷⁹ Ultimately Ward is implying that economic empowerment is more embedded within British-Asian in comparison to African-Caribbean's and that this the reason for these differences.

Websites and Articles

A 2015 internet article written by Eric Anthony entitled *Economic Empowerment and the Black Church*⁸⁰ focuses specifically on the relationship between Black theology and Black economics. Anthony begins the article by describing some of the barriers which have mitigated the efficacy of many solutions to systematic racism. Anthony lists some of the factors that have impaired the regeneration of urban communities. In his opinion these are a lack of federal, state, and local resources, a paucity of effective Black leadership, disproportionate amounts of Black

⁷⁷ Volery, Thierry (2007). *Ethnic entrepreneurship: A theoretical framework*. In: *Handbook of Research on Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship: A Co-evolutionary View on Resource Management*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham. P.30.

⁷⁸ Ram, M., Smallbone, D. and Deakins, D. (2002). *Ethnic minority businesses in the UK*. London. British Bankers' Association. P. 354.

⁷⁹ Ward, R. (1991). *Economic development and ethnic business, in Paths of Enterprise*. Eds Curran, J, Blackburn, R. Routledge, London. P. 51-57.

⁸⁰ Johnson, E. (2015). *Economic Empowerment and the Black Church - Eric Anthony Johnson*, Phd. [online] Eric Anthony Johnson, Phd. Available at: <http://drericanthonyjohnson.com/urban-regeneration/economic-empowerment-and-the-black-church/> [Accessed 30 Jun. 2017].

males suffering mass incarceration, and the flight of the Black middle class from urban communities. Subsequently, Anthony sets out a succinct critical analysis of the potential effectiveness of the Black church in solving Black economical susceptibility.

Drawing on the work of Walter Malone Jr, Anthony builds his analysis upon a categorisation of two different types of Black church. He argues that a history of strong African religious traditions, and a need for Black entrepreneurship subsequently led to the creation of; the Sanctuary bound Church, and the Black liberation church. His critique of the 'Sanctuary bound church' is an accusation of altruism, in which the focus is on the afterlife rather than the present. Drawing once again on the work of Walter Malone, he maintains that sanctuary bound churches are often disconnected from the community, therefore retarding their efficacy. On the other hand, Black Liberation Churches radiate the potential of Black entrepreneurship and would be more likely to encourage a message of socio-economic empowerment, alongside spiritual fulfilment. While Anthony concedes that the Black church is by no means thaumaturgic, he does however emphasise that the church would be the perfect starting block for centralising the wealth potential of the community. He goes on to give specific examples of the potential of the church in self-actualising communities into the belief that they have the chance to manage their own wealth potential and collective destiny.

Anthony's work is a short succinct subscription to the Black economic empowerment movement. Drawing insight from scholars of previous generations, Anthony's article is incredibly direct. He aims to impel the reader into action by emphasising the problems, hindrances, and solutions. Importantly for my research Anthony provides an underlying self-empowerment tone to the reader, which attempts to shift the reliance upon the white power structure for economic success, into the hands of the Black individual.

Within the U.K. a directory for Black business networking exists, suggesting a move to encourage Black entrepreneurship. A Christian based website entitled *Keep the faith*⁸¹ maintains a healthy involvement within the Black community raising awareness of different issues and success stories. Regarding business and entrepreneurship, there exist a number of contactable businesses, as well as leading figures calling for developments in Black communities.

A nationwide Christian business network named Training Kings⁸² provides guidance to businesses owners. The network was established by White British Christian entrepreneur Samuel King, who has dedicated his time to establishing businesses within the Christian religion. While his network does not exclusively deal with Christians, or designate itself solely within African-Caribbean communal affairs, it at least confirms existing examples of religious enterprise within Britain.

The literature accumulated within this chapter raises an interesting dichotomy between capitalist entrepreneurial practice, and socialist criticisms of an unjust system. Advocates of Black capitalism such as Dr. Claude Anderson have focused on economic solutions through the Church as a central supportive institution. Liberation theologians have placed the entirety of the blame upon capitalism, a system which in their eyes cannot coexist with a desire to eradicate racism. Despite this combination of polarising theories, within the United States exists a multitude of scholars and academics raising practical discourses on Black entrepreneurship. Economists and theologians alike are interested in pragmatic approaches converge spirituality and material success. Despite criticisms of these attempts to achieve prosperity through religion, their efforts remain indefatigable. In contrast, there is a shortage of literature within the U.K. dealing with African-Caribbean economic empowerment at its epicentre. This precipitates many questions

⁸¹ Keepthefait.co.uk. (2017). *Keep The Faith* ® – Britain's leading Black and minority ethnic (BME) community-focused publication promoting and supporting unity, faith and family values. [online] Available at: <https://www.keepthefait.co.uk/> [Accessed 15 Sep. 2017].

⁸² Trainingkings. (2017). *trainingkings*. [online] Available at: <https://www.trainingkings.co.uk> [Accessed 16 Sep. 2017].

upon which I have predicated potential research problems. Literature suggests that attempts to economically empower African-Caribbean communities from theological paradigms are non-existent. I will explore how far my field research reflects this trend.

Chapter 3 - Nation of Islam

I will begin by examining the practices and teachings of the Nation of Islam (NOI), a venerable organisation concerned with Black liberation. My examination of the NOI will analyse literature both inside and outside the precincts of the organisation, as this will help me to distinguish between theory and practice. I intend to accumulate an abundance of information on the core beliefs of the NOI, and contrast this with the actualised practices of the Nation.

The Nation of Islam is an ethno-religious movement that has been commonly associated with the peripheries of the Islamic religion. Officially founded in 1930 in Detroit by W.D. Fard Muhammad, the foundations of the NOI are eclectic as they draw influence from a wide range of social and religious doctrines (some of which are not associated within orthodox Islam), racial and political responses, and social economic matters. Importantly for the wider picture, it should be noted that the early history of the NOI evidences their strong inclination to economically empower non-white ethnic groups (specifically the Black race) a feature which continues to the present day. Analysing this literature will enable me to contrast the philosophy of the NOI with their contemporary practices, allowing me to potentially shed new light upon this topic.

Throughout the early history of the NOI; The Reconstruction era, The Civil Rights era, the reinvigoration during the 1990s, and within contemporary society, the NOI have had an inextricable influence on the Black community. Despite many changes within the NOI over their near 100-year history, the propagation of Black capitalist strategies remains unchanging. Their philosophy is comparable with Dr. Anderson's notion of 'ethno-aggregation' which aims to circulate wealth within a specific ethnic group. The NOI view this type of practice as potentially liberating the Black race from their need to rely on the white power structure.

The NOI implemented a race-based code of conduct regarding economic practice that was designed to achieve political, economic, and social autonomy. For many, the separatist stance of the Nation appealed to those who believed that social integration would be financially disastrous for the African-American community. Examinations of literature written by current and former NOI leaders reflect this unchanging separatist doctrine as a means of impelling structured messages of self-empowerment within Black communities. I have discovered from this analysis, the existence of a carefully configured formula designed to create intergenerational wealth as a means of achieving Black liberation.

Elijah Muhammad

For over thirty years Elijah Muhammad was responsible for the leadership of the NOI. Under his tenure Muhammad helped to configure some of the quintessential doctrines of the NOI. Through the means of lecture, literature, and oral transmission Muhammad disseminated key doctrines of the NOI, many of which are still exercised within contemporary forms of the organisation. One of these quintessential doctrines placed heavy emphasis upon economic empowerment, information on which can be found in one of Muhammad's most ground-breaking pieces of literature *Message to the Blackman*, which was a didactic book published in 1965 during the culmination of the Civil Rights Movement.

*Message to the Blackman*⁸³ is a concise work which aimed to outline the key principles of the Nation of Islam. Importantly, these principles were predominantly founded upon the teachings of Elijah Muhammad and included his own exegesis of canonical scripture (Biblical, Qur'anic and others), and a plethora of precepts, maxims, and axioms, which were generally held as gospel by many members of the NOI. The purpose of this work was the establishment of a new revolutionary institution which intended to give Black men, women, and children a structured code of conduct which would eventually serve to reconcile Black communities mentally, socio-politically, and economically. Muhammad himself proclaimed to be the messenger of Allah, and therefore it was under his leadership that many members of the NOI sought his divine promulgations for the procurement of Black empowerment. Muhammad is often considered a controversial character; his assertions are held in high regard by most advocates of an economically empowering Black Liberation Theology.

For the purpose of this research, I will fast forward to chapter seven of *Message to the Blackman* as this section reveals a sifted focus upon practical methods for Black economic

⁸³ Muhammad, E. (1973). *Message to the Blackman*. 1st ed. Phoenix, Arizona: Secretarius MEMPS Publications.

empowerment. Chapter seven is entitled '*Economic Program*' a self-explanatory maxim coined by Muhammad in relation to his purported economic solutions, which are evidenced below:

Before the black man can begin to gain economic security, he must be awakened from the dead and gain knowledge, understanding and wisdom which will enable him to follow my teachings.⁸⁴

This literature suggests that Muhammad's intention was to erect a shift in mental consciousness within the mind of his target audience. The genesis of this chapter suggests that Muhammad believed that the first stage of empowerment pertained to the mind of the individual, and furthermore that a psychological victory must necessarily precede the physical one. Subsequently, Muhammad believed that in order to implement an economic code of conduct, he must first aid Black communities in practically understanding the principles of self-love and self-belief, and he attempted to do this by way of previous doctrines found within the preceding chapters. The dissemination of Muhammad's economic blueprint can be broken down into five key principles.

1. Recognize the necessity for unity and group operation (activities).⁸⁵

This principle embodies the necessity of a need for Black individuals to recognise a need for Black economic empowerment. It explains that the reader must understand why there is a need for enterprise.

2. Pool your resources, physically as well as financially.⁸⁶

This principle asserts the philosophy of ethno-aggregation, the idea that Black people must grasp the economic based nature of capitalism by pooling resources collaboratively to induce autonomous wealth.

3. Stop wanton criticisms of everything that is black-owned and black-operated.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

This principle is a response to the criticisms of the separatist doctrine of the NOI. Muhammad is essentially encouraging members of the NOI to apply the previous idea of ethno-aggregation, without the moral guilt of accumulating wealth at the expense of White owned businesses.

4. Keep in mind -- jealousy destroys from within.⁸⁸

This principle embodies that there must be a general correspondence between those practicing enterprise, as emotional attributes, such as jealousy could impair the efficacy of the blueprint.

5. Observe the operations of the white man. He is successful. He makes no excuses for his failures. He works hard in a collective manner. You do the same.⁸⁹

This epigram encouraged Black people to polarize the economic actions of 'The White man' to mimic their efficacious rise to financial self-sufficiency (generally speaking). Muhammad was also suggesting that the integration of wealth would be financially counter-productive for the Black race.

What follows on from these principles is an instructive methodology for the procurement of Black wealth. The character of this chapter is written with a purported aphorism, in which Muhammad dispels the idea that accumulating income by working for 'The White Man' should be associated with any kind of success. Through the means of religious enthusiasm, Muhammad attempted to utilise the NOI to achieve his goal of a separatist, autonomous, and economically self-sufficient nation. The content within this chapter shows conclusive methodologies for the efficacy of Muhammad's goal. Examples of this are; the encouraging of small donations to fund the building of a Black Banking system, an *Economic Savings program* designed to conserve finances until autonomously Black owned hospitals, schools, and other institutions were built, as

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

well as didactic advisory teachings on how Black people were to save their money, and later invest in agriculture and other segments of business.

In this chapter, Muhammad focuses upon the idea of the NOI as a central institution for the establishment of networking enterprise from which members of the community would practice collaborative wealth building by spending and pooling their money only with one another. This literature is important as it prompts a discussion on the methodology of enterprise, something which is applicable to all aspects of Black religion.

Elijah Muhammad's ideal of a separate, autonomous, and financially self-sufficient Black nation poses a direct challenge to the orthodox Christian integrationist. While the topic of social integration is not our focus, this literature does indicate that religious institutions can be used as the cornerstone for enterprise within a community. The work of Elijah Muhammad (and others) is still relevant within contemporary society, as it touches upon the broader domain of financial well-being. Evidence of a concise focus upon enterprise tied to a faith based institution is evidenced and furthermore indicates the existence of a trend that continued during my examination of the Nation of Islam. The following quote is evidence of this focus:

As a people we must become producers, and not consumers, we must become employers and not employees.⁹⁰

Repetition is a word usually employed to designate the action of repeating something that has already been spoken or transcribed. During my examination of literature associated with the Nation of Islam, I have observed a repetitious trend which has accordingly followed on from the economic teachings of Elijah Muhammad. The maxims, axioms, and precepts asserted by Minister Louis Farrakhan are indicative of this trend, and while this is largely because Elijah Muhammad was the teacher of Farrakhan, it demonstrates a continuation of Muhammad's legacy.

⁹⁰ Ibid. P. 56.

Louis Farrakhan

Since 1978 Louis Farrakhan has been the leader of the Nation of Islam, and while some of his ideas have marginally deviated from the doctrine set out by Elijah Muhammad, the underlying goals of economic independence have maintained traditional dispositions. I will focus upon Farrakhan's 1993 work entitled *A Torchlight for America*⁹¹ in which Farrakhan attempts to reinvigorate the core teachings of Elijah Muhammad and adapt them accordingly within contemporary society. Based upon a 1992 speech given by Farrakhan, this work has been constructed upon a purported aphorism in which Farrakhan provides the reader with his venerable observations of issues within American society. Farrakhan identifies a plethora of issues within American society, however I will focus upon his proposals for economic reform.

As mentioned previously, *A Torchlight For America* was modelled upon a speech given by Farrakhan in 1992. In the beginning of the speech Farrakhan outlines a need to focus upon poverty and economics by wittingly applying the epigram 'Vital Signs'⁹², a term which he employs synonymously with economics. According to Farrakhan the economy of the United States is in a state of 'grave disrepair'⁹³, a situation precipitated by the superseding of federal budgets, and other elitist injustices.

In detail Farrakhan presents to the attention of the audience (reader) an abundance of data detailing the covert financial crisis of the American government and how this filters down to every member of American society. Farrakhan raises the awareness of those in attendance by detailing statistics which highlight inter-racial economic disparities between Whites and Blacks, Indian's, and Hispanics. Using comparative examples of disproportionality in Black-White

⁹¹ Farrakhan, L. (1993). *A torchlight for America*. Chicago: FCN Publishing Co.

⁹² *Ibid.*, P.7.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, P.7-10.

unemployment, Farrakhan intends to provide statistical data which will encourage a desire for entrepreneurship within the Black community.

Farrakhan's teachings regarding economics are foundationally cultivated by the previous work of Elijah Muhammad, whom he commonly adapts to tailor their relevance to the present day. His purpose is to breathe new life into these old teachings and convergently couple them with scriptural references which employ a self-belief in a self-sufficient economic model. In this speech, he makes Biblical references, for example:

And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. (Isaiah 61:4 King James Version).⁹⁴

Farrakhan's philosophy is built upon exegeses of Biblical and Qur'anic scripture, in which he attempts to plant a seed of action in the mind of his audience. Scriptural references are often married with statistics which indicate the vast potential of the accumulation of Black wealth. An example of this was Farrakhan's cry for the perpetual and faithful saving of 35 Cent a week to contribute to the National Savings Treasure, an idea first implemented by Elijah Muhammad. The science behind this programme is the accumulation of wealth amongst millions of African-Americans to aid the collaborative investment of a savings treasure which would serve community interests. Mathematically speaking Farrakhan called upon 16 Million Black workers, to raise \$291 Million over the course of one year, an incredible sum for a seemingly miniscule weekly amount. The purpose of this was to invest in farmland, agriculture, and land in which autonomous Black owned institutions could build productive systems conducive to a Nation. This proposal was influenced by Elijah Muhammad who had set out a similar proposal differing only in monetary amounts which were more conducive to the chronology in which he was writing. Importantly Farrakhan saw the Mosque as the central pillar in enterprise, and asserted that all

⁹⁴ Isaiah 61:4 - And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. (King James Version)

members of the NOI would contribute to self-sufficient productivity. Such axioms were commonly backed up with scripture, and codes of conduct.

In all, Farrakhan's economic plan does not tremendously deviate from Elijah Muhammad's plan, they hold the same, intentions, goals, and methodology for producing Black Economic empowerment. The evidence of faith based enterprise is not only apparent but it is unapologetically dedicated in disseminating this message to as many people as possible. The lifework of the leaders of the NOI have been in the direction of planting a seed of economic growth in the collective consciousness of all those associated with the NOI (Which according to their doctrine includes all Black people). Their emphasis upon enterprise seeks to dominate the thoughts of readers and listeners alike, to attune the holistic mental application of individuals into the belief the ability to change prevailing conditions starts with self. It is from the mental level that Farrakhan hoped to imbed characteristics such as responsibility, discipline, and economic know-how to build the community autonomously.

Academic Literature on the NOI

I have examined the philosophies of the NOI's two most venerable leaders, the next portion of my work presents opinions and observations within academia. Dawn Marie Gibson and Herbert Berg have put together *New Perspectives on the Nation of Islam*, a work which may be described as a contemporary attempt to prompt new and unorthodox considerations regarding historical understandings of the NOI and their principles. The authors claim that their intention is to expand what we know of this movement by examining important aspects of the NOI that have been neglected in earlier scholarship.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ Gibson, D-M (2017), *New Perspectives on the Nation of Islam, Routledge Studies in Religion Series (co-edited with Herbert Berg)*. P.3.

The authors acknowledged that within NOI thought, religious values were inextricably married to the promulgation of enterprise. Their research highlights the quintessential NOI critiques of American society, whilst simultaneously emphasising the inundation of business productivity within the 'corrupt' system. The authors have outlined the steps taken by the NOI to achieve autonomous enterprise within America.

They note that although the NOI criticises 'White Capitalism' they concurrently advocated 'Black capitalism' as a self-serving response. Married to this desire for economic autonomy, was the strict dietary code of conduct implemented by the Nation. Gibson and Berg have commented on the relationship between food regulations and the need for Black owned businesses indicating that they share an incipient link with ownership of land. Gibson and Berg suggest that the cardinal aim behind the ownership of land was to transition Black communities into producers rather than consumers. If we refer back to my introduction, I have discussed the importance of the ownership and production of resources as a necessary component in economic development. The evidence within this book represents evidence of an integration of entrepreneurial activity into NOI theology.

Gibson and Berg have also discussed, community building, food enterprises, and group policing as evidence of entrepreneurial activity. They also note that the creation of restaurants, bakeries, butcher shops, processing plants, tractor-trailer companies, and Black owned farms were not uncommon within the movement. This writing shows us that the NOI were focused on building communal prosperity and their many endeavours into the world of enterprise prove this intention. Their attitudes towards enterprise reflect their ethno-cultural, political and religious ideologies. Every facet of their philosophy strived towards success, and Gibson's writings indicate their understanding of the importance of economics empowerment within this.

Despite documenting the steps taken by the NOI to procure self-sufficiency, the authors have questioned how successful they were. Dawn Marie-Gibson, writing in another book entitled A

History of the Nation of Islam: Race, Islam, and the Quest for Freedom critically examines the success of the 'Black Capitalism' implored by the NOI. Focusing specifically upon the 1950s, she writes:

The NOI's affluence in the late 1950s provided Muhammad, and his immediate family, and officials with a lucrative lifestyle.⁹⁶

She elucidates upon the various methods implored by the Nation to procure wealth, for example; obligatory donations, business profits, and foreign investments with countries such as Libya and Saudi Arabia. Gibson suggests that the NOI were often successful in their enterprise, however ethically criticised the diffusion of their profits. Her comments are reminiscent of the criticisms described in my literature review of individual beneficiaries of the prosperity gospel.

Economically, the NOI reinvigorated the nostalgic ideologies of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association, preaching racial empowerment within the African diaspora. AA. Akom makes a strong case for the NOI reforming Black perceptions of achievement. In his article *Re-examining Resistance as Oppositional Behaviour: The Nation of Islam and the Creation of a Black Achievement Ideology* he provides evidence that is highly suggestive as to the practices of the NOI reconstructing the paradigm of success with the mind of black individuals. His evidence qualifies as both qualitative and quantitative due to his documentation of historical data and self-submitted experience in a NOI mosque. Importantly, his work on Black achievement ideology contextualises this ideology concurrently with their methods of economic empowerment.

The fundamental conceptions of Akom's article are built upon Mattias Gardell's theory on Black achievement ideology which states:

⁹⁶ Gibson, D. (2012). *A history of the Nation of Islam*. Santa Barbara, Calif: Praeger. P.40.

The black achievement ideology is a theory about the world-how and why it was created and how human beings relate to and should act in the world (Gardell 1996).⁹⁷

Drawing influence from this purported axiom, Akom forms the basis of his work through an examination of the key principles of the Nation of Islam, describing the relation to Gardell's theory. Notwithstanding the many other facets of this topic, Akom breaks down this theory into the subsequent principles:

In short, rigid morals, self-determination, non-traditional Islam, and Black Nationalism are the key elements that constitute what I refer to as the NOI's black achievement ideology.⁹⁸

Black Nationalism is an appellation which implicitly refers to the economic doctrine of the NOI as well as other tenants. Further analysis of these doctrinal promulgations allow me to identify trends within NOI literature, and importantly for my research, Akom has provided us with transcriptions of his experiences in the mosque whilst simultaneously evaluating history. A transcript from his attendance at a NOI mosque reads,

.. We need to have our own economic institutions. We already have our own companies... we've built our own industries. ... We own this building-this land that I am standing on.... We own ourselves. . . . And that's why we don't need the white man ... because we are independent.... Isn't that right?⁹⁹

The above transcription conclusively tells us that as a religious organisation, the NOI are decidedly focused upon achieving economic autonomy. It evidences a grounded Black capitalism intertwined with a political theology different from the political theologies discussed by Black British Pentecostals. Akom's quantitative and qualitative conclusions deliver compelling cases of economic empowerment within a religious institution.

The work of Nuri Tinaz provides us with a unique insight into the work of the NOI within the UK. Analysis of this work reveals the many differences between the NOI in the U.S.A., in

⁹⁷ Akom, A. (2003). *Reexamining Resistance as Oppositional Behavior: The Nation of Islam and the Creation of a Black Achievement Ideology*. *Sociology of Education*. P. 307.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid., P 314.

comparison with the UK. My findings in this work, have enabled me to identify a trend which extends beyond the NOI, but also to Black British religious experience. The trend refers to the lack of organised faith based economic empowerment *initiatives* with a definitive end goal. The author of this journal has contextualised this trend, and provided a myriad of reasons for it. He writes:

Unlike the African-Americans, the African-Caribbeans in the UK do not have a similar history of civil rights and neither do they have well-organized militant, radical and nationalist black organizations with definite goals and genuine power bases. They came here as free people, not as a result of the chain of slavery.¹⁰⁰

Tinaz observes that there are differences within the historical experiences between African-Americans and African-Caribbeans. Tinaz contrasts the impact of the NOI within Britain and America and frameworks his dialogue upon the back drop of differences in ethnicity. His emphasis upon these differences strongly echoes the opinions of Gregory Roberts regarding this comparison. He argues that despite the differences in experience, many African-Caribbeans within Britain coherently associated the African-American struggle of the 1960s with their own, an association which prompted the growth of the movements such as the NOI within Britain.

Tinaz suggests that economic disparity played an important role in the popularity of the NOI within Britain, given their capacity to achieve prosperity through capitalist techniques. According to Tinaz the impact of the NOI led to the creation of institutions like educational, economic and business enterprises. The NOI had three schools: The New Mind School in Brixton which offered courses on weekends; the Star Chamber Academy in Shepherd's Bush; and the Nation of Islam School in Hackney which offered full-time nursery, primary and secondary schooling with a distinctive dress code and curriculum. This article provides evidence of an intercontinental trend within NOI practices within the UK & U.S.A. It tells us that the intentions of this religious

¹⁰⁰ Nuri Tinaz (2006) *Black Islam in Diaspora: The Case of Nation of Islam (NOI) in Britain*, Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, 26:2, 151-170, DOI: 10.1080/13602000600937580, P.151.

movements as a collective family were commonly married to Elijah Muhammad's economic blueprint.

A 1997 article offers an insight into the rise of the NOI within the UK, however fails to account for any economic endeavours. Aside from the work of Tinaz, there is a paucity of academic literature on the NOI within Britain. Does this paucity suggest that the NOI's influence in Britain was marginal? It is difficult to make accurate deductions about the influence of Elijah Muhammad's economic programme within Britain because of this shortage of literature.

The case of Tinaz shows us evidence of NOI enterprise within Britain. Despite the small scale of their influence, Tinaz has revealed their endeavour to economically empower. The NOI (in the U.K. or U.S.A.) are strictly focused upon organised enterprise as a means of achieving liberation, for the Nation, the religious demonization of which they belong acts as a necessary agent in achieving these goals. While such examples of this tenacity exist within some forms of Pentecostalism in the U.K. these principles are not seemingly met with the same inundation. These findings, furthermore justify the necessity of my research, in critically assessing the validity of these patterns and drawing logical conclusions on potential and existing methodologies employed by religious instructions in achieving collective congregational wealth accumulation.

Within the above chapters I've learnt that American academics seem more willing to engage in enterprise and entrepreneurship than is the case in Britain. Despite scholars such as Kate Bowler¹⁰¹ questioning their morality, Fletcher M. Moon has described the practice of Prosperity Doctrine by Frederick K.C. Price as a successful marriage between theology and economics.¹⁰² Furthermore, the didactic writings of Phillip E. Gipson¹⁰³, Dr. Claude Anderson¹⁰⁴, Gregory J.

¹⁰¹ Bowler, Kate. (2013). *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel*. P.168.

¹⁰² Moon, F. (2007) *Faith-Based Entrepreneurship*. Library Faculty and Staff Publications and Presentations. Tennessee State University. P.16.

¹⁰³ Gipson, P. (2001) *Empowering the Black Community Faith-Based Economic Development*.

¹⁰⁴ Anderson, C, DR (2001) *Powernomics: The National Plan to Empower Black America*.

Reed¹⁰⁵, and Eric Johnson¹⁰⁶ have all propagated faith based economic empowerment by highlighting the wealth potential of the church. Their writings hold consonance with the ethnic entrepreneurship described by Stephen J Gold.¹⁰⁷

Within the U.K., Monder Ram's identification of a lack of entrepreneurial activity within African-Caribbean's is consistent with most African-Caribbean theologians who are passive or minimalistic in their response to faith based economic empowerment. While Robert Beckford has in part discussed the need for prosperity teaching and called for a new political theology, Gregory Roberts suggested that there is a lack of economic focus. Roberts is one of few whose thesis is centred on African-Caribbean entrepreneurship with the Pentecostal church. Roberts identified a lack of African-Caribbean scholarship on faith based economic empowerment, something that I have also noticed.

My examinations of the NOI have importantly added another layer of comparison to this discussion. The evidence from Elijah Muhammad, Louis Farrakhan, Akom, and Tinaz suggests that within Britain and America the NOI theoretically and actively endeavour to create autonomous wealth and use it to establish self-serving institutions which reflect their religious and political world view. The differences between Britain and America in this instance lie within the scale, with the NOI in America maintaining a wider influence than in the U.K.

The implications of these chapters create a research problem which necessitates an investigation of the reasons behind the polarising differences between African-Caribbean and American academics. Also, the case of the NOI presents evidence of leaders disseminating economic empowerment through a political theology, which is then adopted by the followers.

¹⁰⁵ Reed, J. G (1994) *Economic Empowerment Through the Church: A Blueprint for Progressive Community Development*, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House.

¹⁰⁶ Johnson, E. (2015). *Economic Empowerment and the Black Church* - Eric Anthony Johnson, Phd. [online] Eric Anthony Johnson, Phd. Available at: <http://drericanthonyjohnson.com/urban-regeneration/economic-empowerment-and-the-black-church/> [Accessed 30 Jun. 2017].

¹⁰⁷ Gold, J.S. (2016) *A critical race theory approach to black American entrepreneurship*.

This prompts us to investigate the mentality of church Bishops and leaders to identify their opinions regarding Black economic empowerment and their approach to delivering sermons. I will use auto-ethnographic research (described in the next chapter) to examine how far the literature is reflective of actual practice.

Importantly, this literature review has identified a lacuna within African-Caribbean theological writing. These theologians have often characterised Pentecostalism as a tool of empowerment, however have not detailed the ways in which it can support in collaborative enterprise and entrepreneurship. This literature also shows that African-American theology has become intertwined within ethnic entrepreneurship and Black economic empowerment movements. They seem to actively engage in the economic destiny of their community. This begs the question as to why this is not reflected within African-Caribbean Pentecostal churches.

Chapter 4 - Research Methodology - Responding to Research Questions

Research Overview

The previous chapters provided a contextual response to my first research question, which sought to comparatively investigate the attitudes of African-Caribbean academics regarding enterprise and entrepreneurship. This chapter serves as a justification of research techniques used whilst conducting field research. It will justify the methods implored whilst discerning a

deeper understanding of Birmingham based African-Caribbean Pentecostal attitudes towards enterprise and entrepreneurship. This chapter contains detailed systematic insights into the chosen research methodologies, and explains how they support the search for an adequate response to my hypothesis.

This research methodology has been structured in the following order; First, a definition of research followed by an explanation of its applicable purpose within this thesis. Second, a critical consideration of the methodological approach to chapters two and three. Third, an examination and justification of the qualitative research techniques used within this study and how they relate to a personal context. Finally, I have examined the place of auto-ethnography within academia and explain why I have used it.

What is Research?

The word research may be described as a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a topic(s). Research is the most important element of a dissertation, and when efficiently conducted can effectively examine complex human behavioural patterns, and identify trends in scholarship, beliefs, and values. Research serves as a tool for the acquisition of knowledge, which in turn enables researchers the chance to identify the reasons why people behave the way they do. Furthermore, research provides us with the opportunity to discover the untold stories of everyday people. Upon this research journey, we are fortunate to be able to document these arcane activities.

The purpose of my research was to collect data and subsequently deduce accurate and relevant results from it. To achieve my purpose, I undertook various forms of data collection enabling me to produce more reliable conclusions. The techniques implored during this process have helped to clarify results and draw coherent conclusions from them. Scholar Ranjit Kumar writes:

Research is a habit of questioning what you do, and a systematic way of examining your clinical observations to explain and find answers for what you observe in your practice, with a view to instituting appropriate changes for a more effective professional service.¹⁰⁸

Essentially, research offers an experiential interpretation of events which holds within it the potential of introspectively altering one's perception. I can say that within this study I have reformed my perceptions through experiences and articulated my new conclusions to the reader.

Harry T. Reis and Charles M Judd propagate that:

Research undertaken for the purpose of explanation has the goal of determining not only whether causation exists but why and under what conditions.¹⁰⁹

I have chosen my research methods, with a view to responding to my hypothesis and research questions.

Research Methodologies

I have used qualitative research techniques to strengthen my conclusions. The experiential nature of qualitative research has offered palpable insights into the nature of human behaviour.

Laura M. Dwyer and James A. Bernauer in their book entitled *Quantitative Research for the Qualitative Researcher* suggested that:

Qualitative research seeks to discover new knowledge by retaining complexities as they exist in natural settings.¹¹⁰

Qualitative research techniques have allowed me to reference personal observations without having to appeal to idealistic objective truths. Qualitative research in this sense can be justified within the context of its subjectivity.

¹⁰⁸ Kumar, R. (2014). *Research methodology*. 4th ed. P. 22.

¹⁰⁹ Reis, H. and Judd, C. (2000). *Handbook of research methods in social and personality psychology*. P. 12.

¹¹⁰ O'Dwyer, L. and Bernauer, J. (2013). *Quantitative research for the qualitative researcher*. P 24.

Chapters two and three have critically reviewed academic literature in response to my first research question. Qualitative research will serve as a dynamic comparative reference point between the literature review and results obtained through qualitative research.

The Organised Literature Review

My first research question aimed to discern academic thought regarding faith based economic empowerment within African-Caribbean and African-American churches. This led me to categorise my research into the following sections chronology, geography, and paradigm. This aided the identification of trends or changes within scholarship. Drawing upon the perceptions of scholars provided a further point of comparison within my own results.

First, I chronologically ordered my literature review to identify consistencies within different time frames. Second, I divergently organised the literature review into British and American literature. This helped to structurally respond to my third research question which intended to compare academic thoughts within American and African-Caribbean theology, and other schools of thought. Implementing this comparative analysis has widened the scope of my research and allowed me to explore the reasons behind identified behavioural patterns with regards to environment and geo-political culture. Finally, I have categorised my literature review into different schools of thought, exploring the views of businessmen, economists, African-Caribbean Pentecostals, etc. I have done this to ensure that the literature review maintains a holistic approach in understanding relevant academic thought. This provides another resourceful point of comparison when analysing attitudes towards faith based economic empowerment.

Chapter three reviews literature focused on the Nation of Islam. This is to add another point of comparison between African-Caribbean Pentecostalism regarding enterprise. Historically, the NOI have explicitly integrated economic empowerment into their political theology. This will add a layer of depth, when reflecting upon entrepreneurial responses to racism.

I conducted a pertinent search for literature which could provide me with more evidence of black enterprise. This search involved accessing journal articles using key terms such as 'Black enterprise', 'Black economics' 'faith based entrepreneurship' etc. Academic journals were very useful in my literature review, as they are often peer-reviewed and considered verifiable. Journals are often carefully constructed to contain contemporarily relevant information which is often evidenced with case studies. This was an extremely effective tool in providing me with examples of qualitative research, and enabled me to add an extra layer of depth to my comparative analysis.

I made use of a wide variety of books within my research, helping me to establish an understanding of historical and contemporary scholarship on Black enterprise. During the incipient stages of my research, I drew upon material which I had previously collected due to a personal interest I had in this subject prior to writing this dissertation. As is the case with most authoritative scholarship, it serves as a platform from which a researcher can gain access to many comprehensive books. These books, I evaluated, provided me with historical overviews, case studies, theories, theologies, and background information pertaining to my research questions.

I would often examine the chapters within each book, because many books tended not to focus on Black Pentecostal enterprise in their entirety. Subsequently, I sought the advice of Bishops, theologians, and peers in helping identify resourceful literature. In many cases specific chapters were recommended to me.

Online articles and websites were another form of research used. The advantage of using websites was their ease of access and often concise nature. In many cases, key word searches such as 'Black enterprise' or 'Black Church economics' provided me with statistics, reviews, recent events, and a wide range of opinions. Websites were extremely resourceful in providing quick-fire access to information. I took care to avoid inaccurate or biased websites which may present misleading information by excluding sites with no accreditations.

My literature review enabled me to expand my knowledge base whilst helping me to identify a research problem. It was essential to carry out this type of research early on as to establish a foundation for my investigation. I was then able to focus my research on evaluating and seeking answers in response to the identified research problem. This literature was a necessary antecedent to the other stages of my research.

Qualitative Research

Having formulated the nature of my research problem, my next step was to design qualitative research strategies which would enable me to effectively gather relevant information. I chose to utilise qualitative research techniques due to their tried and tested nature to explain variables in results. My research questions sought to critically analyse the dynamic relationship between African-Caribbean Pentecostalism and economic empowerment. Gaining insights into these variables is achievable through qualitative research. Essentially, I sought to understand the psyche of contemporary individuals and formulate an empathetic interpretation of their present situation.

Imploring qualitative research enabled me to tangibly deduce insights from the direct experiences of individuals in a natural setting.

I designed my investigation to be conducted naturally, because this would produce more reliable results. The topic of African-Caribbean Pentecostal enterprise demands an intricate qualitative analysis. As identified in my literature review, there is a paucity of evidence suggesting that practical cases of enterprise are happening within this community. Qualitative research allows me to explore how far this trend lends itself to practical reality.

Scholar, Uwe Flick has contextualised the practice of qualitative research and listed its benefits.

Flick describes qualitative research as:

Intended to approach the world 'out there' (not in specialized research settings such as laboratories) and to understand, describe, and sometimes explain social phenomena 'from the inside' in a number of different ways.¹¹¹

According to Flick, qualitative research is a pragmatic tool in which we can delineate interpretations of social phenomena. Typically, qualitative research methods are often utilised by researchers interested in social sciences and those seeking to understand factors behind human behaviour.

What is Auto-Ethnography?

In my search to examine the African-Caribbean Pentecostal community, I have implemented a branch of qualitative research known as ethnography, and specifically auto-ethnography. Similarly, to an Auto-biography, auto ethnography immerses the researcher at the epicentre of social interactions, behaviours, and understandings. Implementing this as a research methodology has aided me in existentially and subjectively understanding a community of peoples, specifically African-Caribbean individuals within a Pentecostal paradigm. Ethnographic research has granted me a unique understanding of ethno-cultural behaviour, practice, and lifestyle. Furthermore, I used auto-ethnographic techniques in my research to allow me to explore the reasoning behind these as cultural patterns.

I carried out auto-ethnographic observations within my research by visiting multiple Pentecostal churches and detailing my observations in these settings. Auto-ethnography is a controversial research methodology which allows researchers the freedom to explore the deeper recesses of emotive and bodily responses and furthermore, reference these as an existential understanding of data. Auto-ethnography opens up the door of subjectivity, and while this has traditionally been a reason for criticisms within scholarship, I have utilised auto-ethnography as a way to procure my results introspectively.

¹¹¹ Flick, U. (2007). *The Sage qualitative research kit*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd. P. X.

My purpose behind utilising qualitative research techniques is to provide sound accurate documentations of intrinsic feelings shared by people of churches, and scholars alike. By imploring these methods, I aim to paint a vivid picture of the realities of the relationship between the Black church, black enterprise, and the people attending these institutions themselves.

Carolyn Ellis in her book *Auto-ethnography* writes:

I pay attention to physical feelings, thoughts, and emotions. I use what I call systematic, sociological introspection.¹¹²

What Ellis is essentially saying is that auto-ethnography treats subjectivity as a necessary component of inter-personal communications, and superseding potential generalisations that may be made in attempts to understand social science objectively. Whilst carrying out my research I understood that entities such as religious and racial expression must be 'felt', a term which I avertedly apply subjectively. Auto-ethnographic research has allowed me to examine evidence comparatively with my literature review, ethnographic observations (which I will discuss shortly), and furthermore my hypothesis and research questions.

All truths are but half-truths; all paradoxes may be reconciled – The Kybalion.¹¹³

In other words, objectively attempting to understand the complexities of social science renders itself unto desensitisation. Hari Stephen Kumar claims that auto-ethnography is a tool which can be used to decolonise academic knowledge production. He writes:

Within the academy, colonizing structures manifest in ways that value disembodied and objectified Western knowledges about people, while excluding certain bodies and lived experiences from research texts.¹¹⁴

¹¹² Ellis, C and Bochner, A.P. (2000). *Autoethnography, Personal Narrative, Reflexivity: Researcher as Subject,* in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. California: Sage Publications. P. 3.

¹¹³ Initiates, T. (2007). *Kybalion, the: a study of the hermetic philosophy of ancient Egypt and Greece*. BiblioLife. P. 10.

¹¹⁴ Kumar, S. (2011). *Decolonizing Texts: A Performance Autoethnography*. M.A. University of Massachusetts. P. Abstract.

This is further reasoning for my usage of auto-ethnographic research, as one cannot objectively understand the African-Caribbean Pentecostal community and disregard the historical context of colonialism. This is a key reason for which I have implored auto-ethnographic subjectivity in my research, as I wanted to capture the essence of the contemporary African-Caribbean experience and contrast it to a scholastic framework (literature review). This increases the potential of my research, having a consequential effect in the field of research understanding.

How I carried out Auto-ethnographic research

Carolyn Ellis has written:

Autoethnography refers to writing about the personal and culture. It is an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness... back and forth auto-ethnographers gaze: first they look through an ethnographical wide angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their experience: then, they look inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract and resist cultural interpretations...as they zoom backward and forward, inward and outward, distinctions between the personal and cultural become blurred, sometimes beyond distinct recognition. Usually written in first person voice, autoethnographic texts appear in a variety of forms - short stories, poetry, fiction, novels, photographic essays, scripts, personal essays, journals, fragmented and layered writing and social science prose. They showcase concrete action, dialogue, emotions, embodiment, spirituality, and self-consciousness. These feature and appear as relational and institutional stories affected by history and social structure which themselves are dialectically revealed through actions, feelings, thoughts and language.¹¹⁵

This narrative demonstrates an illustrated explanation of the auto-ethnographic process. I have written my observations in a narrative format, which is designed to marry my experiences with the experiences of others involved within the observation.

Pentecostalism is quantitatively the most popular exemplification of Black religious identity and therefore, I decided that the best way to understand it would be to narrate my own experiences. Visiting many churches, I observed hymns, sermons, baptisms, christenings, wedding

¹¹⁵ Ellis, C., Adams, T., & Bochner, A. (2010). *Autoethnography: An Overview*. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*. P. 38.

proposals, as well as met many different members of the churches. These however were not abstract observations, but instead an opportunity for me to see the world in the same way as the people whom I was researching. Conducting my research in this manner allowed me to understand the perspective of different individuals and gave me an existential insight into the reasoning for certain ethno-cultural behaviours.

Ethnographic observations have provided me with unique insights into the circumstances of the African-Caribbean Pentecostal community. Government statistics within the UK suggest that the population of African-Caribbean peoples (UK born & Non- UK born) stands below four percent.¹¹⁶ Such an intricate and unique community must be understood non-monolithically, and therefore my ethnographic observations must be treated as samples and not as definitive case studies representative of every individual within this community. It is important that my research doesn't succumb to empirical generalisations, and this is my reasoning for implementing auto-ethnographic research as a necessary component.

To add further depth to my study, I ensured to meet and get in contact with Bishops, Ministers, elders, and other church leaders involved in the management of these churches. I arranged meetings, and discussions with these individuals to give myself a broader range of auto-ethnographic experiences to later compare against my hypothesis and other results. Undergoing face to face meetings not only enabled me to document personal opinions of individuals on my research questions, but also allowed me to tangibly develop relationships and to procure information in a way that I could internalise it and birth ideas and opinions from it. Informal conversations provided me with a description of social phenomena, but furthermore spoke to the core of correlational and explanatory research.

¹¹⁶ Ons.gov.uk. (2017). 2011 Census analysis: *Ethnicity and religion of the non-UK born population in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/articles/2011censusanalysisethnicityandreligionofthenonukbornpopulationinenglandandwales/2015-06-18> [Accessed 15 Oct. 2017].

By carefully co-ordinating these ethnographic strategies I have established helpful relationships which have enabled me behind the scenes access, and further aided me in procuring unique responses to, existing literature, current affairs, and theoretically purported examinations of religious enterprise in the UK. I have used these interactions to investigate my initial arguments, and provide trustworthy responses to my hypothesis regarding the dynamic relationship between race, religion and economics. Importantly, these experiences will add a transformative element to my overall dissertation, because as a researcher I have been privileged to merge my internal and external experiences thus exposing myself to new forms of consciousness.

Data Collection

Once again, imploring auto-ethnographic methods of data collection enabled me to place high regard on my own experiences. In collecting data, I was privy to consciously experiencing every facet of social phenomena from a self-centred point of view. My reasoning for collecting data in this method was to remove the idea of fixed objective truths which are so common within positivist paradigms.

Whilst conducting my auto-ethnographic research I not only displayed subjectivity, but encouraged it. This topic is extremely variable, experiences can not only vary from church to church but within every individual. A contextual ethnographic analysis of African-Caribbean culture within the UK will present researchers with a broad diverse spectrum of culture which is very difficult to categorise quantitatively. My work explores the possibility of church influenced enterprise as a solution to historical and racial inequality.

Ethical concerns

My research focuses upon the socio-economic dynamics of race and religion, an ambivalent subject for many. As previously mentioned, my work will gravitate towards African-Caribbean

Pentecostalism within Birmingham, and compare it to the African-American faith based enterprise. To ethically carry out this research I must understand that firstly, the so called 'Black Race' is a nebulous term often used to describe a non-monolithic group of peoples. Secondly, the African-Caribbean ethnic group living in the U.K. are extremely large in number, and are existentially different in their own individual consciousness. Thirdly, Pentecostalism contains within it an abounding number of subjective differences regarding belief, and practice. Considering these factors, I felt it important not to generalise, because of the non-monolithic nature of my research.

Implications on wider research

As discussed in the introduction, my research primarily consults African-Caribbean Pentecostal churches in Birmingham (West Midlands). I have chosen this region for a several different reasons. First, Birmingham is England's second largest city and is considered more ethnically diverse than other British cities.¹¹⁷ Secondly, Birmingham has a historical legacy of African-Caribbean migration. During the 1950s and 60s most migrants in Birmingham were from the Caribbean, and this had inevitable implications for the practice of Christianity. Finally, attending a Midlands based Pentecostal church during my childhood naturally means that I have an inclination towards this region. Conducting my research around this area will endow this study with a widened scope because of the historical and contemporary influences of African-Caribbean's in the area.

The following churches were used as case studies; The Rock, New Testament Church of God, Gibson Road Bethel United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic, and New Jerusalem Apostolic Church. I selected both The Rock and the New Jerusalem Apostolic Church, because they were recommended as examples of enterprising churches. I selected Gibson Road Church, because it

¹¹⁷ Country Digest. (2017). *Population of Birmingham UK (2017) - FACTS AND DATA*. [online] Available at: <https://countrydigest.org/population-of-birmingham/> [Accessed 25 Nov. 2017].

was founded in 1955 and therefore represented the historical legacy of African-Caribbean influence in Birmingham.

Taking these contributing factors into account, I felt that auto-ethnographic research would be most suitable in accessing the experience of my transpersonal interactions. Carolyn Ellis suggested that auto-ethnographic research gives attention to physical feelings, thoughts and emotions when writing about the personal and cultural.¹¹⁸ Religious expression is often the result of a deep driving desire to believe in something more, it is both personal, cultural, and numinous. It manifests itself as tangible human behaviour which is difficult to quantify. As mentioned earlier, Uwe Flick suggested that auto-ethnographic research approaches the world naturally 'from the inside'.¹¹⁹ Adopting this methodology has enabled me to freely conduct conversations and church visits without divorcing myself from the emotions of my experiences.

Chapter 5 - Results

Introduction

This chapter presents results obtained largely through auto-ethnographic research. I have documented these results to test my hypothesis and respond to my research questions. As discussed in Chapter four, I have excluded the possibility of seeking objective truths, and instead

¹¹⁸ Ellis, C and Bochner, A.P. (2000). *Autoethnography, Personal Narrative, Reflexivity: Researcher as Subject,* in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. California: Sage Publications. P. 3.

¹¹⁹ Flick, U., Kvale, S., Angrosino, M., Barbour, R., Banks, M., Gibbs, G., Rapley, T. (2007). *The Sage qualitative research kit*. P. 2.

have illustrated this section in an autobiographical style designed to invoke within readers a lifelike understanding of my experiences.

This section has been organised in chronological order, a structure which I have implemented to aid readability and identification of patterns. Configuring this chapter chronologically has also allowed me to coherently deconstruct each experience in context with my own auto-ethnographical perception. This has added further depth to my results because of the realistic nature of my observations. As a human being my mind is subject to continuous change. Throughout this results section, the auto-biographical nature will demonstrate continuous changes in expectations from one observation to another.

In this section, I have documented different observational visits made to churches. I have configured these observations as natural transpersonal experiences, which are intended to procure an understanding of the psycho-religious mentality that different Pentecostal churches have towards financial prosperity and entrepreneurship. I must emphasise that these observations are not formally constructed experiments, but instead are conscious phenomenological accounts written narratively to express my thoughts and feelings in context with my experience.

As I observed and involved myself within different churches, I was privy to meeting different individuals. I met Bishops, Ministers, members of the congregation and others, something which created more transpersonal interactions. Some of these interactions are documented in this chapter. Another facet of this chapter is the documentation of informal conversations. There are also, auto-ethnographical accounts of one to one conversations held with different individuals. Comprehensive transcriptions of these conversations can be found in appendix A. Finally, in this section, I have documented data drawn from a questionnaire which I have designed to obtain a wider scope of existing academic opinions.

Observation 1 – 10/09/2017

The Rock, New Testament Church of God

Preface

Growing up in a religious West Indian family, I was well acquainted with ‘the vibe’ of the African-Caribbean Pentecostal church. Based upon my previous experiences I couldn’t recall a distinct focus on financial self-sufficiency propagated through scriptural teaching or otherwise. Therefore, my expectations when visiting this church did not lend themselves to the idea of a sermon entirely focused on Black liberation or entrepreneurial strategies.

Service

I was immediately welcomed by the hospitable members of this church, who approached me and asked if it was my first visit. When I answered ‘yes’ they were quick to provide me with a leaflet, and directed me to the main hall. The leaflet did not explicitly imply any focus upon an economic form of prosperity doctrine (See Robert Beckford’s Prosperity Doctrine), however, there were many quotes pertaining to salvation through Christ. Perhaps this was a form of prosperity.

I received a warm greeting and was not made to feel like a visitor but like a member of the congregation. Once directed to the main service hall, my attention was instantly drawn to images of Christ depicted as a man of European origin which prompted my curiosity given the ethnic make-up of most of the congregation who were of African-Caribbean decent. Whilst making my way to a seat, vibrant songs of praise were ongoing which created an uplifting and lively atmosphere. I decided to sit in the middle of the church from where I would see the service as well as most members of the congregation. The congregation was predominantly between the ages of 40 – 70 and most members were female.

The introduction involved several hymns which were intended to exemplify devotion unto Jesus. These hymns were sung with passion and rhythm typifying the African-Caribbean Pentecostal cultural spirit often represented in West Indian churches. The message in the music did not contain any prosperity teachings, but instead focussed on divine worship and praise. I understood that the purpose of the hymns was to emotionally engage the congregation and prepare them for the primary purpose they were there for, to connect with God. Although attending as a researcher I couldn't help but feel involved and part of the church community. To the people around me, I could tell that this was more than a church. They holistically lived the experience of Pentecostalism in their hearts and radiated this passion during the service.

The sermon began with a reading from Psalms 51, the focus of which was forgiveness, transgression and seeking the mercy of God. The Bishop simplified the message and disseminated the core teachings of the chapter concisely for the congregation. The chapter emphasised cleansing of the spirit through purity of heart and being born anew with God. I noticed that the congregation were listening intently to this message, and being part of this audience, I naturally felt able to relate to the message being delivered. It made me realise how influential a preacher can be.

The Bishop later provided an exegesis of Psalms 51, and related it to the achievement of individual and personal goals. The main sermon was replete with axioms and maxims pertaining to the importance of mental clarity when achieving goals. Under the epigram 'Step Ups' the Bishop listed several steps that the attendees should take to achieve their end goals.

The first step up described the importance of 'seeing the future with Christ'. This message essentially preached that faith in Christ was the catalyst in incipiently manifesting prosperity. He propagated the notion that faith in Christ would endow one with purity of the heart and mind, subsequently removing all barriers on the path towards personal achievement. This led me to sit

in my seat and deliberate over the potential power of a sermon which encouraged financial prosperity.

This Bishop often provided a personal context to these teachings, which in this case involved his own individual experience of improving dietary and physical health. This story of personal faith brought the overall prosperity message to life and captivated members of the audience. What the Bishop was essentially providing was a spiritual strategy towards prosperity. The tone of the message was encouraging, and I instinctively knew that the Bishop was strategically preparing members of the congregation to prosper, something which I was very encouraged to see.

Upon my experience of this sermon, I noticed that the Bishop emphasised prosperity as an intuitive spiritual mindset. The sermon rendered me to apply the teachings unto my own inner and outer goals, I am sure that many members of the congregation felt the same.

The second step mentioned 'taking an inventory of self', a metaphor for self-reflection. This again emphasised letting go of baggage, and forgiving oneself for any imperfections. Next followed a reading from Psalms 51:2-10:

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me

My interpretation of this message was that releasing oneself from the imperfections of humanity would serve as a means to focus upon divine purity and rejuvenation. The Bishop then provided the congregation with an axiom, which stated:

Ok is the enemy of good, and good is the enemy of great

I understood this teaching as discouraging all forms of complacency and that one should never be satisfied with mediocrity. In my eyes, the Bishop was providing the congregation with active psycho-religious strategies which would aid individuals in achieving prosperity. Looking around I noticed a very engaged look on the faces of the people around me, however I found it

interesting that the people looked encouraged rather than daunted by the message. This was perhaps due to the preacher's humorous undertone whilst delivering the sermon.

The Bishop gave the example of a job which he disdainfully occupied for several years. In this job, he described feelings of complacency and censure at the nature of the job. He wittingly recalled his memories of feeling disrespected by his boss. Subsequently, what followed was a personal religious success story whereby a thorough purification of self, helped to renew his spirit with God, and thus he could direct his intentions towards leaving the job to find a better one. The result he proclaimed was the one in which he had intended, a new job with better pay and better conditions. This story was warmly received by the congregation who displayed joy and excitement at the message. I felt engaged in the sermon and remember thinking about the power that individual success stories have on the archetypal mind.

The third and final step up embodied the importance of self-enlightenment. It was this section of the sermon that I found to be most empowering as it spoke to the core of every individual. The Bishop passionately encouraged every member of the congregation to dedicate their time to seeking wisdom and expanding their own individual consciousness. Drawing upon his second teaching, he reinforced the importance of avoiding the lore of complacency. What followed was another scriptural reference from Timothy 2:15:

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

My interpretation of this reference was that we should pursue wisdom as a means of lifting the veil of ignorance. Unsurprisingly, the source of wisdom being referred to was within Biblical parameters. The pastor then provided an example of conspiracy theories, and how many people are guilty of directing their attention unto unworthy subjects. It was apparent from the laughter that the congregation saw the humour in this, whilst being able to relate to the message.

Upon the end of service, I met many members of the congregation who recognised that I was not a regular attendee. They took it upon themselves to greet me, and take an interest in my first impressions of visiting the church. I expressed my desire to them to speak with the Bishop, one lady kindly took me straight to him. That is when I first exchanged details with Bishop Jackson which led to my one to one conversation with him.

Meeting with Bishop Jackson – 13/09/2017

On Wednesday 13th September, I sat down with the Bishop of *The Rock* (NTCG) to gain a direct insight into his thoughts and opinions on African-Caribbean economic empowerment. A full transcription of the conversation can be found in appendix A.

Meeting the Bishop was a fantastic experience and an exemplification of the benefits of auto-ethnographic research as a means of exploring variables. The beginnings of our dialogue referred specifically to the teachings that I had witnessed at church a few days ago. The Bishop then proceeded to put his own opinions in a historical context of his life experiences, first describing his parents and their journey from Jamaica during the Windrush years. Despite being third generation, I could relate to much of the Bishop's descriptions of the Windrush generation as my grandparents had spoken of similar experiences. In a general sense, many West Indians had similar reasons for their migration to Britain. The Bishop pointed out that many West Indians did not initially intend to stay in Britain, an interesting thinking point regarding the creation of entrepreneurship.

The Bishop spoke about the central role that Black churches has historically played in the African-Caribbean community and he was drawn to discuss the economic influences that it has had. A phrase which stands out to me from our conversation was:

So the church was like a central financial muscle in the community. Because through it, they had a sense of independence.

The Bishop proceeded to tie this in with his opinions on why the younger generation were leaving the church. He described how he believed that the church as a financial institution had a convergent relationship with the church enterprise. The Bishop then spoke of a case from the 1980s whereby African-Caribbean churches had pooled their wealth and resources together and acquired a convention centre. He jokingly criticised them for not expanding upon such investments by, for example going further and building a hotel nearby. He later mentioned how this case study demonstrated the fear of prosperity held by many West Indians who believed that material gain would detract from their piety:

You find this kind of entrepreneurialism but there is this deep fear of prosperity.

He elaborated on this with an exegesis of the Book of St James which he claims was used during colonial times to discourage African-Caribbean's from seeking financial prosperity by condemning the rich for hoarding wealth. The Bishop told he believes this is still prevalent today as a consequence of the transatlantic slave trade. He went as far as to say that white supremacy had made it honourable to be poor as the oppressors were the ones with the wealth and assets. This led me to consider the impacts of colonialism in my research. I have discussed this in the next chapter.

Bishop Jackson's solution to this issue was to change the mentality of young people to enable them to see the church as an investment which would reap many benefits including financial empowerment.

Observation #2 – 17/09/2017
Bethel United Church – Gibson Road

Preface

Post observation #1, I was anticipating a service which held prosperity at the forefront of its teaching. While I was not expecting a didactic combination of racial inequality, religious belief,

and socio-economic empowerment, I was encouraged by my previous observation to witness a focus upon general wellbeing and progression.

Upon entering this church, there was immediately a warm, friendly, and communal feel apparent. When walking towards the church I was greeted by every individual, regardless of age. Members of this church were very welcoming and polite; the ushers took it upon themselves to enquire as to whether this was my first visit to the church, before escorting me to a seat. The service began with a series of hymns and prayers for loved ones with reference to the victims of recent hurricanes and terrorist attacks. The hymns focused upon devotion unto Jesus and being grateful for the Bible and were sung with extreme passion.

During the ongoing hymns, the usher who had shown me to my seat provided me with a leaflet and said that this was for me to understand more about the beliefs held within the church. The leaflet was entitled *Bethel United Church of Jesus Christ (Apostolic) U.K. Welcomes You*, and was written by M.H. Simmonds. Within the leaflet was a single piece of paper which was entitled '*The Way to Abundant Living*'. The leaflet began with the opening phrase:

Are you one of those people who do not like to be told the truth about themselves? If so please hand this tract to someone else: Don't destroy it like a coward would.

The general constitution of this leaflet was to encourage one to accept the Biblical axiom of being born sinners and furthermore recognise the need to obtain salvation. The leaflet contained information on sin, specifically describing what it was, how it relates to human beings and how to seek forgiveness for it. Repentance, devotion unto Jesus Christ and adherence unto the laws in the Bible were emphasised in this leaflet. While the leaflet was heavily grounded in a spiritual morality, the title read '*The way to Abundant Living*'. While the title could be interpreted in a way which propagates economic empowerment, the leaflet made no specific reference to this.

The sermon emphasised ethical teachings such as sympathy and consolation, with specific reference made to the Book of Job and his sickness. Further reference was made to the Seven Sins, with the preacher relating personal experiences to the destruction that they can cause.

The next speaker was an elder, who spoke of his trip to Jamaica and shared his thoughts with the congregation as he recalled visiting his homeland. The elder spoke of time, change and the emotions of seeing his childhood church in St Thomas, Jamaica. Whilst reflecting, he encouraged the congregation to always advance and try their best. The congregation did not seem overly engaged with what was being said. I noticed that this sermon was not as theological as that at The Rock.

The preacher then moved on to the main topic of the sermon, which was death, making reference to Hebrews 9:6, referring to the blood of Christ overcoming all obstacles. Shifting forward to verse 17, he explained how Jesus was able to mock death. Essentially the message that was propagated here was that with the power of God anything is possible. With this message in mind, the elder passionately urged the audience to never fear anything with Christ in your heart, however he warned that if you did not have Christ in your heart then you would not experience the Holy Ghost. He then proceeded with descriptions of hell, metaphorically comparing it to custody. He ended his sermon with a reference from Revelations, mentioning the lake of fire and interpreting it as punishment for those who disobeyed Gods will.

Overall my visit to this church gave me no implicit evidence of enterprise as a form of advancement, and furthermore displayed no examples of any form of prosperity teaching.

[Meeting with Bishop King – 25/09/2017](#)

On the evening of the 25th September, I sat down with Bishop King and discussed the topic of my research in more depth. As each individual has formulated their own understanding of the world around them, I was looking forward to hearing another unique perspective.

Similarly, to Bishop Jackson, Bishop King began by contextualising his own Christian experience upon the backdrop of Jamaican migration to Britain during the Windrush. Bishop King described his earliest experiences of church as being negative and insular towards the youth. Interestingly, Bishop King acknowledged the Prosperity Doctrine as a motivational factor in his own personal aspirations. I recall his comments preceding this assertion:

Well, I came across prosperity gospel in the late 80's, what it did for me was definitely inspire me to believe that I can do more, that I can go further, I can go higher.

I noticed that after conceding to the influences of the prosperity doctrine, Bishop King raised ethical risks suggesting that many individuals in Africa had used this gospel under false pretention with the goal of furthering their own selfish needs. He then propagated his belief that God intends for you to have financial prosperity, however within reason. It prompted me to consider the dichotomy that many Christians have between morality and wealth.

Speaking as an entrepreneur, Bishop King exerted that prosperity was a consistent preoccupation of his own church in Wolverhampton. He provided numerous examples, where his church had endeavoured to engage in enterprise with the intention of financially empowering members of the congregation. He stated:

There's a general encouragement which is like a consistent, week on week message just to uplift and encourage people. There is one on one so someone might book an appointment to see me, because they are going on a course, thinking of starting their own business and I will try my best to guide them or signpost them to someone who is already in that line of business. There's quite a bit of that which goes on. Last year at Wolverhampton, we had a business Sunday.

Bishop King provided me with a long list of entrepreneurial and enterprising activities that was taking place around the West Midlands within African-Caribbean churches. He described many cases which were by no means abstract, as he offered to put me in contact with many of the individuals of whom he spoke. He irrefutably displayed evidence of enterprise, further describing his own plans to enter into partnerships with different companies for the benefit of his

congregation. Interestingly, Bishop King maintained a moral undertone to his business talk, expressing a desire to solve unemployment amongst the young.

Regarding the African-American comparison, Bishop King referred once again to the prosperity doctrine, suggesting that it had had a more tangible effect upon African-American theology. He described a church in Florida which had successfully achieved Black economic self-sufficiency. Bishop King argued that there are many cases of enterprise happening in the U.K., they are just not as well documented as is the case in the U.S.

Meeting with Ken Ivey – 27/09/2017

On the 27th September, I sat down with businessman Ken Ivey, expecting a different experience compared to my conversations with Bishops King and Jackson. The occupation of Mr Ivey was a contributing factor in my preconceptions. I speculated that Mr Ivey would hold similar opinions to Bishops Jackson and King without theological underpinnings.

Immediately, Ken Ivey was highly critical of the Church accusing them of being altruistic regarding the accumulation of wealth. Ivey argued that the church was not equipped to act out its responsibility of care suggesting that this was because they did not utilise business contacts or resources effectively and regularly. He frustratingly asserted that:

I have not seen to date where a black church has got a directory for businesses although every church that I know has got business people in. When you think about a church, the church has a collection on a Sunday. In some churches, two or three times a day. That's a vast sum if you take it overall. I don't know how much and I won't even guess but when they collect that cash, they put it into a bank. That bank does not belong to us. That bank takes our cash and lends it to others apart from us.

I noticed that Ivey advocated Black capitalism in a similar thought pattern to Dr. Claude Anderson. As the discussion continued, Ivey conceded that he himself had an enterprise with the church involving his own business, however conceded that this has not developed due to 'their lack of ambition'. Subsequently, he described his frustration at attempting to invest alongside the

church in a banqueting suite for the purpose of the church owning their building instead of having to borrow from others. Despite initial interest in the project, Ivey spoke of the withdrawal of church interest. For Ivey this represented the issue with the church regarding economics.

I asked the question:

Do you think there is a different mentality within Black church in American compared to Black Pentecostal churches in the U.K.?

He responded:

Not only have I seen it on TV, but I actually went to Atlanta and I went and looked at some of the churches there and yes big churches, but the enterprise arm they have got with that is phenomenal. You name anything at all and you can see a Black person owns it or runs it and you will always find a link to the church. The church owns their own car parks, supermarkets, barber shops and these are the things that we don't see here at all.

Ivey maintained that some African-American churches had successfully implemented self-sufficient enterprise through faith based entrepreneurship. During our conversation, he consistently voiced his concerns that African-Caribbean churches were not actively replicating African-American success.

Interestingly, Ivey showed that he too was aware of the common moral questions launched at advocates of prosperity with the church. Addressing these questions, he argued that God wants his people to be financially prosperous, and that those who thought otherwise had been influenced by colonialism.

Observation 3 – 01/10/2017
New Jerusalem Apostolic Church

Preface

Having had mixed experiences with my previous observations, I was intrigued about what this visit would reveal about the churches attitudes towards entrepreneurship. This church was

recommended to me by Robert Beckford as a good case study of a church that successfully married theology and economic empowerment.

Upon arriving at New Jerusalem Apostolic Church, I noticed that the common place of parking for churchgoers was a supermarket car park. My first interaction with a member of the congregation was with a middle-aged woman who politely informed us that the supermarket allowed members of the church to use the car parks freely during Sunday service. I found it surprising that the church did not own their own car park because of the expectations that I had arrived with.

As I got out of my car and walked towards the church itself I noticed that the church was situated beside a business estate, I was curious to see if I would later be able to speak with a member of the church who could tell me whether this was of any significance.

Upon entering the premises of the church, I was directed up a set of stairs to a hall where the congregation was beginning to settle. Unlike the other churches the dress code seemed much more laissez-faire with some individuals in very casual attire. Perhaps, this was to encourage self-expression? The building did resemble the traditional church structure, and was more like a community hall. As was the case with my other observations, the genesis of the sermon began with hymns singing. The hymns expressed love and devotion to Jesus. This was consistent with hymns I had heard at the other churches. The service started with a baby being blessed, after which followed donations from the congregation. Before the collection of the donations the Bishop asked everyone to specify on their donation envelope if they are a U.K. taxpayer as this would mean they can claim twenty-five per cent from the government on the amount donated. He said the congregation should see this as giving to the poor and lending to God which they would be blessed as God blesses those who give willingly.

The sermon was delivered by the main preacher of the church and began with a daunting reminder that we are living in the 'last days.' Upon this reminder he emphasised the importance

of adhering God's commandments. He then referred to Genesis 19 which tells about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The reasoning behind this story was to emphasise the necessity to obey laws as a means of 'walking right with God.' This would set a trend for the rest of the sermon which became heavily centred upon rules, regulations, and warnings.

He spoke of the need for every Christian to examine themselves and question whether they only call on God when they need something. He warned that this was dangerous because individuals would start thinking that they had more power than they actually do. Furthermore, he talked about the importance of being disciplined, for example fasting which would bring more miracles from God. An example he gave of having too much power and not enough discipline was the story of King Solomon, a great king with many wives of different nations who eventually turned him to other Gods.

Next followed a teaching which I found very interesting. The preacher talked of bad influences, one of them being business and entrepreneurship which he propagated could distract one from God. He asserted that the accumulation of wealth had an inextricable tie to sensual pleasure which could potentially lead to more sins. He gave the example of poor people idolising material goods, pretending to be wealthy through wearing expensive chains and jewellery. On the other hand, those who did have wealth were often humbler in their choice of attire. The intended message here was that one should not focus on wealth as a means of fulfilment. He emphasised the importance of not forgetting others when acquiring wealth, but overall the most important thing was trusting in God in times of financial need. He maintained that the spiritual always should always take precedent over the material. Material success he preached, should not distract one from God because it is a temporary aspect of life and not a part of the hereafter. Overall this sermon was engaging although not theologically structured in comparison with The Rock.

Chapter 6 - Discussion

My hypothesis intended to test how far African-Caribbean Pentecostal churches engaged in enterprise or entrepreneurship as a means of economic empowerment. This chapter is presented as a discursive response to my hypothesis and research questions. It includes an analysis of results from both my literature review and field research. I have also considered any implications of my results and detailed potential areas for future investigation in my conclusion. This chapter is organised into 7 sub sections. First is a discussion of the literature review and how it relates to my field results, second, a comparison of African-Caribbean and African-American attitudes to economic empowerment, third, an examination of prosperity within the church, fourth, the fear of prosperity, fifth, active examples of enterprise, sixth, a look into Biblical hermeneutics regarding economic empowerment, and lastly, the NOI.

Comparing literature and auto-ethnographic research

Generally, the literature review evinced that African-Caribbean Pentecostal theologians were overwhelmingly passive when discussing theology and economic empowerment, a trend which was also observed within Gregory Roberts work.¹²⁰ African-American writers Dr. Claude Anderson¹²¹ and Anthony Richard Roberts argued that dialogues on 'Black religion'¹²² should be framed within a discussion on economics. Despite their suggestions, reviews of David Muir, Delroy Hall, Vanessa Howard, and others indicates influences from James Cone's liberation theology, particularly within the works of Hall and Muir. The implications of this are apparent, as

¹²⁰ Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship*. P. 75.

¹²¹ Anderson, C, DR (2001). *Powernomics: The National Plan to Empower Black America*. P.XV.

¹²² Roberts, Anthony R. (2014) "*Where the Spirit of the Lord is...There is Freedom: Spirit-Baptism in Liberationist Perspective*".

these influences lend themselves to a critique of the socio-economic order whilst frowning upon practical use of the free market.

The exertion of political theology is a central preoccupation of African-Caribbean theological thought evidenced in my reviews of Anthony G. Reddie,¹²³ Robert Beckford,¹²⁴ Delroy Hall,¹²⁵ and David Muir.¹²⁶ Their respective theologies held the common aim of reforming Black theology in Britain to cater to specific cultural, political, and religious needs. Importantly, these scholars demonstrated an awareness of historical racial economic disparities, however failed to outline entrepreneurship or enterprise as a strategic response within their political/liberation theologies.

Once again, Reddie, Muir, Beckford, Hall, and others have relocated the struggle for Black liberation and re-contextualised their political theologies in accordance with systemic racism in the 21st century. Beckford's *Dread and Pentecostal* for example, examines the historical resistance to oppression, and uses it to suggest that the Black church has the resources to develop a holistic theology to engage with political struggle¹²⁷. Within these respective works are influences from James Cone's liberation theology,¹²⁸ and Marxist critiques of the socio-economic hierarchy. As with many liberation theologies, there is an identification of economic inequality which in these cases are framed within discourses on historical Black oppression. Within these renewed liberation theologies, there exists an unwillingness to integrate the use of the free market system into their political theologies despite the churches capacity to do so. While I agree with Beckford that there must be a holistic theology, the altruistic response towards economic empowerment demonstrated by some theologians is inconsistent with their criticism of racism. Discussions with

¹²³ Reddie, A. (2006). *Black theology in transatlantic dialogue*.

¹²⁴ Beckford, R. (2011). *Dread and Pentecostal*.

¹²⁵ Muir, D, 2013. "But God meant it for good".

¹²⁶ Hall, D. (2013). *Inter-personal conflict in an African Caribbean Pentecostal congregation A Pastoral Study*.

¹²⁷ Beckford, R. (2011). *Dread and Pentecostal*. P.160.

¹²⁸ Cone, J. (1969). *Black theology and Black power*.

Bishops Jackson and King indicated that they recognised a need for economic empowerment within Black theology.

Deductions made from auto-ethnographic observational church visits suggested that theological practices within Birmingham were consistent with the findings of the literature review. I attended three church sermons, and on each occasion neither church explicitly preached economic empowerment or referenced any scriptural teachings to do so. An inconsistency arose when discussing this topic with Bishops King and Jackson, who referenced many cases of ongoing enterprise within the church. Furthermore, the results from my questionnaire showed that members of various churches (inside and outside of Birmingham) described ongoing enterprises within their respective churches. This suggests that there are existing examples of economic empowerment within African-Caribbean Pentecostal churches however they are not written about. Bishop King also noted this.

The African-American Comparison

Paul Gilroy's¹²⁹ work entitled "*The Black Atlantic*" attempted to transcend the idea that nationality and ethnicity were absolute descriptions of Black individuals. He argued that Black Atlantic culture was 'one' by suggesting that those within this diaspora possessed a double consciousness regarding Black culture. Anthony Reddie¹³⁰ also acknowledged a transatlantic dialogue within theology, describing the influences of African-American theology amongst Black British theologians. While both Reddie and Gilroy note that there are influences between African-Caribbeans and African-Americans, they concede that there are many differences within the experiences of both. These differences have manifested themselves within my research to some degree.

¹²⁹ Gilroy, P. (1993). *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. P. 19.

¹³⁰ Reddie, A. (2006). *Black theology in transatlantic dialogue*. P. 203

Many African-Caribbean scholars espouse this influence by using African-American culture as a central reference point in their studies. This partly explains the influence of James Cone within African-Caribbean theology, although there are differences within this context.

The literature review indicated that African-American churches were more willing to actively engage in economic empowerment than African-Caribbean theologians. African-American scholars inside and outside of theology pragmatically conjoined ethnic entrepreneurship and prosperity doctrine into their works. Dr Claude Anderson, Phillip E. Gipson, and Eric Anthony, have all studiously attempted to produce a compelling plan to actively engage African-American churches into redirecting the economic destiny of their community. Preachers Frederick K.C. Price and T.D. Jakes engaged in prosperity teachings to invoke economic growth. Examples of a convergence between theology and ethnic entrepreneurship were not reflected within African-Caribbean theological literature despite its popularity across the Atlantic.

Conversations with Bishops King and Jackson indicated that enterprise actually was practiced by some Birmingham based African-Caribbean Pentecostal churches. The differences lay in the scale of activity being smaller than African-American religious institutions (NOI included). The literature showed that many African-American scholars embodied structural Black capitalism as a potential or actualised response to historical and contemporary racism.

Both Bishop King and businessmen Ken Ivey suggested that African-American churches were more efficient in configuring autonomous institutional wealth. Bishop King strongly attested to this stating that:

From what I've seen in the states there are sufficient Black businesses. I mean I remember going to somewhere in Florida and there was almost a mall that was controlled by Black people. There were all the shops and enterprise amongst the church folk.

King also elucidated upon his observations, describing the circulation of the Black dollar within the community. King's words are comparable to the calls of Dr. Claude Anderson who argued for

the concentration of individuals and resources as a solution for Black poverty. Dr. Anderson termed this proposal under the epigram 'ethno-aggregation' which he described as:

The voluntary concentration of individuals and their resources around their ethnic or language commonalities for the purpose of improving their economic and political competitiveness¹³¹

While King did not implore use of the term ethno-aggregation, he implicitly suggested that there was a place for it within Black economic empowerment. He also commented on the practice of ethno-aggregation within America, suggesting that Black British churches could draw influence from their practices. I recall his descriptions of African-American entrepreneurship:

Well you know, you would see a church and next to it would be a retail of some sort, a shop or a barbers that belongs to the church which you don't tend to see over here. I can't even think of an example but there must be one.

The views of King present a strong case for African-American entrepreneurial proactivity. Although King discussed faith based enterprise within Britain, it was noticeably different in scale.

What reasons are there for these differences in scale? When discussing this topic with Ken Ivey, he refuted suggestions that population and numerical advantages were responsible for these differences in scale, arguing instead the explanation was with within leadership.

Gregory Roberts however, distanced himself from any comparisons between African-American and African-Caribbean culture, by questioning the approach taken by many supporters of ethnic entrepreneurship. Roberts questioned how far American academics interested in ethnic entrepreneurship have considered variant ethnicities within the Black race. Roberts contends that the historical and contemporary experiences of entrepreneurship vary between different ethnic groups, and that such examinations should take this into account.¹³² Nuri Tinaz, maintained similar opinions regarding the Nation of Islam in Britain.¹³³ Delroy Hall is also critical of African-

¹³¹ Anderson, C, DR (2001) *Powernomics: The National Plan to Empower Black America*, Maryland, Bethesda: PowerNomics Corporation of America, Inc. Publisher. P. 43-51.

¹³² Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship*. 60-63.

¹³³ Nuri Tinaz (2006). *Black Islam in Diaspora: The Case of Nation of Islam (NOI) in Britain*.

Caribbean theologians for formulating their political theologies upon the backdrop of African-American culture¹³⁴A potential danger in this thinking is becoming insular of the success achieved by some African-American churches. As Bishop King and Ken Ivey suggested, these examples can be learned from.

Building on that point, Ken Ivey believed that African-American churches have set a high benchmark in terms of achieving prosperity through pragmatic enterprise and entrepreneurship and suggested that churches in the U.K. should seek to replicate it. He stated:

Not only have I seen it on TV, but I actually went to Atlanta and I went and looked at some of the churches there and yes big churches, but the enterprise arm they have got with that is phenomenal. You name anything at all and you can see a Black person owns it or runs it and you will always find a link to the church. The church owns their own car parks, supermarkets, barber shops and these are the things that we don't see here at all.

Ivey speculated upon the differences of the prosperity gospel within African-American theology compared to African-Caribbean Pentecostalism in Birmingham:

It could be just the teaching of their leaders which is totally different from the leaders here. They are more about prosperity. Yes, their Bishop might have an expensive suit and he might even have a jet, but he will have a good church and in that church, all the business people look after. Some of them have even tried to do a bank. Just now I have learnt that there is a bank in Atlanta itself which is a Black owned bank and Black guys have invested in that bank. It doesn't take much to open a bank.

Ivey propagated the view that African-American churches were more likely to incorporate prosperity teachings into their theological practice. Bishop Jackson suggested that the African-American prosperity gospel temporarily influenced Black churches in Britain, however conceded that it was defused by a fear of prosperity, a phenomenon explored later in this chapter.

A senior Pastor from an African-American church completed my questionnaire. He described the active role of his church in providing free training to those seeking to pursue success in business and furthermore held Black economic empowerment as a matter of importance. This response is typical of African-American theological attitudes towards economic empowerment. In

¹³⁴ Hall, DW, (2013). *“But God meant it for good”*. P. 23.

comparison, my questionnaires also implied that some Birmingham based churches within the U.K. equally regard economic empowerment as a necessity, and take necessary steps to pragmatise this view.

The literature review combined with the deductions made from church visits suggests that African-Caribbean churches do not hold economic empowerment as a matter of importance. Contrastingly, it told us that African-American churches were theologically active in their pursuit of prosperity through enterprise and entrepreneurship. My conversations and questionnaire however, told us that within Birmingham based Pentecostal churches there are existing and ongoing cases of enterprise. Business networks, Pentecostal Credit Unions, joint enterprise partnerships with micro business etc. My conversations also told me that Bishops King and Jackson believed in a need for economic empowerment and took action to integrate it into their theological praxis. While I have not discovered the kind of communal self-sufficiency around the church described by Bishop King and Ken Ivey, we can say that African-Caribbean literature does not reflect the attitudes that many Pentecostal churches have towards economic empowerment. While these activities are ongoing they are not being exhibited within literature for one reason or another.

Prosperity Doctrine

Robert Beckford's notion of prosperity contains some overlap with the prosperity doctrine discussed previously in this study. In the literature review, I showed Beckford's calls for a hermeneutical shift in our understanding of the word prosperity.¹³⁵ His interpretation diverges from the popularised materialistic epicentre described by Pastor DeForest B. Soaries Jr,¹³⁶ suggesting that it ought to take on a more holistic meaning. For Beckford, prosperity was

¹³⁵ Beckford, R. (2006). *Jesus dub*. London: Routledge.

¹³⁶ DeForest B., S. (2010). *Black Churches and the Prosperity Gospel*. Wall Street Journal. [online] Available at: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704116004575522202425314706> [Accessed 21 Oct. 2018].

synonymous with common wealth or general wellbeing. Beckford has not excluded economic prosperity and instead embraces economic empowerment as an inclusive understanding of the word. Beckford's holistic approach to prosperity will perhaps help to neutralise the harsh criticisms launched by scholars such as Kate Bowler and Paula McGee. Emphasising a holistic prosperity is perhaps a calculated response to the fear of prosperity described later in this chapter.

The word 'prosperity' derives from the root word 'prosperitatem' which means good fortune in Latin. In this sense, the concept of prosperity is open to a myriad of interpretations. My auto-ethnographic observational church visits inferred that the understandings of prosperity displayed a closeness with Beckford's understanding of prosperity, rather than an economic understanding.

During my visit to *The Rock*, Bishop Jackson's sermon was largely focused around wellbeing and the achievement of individual and personal goals. The sermon implored a variety of techniques which postulated the idea that success was achievable through Christ. Bishop Jackson endeavoured to provide his congregation with many examples of combining mental willpower and spiritual purity, through the power of Christ. Expanding upon his own personal examples, he spoke of his transition from working a job with disdain to working a job that not only paid more but provided sanctuary from his previous place of employment. Whilst observing this sermon it was apparent that the teachings were carefully constructed to isolate specific characteristics and provide individuals with tools upon which they could empower themselves and become prosperous. Further aspects of the sermon made humorous references to healthy eating as another form of prosperity. These teachings held a certain degree of consonance with Robert Beckford's articulation of prosperity.

In comparison to A.A. Akom's experience of conducting interviews at the NOI temple¹³⁷, I can readily acknowledge that I did not witness any evidence of enterprise or entrepreneurial teachings in these Birmingham based churches. To analyse Bishop Jackson's success story of leaving one job and taking up another, it demonstrated 'prosperity', but did not reflect any form of entrepreneurship or desire to be immediately self-sufficient. Akom's biographical experience of the NOI displayed pride at their achieved financial independence. Dr Claud Anderson¹³⁸ also maintained that Black people must learn to be job producers and not job seekers, something which again suggests a difference between the mindset of African-Americans and African-Caribbeans.

What struck me most was that even though the sermon contained no examples of encouraging entrepreneurship, my conversation with the Bishop suggested he was very much in favour of the idea of economic empowerment as a pragmatic tool for the emancipation of African-Caribbean peoples. When asked what importance should be given to financial enterprise in terms of community building, Bishop Jackson responded:

High importance due to our philosophy of self-reliance and dictating our own vision and needs rooted in our historical experiences of racial prejudice and bias.

As mentioned, the responses in my questionnaire also indicated that economic empowerment was needed within the church. To some degree, this proves the theory of sociologist Milmon Harrison who suggested that prosperity gospel would appeal to Black churches due to historical oppression,¹³⁹ however one might question why the observed sermons were not consistent with these views.

¹³⁷ Akom, A. (2003). *Reexamining Resistance as Oppositional Behavior: The Nation of Islam and the Creation of a Black Achievement Ideology*. P 312

¹³⁸ Anderson, C, DR (2001) *Powernomics: The National Plan to Empower Black America*. P. 91.

¹³⁹ Harrison, M. (2005-03-17). *Righteous Riches: The Word of Faith Movement in Contemporary African American Religion*.: Oxford University Press. P. 132.

Perhaps one of the most perplexing observations within my research was that no examples of innovative uniformed propagations of economic empowerment presented themselves during any visits to my selected churches, despite the presence of aspiring and successful entrepreneurs within the congregation. In relation to my hypothesis, these observations indicate that financial prosperity is not held in high regard within Birmingham based African-Caribbean Pentecostal churches. In the next sub section, I have discussed reasons why economic prosperity is not prevalent in African-Caribbean Pentecostal Churches in Birmingham.

A bigger project would have enabled me the opportunity to visit these churches a number of times, as well as visiting a church in the United States to add depth in my response to the hypothesis. Such opportunities would help me to explain the reasoning behind the lack of financial prosperity teachings witnessed in my visits to these churches.

Fear of Prosperity

Robert Beckford outlined an intergenerational transition in theological thought between first generation African-Caribbean migrants and second.¹⁴⁰ He observed that studies of early African-Caribbean's living in Britain suggest a muted expression¹⁴¹ to the idea of a political theology. Beckford's observation displays some concurrent similarities with the thoughts of Bishop John Jackson. During my conversation with Bishop Jackson he outlined distinct characteristics of the 'Windrush Generation', pointing out that many African-Caribbean families did not intend to stay in Britain, and therefore had no interest in crystallising any form of entrepreneurship or political economic doctrine. Bishop Jackson spoke of the difficulties of encouraging financial prosperity within a church where most people feared prosperity, stating:

There's a fear of chasing money until the money strangles your face. That's inside the Church There was also a rejection of living affluent as well. Poverty was more glorious.

¹⁴⁰ Beckford, R. (2011). *Dread and Pentecostal*. P.16-17.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., P. 26.

The exertion of poverty being glorious and somehow more spiritual was a central preoccupation of the economic thinking of many first generation African-Caribbean's in Britain. The words of Bishop Jackson correlate with the writing of Gregory Roberts who also speculated upon the fear of prosperity within African-Caribbean theology.¹⁴² For Bishop Jackson, this preoccupation was overwhelmingly representative of a legacy of colonialism. My conversation with Ken Ivey drew a similar conclusion suggesting that the fear of prosperity had been left there from the old days (referring to Jamaican history). Likewise, Dr Claude Anderson strongly ascribed the fear of prosperity to slavery and the way in which it taught those of African descent to interpret the Bible.¹⁴³ Bishop Jackson emphasised the overplaying of condemning of rich oppressors in the Book of St James. He described the mentality behind Biblical hermeneutics of St James by stating:

And maybe from the perspective of colonialism and white supremacy or colonial theology which teaches that this concept of poverty being honourable.

A consistent theme, that the economic situation of many within the African diaspora can be traced back to the legacy of the slave trade was discovered. Many suggest this has impaired the desire of Black people to economically prosper.

Upon deep examinations of Roberts¹⁴⁴ writing he has brought to the attention of the reader an interesting historical dynamic. Roberts discusses specific examples of preachers in Jamaica being anti-money as a means of being subordinate during slavery¹⁴⁵. Such examples suggest that colonialism has had a detrimental effect upon the desires of African-Caribbean preachers to promote material prosperity.

¹⁴² Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship*. P.78

¹⁴³ Anderson, C, DR (2001) *Powernomics: The National Plan to Empower Black America*. P. 236.

¹⁴⁵ Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship*P. 278.

Both Ken Ivey and Bishop Jackson have described the attitudes that many West Indians have towards investment, arguing that one would be labelled a 'thief' for even asking for a small fee to contribute towards regenerative prosperity. This type of mentality has perhaps impacted upon the level of passivity seen throughout the majority of African-Caribbean Pentecostal literature on entrepreneurship and economics.

Consciously overcoming the fear of prosperity within African-Caribbean churches was discussed in my one to one conversations with Bishops Jackson and King, who expounded upon the congenial relationship the church had with congregational economics. Bishop Jackson discussed the historical influence of 1960s Black empowerment movements in America and how they temporarily motivated African-Caribbean churches in the U.K. to pursue entrepreneurship as a means of self-empowerment. Delroy Hall posits the view that Black British theology should remove the African-American mask and implore the use of continental African-Caribbean resources.¹⁴⁶ Bishop King on the other hand argued that criticisms of the church were unfair and that there was a multiplicity of organisations that could be doing more.

As the views of Bishop King, Ken Ivey, and Bishop Jackson are expounded, further similarities arise around the activity of the church. All three individuals claimed that the church was actively involved in some form of practical enterprise, however emphasised that the church should refocus and redouble its application. Bishop King specifically argued that:

The church is reaching a point now where it's going to be difficult for them to survive on what comes in on the offering plate. We have got to look at other income streams and obviously the more prosperous the people are that come to your church the more they are able to give and then the more the church is able to do in supporting people.

A closer examination of my discussion with Bishop King displays his awareness of the churches potential to uplift people out of poverty suggesting that charity was not plausible in achieving

¹⁴⁶ Hall, DW, (2013). *"But God meant it for good"*. P. 145.

such a feat. This is an interesting point made by the Bishop, and prompts examination of the word 'spiritual'. According to the Oxford dictionary, the word spiritual means:

Relating to or affecting the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things.¹⁴⁷

This definition may be interpreted to suggest that the spiritual is in opposition to the material, which in turn promotes the anti-capitalist liberation theologians in their exertions against the accumulation of wealth through active participation in the free market system. Furthermore, it responds to the existential questions raised by many African-Caribbean political theologians who concern themselves with locating Black Christian identity within oppression. Then the response will most likely fail to take into account the need for material growth.

On the other hand, Stephen Long seems to take the view that theology and economics are naturally intertwined¹⁴⁸. and there is work to suggest that business acumen is a reflection of our internal likeness of God.¹⁴⁹ Long would argue that there is nothing intrinsically spiritual about opposing oneself to material gain. Bishop King agreed in his comment about the churches role:

The primary commission is to look after their souls but the same time the scripture says if you want to talk to a man about his soul and he is hungry, then feed him first.

King elucidated upon this, stating that real progress would alleviate the need for food banks and community shelters. For King, charity would not lift people out of poverty, and similarly to Long's conclusions, King held that material gain should be encouraged if it was morally consistent with God's will. In a recorded sermon, he taught that the biggest prohibiting factor preventing people from going into business was fear, however this fear was of failure not of materialism. Such characteristics of fear suggest that there are still internal and external factors which discourage many from getting into business. Such postulations are not only true of Bishop King, but to Bishop Jackson who propagated the aphorism 'mind over matter', espousing that the love

¹⁴⁷ Anon, (2017). [online] Available at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/spiritual> [Accessed 13 Nov. 2017].

¹⁴⁸ Long, D. Stephen (2000) *Divine Economy: theology and the market*. P. 3.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., P. 230.

of money was the root of evil and not the acquisition of money itself. Both Bishops argued that encouraging a move from charity to investment was the right thing to do, however both were aware of the barriers facing these aspirations.

The fear of prosperity seems to have a conspicuous impact upon theological praxis within the church. During my conversations, all three individuals discussed their awareness of this impact, however Bishops King and Jackson spoke of ways to promote economic empowerment regardless.

Gregory Roberts¹⁵⁰ contends that many African-Caribbean Pentecostal churches are suspicious of prosperity doctrine, and perhaps this is due to the reasons asserted by Bishop Jackson (earlier in the chapter). In Robert's work he concedes that this mentality creates difficulties when partaking in entrepreneurial activity, and therefore we may assume that many Pentecostal churches would be averse to promoting such a gospel.

On the other hand, while I did not witness any explicit examples of a fear of prosperity during my church visits, I did not experience any propagations of entrepreneurship, business investment, economic prosperity teaching, through sermon either. This led me to question how far the fear of prosperity is responsible for my observations and the paucity of economic empowerment within African-Caribbean theological literature. Gregory Roberts was also aware of this fear of prosperity within his literature, suggesting that African-Caribbean Pentecostals held a fear of exclusively identifying with wealth creation and entrepreneurship.¹⁵¹

Active examples of enterprise

The conversations within this research have made me aware of relevant examples of faith based enterprise within Birmingham. Simply, the literature does not exhibit these ongoing

¹⁵¹ Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship*. P. 78.

enterprises and can lead to the misconception that economic empowerment is almost non-existent within African-Caribbean Pentecostal churches in Britain. Bishop King also stressed this during our conversation.

He told me that his church consciously contributed to prayers for prosperity, business networking, support for aspiring entrepreneurs, special guest sermons for established companies, sole traders, self-employed businessmen etc. Bishop King told me that a member of his congregation had written a book titled 'how to systematise a business'. These subscriptions to the encouragement of economic prosperity demonstrate active examples of church enterprise. This again demonstrates a misrepresentation of practice within African-Caribbean theological literature.

King recalled a movement within his previous church to establish a Black business directory which aimed to network Black businesses as a means of curing what he referred to as 'The Black Pound Syndrome'. The movement, he described was fuelled by a desire to 'keep Black money Black' and was influenced by the prosperity gospel, popularised by some African-American churches. King's comments are reminiscent of the ethnic entrepreneurship applied by some African American's in an attempt to replicate the purported success of Asian and Jewish communities by practicing what Dr Claude Anderson referred to as group economics.¹⁵²

Whilst visiting New Jerusalem Church of God, I noticed that entrepreneurship was discussed with negative connotations. The preacher warned the congregation that material success might potentially have a harmful impact on ones' devotion to God. The consequences of this message might incur the kind of fear of prosperity described previously in this chapter.

¹⁵² Anderson, C, DR (2001) *Powernomics*. P. 119-125

Interestingly, within the same church I met an Elder, Karl George, the managing director of *Governance Forum Ltd*¹⁵³, a company dedicated to delivering exceptional services in governance. George is a nationally established consultant in governance and has over twenty years of experience in business and strategic development. George's contribution to this work was through the completion of a questionnaire, in which he provided case examples of the enterprise and entrepreneurial activity within the church. George described a social interaction vehicle called *LOUD* which provided teaching and workshops in collaboration with other churches and organisations. This case suggests that African-Caribbean churches in Birmingham actively engage in enterprise as a means of economically empowering members of their congregation. The question as to why these enterprises were not reflected in the observed sermons is mind boggling.

Bishop Jackson remarked upon Pentecostal Credit Unions established by Black Pentecostal churches as a good example of contemporary organised economic empowerment. According to Jackson, this union maintained a roughly similar structure to that of a Black owned bank. This presents a strong case for active examples of economic empowerment within African-Caribbean churches in Birmingham. In addition, Ken Ivey also described his own involvement in an enterprise partnership with the NTCG. His Regency Auto Centre Ltd worked in tandem with the church to provide employment, training, and services to members of the church congregation. This is another example of small scale enterprise within the African Caribbean church in Birmingham which is not reflected within academic literature.

While small scale examples of enterprise exist, all three individuals suggested that there was a potential for greater concentration of church resources in achieving economic empowerment. Gregory Roberts also discussed this within his work.

¹⁵³ The Governance Forum. (2017). *The Governance Forum - Governance is more than compliance*. [online] Available at: <http://www.thegovernanceforum.com/> [Accessed 23 Oct. 2017].

Ken Ivey criticised the church for a lack of entrepreneurial ambition. Describing his frustrations, he spoke of his desire to collaboratively invest in a banqueting suite with the co-operation of the church. Ivey believed that this type of investment would serve the community creating reciprocity with the congregation. While Ivey described the success of preliminary negotiations, he later conceded to the disintegration of interest from the church as business partners. For Ivey, this was demonstrative of a lack of economic ambition within the African Caribbean Pentecostal church in Birmingham. In my questionnaire survey, Ken Ivey argued that church leaders welcome partnering with businesses, but do not promote community business that often.

Biblical Hermeneutics

One of the key facets of the prosperity gospel is the use of Biblical interpretation to impel financial enterprise and material prosperity. Ken Ivey in our interview acknowledged the Bible as:

A wonderful book and if it is read and taught in the right way, we will prosper.¹⁵⁴

Commonly, those interested in achieving faith based economic empowerment advocated the use of the Bible as a tool in achieving their goal. The results of my questionnaire suggested that many within the church were in favour of using the Bible to promote economic prosperity. In response to the question:

Are there any examples where the church has preached on economic empowerment? If so, what Bible verses might have been used?

Bishop Jackson referenced the following Bible verses:

Deuteronomy 8:18 power and wealth, Luke 6:38 giving brings prosperity, Psalms 122:6 reflecting those who love God will prosper, 3 John 1:2 the Elders prayer of health and prosperity

Taking a closer look at Luke 6:38 which states:

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again (Luke 6:38) KJV.¹⁵⁵

Jackson's interpretation indicates a divine governance of incomings suggesting that it is married to charitable outgoings. This principle does not readily lend itself to the business state of mind, but instead appeals to a charitable approach to finance.

The charitable approach was also exemplified during my visit to New Jerusalem Church of God, whereby members of the congregation were encouraged to donate to the church collection basket. The preacher encouraged the congregation to give money whilst informing us that as a tax-exempt institution they would receive a 25% return on all money that was given. He preached that those who were charitable would be blessed by the Lord. He encouraged us to see it as an investment in God rather than a business. Perhaps this was a subtle appeal to fear of prosperity discussed previously in this chapter. The implications of this necessitate caution, as it is important to not confuse charitable acts with economic empowerment through entrepreneurship and enterprise. Economic empowerment can endow churches with more license to be charitable, however it is important not to confuse the two. It requires careful consideration when associating specific Bible verses with financial abundance.

Bishop King also argued that the Bible should be a key component in the consolidation of a prosperity doctrine. When questioned on which Biblical verses he might use to encourage entrepreneurship, King proceeded to send an audio file of a sermon he termed *Business Sunday*.¹⁵⁶ This sermon was replete with King's personal rise to entrepreneurship through economic empowerment. He focused upon the importance of the Bible in evoking the spirit of hope over fear before referencing Psalms 37:25 which states:

¹⁵⁵ Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. Luke 6:38. (King James Version)

I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread (Psalms 37:25 KJV).¹⁵⁷

King is suggesting to his congregation that those who live a righteous life consistently with Biblical scripture will never be in a position where they must beg. Following on from this teaching, King reminded the audience of the importance of remaining committed to God, regardless of success, something which tied in with my experience at NJCG, where the preacher warned of the dangers of becoming successful and losing sight in God.

Businessman Karl George emphasised the importance of the Bible in encouraging economic empowerment of Black people in Britain. In the questionnaire he conceded that:

As a predominantly Black led and Black congregation and with so much economic disparity evidenced in our community it is imperative that we play our part in tackling all disparity but definitely the communities that we represent.¹⁵⁸ (See Appendix B)

This idea of responsibility was reflected in George's purported Biblical empowerment teachings. He referenced the following scriptures in an attached document

Luke 6:38 (King James Version)

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.¹⁵⁹

Proverbs 10:4

He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.¹⁶⁰

Deuteronomy 28

And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:

¹⁵⁷ I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. Psalms 37:25 (King James Version)

¹⁵⁹ Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. Luke 6:38 (King James Version).

¹⁶⁰ He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. Proverbs 10:4 (King James Version)

4 Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

5 Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.

...

11 And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

12 The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.¹⁶¹

Analysis of these verses suggest that God blesses those who are faithful and righteous in accordance with his will, with prosperity. The content of these scriptures suggests that there is a relationship between divine morality and wealth, which rewards those who maintain an unwavering belief in God. George furthermore, presented scriptures which warned of the dangers of wealth for example:

Matthew 19:23-24 Rich Man's warning

23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.¹⁶²

Some verses appear to condemn the love of wealth and riches suggesting its tendency to evoke immorality within an individual. The focus of such verses, specifically speak of the actions of the wealthy rather than the wealth itself. Dr Claude Anderson argues that in Matthew, the parable of the slave and the master is a demonstration of responsibility. Anderson (a supporter of prosperity gospel) argues that this parable teaches the power of responsibility, and could be used

¹⁶¹ Deuteronomy 28:4-12 (King James Version)

¹⁶² Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. Matthew 19:23-24 (King James Version)

to encourage members of the congregation to accumulate wealth as a means of aiding God's will.¹⁶³

Evidently, the Bible is often a central tool in the formation of the theological worldviews of many Bishops, Ministers, and members of the congregation. These verses are consciously and subconsciously accessible to the individual who can birth an entire state of mind through one verse. Dr. Claude Anderson describes how the Bible was used during slavery to justify and brainwash slaves into accepting their oppression. On the other hand, he argues that this dynamic can be polarised by using Bible verses to stimulate economic empowerment. The evidence within my questionnaires and conversations with Bishop King and Bishop Jackson suggest that Ken Ivey was right in his suggestion that the Bible holds the keys to upliftment. This appeals to Gregory Roberts suggestion that African-Caribbean Pentecostals are looking for opportunities that can be exploited without a compromise to their faith.¹⁶⁴ Utilising the Bible may be considered a methodology in garnishing these opportunities.

Nation of Islam

The case of the Nation of Islam presents an interesting dichotomy for African-American and African-Caribbean Pentecostalism. As discussed previously, Ken Ivey argued that effective leadership was the main reason for African-American successes within entrepreneurship and enterprise. A similar case can be made for the NOI, who attempt to exemplify a reciprocal relationship between leadership and their followers. The literature and practical teachings of Elijah Muhammad and Louis Farrakhan indicate a consistent intent to economically empower Black individuals as a functional community. As shown in Akom's work, the teachings of these leaders have precipitated a similar intent within their followers.

¹⁶³ Anderson, C, DR (2001) Powernomics. P. 223.

¹⁶⁴ Roberts, G. (2009). Entrepreneurship. P. 5.

As an ethno-religious movement, the NOI have been influenced by historical African-American ethnic entrepreneurship. Elijah Muhammad and Farrakhan locate Black capitalism within a calculated response to their interpretations of historical oppression within America. Self-sufficiency achieved through the autonomous ownership of wealth and resources is considered a solution to a corrupt and racist socio-economic order. Farrakhan's *Torchlight for America speech* displayed overlaps with Black Liberationist criticisms of capitalist institutions. The difference is that he advocates use of the free market system as a means of polarising the position of the oppressed.

Farrakhan's aim is to encourage investment into an economic savings program, which intended to accumulate enough wealth to purchase farm land suitable for autonomous agricultural produce. As shown, Farrakhan and Elijah Muhammad used Biblical and Qur'anic scripture to encourage economic development within the psyche of their followers. Psychologically, belief is always a precursor to action, and therefore the implications of their teachings would increase the possibility of entrepreneurial actions amongst their followers. This is a lesson in the power of scripture to impel economic empowerment. Farrakhan and Elijah Muhammad both taught that financial abundance was a solution to inner city crime. Teaching financial abundance as a solution to communal ethical issues resulted in overpowering any fears of prosperity within the NOI and this is evident within Akom, Tinaz, and Dawn Marie Gibson and Herbert Berg's accounts of the NOI's work within the community.

Akom's transcribed experience of attending a NOI mosque in the U.S.A, provides evidence of economic empowerment teachings within their theological praxis. I would like to re-visit this particular statement recorded by Akom in a NOI mosque:

We need to have our own economic institutions... We already have our own companies... we've built our own industries... We own this building-this land that I am

standing on... We own ourselves... And that's why we don't need the white man... because we are independent.... Isn't that right?¹⁶⁵

This statement presents strong evidence of the attitudes held by the NOI towards economic empowerment. It shows us that the NOI integrated aspirations of economic self-sufficiency into their theology. While this case is once again within the United States, it has implications within Britain. It prompts us to question how many African-Caribbean churches actually own the church in which they practice their faith?

Nuri Tinaz suggested that the rise of the NOI within Britain was inspired by African-American Black power movements in the 60s.¹⁶⁶ Bishop Jackson also linked the NOI's influence within Britain to the African-American resistance movements. Tinaz points out that the NOI were only able to achieve moderate and temporary enterprise within the U.K. and that their influence quickly diminished. The reasons for this may possibly be down to the fact that the NOI was not as popular in Britain as was in the U.S.A. Tinaz concedes that many advocates of the NOI in Britain had attempted to associate themselves with the African-American struggle and contextualise this within the realms of a political theology. This is reminiscent of the views of Delroy Hall¹⁶⁷ and Gregory Roberts¹⁶⁸ who both criticised the comparison of African-American theologies within the African-Caribbean experience in Britain.

Does this suggest that African-American political theologies are inconsistent with the African-Caribbean experience within the U.K.? As discussed previously in this chapter, many African-Caribbean theologians built their respective theologies with underpinning influence from African-American theology. However, unlike many African-American theologies, they failed to incorporate the level of the economic empowerment seen within American literature.

¹⁶⁵ Akom, A. (2003). *Reexamining Resistance as Oppositional Behavior*. P. 314.

¹⁶⁶ Nuri Tinaz (2006) *Black Islam in Diaspora: The Case of Nation of Islam (NOI) in Britain*. P. 151-155.

¹⁶⁷ Hall, DW, (2013). "But God meant it for good". P. 17.

¹⁶⁸ Roberts, G. (2009). *Entrepreneurship*. P. 120.

Tinaz's work presents exemplary evidence of NOI enterprise within Britain. The enterprise described however, does not supersede any of the descriptions of Pentecostal enterprise given by Bishop King and Bishop Jackson. The implications of this are twofold. Firstly, the scale of faith based enterprise within Britain is consistently smaller than in America in both the NOI and in the Pentecostal church. Secondly, the NOI have done a good job of exhibiting their economic development within literature, however this is not the case in Pentecostal theology.

In summary, both African-Caribbean and African-American churches engage in economic empowerment, however the scale and structure is bigger within America. Secondly, there is a fear of prosperity that exists as an underpinning from the past, however Bishops and businessmen are finding innovative ways to combat that mentality. Thirdly, the Bible may be used not only to combat the fear of prosperity, but to instil a divine resonance regarding economic empowerment without detracting from one's piety. Lastly, there are examples of faith based enterprise in Birmingham, which are ongoing regardless of institution. Both the NOI and Pentecostal church within Birmingham showed an endeavour to economically empower as a political theology, however these are not being written about within scholarship.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the African-Caribbean church and analyse its practices within an economic and entrepreneurial framework. It locates economic empowerment within a discussion on racism, which has enabled an assessment of how far Bishops, Ministers, and others involved within Pentecostal institutions hold enterprise as a matter of importance.

Upon establishing the area of study, I developed a hypothesis which I later justified as a necessary area of research through my literature review. This hypothesis examined the relationship between African-Caribbean Pentecostalism and economic empowerment by questioning how far enterprise was represented through literature and practice. To test this hypothesis, I configured the following three research questions (also found in the introduction):

1. What conclusions have theologians and academics reached regarding African-Caribbean/ American economic progress?
2. What procedures are some African-Caribbean Pentecostal churches initiating to economically empower their communities?
3. How do these procedures compare in the U.K. and U.S.A.?

I answered these questions by using predominantly auto-ethnographic research, conducting observational church visits, informal conversations, and preparing questionnaires to collect primary data. Each research method has helped me to deduce coherent responses to the research questions.

Summary

Responding to research question 1

What conclusions have theologians and academics reached regarding African-Caribbean/American economic progress?

My literature review evinced that academics generally approach this topic through one of the following schools of thought; Black liberation theology, prosperity doctrine, ethno-aggregation, ethnic entrepreneurship, divine economy, and Black capitalism. Reviewing these ideologies allowed me to comparatively analyse the attitudes of academics with the results of my auto-ethnographic results.

The literature review suggested that African-Caribbean Pentecostal theologians have generally disengaged from the inclusion of economic empowerment within their political theologies. Interestingly, many African-Caribbean writers reflect an awareness of a need for economic development within their respective works, however refrain from elucidating upon it. Many of these theologians have formulated their political theologies with influence from the popularised liberation theology as a response to racism and oppression. Typical of most liberation theologies, they have announced the potential of Pentecostalism to empower their congregations without discussing the churches capacity to create revenue for the purpose of regenerative community serving wealth. Simply, the literature review shows that besides Gregory Roberts African-Caribbean theologians are unwilling to dedicate special attention to the subject matter.

The trends within African-Caribbean theology are not consistent with the results of my auto-ethnographic research. Both Bishop's Jackson and King, as well as businessman Ken Ivey and the participants of the questionnaire held economic empowerment as a matter of importance. My one to one conversations showed that both Bishops felt it necessary to incorporate ethnic entrepreneurship and Black capitalist enterprise within the Pentecostal church. Bishop King and Gregory Roberts highlighted that many Pentecostal churches in Birmingham are practicing economic empowerment on a small scale, however this is not being documented in written work. The results of my literature review support their speculations.

A point of comparison within academia was that the NOI presented evidence of economic empowerment through practice, preaching, and literature. Whilst small in scale, I discovered the work of Nuri Tinaz who had diligently recorded the enterprises of the NOI in London. It highlighted that unlike African-Caribbean Pentecostal theologians, scholars writing on the NOI produced literature that was consistent with practice. This shows that African-Caribbean Pentecostal theologians need to do more to incorporate economic empowerment into their political theologies.

Responding to research question 2

What procedures are some African-Caribbean Pentecostal churches initiating to economically empower their communities?

The qualitative research completed is further compatible with my hypothesis, as it has pragmatically shown that the literature is not entirely reflective of the actions that are taking place within some churches. Every participant in my questionnaire proclaimed the importance of economic empowerment within the Black community, and furthermore admitted that the church should aid this ambition.

The findings procured through auto-ethnographic conversations suggest that there are significant steps taken by some Pentecostal churches to manifest economic empowerment as a practical reality. While all participants in these conversations conceded that Black churches could endeavour to achieve financial upliftment through enterprise, it can be acknowledged that practical cases of entrepreneurial initiatives are ongoing. Business networking, allocated sermons focused on economics, partnerships with local businesses, collaborative investments, and Pentecostal credit union were all suggestions that I uncovered in response to my second research question. On the other hand, Ken Ivey suggested that these examples are sporadic and lack the level of autonomy needed to polarise power relations made precedent by racism.

Bible teachings were also found to be a means of encouraging financial abundance. Most participants highlighted specific verses in the questionnaire that they completed. The preaching around these verses intended to uplift members of the congregation to believe that they could achieve prosperity through their faith in God. Ken Ivey maintained that the Bible held the keys to economic empowerment. Dr. Claude Anderson also recognised the power of the scripture in reforming the psyche of Black people to enable them to actualise their potential to economically empower. However, this was not to the extent of the leaders of the NOI or Stephen Long's divine economy theory which held economic empowerment as a divine right. It seems that the fear of prosperity is holding back the church from using the Bible in this way.

Responding to research question 3

How do these procedures compare in the U.K. and U.S.A.?

The review of African-American academics presented cases of faith based entrepreneurship as a progressive enterprise with the potential to tackle the consequences of racism. In many cases, I found evidence of a pursuit of ethnic economic empowerment as an actualised expression of faith. The literature showed that ethnic entrepreneurship and Black capitalism had been integrated into African-American theology. This dynamic was abundantly evidenced in chapter three where I discussed the NOI's Black achievement ideology and in the literature review where I discussed Dr. Claude Anderson's *Powernomics*.

Results accumulated through my field research suggest that similar examples of enterprise exist within the U.K. Differences however, can be outlined by the scale of entrepreneurial activity within African-American Pentecostal churches. These churches are more structurally involved in enterprise and entrepreneurship than African-Caribbean churches in the U.K., specifically those in Birmingham. This variation is arguably predicated on the historical relationship that the African-American church has had with the American socio-economic order, which is invariably different to the experience of African-Caribbean migrants and their descendants in Britain.

Concluding Statements

Looking ahead to the future, I would exert that the African-Caribbean community will never fully reverse the legacy of structural economic disempowerment (racism), unless individual perceptions of spirituality shift to embrace material gain. There needs to be an eradication of the fear of prosperity and a cultivation of Stephen Long's sensible integration of theology and economic wellbeing¹⁶⁹. Ironically, a definition of the word spiritualities refers explicitly to church property and revenue. Bishop Jackson was right to emphasise self-study, as new information can transform the thinking of the individual, which will subsequently change their actions, in turn precipitating an intended outcome. In this case, the intended outcome is the physical acquisition of wealth or resources which can cater to a desired religious ideal.

Elaborating on this point, I would like to address the criticisms launched by Pastor DeForest B. Soaries Jr. who argued that prosperity teaching was a road to greed and immorality. A proper understanding of the word spirituality actually necessitates the generation of revenue and assets. As Bishop King, Dr. Claude Anderson, Ken Ivey, and Karl George have all agreed, I also believe that economic sovereignty provides the spiritual freedom to do good deeds. It comes down to the intentions of the individual rather than the acquisition of wealth being immoral in principle.

Evidence within my study shows that African-Caribbean churches in Birmingham have failed to create thriving collaborative business networks. Pentecostalism holds the idea that the Kingdom of God can become an actualised phenomenon here on Earth. Furthermore, the Pentecostal emphasis on the power of the Holy Spirit within our daily lives can potentially encourage individual prosperity without a perceived clash between the physical and spiritual. This would help to address the idea that the spiritual is opposed to the material, subsequently managing the fear of prosperity. Entrepreneurial and economic success would essentially be guided through

¹⁶⁹ Long, D. Stephen (2000) *Divine Economy: theology and the market*. P. 4.

faith based enterprise, which would have the benefit of utilising the power and resources of the church to positively impact systemic racism.

Further Research

This study did not include auto-ethnographic observations of African-American Pentecostal churches. I would however suggest that a further area of research may seek to compare both African-Caribbean and African-American churches as central observation points of research. One may even seek to analyse African-Caribbean churches within the U.S. as a more refined area of research.

A limitation within this study is in the categorisation of African-Caribbean people. As discussed in my introduction, I employed this term to describe those who descended from former British Caribbean colonies, currently residing in the U.K. The majority of migrants from the British Caribbean colonies came from Jamaica, and therefore my research is likely to hold a slight bias towards Jamaican Pentecostalism. The focus on Jamaica however, does not diminish the influences and experiences of descendants of other Caribbean islands.

Finally, I think that any future research on this topic must consider the inexorably changing perceptions of success. I have briefly touched upon this within chapter three when referring to the NOI who held a Black achievement ideology which aimed to be self-sufficient. In my opinion however, I believe that society is slowly shifting away from group realisations, and more towards individualistic notions of progress. This is not to suggest that group phenomenology will cease to exist, but I do believe that within the following generations, culture based upon ethnicity will undergo drastic reform within the U.K. The accessible nature of mainstream western pop culture via the internet is continuously revolutionising the individual perceptions of self and the world around. The knock-on effect of this might see ethnicity having a lesser role in the outer expressions of individuals in terms of common customs between masses of people. I think that

unless bound by a particular uniformed belief system, notions of success will often be invariably formulated by individuals through experiences in a globalised society.

Appendix A: Transcriptions

This appendix contains transcripts from three recorded conversations. Everyone spoken to agreed they were happy for their name to be used. I have used my initials below to show my part in the conversation.

Transcript 1: Bishop John Jackson, The Rock: New Testament Church of God

Bishop Jackson:

So, your first generation were your Windrush guys. They would come, find somewhere to stay and then in 5 years, then going home. They'd have a house and live and die there happy. I don't need a business because I'm just coming to work and then I'm going home. That was predominantly. The affluent ones stayed in Jamaica predominantly. So, when they came here, they were just working and I suppose what is different from the American's is that they were coming from a colonised situation where the Nanny state, made them feel that things were better under the Nanny state, under the colonial state if you like. Good road, good schools. That's what they all talk about but they never talked about the concept of them still being almost like slaves.

So, when they came here now to change that, there was this challenge, this crack or split in this utopia because their children started to think differently. Black Power in the 60's came in and for us also, Rasta flowed into that as well. And then you get Black radicalism as well.

JB:

Nation of Islam

Bishop Jackson:

Not so much nation of Islam. It was more so Panthers, Black radicalism in that sense. It never strongly flowed into the Black community if you're thinking about the Black community. It's just now that it flows in stronger because there was a geographical systemic that stopped it from flowing.

So, you can see from there, it was the elders who were prepared to work and keep their heads down and it was the younger ones who said 'hang on a minute, I can do more with now the skills' because the elders would have said to them that you can do more and you can get higher. So, they would make them slightly more aspirational. That was the generation that was slightly more aspirational but every now and then you get someone that bucks the trend. Bishop Dunn. You get people like that who buck the trend. They would come and they would think about entrepreneurialism and starting a business and you would get the corner shop owners. My Uncle was a corner shop man. You would get another few who were builders, they would work in factories and then they would do building so they had their own companies. So, quite a few of the elders had companies, building companies, baking in the back room. They may not have a bakery but they would try and bake a bun and try to sell it. That's how Sunrise started up. They started baking off in a back room and then had to go out and buy something bigger because they learnt baking from back in Jamaica. I think they that they realised that they had to look around them and see models. So just like my dad, he sold models of people having their own firms like building

firms, so he could build, but he sold models with people being self-employed and you had people saying 'I can do my own thing' because all of a sudden in the factories it was the Blacks come in, and they go out first, and no matter where they are, they get made redundant first so they had to find another way of working. That's just my Dad's story.

JB:

If you look at trade unions here when Blacks and Asians were first coming to the country, it's interesting because when they first said that you guys can't join our union, it's interesting as the Asians went and built their own TU and Black people were protesting. So there is a difference which is interesting. African's a lot of the time have a different mentality to us.

Bishop Jackson:

So, I think if you are looking at the church, those are the things that impact on the Church to say that some worked and some had their own business but all ploughed into this central place called the church.

So the church was like a central financial muscle in the community. Because through it, they had a sense of independence. That's why you get this concept of Anglicans wrestling with did we reject them or did they just find their own space. Just two things did happen, they rejected and people also found their own space to make a church that was like themselves. They did not want to sit down quietly and reflect. They wanted to rejoice and wanted their African and Caribbean roots to come out in their worship. They wanted that to come out in their worship. That's what they were used to in the Caribbean. So, there was both the concept of rejection and also them wanting to find their own expression of worship. Both of those things made them have this powerhouse they called the church. In there came the place of central focus. Entrepreneurial focus was like, 'yes, let's buy a building so we can worship in it'

They became people who would look for opportunities to purchase properties and from that learnt to purchase other things. 'If we can buy a Church, I can buy a house.' So those sort of things wound together. Members of the Church to buy a church, buy a house, buy a flat., buy this, but that. So there was this reciprocal working undercover. There was nobody professional with a so-called business on the top, they just learnt and taught each other on the journey. It wasn't until much later that you get these property models. But I think that's the first kind of place that you find this kind of entrepreneurialism but there is this deep fear of prosperity, money. There's a fear of chasing money until the money strangles your face. That's inside the Church.

There was a fear of this money strangling the beauty of their faith if you like. Nothing worse than telling a Jamaican or a Caribbean, Barbadian or Kittian 'money is a thief'.

So, what they were always aware of was that you can't focus on money too much. That's what their fear was. With that, the baby went out with the bath water.

There was also a rejection of living affluent as well. Poverty was more glorious. "My Mother didn't have anything and she lived good before the lord" (Patois Dialogue)

One of the concepts that they use and is overplayed is the James concept which is a concept condemning the rich oppressors in the book of Saint James and also then uplifting those that have been pressed down. James is quite clear, it's not hidden. It says you're asking the rich man to come and sit here and then the poor people have nowhere to go. And maybe from the

perspective of colonialism and white supremacy or colonial theology which teaches that this concept of poverty being honourable. You are honourable because you are poor. Don't look on our riches because you are honourable because you are poor. You are the ones that Jesus will have always. The poor he will have. You are almost like Jesus. He doesn't have anywhere to stay and neither do you. But then they started to click. If we are like Jesus then the thousand hills belong to the Lord.

JB:

Just as I have done great work, great work ye shall do.

Bishop Jackson:

See what I mean. The thing that gives them a glimpse into that is America. Because they have been there long enough and because they have been working on their model of liberty long enough, you have rich Black Americans. Entertainers on the radio and then you started to see them on the TV. It allowed them to be free to think about prosperity. This is just my view of how things work. Being born in 1969, we went through school and school murdered our minds. By the time we finished our school, the key thing we were going to do is go to a factory and work. We are not supposed to think about university, we are not supposed to think about business. We were taught to be the highest level of attendant that we could which was to be a shop attendant. For me, you're not taught to think higher than that.

JB:

It gives you a ceiling in your mind. That then becomes your reality if you start thinking within those realms. It's the same with the cast system in India. People from the lower cast are taught that they can't go any higher and people start believing that. And then if their son or daughter then comes along to England with a different mindset, 'I want to be a Doctor, I want to be this' No no no don't do that you need to be...

Bishop Jackson:

It's a challenge because that's left there by colonialism.

JB:

Did you have a look at the questionnaire?

Bishop Jackson:

Yes, I have. I will send it to you.

JB:

What does your Church directly do?

Definitely our sermons are empowering and entrepreneurial in some senses.

One thing I did notice during the sermon is that when you gave the Step up, and you were giving the example of going from one job to the other, you said that through Christ you are able to focus your mind on that intention and picture the end goal. The one thing I picked up, and this is not a criticism, but I thought you might have mentioned something like, rather than going from one job to another, you can maybe go to owning a business.

Bishop Jackson:

In most peoples' reality, maybe that's not the case. Preachers are always trying to hit them on the ground. Whether it's done, it's still telling you that you can achieve. The core element of what it is saying to you is that you have the ability to achieve. So, whether you want to become consistent in that or you want to do something else, it's the ability to step up and achieve.

JB:

The way I look at it is that if you look at it as a game of chess, most people are like, I want to win the game of chess. The way I see it is that I want to own the chess board and the people who

are playing it are going to pay me to play it. That's the way I want to see it. Some of the Churches I looked at in America, the Church is like a monopoly. I know you said that they have a tendency of being over materialistic. There are some cases where that's not the case. Frederick C Price, Dr Claud Anderson who's not part of a church but he worked with churches. He has two books, 'Black Labour, White Wealth' and the second one which is better, is called 'PowerNomics' which talks about empowerment of Black America. There's a whole chapter on churches and how they can be used and have been used and it talks about the church being a central monopoly, so pooling wealth together and also setting up their own credit unions.

Bishop Jackson:

I totally understand that and we do have that in terms of credit union. The credit unions were started through Partner. Partner money, a group of partners come together and they put money in a pot. It might be a thousand pounds so one person takes a thousand pounds and do what they want with it but they still have to carry on paying into that until the round finished. It's almost like an internal credit union. That's the core element of how they used to pay for businesses, buy their houses, buy their cars, go on holidays. Now they've got credit union. One is called the Pentecostal credit union. That empowers people and churches to save to do business and do whatever. It's like a bank really but it's birthed out of the Black church. Pentecostal Credit Church. Bishop Louis McLoud is a core member of that. He can give you some information about how that works.

The fear is of being labelled as a money grabbing, money taking church. Unfortunately, that's how Black churches were demeaned. There is no legacy. Nobody puts any money down for us. Our grandmother doesn't die and leave us billions of pounds. Whatever we have is what people

give. So, when the offerings go around and you say 'Bredrin, give because if you don't give, the lights go out' it's being pressed against us as 'all that they're doing at that church is taking money' and then you the generation that we need, leave because you don't see past the ask. You don't see it as an independent structure that can help you in the future. You don't see no investment in it. You don't see it as anything positive. All you see is a negative.

So, the rebuckle from that was to get heavenly minded. Think about spirituality. Biblical correctness.

JB:

What's that bible teaching that says you should always leave something for your grandchildren? Is it in Hebrews? There's an exact verse that says something like, you will be condemned if you don't leave anything for your grandchildren.

Bishop Jackson:

Proverbs. It's not that you don't leave anything for your grandchildren, it's making sure that your soul is not sold. It's all about who are you going to serve. In Jamaica, there were big sermons that were preached around what can a man give in exchange for his soul and whether you should be striving for riches and money or for righteous actions. That was to stop the church from falling into the trap of being totally money orientated. That's how we're taught which, in some senses is good but in some senses, is bad. You stop being driven towards pursuing things to create platforms.

JB:

There is that danger of becoming reliant on something.

Bishop Jackson:

Because you look at it, Eddie Long was doing great because he was doing some fabulous models. Education. Entrepreneurialism. Everything working out of the church, really in a powerful way. We're talking about setting up structures and conferences where people are employed. You come to that conference, CV done, you're leaving that conference with a job. To me that's a beautiful model. However, the downside of that was that they went to the top end about investments. Bring a man in tot deal with investments, what's the man do? Skank everybody and disappear and get locked down and he had to wrestle his way out of it. So, you see the good was killed with the bad. What we do now, as a ministerial church, one we are an independent charity that functions on the basis of the propagation of the gospel. Anything to propagate the gospel. Within that we have ways of propagating that gospel so that could be that you run a nursery, which is George Street. Everybody needs a nursery. George street church has a nursery. That was done by Bishop Thompson and that's Lozzels.

JB:

[Could you put me in contact with them?](#)

Bishop Jackson:

Yes I can.

We also had an employment agency run by John Ray. My wife was secretary at the time. That was in the 1980's when "Fired burned" (Patois Dialogue) as a response to the riots. This was some of the early stuff we did in the Midlands that I can point to that then drove towards businesses. We as a local Church have done one or two things.

As a response to the 2011 riots, we opened an alternative education provision with an organisation called the Lighthouse Group (TLG). We partnered with them and now we have an independent school in Birmingham Central. They do alternative education provision. We have been running that for five years now and have it as an independent business. That's the core

business at the moment. Other than that, there are strands of business like we had a shop open. It was a book shop but the sales were poor and the rent was high. Predominantly in that area it's fast food so we had to shut that down. We then created some hubs for education and employment. We've had several education and employment groups come in as an organisation to train and teach us. Our core business right now is the alternative core education.

JB:

[How successful would you say that business is?](#)

Bishop Jackson:

I would say it's quite successful, 8 out of 10. I don't want to boast too much but it's still there, it's still working, many have shut down. It's making its way through and developing. That's part of what we do. We have also got quite a lot of business people amongst us that we make sure there is a hub to connect them. One man does two different things, one, he has created his own alternative education provision, one a government owned and one a private school. He's a member of the church and we consult with him. What we have realised is that we don't have to invent everything, the members do it and we empower them to do what they have got to do. We consult them and we support them in that. He also runs a football agency. Several of his players have gone to Liverpool, Chelsea etc. He's quite well known, so, those are his two businesses. As a member of the church, he involves himself in the life of the church. This is the new way to do it because we have always said that we need to do everything and then we have done nothing. What's happening now is that the members are doing it. Another guy runs a security business and what we do with that is work together to find him partners, customers etc. So, he is a member of the church and he is about doing that business. For me, you have to remain focused as to what you are supposed to do as a church and if you don't dissect what you are doing then you will never become the empower centre that you are supposed to be. When you look at Jeremiah Wright Church in Chicago, it gives rise to businesses. That's Barack's old Church.

Transcript 2: Bishop Ruben King, New Testament Church of God;

Harvest Temple

Bishop King:

I grew up in church, parents are Jamaicans. I wasn't originally a part of New Testament Church of God. I was part of a small independent Church.

JB:

Was that Pentecostal?

Bishop King:

Yes. However, it wasn't very organised and there wasn't much going on for young people. We reached a point where my mum decided that if we stay there, my brother, my sister and myself would lose interest and leave church basically as a lot of young people were doing at the time. She's originally New Testament Church of God from Jamaica so she decided that we were going to go back to that. We went to the one in Handsworth in Birmingham. We were there for 35 years, up until 2 years ago. I was then moved to the church in Wolverhampton where I am now the Pastor of that church. So, I have served in various roles over the years but that's sort of my background in terms of the church.

JB:

Have you heard of the Black Liberation Theology and if so, what have you heard about it`?

Bishop King:

I have. I did two modules at the Queens Theological College in Birmingham, back in about 2002 or 2003. I didn't do the coursework and the exams but I attended the modules. That was kind of like my first full introduction to Black and Asian Christian theology. It was quite an eye opener. Some of the concepts, I found to be quite radical compared to what I was used to and what I understood about the Bible. On the course, there was a chap from south Africa, who made it interesting with the Apartheid. I remember one session, it was really heavy and the folks who were there, mainly from the Methodist church, it was almost like the guilt on these people from that session was really heavy because the guy was sharing his experience of growing up in South Africa and how certain scripture was used to reinforce the apartheid and how they were treated and how they were viewed. I mean I think it was good for me to be there and be a part of that and also to see a totally different perspective on theology and what I had been brought up on. Even things like images. A few had an image of Jesus as a Black man which would upset and anger some people because of the way they viewed Christ and the bible for centuries really. So it was good for me to be a part of that. I didn't do that much reading.

JB:

In terms of Black liberation theology before you studied it or were aware of it, were there any elements that you think were applicable or useful or you think were too radical?

Bishop King:

No, it's definitely useful. It definitely helps in terms of ones identity with the scriptures. I think it would be particularly useful for youth because they are looking for identity to see the Black involvement in the scripture and how the scripture was misused and how it seeks to correct that in a sense. It's not something that is regularly taught even in the Black majority churches. It's still on side-lines. People can be seen as radical who are into that sort of thing.

JB:

Do you think (application of the Black liberation theology) differs here with Caribbean churches here in the UK as compared to African-American churches?

Bishop King:

Yes, I think so the churches are not the same. The culture of both countries is different. It's a different culture. I have been to America and you had Black Caribbean churches, Black American churches and they had separate conventions, separate everything. Their style of worships are different. The context of America, with the civil rights movement and all that is different to the UK.

JB:

So do you think that Africa-Americans have a slightly different history to West Indians? And growing up in a different country, do you think their attitudes towards economics is different to west Indians?

Bishop King:

Hmmm...

JB:

From my research, I found a lot of African American churches are proactive in encouraging a sort of prosperity doctrine.

Bishop King:

Yes, I mean that's surfaced to my knowledge from the 70's, this prosperity Gospel and all that. Not all the African-American churches are into that. From what I've seen in the states there are

sufficient Black businesses. I mean I remember going to somewhere in Florida and there was almost a mall that was controlled by Black people. There were all the shops and enterprise amongst the church folk.

JB:

Could you give me an example of the enterprise amongst the church folk?

Bishop King:

Well you know, you would see a church and next to it would be a retail of some sort, a shop or a barbers that belongs to the church which you don't tend to see over here. I can't even think of an example but there must be one. There are some mosques now that have their own funeral parlour. I'm sure there are churches that do that but I can't think of an example.

JB:

Do you think that's necessary here?

Bishop King:

Yes I do, I think we should have businesses and people in every strata of society, from the grassroots to the top.

JB:

And what benefits do you think that would bring to the Black church and also to the communities in Britain?

Bishop King:

Well, it's going to upskill and empower. The hopes and aspirations of the youngsters coming through. All of that, it helps to feed into that because if youngsters, all they see and end up in jobs where they are working for someone else there's not much chance of promotion and you are

limiting them financially in what they can achieve. It's important that they can look around and see that that guy, just like me, same age as me, look what he's doing.

JB:

[Role models](#)

Bishop King:

Yes, it inspires. I also feel we need to have more independence. You are never going to advance as a people if you are dependent on others for everything. We've got to have our own. So that's the thing about the church, we've got lots of buildings, the church has probably been the most stable part of Black society in Britain. In many ways, it's seen as an honest broker. The church is here, whether the funding exists or not. It's seen as doing work in the community.

JB:

[It's a charity, tax free.](#)

Bishop King:

It's quite stable. People argue that the church could be doing more. Every organisation could be doing more. I think sometimes the church gets unfair criticism. It's probably about how we refocus and re employ our energy and efforts because yes we are caring for the whole being of people. Yes the primary commission is to look after their souls but the same time the scripture says if you want to talk to a man about his soul and he is hungry, then feed him first and if you've got no money to feed him, then you know what I'm saying?

We have community projects, food banks. We're doing all of that but that's not going to necessarily lift people out of poverty. It's just to get them by. For me personally, I would like food

banks to be closing down because that is a sign that people are moving on and they are progressing. They're creating wealth for themselves.

JB:

You mentioned a Bible verse just there. Which verse is that?

Bishop King:

I mentioned about feeding. It's a scripture about if you are going to talk to a man about spiritual things, but he is in a temporal need, he hasn't got clothes and he is hungry.

JB:

Do you think that given our history, economic efficiency is a way to then focus on spirituality or being spiritual?

Bishop King:

Yes, I think it definitely helps because running a church costs money and up until now, my parents have been committed to the church and they try to give. We see the trend changing. You could say, it's harder to buy a house now and all of that so in terms of the financial contributions, there is not the same level of commitment that the like of my parents were willing to give back in the day.

The church is reaching a point now where it's going to be difficult for them to survive on what comes in on the offering plate. We have got to look at other income streams and obviously the more prosperous the people are that come to your church the more they are able to give and then the more the church is able to do in supporting people.

JB:

So, specifically going back to the bible verse that you mentioned, when you get up there and preach, do you use any prosperity doctrine or any scripture to encourage people to kind of economically empower themselves. Could you give me an example?

Bishop King:

There are many scriptures. Psalm 1 tell you that that you are blessed if you walk in the way that God has subscribed us to walk and follow his pre-steps. You are blessed if you honour your parents. But there are also scriptures that say that God has given us power to get wealth and many scriptures that talk about all of us having some gifts or talent and there's parables in the bible Jesus talks about talent where he gave one servant so many talents. There are two parables where Jesus gives them one pound each, one comes back with ten, one with five and one buries it in the ground and Jesus calls him wicked and lazy. So, that's saying that we are supposed to be trading on the gifts that we have but I would say everybody has some sort of gift. As far as I'm concerned, everybody has something that they are good at, with your hands or with your mind, art or music or whatever. There's something. I encourage people, if they don't know what this is, to experiment and find out what that is. Once you find out then you are naturally inclined to do what you are good at. Build on that because that could become your bread and butter. Your source of income or it could be additional income and in the world that we live in now, you know, the years of working at one place for 45 years, those days are going now. People are going to have to be switching careers every ten years or more often than that. So, the more strings you have to your bow, it's going to make it easier to transition. I think continually building up your skill bank, that's very important.

There's a lot of cottage industry happening. People bake, they do hairdressing or valet your car. They'll do your catering if you're doing a party. They are not setting a lot of them as a limited company. They've got that enterprise in them but many don't go that step of setting up a company and doing it for a living. It's something that they do alongside something else that they are doing.

JB:

What are your thoughts in general on the prosperity doctrine because from my research, some people do criticise it? The follow-on question from that is, West Indians especially from Jamaica, do you feel there that there is a mentality, based on the colonial mind-set that we've been taught that we shouldn't be too prosperous? Are we afraid of prosperity?

Bishop King:

Well, I came across prosperity gospel in the late 80's and what it did for me was definitely inspire me to believe that I can do more, that I can further, I can go higher. Definitely, but then as I listened to it more and more, I wouldn't say that I am 100 per cent for how it is portrayed and put across, particularly from the state. In Africa, it is a massive thing and last year in Ghana. There's some massive ministries out there. I believe that God wants you to be blessed and prosperous but all in light of what his will and purpose is for you. Not just being blessed multi rich for the sake of it. It made me think, how does that message fit into the context a country where there are a lot of poor people. To me it's not a universal message. It may kind of work in parts of African-America, Africa and Britain but you go to a country where people are struggling and they haven't got the basics they do need some sort of hope and something to look up to but telling them if you give me your last rupee or whatever, god will make you a millionaire by next year, no I wouldn't support that at all. We know people are using it just to make loads of money.

JB:

Specifically, then, you mentioned Wolverhampton church, what examples do you have of enterprise related things you have done? What active steps does your Church take?

Bishop King:

There's a general encouragement which is like a consistent, week on week message just to uplift and encourage people. There is one on one so someone might book an appointment to see me, because they are going on a course, thinking of starting their own business and I will try my best to guide them or signpost them to someone who is already in that line of business or somebody experiences. There's quite a bit of that which goes on. Last year at Wolverhampton, we had a business Sunday. So we invited in a local businessman who's a Christian and the whole service was geared around people who are either in business or are considering setting up a business, whatever that business may be. Whether they are a fully-fledged limited company, a sole trader, self-employed or someone just considering as they have an idea which has been going around their mind for a while but they haven't actually done it.

Tony Brown has written a book called 'How to Systemise your Business' He is part of a Church in Wolverhampton. He talks about his journey and how he started off. He was working for various agencies and the council and so on and then eventually decided to take the leap and set-up his own business and talks about the challenges that came with that. There are certain advantages but when you work for someone else, you get your salary weekly or monthly, it's going to be there in the bank but when you work for yourself, it's different.

That was followed by a time of prayer. So, for those who are in business or those looking to set-up, we prayed for them. God bless them and confirm in their hearts that of this is something to do then do something about it. You don't have to necessarily give up your job but you can start

something which then overtakes what you are doing and you take the leap then. We provided a free lunch and there was a question and answer session with Tony and other business people who were there which people found to be really helpful. So, that was something that we did specifically to inspire and encourage enterprise and business.

At my former Church, in Handsworth, the new testament of God church, we were looking into doing a directory, in fact we started it. We had it up all together but we didn't get as far as printing it. We hadn't yet printed it as a colour brochure. We thought the best thing is to start finding out who amongst us is doing what. The 'Black found syndrome', keeping it in your community. So, if someone in your church has got a garage, then why take your car to someone else? With the Jewish community and others, it circulates. With the Black community, it tends to go around once and then it's out. Years ago, there used to be a print and design company called Majesty Print based in Birmingham. They put together a proper Black business directory called Kush-I. It was a thick, properly printed, properly presented directory which was an attempt to keep the Black pound circulating within the community. So, there have been initiatives like that. There's a group in Wolverhampton that meet monthly in a hotel to set up a business. They get invited speakers in and so on to talk about business.

We've got other people amongst us like Gregory Roberts. He's done research similar to what you are doing, into economics. He looked at some of the financial accounts of denominations and so on. He is based in Birmingham.

I'm working on a project now with Bristol Street Motors. It's got three strands to it we've got an infinity strand with them called Virtue but more commonly known as Bristol street motors. The three stands of that strategy is that their CEO is allowing us access to the training that their

management have. So, in terms of upskilling Pastors, leaders to think like business people. He has come and met with the top level of our denomination and done a macro-presentation of how he runs the company and how they have gone from 33 dealerships to 120 odd now in 20 years. So that's one strand. Two or three of our leaders can go and attend the training with their staff. The second strand of that is the package where we can get vehicles. Cars, minibuses at a discounted rate. The third part is that they are going to give us an annual donation. We have set up an application procedure for our churches to apply for funding. So, if they want to do some sort of community enterprise, or support group in the community then they can apply for up to £1,000. There would then be a panel who would decide who gets the money by looking at various things. This whole funding issue and the thing of applying to various places for funding, in my view, I'm not saying there is anything wrong with that, but I have been waiting a long time to see (28 minutes) corporate companies to help finance the community side of what we are doing. Obviously, they are not going to promote our religion or Christianity. But there are a lot of other good things that the church does in the community and a lot of these corporate companies have a corporate responsibility arm where they want to put something back into the community. So, we are saying that we are brokers, we are on this vehicle, we have been around since 1953, we are not going to run off with your money or misuse it so why not give a portion of that money to us and we will decide with you which churches get that money to do projects that benefit the community. So, that's something new that has really come on Board in the last few years.

JB:

[Is there a name for that?](#)

We call it the 'social support award'. It hasn't been fully rolled out to the churches yet but the ministers across the country are aware of it. It's trying a different angle than everybody just going for awards for Children in Need. Let's see if we can try another angle. I am hoping that it will be a success and it will open up doors with corporate companies and say look at the exposure that

they are getting to that network of churches across the country. People are now buying their vehicles through Bristol Street Motors, and others will then say that yes this is something that we want to get on board with too. The thing is we also now have five people working for Bristol street motors. So in terms of career aspirations, apprenticeships, training and all of that, it's upskilling of some of our youngsters which may eventually end up meaning they get their own garage and doing their own thing.

JB:

Would you say that in Britain that there are small examples or big examples of the type of enterprise you are talking about on a wider scale?

Bishop King:

There are definitely examples. You are spoilt for choice if you look at catering. There are more and more take-away shops you see opening up. I think for me one of the biggest things in Birmingham, I can't speak for other areas, is that we have funeral directors who actually do an excellent shop, they're consistent. I'm really proud of them. If you go back ten years ago, you didn't have that option. So, you have probably got two or three now in the West Midlands area. They are doing a good job and actually taking away business from those who have been around for donkey's years. What makes me feel really good about that is that they have got youngsters involved in a business that most people wouldn't want to get involved in. When I'm involved in a funeral I see these kids, in their early 20's undertaking the funeral duties and I always make a point of encouraging them. Barber shops are a common thing as well. They are springing up all over the place in the city but I think there is a lot more we can be doing in terms of the provision of our food, Caribbean type food, hair products. There's not much of that. I'm not aware of any bank. I think there are lots of things where there are massive gaps. Really, we need to be looking into and encourage people to step out into but I guess if you are in a good cushy job then you just stay there.

JB:

So would you say the Church is a good way to pool resources and skills together and then to start creating?

Bishop King:

Well the Church is a community of people that meet regularly. It is centred around Jesus and the Christian faith but the advantage is that we meet on a weekly basis so you could be touching base with people very often. The support is there. I think that's the advantage of the church. If you go to a reasonably sized congregation, there will be someone there who has the same interest as you, or their cousin or somebody else so in terms of making links, it would be quicker than trying to make links with someone if you don't meet with anyone regularly. It's an atmosphere that encourages and inspires.

JB:

When I was doing my literature review, the first thing I set out to do on this research was to accumulate all the literature before I started meeting people, and there is an abundance of literature in America which documents active examples of African- American churches involved in enterprise and the economy, empowerment and so on. In the UK there is a paucity of literature talking about any of the things that you are talking about so I want to know why is the literature not reflect some of the things that you are saying?

Bishop King:

Admittedly, that is not one of the Church's strong points in terms of literature and writing. By and large, we've left that to others to report on us rather than us telling our own story. People can then spin things in whichever way they choose.

JB:

Just because it's not being written about, doesn't mean that it's not happening.

Bishop King:

No there are good stories up and down the country. I would not be aware of them because if it is not written and shared using a podcast or whatever modern technology, you just know what's going around in your little circle. As a minister, I will speak to other ministers so I get an idea of what's going on but not on a regular organised basis. In the past, there were organisations that brought the Black churches together like ACEA, African-Caribbean Evangelical Alliance. That folded a number years ago. Perhaps some organisation like that could facilitate some of that because I can't really think of an organisation at the moment that's really pushing this agenda or that's wider than a denomination and independent church. People are doing their own thing in isolation but really I think to have a much greater impact, it would have to be coordinated better and I think there are other challenges, people are not always willing to give up time, resources like I have got my timetable and I can't break out of that for a meeting and event because we do these every year and we're not going to progress like that. Everybody has got to be prepared to give up something if we are going to gain. The other thing I find sometimes find in the Black community, not with churches, just with community groups, everybody is after instant success, instant gain. Nobody wants to graft. I was trying to coordinate several Black community groups to come together and apply for a £100,000 than small amounts here and there individually, and go for big joined up projects in north-west Birmingham. Unless you're literally handing out money, they wouldn't even come to meetings. It's quite a challenge because of people's mentality and mind-set and everybody is just trying to survive. To get people to rise up out of that and see a bigger picture, give up half a day to sit down and talk and see how we can work together, I'm not competing with you, let's do something that's bigger, more impactful, sustainable, it's very challenging.

More Churches are now setting up community interest companies where they can do business and make a profit. With those companies, you still get the benefits

Transcript 3: Ken Ivey, Owner of Regency Auto Centre, Birmingham

JB:

What's your opinion on Church related enterprise in terms of, do you think church's do enough? Do you think more should be done? What's your opinion on it?

Ken Ivey:

Church Enterprise, I think the Black Church lacks that. I think that there is opportunity for example to partnership with Black businesses for growth. I think they're missing a trick there for sure. If you are asking me can the Church do more? The answer is yes, an awful lot more. When we think of a church, you're right to say that the Church is the head of everything that we do. As a community, we always run back to the church, no matter who we are, for guidance, for protection, for upliftment, for medical reasons sometimes etc. In my view, and this is a personal view, the church is not seemingly equipped to undertake its foundation role.

JB:

Why would you say that it's not equipped?

Ken Ivey:

It's not equipped because there might be people in the church who are equipped to do things, but they surely are not coming forward) I don't know if that's because the leadership is not right

and we should be asking that question, or they don't see a need etc., but if I want something, no matter what that thing is, my first port of call would be the church because in the church I see hundreds and thousands of people going on a Sunday and they are from all walks of life. Magistrates, judges, lawyers, mechanics, food vendors etc etc. So, everything is in a Church, our Church. But again, I say this, the church is not utilising those skills. I have not seen to date where a Black church has got a directory for businesses although every church that I know has got business people in. When you think about a church, the church has a collection on a Sunday. In some churches, two or three times a day. That's a vast sum if you take it overall. I don't know how much and I won't even guess but when they collect that cash, they put it into a bank. That bank does not belong to us. That bank takes our cash and lends it to others apart from us. I've been in business now for maybe 15 or 20 years and I approached the bank 3 times and on those 3 occasions, they have knocked me back so I have built my business on my own cash. Now if the churches were to come together and have a bank, how powerful would that be? That would be a big big plus. We would be able to go to the bank, and don't get me wrong because I'm Black and I got to Church and the bank will say yes to me and not go through all the checks, but at least we would feel sort of welcome and we would have better chance of getting a loan and if you think about it, the church is not built by pastors or bishops etc. The churches are built up by its congregation. So, if you can feed to go out and get more, more can come into the church and it can be more profitable.

But again, I am not seeing that. I must admit that there is one church in our community that's actually doing some partner shipping. I am not sure if that's with businesses as of yet. I think that would be the way forward. Not just to go to church and clap our hands and praise Jesus, but to do the things that we need to live in the kingdom and we need for survival and survival is not going to church on Sunday morning. I always say that God has given us knowledge, wisdom and

understanding and we have to use those so yes, the church could do a lot lot more. Our church leaders need to go out more and talk to the layman and talk to the guys and girls who do not go to Church because there is a reason why they don't go to church. Go and find out that reason. If they are right or wrong. If they are wrong, then show them how they are wrong and try to get them into Church.

JB:

You are a business owner yourself, and I can see on your leaflet that you are in partnership with Handsworth New Testament Church of God. So, is that an example of enterprise involvement with the church?

Ken Ivey:

That's an enterprise that I came up with last year, myself and a friend of mine. It was to try and encourage the church to partnership with us. It's not a thing where we are trying to go to the church to get customers etc. My thought is this, when the church is in need, I know they go to the Black people because Black people attend the church. We don't go to Asians, we don't go to whites etc. They go to Black people and we give what we can. If the church can show support and encouragement to the congregation to support their own, so the Black businesses that are successful, the church can in turn say, 'we are in difficulty' can you partnership with us to do it and vice versa because I know businesses now that are suffering and they just need a helping hand. And my thought always is that we should always be able to go to the church and say 'I've got a business but I'm failing, can you advise me, direct me in the right place or have you got that bank where I can go?' But unfortunately, I don't see that.

JB:

So, as you say, you have a partnership with the church yourself. Would you say that this happens often or is this kind of like a one off?

Ken Ivey:

As far as I know, it's a one-off. I have tried to partnership with three churches and I will try to branch it out some more because most people in churches drive a car. Most churches have got a van etc and my thought is, every church member should be coming to me or someone who looks like me. I am not discriminating etc.; I'm being pro-Black. I'm being pro-us because others look out for themselves and they don't look out for us so we should be doing exactly the same. It's as simple as that. I think the church and business should work together and I think the church is powerful enough to influence to make businesses grow.

JB:

Are you familiar with the term Black Liberation Theology?

Ken Ivey:

Not really. I have heard of it but I have not heard it being discussed in depth.

JB:

Well, the Black liberation theology to give you a quick analysis is a type of theology within the church that has certain practices which are intended to liberate Black people. The theory was set by an African American named James Cone and in his theology, he came up with different practices, ideas and doctrines that different churches could practice. One of those which is important here, was economics. He said the church should be actively involved in an economic programme that will liberate. He mentioned like yourself, directories, banking systems and credit

unions is another one. Another one is simply a prosperity teaching from the bible itself because in speaking with different Bishops and Ministers, there are many examples in the bible where you can preach economic prosperity through. Within the Caribbean Pentecostal Church in the UK, do you think there is a fear of being too prosperous?

Ken Ivey:

Absolutely and I think that is coming back from the old days. I am a businessman and believe me, some church people have called me a thief because we are not used to dealing with each other fairly it seems. If I charge a £1 more than Mr. Singh, I'm not seen as being a little bit expensive, I'm labelled a thief. Yet, they don't know the reasons why. Yet, those same people who call me a thief will ask me to take their sons on to train them to be a mechanic so, it's as if we don't like each other. The bible is a wonderful and book and if it is read and taught in the right way, we will prosper. So, I'm glad to hear that there is a programme going around to encourage us to do all the economics that we need to survive.

JB:

Are you aware of any churches, or have you been to any churches where you have sat in church and the sermon has been teaching a prosperity message and economics has been mentioned? Have you been to a service where they have mentioned prosperity in that sense?

Ken Ivey:

Yes, the church I attended going back three or four years ago, they had a service predominantly about businesses and I remember they had each person with a business to give a

little brief and talk about their business and the pastor at the time did say that we should support each other and that it is good for us to have businesses together. It shows us that with support we can grow as a people, as a church. I have seen that done once. For me again, it should be common practice. I'm not saying every Sunday should preach about that.

JB:

Do you think a Church should allocate a monthly business night as a hub for where business people can meet?

Ken Ivey:

At least, yes, it should. See, if they do that, they will automatically have investment in the church. If I was to go to a business meeting every week and they invite certain people and the congregation know about it and the congregation support Ken's Garage or whatever else, I would be so impressed. So, if the church ever comes to me and says, Mr. Ivy, this week or this month we are short and there is a hole in the roof so could you and a couple of other business guys come together and do it, we would be more than happy to do so. But right now, I'll be quite honest and quite frank with you, just now, I don't see where the congregation money is going. It might seem harsh; I know they have got bills to pay etc. but if you depend on the congregation to get your bills paid that isn't economics at all.

JB:

Are you saying that the church should use their income to create wealth and enterprise?

Ken Ivey:

Yes, simple as that. Five years ago, I went around some churches to see what buildings they have got etc. and I was quite surprised how many buildings they have got unused, locked up, yet we have got old folks who are in need, we've got young people who need somewhere to go etc., yet we have got buildings locked up. It makes no sense to me at all. It infuriates me.

JB:

Do you think that there is a different mentality within Black churches in America compared to Black Pentecostal churches in the UK?

Ken Ivey:

Not only have I seen it on TV but I actually went to Atlanta and I went and looked at some of the churches there and yes big churches, but the enterprise arm they have got with that is phenomenal. You name anything at all and you can see a Black person owns it or runs it and you will always find a link to the church. The church owns their own car parks, supermarkets, barber shops and these are the things that we don't see here at all. Again, I mean our leaders I'm sure are quite aware of this. They watch TV, they travel the world. I just can't fathom why we haven't reached further than we have. We have travelled a long way but in that travel, it seems there have been too many pauses as it were. There is not any clearness about it. We seem to be selling God a lot which is fine but people need to live. You have churches that have got food programme etc. and they have mornings where poor people can come in one day a week. There are 7 days in a week. These people are hungry the other days in the week. Yet, you are going to big yourself up and say I feed them one time a week? I don't see how that works. I always thought that a fundamental thing for a church is to care for its people in every way and if that means partnering

with businesses, with people who are members of the church, do that so that you can create more wealth so that the wealth can be passed down the line.

JB:

So why would you say that there is a difference between Black churches in America, compared to here?

Ken Ivey:

I really don't know because as far as I am concerned, it's the same set of people. They're from Jamaica and the Caribbean and they do whatever but most are African-Americans. I don't know if their mentality is different. When I went to Atlanta and saw a programme where Black people who will only shop from Black people no matter what they want to buy and when I witness a Black brother or sister go past a Chinese man's shop, an Asian man's shop to find a Black man's shop, I was impressed with that. It could be just the teaching of their leaders which is totally different from the leaders here. They are more about prosperity. Yes, their Bishop might have an expensive suit and he might even have a jet, but he will have a good church and in that church, all the business people look after. Some of them have even tried to do a bank. Just now I have learnt that there is a bank in Atlanta itself which is a Black owned bank and Black guys have invested in that bank. It doesn't take much to open a bank.

JB:

Do you think maybe in America the percentage of Black African-Americans is about 25 per cent whereas in the UK there are a lot less, especially when talking about West Indians specifically, but your observations are interesting.

Ken Ivey:

The percentages of Black and white don't impress me. If we have one hundred people, there are 100 people in need and if the church can't accommodate them and their thoughts and the church is respectful and powerful, it should be doing something towards that. So, the percentage parts don't hold much with me. We have enough people here. The churches make enough money on a Sunday morning to go in a bank on Monday morning for us to prosper and I don't know how many churches are in the UK and how much they all collect on a Sunday morning, I know in America it was said it's like 2.4 million dollars get collected every Sunday morning, I don't know how much it is here, but it's still an awful lot of cash and that tells me in a month, you have got a lot of cash. It's what we do with it. I have also seen that a lot of churches now are owned or purchased and paid for, so in theory, there is then extra money out there to do business.

Appendix B: Questionnaire Responses

Directly below is information which was on the first page of the questionnaire. Following that, all completed questionnaires can be found. Names of individuals who completed the questionnaires have not been included as some preferred to remain anonymous.

Religious Enterprise Questionnaire

You are being asked to participate as a volunteer in a research study conducted by James Boston, an MA student at Canterbury Christ University. This study is designed to gather information about the relationship between religion and economics. The research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Robert Beckford, Dr. Gabriella Beckles-Raymond.

You will be one of several people participating in this study by completing this questionnaire.

1. Your participation in this project is voluntary; you will not be paid for your participation. You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or harm of any type. If you decline to participate in or choose to not complete the questionnaire, the researcher will not inform anyone of your decision, and no foreseeable negative consequences will result.

2. Completing the questionnaire will require approximately 15 minutes. There are no known risks associated with completing the questionnaire. If, however, you feel uncomfortable in any way during this process, you may decline to answer any question, or not complete the questionnaire.

3. The researcher will only identify you by name with your permission to do so. If you do not give permission, your confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of data generated by this questionnaire will protect your anonymity.

4. This research effort and this questionnaire have been reviewed and approved by the Dissertation Proposal Review Board, which functions as the Institutional Review Board for ethical research at Canterbury Christ University. For research-related problems or questions regarding ethical research practices, please contact Dr. Robert Beckford at robert.beckford@canterbury.ac.uk

For further information, including a copy of the results of this study, please contact:

James Boston

James.boston007@gmail.com

NOTE: By completing and submitting this questionnaire, you are indicating that you understand the statements above, and consent to participate in this study. **Do not put your name on the questionnaire;** your signature acknowledging that you understand the information presented above is not required.

Questionnaire 1

Common Demographic Variables

What is your gender? Male Female

How old are you? (tick one of the choices) Under 25 years of age
 25–34 years of age
 35–44 years of age
 45–54 years of age
 55–64 years of age
 65–74 years of age
 75 years of age or older

What is your marital status? Single
 Married (legal or registered)
 Married (traditional or unregistered)
 Divorced
 Separated
 Widowed
 Other: _____ [explain]

- How many years have you been a Christian? 37 years.
- How many members and adherents currently attend your church? 250 people.
- How many years have you been a member of this church? 2 years; was at previous church 35 years.
- Does this church reflect your own theological beliefs? Yes.
- What is your role within this church? I am currently the Senior Pastor.
- What importance do you personally give to financial enterprise in terms of community building and why?
Financial enterprise is important and has become more important over the years. It has to be seen as a viable first option amongst other possibilities, that is not always related to one's education, experience and practical achievements.
- What steps does this church take to provide its community with enterprise opportunities?
I continually encourage individuals to make the most of opportunities, upskill and create additional income streams. I am the director of my own limited company, established with my wife and a friend in 2001.

There is a lot of cottage industry (catering, baking, decorating, hairdressing, etc.) that don't necessarily count themselves as a business, as they may not be legally registered.

Over the past decade it has been good to see Black Funeral Directors emerge from church members of Birmingham.

Are there any examples where the church has preached on economic empowerment? If so, what bible verses might have been used?
There are too many to list here, as economic empowerment can be found throughout the scripture. Here is the message from our Business Sunday that is available online:
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/h38g2yu3v3wtxl/Business%20Sunday%20Audio%20File.mp3?dl=0>

- How far is this doctrine reinforced by practice?
 September 2016, we held a Business Sunday, that comprised of having a business person be our guest speaker, prayer for existing and prospective businesses, making available literature, lunch and a Q&A.

At my previous church we put together directory of businesses and services offered by Christian organisations. Around a decade ago Majesty Print and Design produced a professionally printed Black Business Directory called 'CUSH I' (if my memory serves me correctly); I still have a copy of it somewhere.
- Are you familiar with the terms 'Black Liberation Theology' If so, what have you heard?
 I attended the Black and Asian Christian Theology modules 1 & 2 at Queens Foundation Theological College – Birmingham in 2000 – 2001. I found it to be an enlightening course.
- How far do you feel that Churches should take active roles in tackling issues such as racial economic disparity?
 We have recently set up a Community Interest Company that can address some of the issues. Where possible, we should look to support our own, similar to what others do.

Please categorise yourself? _____

- Pastor
- Youth Leader
- Evangelist
- Missionary
- Men's ministries leader
- Other: _____

Questionnaire 2

Common Demographic Variables

What is your gender? * Male Female

How old are you? (tick one of the choices)..... Under 25 years of age
 25–34 years of age
 35–44 years of age
 *45–54 years of age
 55–64 years of age
 65–74 years of age
 75 years of age or older

What is your marital status?..... Single
 *Married (legal or registered)
 Married (traditional or unregistered)
 Divorced
 Separated
 Widowed
 Other: _____ [explain]

- How many years have you been a Christian? 16 years
- How many members and adherents currently attend your church? 200 people
- How many years have you been a member of this church? 16 years
- Does this church reflect your own theological beliefs?
Yes, I did my foundational studies as a new Christian at this church and share the doctrinal beliefs around God, Scripture, Christ, Man, Redemption, Church and Kingdom
- What is your role within this church?
I am in the leadership of the church serving as an Elder
- What importance do you personally give to financial enterprise in terms of community building and why?
It is an important part of a Christian's personal journey as a steward and ultimately as part of being a productive member of society with an ability to give and to empower others. The church has an important part to play in society, its local community and the community of members that attend the church
- What steps does this church take to provide its community with enterprise opportunities?
We provide teaching and workshops. A social interaction vehicle called LOUD where we try to engage with other churches and organisations.
- Are there any examples where the church has preached on economic empowerment? If so, what bible verses might have been used?
Yes several messages and training courses have been delivered. These are:
Luke 6:38
1 Timothy 6:10 – Love of money
Ecclesiastes 5:10 – Money is never enough
Proverbs 15:29

Proverbs 22:7
 Proverbs 20:13
 Proverbs 20:21
 Proverbs 10:4
 Proverbs 24:10
 Ecclesiastes 11 King James Version (KJV)
 Ephesians 6:12
 Deuteronomy 28 King James Version (KJV)
 Mathew 19:23 -24 Rich Man's warning
 Luke 19 1-9 King James Version (KJV) Spiritual change should produce financial change
 Luke 6 10 – 13
 Galatians 6: 7 -9
 Malachi 3:10
 Ps 37:23 -26

- How far is this doctrine reinforced by practice?
 Many of the congregation have business and have used the tools and information that have been shared
- Are you familiar with the terms 'Black Liberation Theology' If so, what have you heard?
 I could guess what the terminology is aimed at but have to confess I am not familiar with it.
- How far do you feel that Churches should take active roles in tackling issues such as racial economic disparity?
 As a predominantly black led and black congregation and with so much economic disparity evidenced in our community it is imperative that we play our part in tackling all disparity but definitely the communities that we represent.

Please categorise yourself? _____

- Pastor
- Youth Leader
- Evangelist
- Missionary
- Men's ministries leader
- *Other: _Elder - _____

Questionnaire 3

Common Demographic Variables

What is your gender? Male Female

How old are you? (tick one of the choices) Under 25 years of age
 25–34 years of age
 35–44 years of age
 45–54 years of age
 55–64 years of age
 65–74 years of age
 75 years of age or older

What is your marital status? Single
 Married (legal or registered)
 Married (traditional or unregistered)
 Divorced
 Separated
 Widowed
 Other: _____ [explain]

- How many years have you been a Christian? 38 years
- How many members and adherents currently attend your church? 100 people
- How many years have you been a member of this church? 14 years
- Does this church reflect your own theological beliefs? Yes

- What is your role within this church? Senior Pastor

- What importance do you personally give to financial enterprise in terms of community building and why?
Great importance. Needed for growth and development.

- What steps does this church take to provide its community with enterprise opportunities?
Free Training

- Are there any examples where the church has preached on economic empowerment? If so, what bible verses might have been used?
3 John 1:2

- How far is this doctrine reinforced by practice?

Widely

- Are you familiar with the terms 'Black Liberation Theology' If so, what have you heard?

No

- How far do you feel that Churches should take active roles in tackling issues such as racial economic disparity?

Key responsibility

Please categorise yourself? _____

- Pastor
- Youth Leader
- Evangelist
- Missionary
- Men's ministries leader
- Other: _____

Questionnaire 4

Common Demographic Variables

What is your gender? Male Female

How old are you? (tick one of the choices)..... Under 25 years of age
 25–34 years of age
 35–44 years of age
 45–54 years of age
 55–64 years of age
 65–74 years of age
 75 years of age or older

What is your marital status?..... Single
 Married (legal or registered)
 Married (traditional or unregistered)
 Divorced
 Separated
 Widowed
 Other: _____ [explain]

- How many years have you been a Christian? 10 years
- How many members and adherents currently attend your church? 350 people
- How many years have you been a member of this church? 5 years
- Does this church reflect your own theological beliefs? Yes

- What is your role within this church? Men's Ministry Board Member

- What importance do you personally give to financial enterprise in terms of community building and why?
I'm part of a group of 5 that's trying to buy a building for our community. Because there is a great need for this it also gives us a legacy.

- What steps does this church take to provide its community with enterprise opportunities?
This church and its leader welcomes partnering with businesses but does not promote community businesses enough.

- Are there any examples where the church has preached on economic empowerment? If so, what bible verses might have been used?

Economical|Empowerment is not preached in church although the church itself practices it to a degree.

- How far is this doctrine reinforced by practice?

- Are you familiar with the terms 'Black Liberation Theology' If so, what have you heard?

No

- How far do you feel that Churches should take active roles in tackling issues such as racial economic disparity?

It's the churches duty to do so.

Please categorise yourself? _____

- Pastor
- Youth Leader
- Evangelist
- Missionary
- Men's ministries leader
- Other: _Men's Ministries Board
Member _____

Questionnaire 5

Common Demographic Variables

What is your gender? Male Female

How old are you? (tick one of the choices) Under 25 years of age
 25–34 years of age
 35–44 years of age
 45–54 years of age
 55–64 years of age
 65–74 years of age
 75 years of age or older

What is your marital status? Single
 Married (legal or registered)
 Married (traditional or unregistered)
 Divorced
 Separated
 Widowed
 Other: _____ [explain]

- How many years have you been a Christian? 32 years
- How many members and adherents currently attend your church? 350 people
- How many years have you been a member of this church? 15 years
- Does this church reflect your own theological beliefs?

Yes

- What is your role within this church?

Senior Pastor and Bishop

- What importance do you personally give to financial enterprise in terms of community building and why?

High importance due to our philosophy of self-reliance and dictating our own vision and needs rooted in our historical experiences of racial prejudice and bias

- What steps does this church take to provide its community with enterprise opportunities?

Creation of work and training opportunities, promotion of local businesses developing our own businesses and business hubs creating space for business promotion and development. We embarked on a number of employability seminars and job fairs helping people into employment

- Are there any examples where the church has preached on economic empowerment? If so, what bible verses might have been used?

More in practice than preaching action or teaching a small percentage of members had businesses however examples that came in from us and Caribbean:

Deuteronomy 8:18 power and wealth

Luke 6:38 giving brings prosperity

Psalms 122:6 reflecting those who love God will prosper

3 John 1:2 the elders prayer of health and prosperity

- How far is this doctrine reinforced by practice?

It is always reflected on with great caution and not really developed as doctrine. It is more righteous conduct and considering the warning from the Parables on riches and the epistle of James.

- Are you familiar with the terms 'Black Liberation Theology' If so, what have you heard?

Yes, I have been in two studies on liberation and black liberation theology. It now forms part of my praxis.

- How far do you feel that Churches should take active roles in tackling issues such as racial economic disparity?

Churches should be deeply involved in leading and taking active transformative roles.

Please categorise yourself? _____

- Pastor
- Youth Leader
- Evangelist
- Missionary
- Men's ministries leader
- Other: _____

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