

**RETHINKING THE IMPACT OF THE CHURCH ON THE  
DYNAMICS OF INTEGRATION OF CONGOLESE MIGRANTS IN  
JOHANNESBURG:  
A CASE STUDY OF YAHWEH SHAMMAH ASSEMBLY**

**VEDASTE NZAYABINO**

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Humanities in fulfillment of  
the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,  
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg**

**Johannesburg, 15 February 2011**

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to:

My beloved wife, Jeanette Nyirabagenzi, and children, Doreen Nzayabino Baraka,  
Providence Shimwa Nzayabino and David Izere Nzayabino.

**BUT ALL THE GLORY TO GOD**

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other University.

---

Vedaste NZAYABINO

Johannesburg, .....day of.....2011

## AKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank all the people who contributed to the completion of this work.

I express my special gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Achille Mbembe, for his intellectual guidance and support. Thank you for all your precious time and patience with me all the way. Also, special thanks go to Prof. Loren Landau of Forced Migration studies for his inspiration, especially with regard to choosing and situating my research. His comments were very helpful. I also address my deepest gratitude to Prof. Susan Van Zyl for her academic advice as well as moral and financial support. I really salute her acumen in providing encouragements and inspirational discussions. Special thanks go also to the Humanities Graduate Centre for the enriching workshops, seminars in research methods. Attending these seminars has significantly shaped my skills in research field. Many thanks as well to Sharlene Khan for all her encouragements during her career at Graduate Centre, and to Mapule Tsoari and all the Graduate Centre's staff who have been my colleagues.

I would like to thank the Forced Migration Studies Programme for the administrative support and valuable input into this thesis. Many thanks to J. Pierre Misago of Forced Migration Studies for his encouragements and logistic support. I am also grateful to the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg for the financial support under the form of awards and scholarships. This has greatly contributed to the completion of my studies. I want to also thank the pastor of Yahweh Shammah Assembly for allowing me to conduct my research in the church, and all the respondents who voluntarily participated in this research. May God bless you as well. I would also like to thank my wife and children for their humble patience during my academic absence. May God bless you for your enduring and loving patience. Finally, but not least, I want to acknowledge the fervent prayers of the children of God who have been praying for me during my studies. This is a result of your prayers.

**Rethinking the Impact of the Church on the Dynamics of Integration  
of Congolese Migrants in Johannesburg:  
A Case Study of Yahweh Shammah Assembly**

***Abstract***

The embeddedness of religious issues within contemporary global phenomena increases the role religion plays in migrant's spiritual, social, and economic lives. This study sought to understand how migrants' churches help situate foreigners within a transforming South African society. Concretely, using a qualitative research approach, the study sought to establish whether affiliation to a migrant's church is a salient form of belonging that fosters migrants' transience and shapes their motivation to integrate into South African society. The population of this case study consisted of a sample of thirty-nine Congolese migrants, members of Yahweh Shammah Assembly ('YSA' in short), a Pentecostal church located in Hillbrow, Johannesburg. The church's membership is predominantly made of Congolese migrants, with few members from other African nationalities.

Overall, this study found that the desire to integrate into South African society remains the main option and ideal for many international migrants coming to South Africa. However, migrant's integrative imaginaries and welfare trajectories are often obstructed by a growing xenophobia within South African society. Many migrants seek full integration and membership within the community but the host society prevents them from achieving this ideal. Acknowledging the fact that a number of migrants came to South Africa with a view not to stay but to use the city of Johannesburg as a transit point to third countries abroad, yet this study found that a significant number of migrants wish to leave Johannesburg because it refused to accommodate them. In this context, the study identified three groups among Congolese community: those in quest

of permanent settlement in South Africa, those in transit, and those who want to exit due notably to xenophobic backlash in the country. The study revealed that YSA was able to integrate Congolese migrants who could not otherwise integrate into host religious institutions. Being primarily an ethnic church in terms of Mullins's model of life-cycle of ethnic churches, YSA focuses on meeting the needs of its members first, before serving the religiously and culturally 'outsider'.

The results of this study together with the rich literature reviewed provide, therefore, a significant theoretical contribution to the understanding of the place of religion within contemporary complex debates on identity and belonging within diasporic communities. It also offers great contribution to the current literature on the dynamics of belonging and integration of migrants in host societies. In addition, this research contains substantial theories and discussions salient to the understanding of the sociology of religion, particularly the interactive relationship between the 'secular' and the 'religious'. Lastly, conducted during the xenophobic outbreak in May – June 2008, this study also gives a more detailed understanding of the dynamics of the widespread xenophobic sentiment and their impact on the integration of migrants in South African society.

**Key Words:** religion, migration, refugee, integration, assimilation, acculturation, Pentecostalism, ethnic churches, culture, identity, belonging, xenophobia, transnationalism.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Dedication*

*Declaration*

*Acknowledgement*

*Abstract*

*List of Figures*

*Abbreviations*

### **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION..... 1**

|                                                                  |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Aim and objectives of the study.....                             | 7  |
| Relevance of the study.....                                      | 10 |
| Structure of the thesis.....                                     | 12 |
| Historical background of Congolese migrants.....                 | 13 |
| Geo-economic profile.....                                        | 14 |
| Political background.....                                        | 16 |
| Religious background.....                                        | 21 |
| Roman Catholic Church.....                                       | 23 |
| The rise of Protestant and Evangelical<br>Churches.....          | 24 |
| Main waves of arrival of Congolese migrants in Johannesburg..... | 26 |
| Locating Congolese migrants within Johannesburg.....             | 30 |
| Yahweh Shammah Assembly (YSA) background.....                    | 31 |
| Church mission.....                                              | 32 |
| Church vision.....                                               | 33 |
| Church Programme.....                                            | 34 |
| Conclusion.....                                                  | 35 |

### **CHAPTER TWO: METHODS.....37**

|                                                      |    |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Introduction.....                                    | 37 |
| Main tasks.....                                      | 37 |
| Research design.....                                 | 39 |
| A qualitative approach.....                          | 39 |
| Population of the study and sampling strategies..... | 42 |
| Why Pentecostal Church? (YSA).....                   | 43 |
| Site selection.....                                  | 47 |
| Johannesburg inner-city.....                         | 47 |
| Sampling design.....                                 | 50 |
| Purposive sampling.....                              | 51 |
| Snowball sampling.....                               | 52 |
| Data collection.....                                 | 53 |
| Triangular methods.....                              | 53 |
| In-depth interviews.....                             | 54 |
| Participant observation.....                         | 57 |
| Secondary sources.....                               | 60 |
| Data analysis and interpretation.....                | 61 |
| Thematic content analysis.....                       | 61 |
| Ethical considerations.....                          | 62 |
| Socio demographic profiles of respondents.....       | 63 |
| Age groups.....                                      | 64 |
| Marital status and length of residence.....          | 65 |
| Legal status in SA.....                              | 66 |
| Levels of education.....                             | 67 |
| Occupation in country of origin.....                 | 68 |
| Current occupation.....                              | 68 |
| Main reasons for leaving country of origin.....      | 69 |
| Conclusion.....                                      | 70 |

## CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE

|                                                                                                                     |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| REVIEW .....                                                                                                        | 71  |
| <b>Theoretical framework</b>                                                                                        |     |
| Introduction.....                                                                                                   | 71  |
| Theoretical framework.....                                                                                          | 71  |
| Essentialist vs alternative approach.....                                                                           | 71  |
| Durkheim functionalist theory of religion and Weber's theory of economic consequences of religious affiliation..... | 75  |
| Homophily principle.....                                                                                            | 77  |
| Mullins life-cycle model of ethnic churches.....                                                                    | 79  |
| Hofstede's dimensions of culture.....                                                                               | 84  |
| Power distance culture.....                                                                                         | 84  |
| Individualistic vs collective culture.....                                                                          | 85  |
| Masculine vs feminine culture.....                                                                                  | 86  |
| Uncertainty avoidance.....                                                                                          | 87  |
| Definition of key concepts.....                                                                                     | 88  |
| Belonging.....                                                                                                      | 89  |
| Religious identity.....                                                                                             | 93  |
| Ethnic identity.....                                                                                                | 95  |
| Cultural identity.....                                                                                              | 97  |
| Refugee/forced migrant.....                                                                                         | 97  |
| Asylum seeker.....                                                                                                  | 98  |
| Economic migrant.....                                                                                               | 99  |
| Transnationalism.....                                                                                               | 100 |
| Integration.....                                                                                                    | 102 |
| Conclusion.....                                                                                                     | 105 |
| <b>Literature Review .....</b>                                                                                      |     |
| <b>106</b>                                                                                                          |     |
| Introduction.....                                                                                                   | 106 |

|                                                                          |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Relationship between territory and people.....                           | 107 |
| Introduction.....                                                        | 107 |
| Territorial rootedness and fluidity of religious identity.....           | 110 |
| Conclusion.....                                                          | 112 |
| Role of the church during migration process: Psychological outlook.....  | 114 |
| Attribution and Deprivation theories.....                                | 115 |
| Exploring the impact of culture shock on the process of integration..... | 122 |
| Berry's acculturative stress theory.....                                 | 122 |
| Impact of culture shock on the integration of migrants.....              | 125 |
| Oberg's stages of culture shock.....                                     | 129 |
| Critics against Oberg's model of culture shock.....                      | 131 |
| Migration-induced transnationalism.....                                  | 133 |
| De-essentialising theory.....                                            | 133 |
| Types of transnationalism:.....                                          | 136 |
| Typology of integration strategies.....                                  | 138 |
| Berry's integration strategies.....                                      | 138 |
| Acculturation strategy.....                                              | 139 |
| Forms of acculturation.....                                              | 144 |
| Selective acculturation.....                                             | 145 |
| Dissonant acculturation.....                                             | 145 |
| Dimensions of acculturation.....                                         | 147 |
| Assimilation strategy.....                                               | 147 |
| Chicago School of Sociology.....                                         | 149 |
| A de-essentialised approach to assimilation.....                         | 150 |
| Dimensions of assimilation.....                                          | 152 |
| Structural assimilation.....                                             | 152 |
| Cultural assimilation.....                                               | 154 |
| Marginalisation.....                                                     | 155 |
| Separation.....                                                          | 155 |
| Conclusion: A balanced view.....                                         | 157 |

## **CHAPTER FOUR: PRE-MIGRATION PATTERNS OF CONGOLESE MIGRANTS AND THEIR IMPACT ON INTEGRATION... 160**

|                                                                   |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Introduction.....                                                 | 160 |
| Pre-migration patterns and their impact on integration.....       | 160 |
| Pre-migration religious and cultural patterns.....                | 168 |
| Religious patterns.....                                           | 168 |
| Theology of inclusion vs theology of exclusion.....               | 170 |
| Comparing pre-migration and current religious commitment.....     | 171 |
| Spiritual scaling – Low vs high religiosity.....                  | 173 |
| Cultural patterns.....                                            | 179 |
| Discourse of cultural scaling – Low vs high culture contexts..... | 179 |
| Gender-based barriers to integration.....                         | 181 |
| Impact of pre-migration patterns on integration.....              | 188 |
| Impact of religious reactivity.....                               | 195 |
| Conclusion.....                                                   | 200 |

## **CHAPTER FIVE: UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS.....201**

|                                                                              |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Introduction.....                                                            | 201 |
| Feeding the ‘flock’ and fishing the ‘lost’.....                              | 201 |
| Church and the making and remaking of cultural and religious identities..... | 213 |
| Betwixt and between: religion and ethnicity.....                             | 217 |
| Church engagement in transnational networks.....                             | 223 |
| Introduction.....                                                            | 223 |
| Church-based transnational networks.....                                     | 225 |
| Dynamics of transnational networks within YSA.....                           | 226 |
| Factors contributing to transnational engagement.....                        | 230 |
| Insecure livelihood and social pressures.....                                | 230 |

|                                                              |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Social solidarity: ‘Economy of sharing’ and remittances..... | 231 |
| Family pride.....                                            | 234 |
| Impact of transnational networks on integration.....         | 235 |
| Discussion and conclusion.....                               | 237 |

## **CHAPTER SIX: IMPACT OF XENOPHOBIA ON INTEGRATION**

|                                            |            |
|--------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>PROCESSES.....</b>                      | <b>240</b> |
| Introduction.....                          | 240        |
| Xenophobia: Historical considerations..... | 246        |
| Defining xenophobia.....                   | 246        |
| Integrated Threat Theory.....              | 247        |
| Impact of xenophobia on integration.....   | 250        |
| Symptoms of xenophobia.....                | 252        |
| Stereotype and phenotype profiling.....    | 252        |
| Conclusion.....                            | 256        |

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS.....258**

|                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Introduction.....             | 258 |
| Conclusion.....               | 267 |
| Areas for future studies..... | 267 |

|                               |            |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| <b><i>References.....</i></b> | <b>269</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------|

|                                                   |            |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b><i>Appendix 1: Interview schedule.....</i></b> | <b>295</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------|

## LIST OF FIGURES

|                                                                                           |            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Figure 1: Mullins' Selected Organizational Aspects of Ethnic Church Evolution.....</i> | <i>82</i>  |
| <i>Figure 2: Forms of acculturation and acculturative stress levels.....</i>              | <i>128</i> |
| <i>Figure 3: Religion and immigrant incorporation: Integration effects .....</i>          | <i>207</i> |
| <i>Figure 4: Cultural Interactive Diagram.....</i>                                        | <i>216</i> |

## ABBREVIATIONS

|        |                                                   |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------|
| AIC:   | African Independent Churches                      |
| AU:    | African Union                                     |
| DHA:   | South African Department of Home Affairs          |
| DRC:   | Democratic Republic of Congo                      |
| OUA:   | Organisation of African Union                     |
| PCC:   | Pentecostal Charismatic Churches                  |
| SA:    | South Africa                                      |
| UN:    | United Nations                                    |
| UNHCR: | United Nations for High Commissioner for Refugees |
| US:    | United States                                     |
| YSA:   | Yahweh Shammah Assembly                           |

## **CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION**

The phenomena of integration and belonging of immigrants into host societies have increasingly attracted much attention among anthropological academics and professionals across the globe. The central and pivotal point of these evolvments has recently consisted in the theoretical development of highly complex and endless debates around the relationship between ‘people’ and ‘place’ (Brun 2001), ‘identity’ and ‘belonging’ (Malkki 1992; Koser and Black 1999; Merks 2000; Landau 2006; 2007; Vigneswaran 2007). As Zmegac (2005:206) observes, ‘there are more and more groups in the contemporary world who identify beyond the localities in which they live’, thus rendering the concepts of ‘territorial’ belonging and identity more complex. Merks (2000:5) points out that the study of forced migration and diasporas finds itself involved in a continuous discussion about what ‘home’ really means, and if ‘home’ is always associated with a locality (territory) or with a ‘nation-state’, or ‘whether one can belong to a group which does not also have a territorial reference point, or whether belonging is necessarily and absolutely rooted in a territory’ (Lovell 1998; Malkki 1992; Braakman and Schlenkhoff 2007).

Conceptually, the debates over the relationship between people and place gravitate around two divergent approaches to space: an ‘essentialist’ approach and an ‘alternative’ approach (Brun 2001). The essentialist approach suggests that ‘all people have a natural place in the world, and therefore refugees have been regarded as being torn loose from their place and thus from their culture and identity’ (Brun 2001:15). Conversely, the alternative understanding of space and people ‘separates identity from

place to show that though refugees have to move from their places of origin, they do not lose their identity and ability to exercise power' (Brun 2001:15).

But Brun's hybridized understanding of the interplay between space and people did not survive scholarly challenges from his contemporaries. Peterson, Vasquez *et al.* (2001:18), for instance, seem to implicitly reject both approaches by suggesting another view of a deterritorialized belonging, which rather situates transnational migrants into an imaginary supra-space, a 'nowhere' kind of belonging. They introduce the concept of 'dual disenfranchisement' whereby, because of their liminality migrants experience a sort of spaceless or homeless life which makes them to belong neither to the groups in host society nor to their country of origin (see also Merks 2000; Bosswick 2006). Similarly, subscribing to the hypothetical liminality of refugeehood other scholars argue that in most cases the uprooted people choose to remain 'transient' (Landau 2006:127, Shami 1996:6) and artificially invent a temporal 'supra-local' homeland or an 'extraterritorial' space (Landau 2006:140) within the host land where they may keep a handful of the soil (or seeds) they took along from their country (Malkki 1992:27) and where they maintain their personal autonomy vis-à-vis host community (Connor 1989:905).

In the same line of thinking – but making his point from a religious viewpoint - Van Dijk (cited in Helgesson 2006) introduces the concept of 'universal home', another form of 'deterritorialised' belonging which is metaphysically rooted neither into the host society nor into sending community (Helgesson 2006:28). This global mode of belonging places a [Pentecostal] migrant into an ecumenical corporate 'family of God'

which connects all Pentecostal churches all over the world (Helgesson 2006:28; Howell 2003:239, 241).

The increasingly abundant literature on the dynamic interface between people and territory in the study of the displacement have significantly influenced and contributed to the development and understanding of the theories of assimilation and its associated variants: integration, adaptation, acculturation, interculturalisation and deculturation of immigrants within new host milieus. Portes and Rumbaut (2006: 314-315) treat the topic from religious lenses. They therefore distinguish between ‘secular logic’ and the alternative ‘religious logic’.

The proponents for *secular logic* suggest that immigrants should leave everything behind upon arrival and seek to become indistinguishable from other host population as quickly as possible. Assimilationist theories of integration which literally require all immigrant and ethnocultural groups to become like those in the receiving society (Berry 1997:11), are inspired by this essentialised wave of thought.

Conversely, the alternative *religious logic* upholds national identities, cultures, and languages as positive insofar as they help newcomers regain their balance in a foreign land and provide them with information and resources to move ahead in their new social environment (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:315). In the same vein, Fenggang (2001:270) sustains that in the course of immigration and settlement, immigrants commonly transplant their traditional religious institutions in their new land. In this context, religion is defined as a fluid or mobile entity distinguishable from a territory

bound institution. Religious fluidity therefore consists in that refugees carry with them cultural practices and beliefs that previously contributed to both the stabilization and necessary dynamics of their communities of origin (Coker 2004:402). Sol's law of continuity of religion which suggests that 'when people move, the church moves' (Sol 1982:38) belongs to this 'alternative' current of thought.

Broadly the understanding of the relationship between place and people and how migrants forge and negotiate new identities within new milieus becomes particularly salient and, therefore, useful in understanding the processes of integration of migrants in host communities. While recognising the all-encompassing character of integration processes and more particularly the ever widening range of individual and corporate actors involved in resettlement and integration processes at various levels this study limits itself to exploring the role of the church in these processes. As discussed above, several migration studies (see Mullins 1987; Warner 2000; Menjivar 2003; Portes and Rumbaut 2006) have extensively documented the congruent interplay between religion and migration. In this respect, for instance, Smith (quoted by Menjivar 2003:25) emphatically argues that immigration itself is often a 'theologizing experience', because religion provides an ethical slant and the resources that nourish the immigrants' outlook as they react to the confusion and alienation that result from their uprooting (see also Portes and Rumbaut 2006:325, 331, 350). Almost two and half decades back, Mullins (1987) pointed out that 'the story of religion in the New World has been largely shaped by patterns of immigration' (Mullins 1987:321).

In a similar vein, reinforcing the interlocking relationship between religion and

migration, Portes and Rumbaut (2006:301) argue that ‘religion has accompanied the process of migration, seeking to ameliorate the traumas of departure and early settlement, to protect immigrants against external attacks and discrimination, and to smooth their acculturation to the new environment’. It is worth noting, in this regard, that acculturation is here either vaguely understood as what Malkki (1992) allegorically calls ‘acclimatization’ to a new milieu, or likely confounded with the concept of integration as it has often been the case in much literature (Wright and Ellis 2000). Extensive discussion of this concept together with other related terminologies will be discussed later (see chapter 3 - literature review). Portes and Rumbaut (2006) emphatically underscore the added-value religion brings to immigration. They postulate that :

If immigration is a ‘theologizing experience’ because of the challenges and psychological trauma that it poses, *[then]* the tendency for most of those who confront them is to hold tight to what they already have – reaffirming traditional beliefs and rituals as a source of comfort and protection. (Portes *et al.* 2006:325-326). (Emphasis is mine).

Moreover, both theoretical and empirical exploration of the role of migrants’ religious institutions remains particularly salient for the understanding of the sense of belonging in the city of Johannesburg where migrants, in reaction to a widespread xenophobia and the resultant exclusionary policies and practices, are in quest for an alternative place of belonging or forge new forms of belonging. Coker (2004:411, 416) points out that when a group or community feels threatened (by the ever-present ‘other’) from without, it reacts by shoring up the group’s boundaries and modes of coping with this threat (see also Mullins 1987:323). Arguably, the establishment of migrant churches<sup>1</sup> within

---

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this study, a ‘foreign’ or ‘migrant’ church is the church that has been

immigrant communities seems to follow this trend. Several scholars contend that the church serves as an 'alternative community' (Pheko and Oladipo 1978:212, Kim 1987:233, Cumpsty 1991:400) or 'spaces of hope' (Winkler 2006:2) where, to use Coker's terms, common histories and cultural traditions are invoked to create a sense of unity within the community, and where dangers are both delineated and resisted through a discourse which effectively warns against the dismantling of the physical and social bodies by the powerful 'other' (2004: 404). In their study of the struggle and organisation among Congolese refugee community in South Africa, Amisi and Ballard (2005:4) argue that 'Self-sufficiency and self-organisation along ethnic lines at the micro-level is seen as the basis for material and social security in the hostile South African environment'.

This study, therefore, argues that mechanisms by which migrants conserve and negotiate their pre-migration identities and cultural capital or forge new forms identities to navigate and adjust to the new challenges significantly shape their processes of integration within host society. The following section outlines the aim and objectives of the study.

---

founded or is headed by an immigrant. The concept 'immigrant' is hereby to be understood in its broadest sense which includes both voluntary and forced migrants or refugees.

## **1. 1. Aim and objectives of the study**

The present research explores and unpacks the meaning and role of religion among Congolese migrants in Johannesburg. More particularly the study seeks to establish whether affiliation to a migrant's church is a salient form of belonging that fosters migrants' transience and shapes their motivation to integrate into South African society. In order to reach this aim the study seeks to achieve the following fourfold objectives.

First, the study seeks to identify migrants' form of belonging through levels of integration. Secondly, the study purports to bring to the fore migrants' level of church attendance and thirdly, to establish whether a migrant church increases migrant's motivation to integrate or whether it somehow accounts for those who are less integrated within South African host society. Lastly, the study seeks to determine to what extent the church contributes to the preservation or 'deculturation' (Scott and Scott 1989:14; Lueck and Wilson 2010:56) of migrant's cultural identity and the impact this transformative pattern has on the integration of the latter.

Based on the above working objectives, the study analytically looks at the following aspects:

1. The dynamics of migrants' pre-migration sense of belonging in terms of beliefs, practices and church affiliation in their countries of origin. The study establishes whether displacement has an impact on migrants' pre-migration sense of belonging, i.e. whether the patterns of religiosity undergo both temporal and

spatial alterations during migratory processes and the implication of these on the integration of migrants into host societies. Foner (1987:13), for instance, argues that ‘pre-migration religious beliefs are what draw many to Protestant and Catholic Churches and at the same time they explain the continuation of customs and ceremonies among migrants’. Similarly, in their studies among immigrants in America, Portes and Rumbaut (2006) argue that

Yesterday and today, many newcomers in America have felt the needs to reaffirm their religious roots or, alternatively, to find new ones, with consequences that have been momentous, both individually and collectively. (Portes *et al.* 2006:301)

2. Church and transnationalism. This study particularly explores the role migrant church plays in linking migrants to their place of origin and in building up a homeland-based sense of belonging within the church. The exploration of this particular aspect of the role of the church remains relevant because, Howell (2003:234) argues ‘it is becoming clear that we need to work out our understandings of how Christianity can be held to be both locally specific and globally interrelated simultaneously’ (see also Stevens 2004:135). In this context, the study investigated whether the migrant church facilitates transnational processes between host and home country and beyond, and the impact these processes have on migrant’s integration within the host community.
3. Whether migrants perceive own religious affiliation as an identity or as a new form of belonging (Cumpsty 1991) beyond other forms of identification or identitive ideals (group or ethnic identities, etc.) within host society. Discussing

ways of living of Latinos who are U.S.-born citizens Peterson, Vasquez and Williams (2001) underline the potential role the church plays in creating and developing Latinos' identity and sense of belonging in the following words:

... faced with the challenge of being treated as second-class or third class citizens, Latino immigrants adopt a variety of strategies in developing a sense of belonging, and their religious organisations shape the ways in which they imagine their communities. They may help create a multicultural or pan-Latino identity, or they might reinforce national identities within a broader transnational field. (Peterson *et al.* 2001:17)

Similarly, in their study among Immigrants in America, Portes *et al.* (2006:300) argue that 'It [the church] does not determine the emergence of ethnic communities, but it can be a powerful rallying point for them'. Due to the paucity of studies documenting the role of religion in the construction and reproduction of identities among immigrants' communities across the continent the present study examines the extent to which the above and other reviewed findings may stand relevant to the context of immigrant churches in South Africa.

4. Ways and the extent to which the encounter of the migrant's culture and the host culture shape the processes of integration within the host community.
5. Whether a migrants' church fosters integration of migrants or whether it somehow helps them to resist integration, or else whether migrants themselves are inherently set not to integrate into host society (see Simone 2001; Landau 2006; McDonald 2000; Posel 2006; Gotz 2004).

It is worthwhile noting that there exist several studies that discuss the role of the church in the formation and reformation of both social and ethnic identity of immigrants, but few, if ever, explore the impact these new identity paradigms have on the integration of immigrant communities into the host society. For instance, in earlier studies Winland (1994:35) had warned that, by reinforcing migrants' patterns and attitudes migrant churches limit their ability to explore alternatives available within the host society (see also Mesch 2002:921). Though there is rarely significant literature that share similar postulate, yet Winland's finding cannot be merely overlooked or undermined upon this ground. Therefore, while other scholars, such as Amisi and Ballard (2005:16), maintain that the heritage of political identity which refugees bring with them has a fundamental impact on the way in which they organise and make claims on the state, this study investigates whether a migrant church contributes to the reinforcement of pre-migration ethnic identities of its members, or whether it accounts for the emergence or forging of new forms of identification, and the implication these processes have on the integration of the migrant minority group.

## **1.2. Relevance of the study**

As Lovell (1998:1) points out, 'the exploration of how notions of belonging, localities and identities are constructed seems particularly relevant in current political contexts of 'globalisation', where the interface between localised understandings of belonging, locality and identity often seem to conflict with wider national and international political, economic and social interests'. More particularly in South Africa, identity, belonging and integration issues among refugees remain increasingly complex (Eyber

2004:71) and therefore more explorative studies remain crucial in this important area.

While recognising the merit of the available empirical studies in identifying religious institutions as key instruments in negotiating migrants' livelihood (See Katjavivi, Frostin *et al.* 1989; Peterson *et al.* 2001; Smith 2003; Sommers 2001; Gozdzia 2002; IOM 2006), yet there is little mention of the impact these institutions have on integration of migrants into host communities. More so, while the postulate that migrant's pre and post-migration various forms of identification have potential implications on their process of integration in host society remains the hallmark shared among many scholars (see Amisi *et al.* 2005; Menjivar 2003), yet few, if ever, have gone further to explore how this happens and what it entails. For instance, Amisi *et al.* (2005:16) argue that 'The heritage of political identity which refugees bring with them, therefore, has a fundamental impact on the way in which they organise and make claims on the state'. The present study therefore seeks to expand previous studies by exploring the impact the role of the church has on the integration of migrants in host societies.

On the other hand, while most of the recent theoretical and empirical studies of displacement posit that religion exerts a crucial role in recreating and reproducing migrants' cultural and religious identities (see Ebaugh *et al.* 1999; Barro *et al.* 2003) and thus making migrants feel at home within a 'home away from home' (Helgessen 2006; Meyer 2004), few of these studies, however, investigate the impact this process may have on migrants' motivation to integrate into the host majority group.

Moreover, while fairly crediting the recent developments in migration theories that

interrogate the current patterns of integration of migrants in South Africa, a cursory examination reveals, however, that many of these studies have mainly focused on gathering empirical data to substantiate the claim that migrants are not set to take full-fledged membership in South African society (see Posel 2006; Gotz 2004; Simone 2001; McDonald 2000). These studies, however, to a greater extent, remain quite superficial in identifying host factors and actors involved in shaping migrant's disinclination to take root into South African community, and to what extent each actor becomes influential in this process. In other words, there is a need for extensive studies to expand the spectrum of this new shift in migratory literature by identifying potential actors that influence migrants' likelihood or their rational choice to integrate into host community.

In conclusion, the present study provides a substantial contribution to the in-depth understanding of the current literature on the complex paradigms of integration of immigrants in host societies. More particularly through a critical discussion of the reviewed literature the study hopes to bring potential theoretical contribution to the understanding of the place of religion within contemporary global debates on integration, identity and belonging within diasporic communities across the continent in general and within South Africa in particular.

### **1.3. The structure of the thesis**

The thesis is broadly divided into seven chapters in the following sequence. Chapter one presents the introduction to the whole study. More specifically, a brief description

of the theoretical and empirical context of the study, the aim and objectives and relevance of the study, historical background of the population studied, as well as a descriptive overview of the church under investigation, that is, Yahweh Shammah Assembly (YSA). Chapter two discusses in details the methodological aspect of the research. Chapter three explores the theoretical framework and literature review of the study. It also discusses some key concepts used throughout the study. Drawing upon the results of the case study, chapter four discusses in more details socioeconomic, cultural and religious backgrounds and draws a comparative analysis between pre-migration level of commitment and post-migration degree of cultural and religious engagement. Chapter five explores and unpacks the actual role of the Church while chapter six expounds the issue of xenophobia as one of the major barriers to migrants' integration in South African community. Lastly, chapter seven concludes the research with a summary of key findings and conclusions as well as suggestions of future areas that need further explorations.

#### **1.4. Historical background of Congolese migrants in Johannesburg**

This section briefly discusses the political, socioeconomic and religious background of Congolese migrants, the subjects of the study. It also provides information about the background of the church under investigation, that is, Yahweh Shammah Assembly ('YSA' in short).

### 1.4.1. Geo-economic profile

Geographically, the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) is situated at the heart of the west-central portion of sub-Saharan Africa and is surrounded by Angola, the Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, the Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania and Zambia. With an area of 2,345,410 sq. km, DRC is the third largest state in Africa after Sudan and Algeria. The size of Congo is comparable to that of Western Europe or the United States east of the Mississippi (Turner 2007:24; US Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, May 2010). The country is administratively divided into eleven provinces: Kinshasa, Province Orientale, Kasai Oriental, Kasai Occidental, Maniema, Katanga, Sud-Kivu, Nord-Kivu, Bas-Congo, Equateur and Bandundu. Kinshasa remains the capital city of the DRC with an estimated population of 8 million (see Missionary Atlas Project, 2007)<sup>2</sup>.

Demographically, with a population estimated at 68 million (see National Institute of Statistics, 2009) the Democratic Republic of Congo counts a total of about 250 ethnic groups, of which Kongo, Luba, and Mongo remain the most numerous groups. About 242 languages are spoken in the DRC. However, only four of these have the status of national languages: Kikongo, Lingala, Tshiluba and Swahili. It is worthy noting that French remains the official language of the country. Being a widely spoken language French is meant to be an ethnically neutral language susceptible to ease communication between all the different ethnic groups of the country. According to African Cities

---

<sup>2</sup>

For a more detailed report on the country profile, see *Missionary Atlas Project, 2007*, at <http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic%20republic%20of%20the%20per%20congo/Republic%20of%20the%20Congo.pdf>

Project survey (2006:7) among immigrant communities, an overwhelming number of Congolese migrant respondents in Johannesburg (98.80 per cent) speak French, 64.40 per cent are fluent in Lingala, and 31.20 per cent speak Swahili while only 9.09 per cent speak Kikongo.

Economically, the DRC is a well endowed country that has been poorly governed (Turner 2007:24) because the fragmentation of the state and decline of the formal economy contributed to the rise in an informal and illegal economy that sustained millions of Congolese while furthering the weakening of state capacity and authority (Nest 2006:17). According to Missionary Atlas Project report (2007), Agriculture remains the core of the Congolese economy, accounting for 56.3 per cent of GDP in 2002. The main cash crops include coffee, palm oil, rubber, cotton, sugar, tea, and cocoa. Food crops include cassava, plantains, maize, groundnuts, and rice. Industry, especially the mining sector, is underdeveloped relative to its potential in the DRC. In 2002, industry accounted for only 18.8 per cent of GDP; with only 3.9 per cent attributed to manufacturing. Services reached 24.9 per cent of GDP. According to the same source, the DRC was the world's fourth largest producer of industrial diamonds during the 1980s. It is worth noting that the country's main copper and cobalt interests are dominated by Gecamines, the state-owned mining giant. Gecamines production has been severely affected by corruption, civil unrest, world market trends, and failure to reinvest. (Missionary Atlas Project 2007:7-8).

The following statement gives a brief overview of the economic landscape of the country:

Sparsely populated in relation to its area, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is home to a vast potential of natural resources and mineral wealth. Nevertheless, the D.R.O. C. is one of the poorest countries in the world, with per capita annual income of about \$90 in 2002. This is the result of years of mismanagement, corruption, and war. The powerful elite in the country have impoverished the nation. The neglect of the systems has left the roads almost unusable, trade reduced to a trickle, and the African nation with the highest potential for wealth falling to the situation in which it can no longer feed its own people without foreign aid. (Missionary Atlas Project 2007:7)

Due to its vast pool of natural resources, such as gold, diamonds, rubber, copper, cobalt, coltan, Zinc, uranium, tantalite, timber, coal, etc (Grignon 2004:43), the DRC garnered the fame of being the ‘jewel of Africa’ (Malan and Porto 2004:1), but the quasi-generalised mismanagement and ruthless wars over these goldfields soon turned the jewelled fame into a ‘geological scandal’ (Grignon 2004:43) or to use the Human Rights Watch’s term, into a ‘curse’ (Human Rights Watch 2005:1). According to Grignon the uranium used for Hiroshima’s nuclear bomb came from Shinkolobwe in Katanga, DRC (2004:43).

#### **1.4.2. Political Background**

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – formerly Zaire – is one of African francophone countries<sup>3</sup>, and a former colony of Belgium. Since the regime of President

---

<sup>3</sup> According to A. Bouillon, African and Indian Ocean francophone countries are those countries where part of the population uses French for everyday communication and/or where the government has

Mobutu Sese Seko, Zaire has been the theatre for several sporadic ethno-political wars mainly triggered by state systematic mismanagement and persistent economic hardships. Writing on the political history and identity of Congo, Guy (2005:127) argues that ‘although it is a country richly endowed with natural resources and minerals, its population remains one of the poorest and most conflict-ridden in the world’. While in many African countries long-standing strifes are mostly associated with the increasing depletion of resources and the shrinking of employment opportunities, in the DRC both political and economic upheavals are believed to be the result of the historical unequal distribution and ill management of available resources in the country<sup>4</sup>.

The bloodiest war since the Second World War unfolded in the mid-1990s. The magnitude of this war has made a number of writers to sometimes refer to it as ‘Africa’s world war’ (Amisi and Ballard 2005:2). More particularly since 1994, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been wrought by ethnic strife and civil war, ignited by a

---

adopted French as the official language. These include Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Comoros (including the French territory Mayotte) Congo (Brazza), the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast (Cote d’Ivoire), Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali,, Morocco, Mauritius,, Mauritania, Niger, Reunion (French overseas department), Rwanda, Senegal, the Seychelles, Tchad, Togo and Tunisia. These 26 countries and Equatorial Guinea, are members of the main francophone institution: l’Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique Francophone (Francophone Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation). (See Bouillon 2001:19 – *footnotes*).

<sup>4</sup> For more detailed information on Mobutu’s regime, see Martin Guy, 2005. Guy, Martin (2005). The History of Congo, and: Imagining the Congo: The International Relations of Identity, and: Lumumba, un Crime d’État, and: Les Nouveaux Prédateurs: Politique des puissances en Afrique centrale, and: Kabila et la Révolution congolaise: Panafricanisme ou néocolonialisme, and: War and Peace in Zaire/Congo: Analyzing and Evaluating Intervention: 1996–1997. *African Studies Review*, Volume 48, Number 1, April 2005, pp. 127-137.

massive inflow of refugees fleeing the Rwandan Genocide. More than one million<sup>5</sup> Rwandans, mostly Hutu and including much of the former members of Rwandan national army streamed across the border into the then Zaire at Goma and Bukavu to escape the advancing forces of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), which subsequently established a government in Rwanda (see Malan and Porto 2004:123; Missionary Atlas Project 2007:5). In September/October, a dispute flared up between the then Zairean Government and the Rwandophone Banyamulenge community in South Kivu that resulted in President Mobutu stripping the Banyamulenge of their Zairean citizenship (see Van Hear 1998:236-237; Thomson 2009:145)<sup>6</sup>. Fighting broke out, and a group known as the Allied Forces for Democratic Liberation (Alliance des Forces Démocratiques de Libération – AFDL), with Banyamulenge and Rwandan support, rose up against the Government (Malan and Porto 2004:164; Thomson 2009:144-147). When the AFDL advanced to seize the capital in May 1997, President Mobutu fled the country and Laurent-Désiré Kabila, who had emerged as the leader of the AFDL, marched into Kinshasa and was proclaimed president, whereupon he changed the country's name to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Malan *et al.* 2004:164; Missionary Atlas Project 2007:5).

---

<sup>5</sup> Based on UNHCR Report, Susan Thomson (2009:144) documents a number of 1,200,000 refugees in eastern Zaire and about 600,000 in western Tanzania by end of 1996.

<sup>6</sup> According to Thomson (2009:145), the term *Banyamulenge* refers to the people originating from Rwanda and Burundi and who live in Mulenge plateau, south of Bukavu in the eastern DRC. According to the same source, the Banyamulenge have been living in Zaire for hundreds of years, and the term gained political meaning after Rwandan Tutsi arrived in 1959-1962 as a way to distinguish them from the newly arrived *Banyarwanda* (those from Rwanda). This had the effect of changing *Banyamulenge* identities from territorial and class-based ones to an ethnic one, as Tutsi from Rwanda and Burundi arrived following political upheaval at home (Thomson 2009:146). Thomson argues that 'during the war that began in 1996 the Banyamulenge expanded the meaning of the term to other Tutsi from other areas of eastern Congo, including north Kivu, increasing their number to about 400,000' (2009:146).

In the meantime, in October 1996 Rwanda launched the first invasion of DRC which was supported by the coalition of anti-Mobutu elements from within the country (Turner 2007:1, Thomson 2009:145; Missionary Atlas Project 2007:5). As mentioned above, the invasion culminated in the toppling of the President Mobutu and the enthronement of Laurent-Désiré Kabila in May 1997. In the year that followed his inauguration, however, his former allies soon turned against him and his regime was challenged by a Rwandan and Ugandan-backed rebellion in August 1998. Allied troops from Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, intervened to support the new regime in Kinshasa (Rogier 2004:25; Turner 2007:5-6; Missionary Atlas Project 2007:6).

Though a cease-fire was signed in July, 1999 fighting continued apace especially in the eastern part of the country. Laurent Kabila was assassinated in January 2001 allegedly by one of his bodyguards (Turner 2007:7), and his son Joseph Kabila succeeded him. According to Missionary Atlas Project (2007), Joseph Kabila reversed many of his father's negative policies and introduced some reforms, such as liberalizing domestic political activity, establishing a transitional government, and undertaking economic reforms in cooperation with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), etc (Missionary Atlas Project 2007:9). Over the following year, *la Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo* – MONUC (United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo) deployed throughout the country and the Inter-Congolese Dialogue proceeded. Following DRC-Rwanda talks in South Africa that culminated in the Pretoria Accord in July 2002, Rwandan troops officially withdrew from the DRC in October 2002. Subsequently, by

the end of 2002, all Angolan, Namibian, and Zimbabwean troops had withdrawn from the DRC. By late 2003, a fragile peace prevailed as the Transitional Government was formed. Kabila appointed four vice-presidents, two of whom had been fighting to oust him until July 2003.

It is worth noting that despite these developments in bringing peace and political stability and harmonization yet much of the east of the country until now remains insecure, primarily due to the Ituri conflict and the continued activity of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda in the Kivu (see Un Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs report, May 2010). However, serious human rights violations remain in the security services and justice system. The eastern part of the country remains subject to sporadic violence orchestrated by irregular armed groups, which has created a humanitarian disaster and ongoing refugee outflows in the region. (Missionary Atlas Project 2007:9; UNHCR Global Trends 2009:6).

During the war it is reported that millions of Congolese died; even after a ceasefire had been signed in 2002 low-scale warfare continued in various parts of eastern Congo. According to (Turner 2007:1) the second war, 1998-2002, was widely characterised as 'Africa's First World War' which aimed at the reversal of President Kabila's dictatorship. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) reported that 1.7 million people had died during the previous two years as a result of war in the eastern part of the DRC (Turner 2007:3; Human Rights Watch Report 2005:12). According to the same source the death toll raised to at least 3.3 million Congolese who died between August 1998 when the war began, and November 2002, the highest figure so far since

the Second World War (see also Rogier 2004:25). Martin Guy (2005:130) documents an estimate toll figure of about 4 million lives. It is however worth noting that, according to Human Rights Watch Report (2005:12) many of the victims were displaced people who died from exposure, hunger or lack of medical assistance.

### 1.4.3. Religious Background – A highly Christian country

The Democratic Republic of Congo is home to a wide range of religious confessions including Christianity, Islam, traditional or ancestral beliefs and syncretism. Nevertheless, Christianity<sup>7</sup> overwhelmingly remains the majority religion with a total of about 80 per cent of the population, comprising Roman Catholic 50 per cent, Protestant 20 per cent, and Kimbanguist 10 per cent<sup>8</sup>. Of the remaining 20 per cent of the

---

<sup>7</sup> In some cases these figures have been variably overestimated. For instance, the Worldwide Evangelisation for Christ (WEC International) claims that 96 per cent of Congolese are Christians, in early 2005. For more details about the report, see <http://www.wec-int.org/cms/fields/congo/background.html>. Accessed on 29 June 2010

<sup>8</sup> According to Missionary Atlas Project, the *Church of Jesus Christ on Earth through the Prophet Simon Kimbangu* (EJCSK), or conventionally referred to as *Kimbanguist church*, is the largest independent church in Congo. According to the same source, it is believed that in 1921, a Congolese Christian named Simon Kimbangu received a call for a ministry of preaching the Gospel and healing the sick. Having performed some miraculous cures, he gained a large following in *Bas-Congo*. In its creed to bring Christianity into a complete communion and harmony with African culture and tradition during colonial epoch, *Kimbanguist church* was seen as a threat to the colonial regime and was banned by the Belgians. As a result, in 1921 Kimbangu was arrested, convicted and sentenced to death. In 1951, he died in prison, after his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. A Kimbanguist church council was organized in 1956. Three years later the colonial government lifted the ban and granted the church legal recognition. In 1969, the Kimbanguist Church became the first independent African church to be admitted to the World Council of Churches. For full religious profile, visit Missionary Atlas Project, at [http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic\\_per\\_cent20republic\\_per\\_cent20of\\_per\\_cent20the\\_per\\_cent20congo/Republic\\_per\\_cent20of\\_per\\_cent20the\\_per\\_cent20Congo.pdf](http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic_per_cent20republic_per_cent20of_per_cent20the_per_cent20congo/Republic_per_cent20of_per_cent20the_per_cent20Congo.pdf) or the US Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.htm>. Both accessed on 15 June 2010. More details on Kimbangu's biography and history can be found from the *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*, at

population, 10 per cent are Muslim, and the rest (10 per cent) follow traditional beliefs or syncretic confessions<sup>9</sup> which often mix Christianity with traditional beliefs and rituals. Being the largest religious organisation in the country with about 30 million members, the Roman Catholic Church in the DRC becomes one of the largest Christian Churches in Africa (see Missionary Atlas Project, 2007; US Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs report, 2010)<sup>10</sup>.

---

[http://www.dacb.org/stories/demrepcongo/diangienda\\_joseph.html](http://www.dacb.org/stories/demrepcongo/diangienda_joseph.html)

Accessed on 29 June 2010

<sup>9</sup> The term 'syncretism' came into use within theological and ecclesiastic spheres during early foundational stages of ecumenical movements in the sixteenth century and primarily aimed to 'designate the coherence of dissenters in spite of their difference of opinions' (Schmeling 2007:317). According to Mayes (2004) 'Syncretism refers in particular, to the irenic movement arising from an effort within the Lutheran Church in the seventeenth century toward inter-confessional union, the sole final result of which was the moderation of the theological spirit' (2004:291). It is worth noting here that while some theological scholars viewed syncretism as an ecumenical reconciliatory strategy to deal with increasing confessional dissensions that prevailed during this reformationist epoch, yet others viewed it rather as a way of unfaithfully negotiating or compromising one's belief or creed in attempting to mix 'the dissimilar or the incompatible things or ideas' (Schmeling 2007:317). Schmeling describes this dichotomous conceptualisation in these words:

[...] An explanation [of syncretism] is given by Plutarch in a small work on brotherly love ('Opera Moralia', ed. Reiske VII, 910). He there tells how the Cretans were often engaged in quarrels among themselves, but became immediately reconciled when an external enemy approached. 'And that is their so-called Syncretism.' In the sixteenth century the term became known through the 'Adagia' of Erasmus, and came into use to designate the coherence of dissenters in spite of their difference of opinions, especially with reference to theological divisions. Later [...] it was inaccurately employed to designate the mixture of dissimilar or incompatible things or ideas. (Schmeling 2007:317)

<sup>10</sup> For full religious profile, visit Missionary Atlas Project, at [http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic\\_per\\_cent20republic\\_per\\_cent20of\\_per\\_cent20the\\_per\\_cent20congo/Republic\\_per\\_cent20of\\_per\\_cent20the\\_per\\_cent20Congo.pdf](http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic_per_cent20republic_per_cent20of_per_cent20the_per_cent20congo/Republic_per_cent20of_per_cent20the_per_cent20Congo.pdf) or the US Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.htm>. Both accessed on 15 June 2010.

#### 1.4.3.1. Roman Catholic Church<sup>11</sup>

According to the Missionary Atlas Project (2007), Christianity came to the Congo in 1482 with the arrival of Portuguese explorers. The first missionary group arrived in 1491 and consisted of Franciscan and Dominican priests. The Congo king was baptized and a large church was built at the royal capital, which was renamed *San Salvador*. The Portuguese slave trade, however, inhibited increasingly the vitality of the Christian movement. But later on the Catholic Church enjoyed a privileged status during the colonial period. From the creation of the *Congo Free State* in 1885, the *Belgian King Leopold* controlled placement of missionaries and granted them property, subsidies, the right to fulfill certain state functions and a virtual monopoly over education and medical services. Priests and nuns established a dense network of churches, schools, clinics and hospitals, and other institutions. These Belgian missionaries shared the view of the colonial authorities, that they had a civilizing task and came more prepared to teach than to learn.

Throughout the first half of the 20th century a great discrepancy grew between the privileges of the Catholic and the Protestant missions. Close cooperation between colonial administration, Catholic missions, and businesses reinforced a serious disadvantage for the Protestant missions. Consistent Protestant criticism resulted

---

<sup>11</sup> For more details on the history of the Roman Catholic Church in the DRC, see Missionary Atlas Project Africa: Democratic Republic of Congo – Basic Facts, at [http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic\\_per\\_cent20republic\\_per\\_cent20of\\_per\\_cent20the\\_per\\_cent20congo/Republic\\_per\\_cent20of\\_per\\_cent20the\\_per\\_cent20Congo.pdf](http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic_per_cent20republic_per_cent20of_per_cent20the_per_cent20congo/Republic_per_cent20of_per_cent20the_per_cent20Congo.pdf)  
Accessed on 15 June 2010.

eventually in the concession of land to national missions. Subsidies were extended to Protestant schools in 1946 and state schools were opened in 1954. In 1956, the Catholic Church took opposition to the colonial system by her disapproval of the injustices by the colonial regime and her advocacy on behalf of the Congolese. This political reorientation helped the church to retain its significant role after Independence in 1960, when it had almost 700 mission stations and some 6,000 missionaries in educational, medical, philanthropic and social services. Up to date, despite several sources documenting an exponential proliferation of Protestant and Evangelical movements yet Roman Catholicism still remains the majority church in the DRC.

#### **1.4.3.2. The rise of Protestant and Evangelical Churches<sup>12</sup>**

According to Missionary Atlas Project (2007), the first Protestants to arrive in the Congo were British Baptist missionaries in 1878. Like Roman Catholic missionaries Protestant missions were active in the medical and educational fields. At an early date the Protestant missions affirmed their common ground and formed a committee to maintain contact and national cooperation and to minimize internal competition. The Congo Protestant Council was founded in 1924 and evolved into a Union of Congolese Protestant Churches.

---

<sup>12</sup>

For more details on the history of Protestant and Evangelical Churches in the DRC, see Missionary Atlas Project Africa: Democratic Republic of Congo – Basic Facts, at [http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic\\_per\\_cent20republic\\_per\\_cent20of\\_per\\_cent20the\\_per\\_cent20congo/Republic\\_per\\_cent20of\\_per\\_cent20the\\_per\\_cent20Congo.pdf](http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic_per_cent20republic_per_cent20of_per_cent20the_per_cent20congo/Republic_per_cent20of_per_cent20the_per_cent20Congo.pdf) Accessed on 15 June 2010.

In 1970, under pressure from Mobutu and with the support of the World Council of Churches, those churches and mission agencies which were more open to the ecumenical movement and to new methods of mission work agreed to establish the *Eglise du Christ au Congo (ECC)*, later called the *Eglise du Christ au Zaire*. Reformed church leaders played an important role in realizing this union. The risks of the church being controlled by the Mobutist system were not immediately and sufficiently recognized. When the situation became clearer, the same leaders began to question the authoritarian style of the ECZ leadership and the political system. Therefore, in 1988, the *Reformed Conference of Zaire* (COREZA, now ARCK) was founded. It included the *Community of the Disciples of Christ* (CDC), the *Evangelical Community in Congo* (CEC), the *Presbyterian Community in Occidental Kasai* (CPKOC), the *Presbyterian Community in Oriental Kasai* (CPKOR), the *Presbyterian Community of Kinshasa* (CPK), the *Presbyterian Community in Congo* (CPCA), the *Reformed Community of Presbyterian* (CRP), the *Protestant Community of Shaba/Katanga* (CPSHA). The ARCK militates for democracy and reconstruction of the country and seeks to promote interethnic relations. In 1997 its name was changed to *Alliance Réformée du Congo-Kinshasa* (ARCK). Many of the groups now serving in DRC are affiliated with the ECC (see Missionary Atlas project 2007:11-13).

It is further worth noting that the increasing proliferation of Protestantism marshalled by European evangelical missionaries across the continent was later followed by the rise of African Independent Churches (AICs) in many African countries (see Meyer 2004). These churches were unilaterally initiated by Africans and followed African culture, as opposed to the churches started by missionaries and which were negatively

criticised for being very western in culture<sup>13</sup>. African Independent Churches are often interchangeably referred to as ‘African Instituted Churches’ or ‘African Initiated Churches’ (see Born 2004:47; Meyer 2004:448) or ‘African Indigenous Churches’ (Meyer 2004:447). These convergent terminological appellations are, however, not incidental. Implicitly the labelling reveals the specificity of these churches in terms of nature and purpose for which they are designed. According to Missionary Atlas Project, African Independent Churches ‘represent cultural renaissance in reaction to the cultural imperialism of the mission work of the historic churches’<sup>14</sup>. According to the same source, African Independent Churches claim a total of over twenty million adherents and are probably growing faster than any other churches in Africa; it is estimated that there are more than 6,000 such groups in Africa. The *Eglise du Christ sur la Terre par le Prophète Simon Kimbangu* (EJCSK, Church of Christ on Earth by the Prophet Simon Kimbangu), or *Kimbanguist Church*, from the Democratic Republic of Congo, is one of the AICs<sup>15</sup>.

## 1.5. Main Waves of Arrival of Congolese Migrants in Johannesburg

---

<sup>13</sup> See Missionary Atlas Project Africa: Democratic Republic of Congo – Basic Facts, at [http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic per cent20republic per cent20of per cent20the per cent20congo/Republic per cent20of per cent20the per cent20Congo.pdf](http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic%20republic%20of%20the%20per%20congo/Republic%20of%20the%20Congo.pdf) . Accessed on 15 June 2010; and [www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/ecumenical/aic-e.html](http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/ecumenical/aic-e.html) Accessed on 30 June 2010

<sup>14</sup> See Missionary Atlas Project Africa: Democratic Republic of Congo – Basic Facts, at [http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic per cent20republic per cent20of per cent20the per cent20congo/Republic per cent20of per cent20the per cent20Congo.pdf](http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic%20republic%20of%20the%20per%20congo/Republic%20of%20the%20Congo.pdf) . Accessed on 15 June 2010

<sup>15</sup> For more details, visit [www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/ecumenical/aic-e.html](http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/ecumenical/aic-e.html). Accessed on 30 June 2010.

Congolese immigrants currently residing in South Africa did not have same motivations for migration nor did they all come as a single cohort. Some of them have fled socio-political violence while others were forced to move due to dire economic problems prevailing in the country. Their generational diaspora involved a sequence of sporadic waves as discussed in this section.

According to Bouillon (2001:40), Zairians (today Congolese) were the first wave of 'continental' immigrants to come to South Africa after the major political and economic upheavals in that country in the mid 1980s. Most of these immigrants were economic migrants including medical doctors, engineers, employees and pastors looking for employment opportunities in South Africa (Bouillon 2001:40). This migratory pattern supports Kleist's premise according to which, when a war occurs in a country most of the educated people and people who are important to the country are the first ones to move out (Kleist 2007:120). Similarly the present case study depicted the same trend. About 90 per cent of the respondents who participated in this study hold university qualifications (40 per cent) or have at least completed secondary education level (50 per cent). Similarly, the study found that, back home about 40 per cent of the respondents were business professionals while 22.5 per cent and 7.5 per cent were respectively university students and Engineers. These figures are remarkably significant in a country where 21 per cent of the population had no schooling, 46 per cent had primary schooling, 30 per cent had secondary schooling, and 3 per cent had university schooling

in 2007 (Missionary Atlas Project 2007)<sup>16</sup>.

The second wave (1991-1993) of immigrants coming to South Africa characterised by institutional breakdown and worsening economic crisis in most of francophone African countries was also dominated by Congolese nationals, particularly fleeing both the 1991 war which ravaged the rich mining region of Shaba and the collapse of the big copper company, *Gécamines*, culminating in an unprecedented unemployment rate in the country (Bouillon 2001:42; Nest 2004:18). This is what Turner (2007:24) terms as the second Congo war, that is, a war of 'partition and pillage' – the partition of territory and sporadic pillage of resources (see also Nest, 2004:18-19). Turner adds that 'pillage of Congo by both Congolese themselves and foreign countries is not just a manner of speaking; it is a reality' (Turner 2007:24).

The third and current generation of Congolese migrants in South Africa followed the political conflicts sparked by the massive inflow of thousands of refugees fleeing genocidal killings in Rwanda in mid of April 1994. As discussed earlier, later in 1997, the presence of these refugees coupled with the existing ethnic tensions ushered into an armed rebellion which overturned Mobutu's government, culminating in an enormous number of internally displaced people and refugees in the region. Most of the

---

<sup>16</sup> According to estimates made in 2000, 41.7 per cent of the population had no schooling, 42.2 per cent had primary schooling, 15.4 per cent had secondary schooling, and 0.7 per cent had university schooling. See US Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.htm>. Accessed on 01 July 2010

See also Missionary Atlas Project Africa: Democratic Republic of Congo – Basic Facts, at [http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic per cent20republic per cent20of per cent20the per cent20congo/Republic per cent20of per cent20the per cent20Congo.pdf](http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic%20republic%20of%20the%20per%20congo/Republic%20of%20the%20Congo.pdf) . Accessed on 15 June 2010

Congolese refugees in Johannesburg belong to this generation which coincided with South Africa's economic and political liberalization, which gradually inspired reforms of apartheid-induced immigration laws and opened new avenues for foreign migrants to converge on the streets of inner-city of Johannesburg (Landau 2006:125).

While most of the second wave migrants came to South Africa to seek work opportunities and better remuneration ('pull factors') (Kadima 2001:93), the majority of the third generation migrants left their country for socio-political reasons ('push factors')<sup>17</sup>. According to African Cities Project survey conducted among migrants in Johannesburg, over 85 per cent of Congolese respondents fled politico-ethnic conflicts while others claimed economic (31 per cent) or educational (12.90 per cent) aspirations or easy access to third country (5.60 per cent) as motivations for their flight (African Cities Project survey 2006:24).

Another important trend of this particular community is that, up to 2005 Congolese migrants form the largest refugee community in South Africa where the majority of them live in Johannesburg (Amisi *et al.* 2005:2, 20). According to Human Rights Watch statistics, during 2008 South Africa hosted 256,000 asylum seekers and refugees, including 115,800 Zimbabweans, 33,000 Congolese, 27,000 Somalis, 11,000 Ethiopians, and about 15,000 from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India, of whom 37,000

---

<sup>17</sup> 'Push-pull theory' assumes that immigrants have reasons why they decide to leave their country (push factors) while at the same time, have reasons why they choose a new country to live in (pull factors). (See Chamba 2006:89; Berry 1997:16)

were recognized refugees (Human Rights Watch report 2009:15).

It is important to note here that there is a positively significant correlation between religious background as briefly described above and current denominational characteristics of Congolese migrants living in Johannesburg. In his study on social capital and political engagement among Congolese immigrant community in central Johannesburg, Mazembo (2006:33) points out that ‘Congolese religious segmentation in Central Johannesburg is the transplantation of the kind of religious proliferation that has taken place in Congo since late 1980s’. On the other hand, according to African Cities Project survey, Congolese migrants in Johannesburg remain majority Christian community compared to other migrant communities residing in the city (see Vigneswaran 2007:14). The final results of this survey revealed that 94.1 per cent of Congolese respondents identified themselves as either Catholic or Protestant (2007:14)<sup>18</sup>.

## **1.6. Locating Congolese Migrants within the City of Johannesburg**

While many of the migrants from Southern African countries have settled in established black townships, working as artisans, hawkers and clerks, large numbers of immigrants from francophone African countries as well as Nigerians, Mozambicans and Zimbabweans reside in Johannesburg’s inner-city neighbourhoods which are centres of activity and exchange (see Simone 2001:158; Bouillon 2001:34). More particularly, as

---

<sup>18</sup> For more details, see also religious background

each nationality tends to have different driving forces and capacities and tends to congregate in different areas (Simone 2001:158), Congolese migrants are concentrated in the Western suburbs of Yeoville, Berea and to a lesser extent Bertrams, where a larger African Francophone diaspora consisting of Cameroonians, Senegalese and Rwandans resides (Vigneswaran 2007:13). Some of these areas have become popular for accommodating many Congolese migrants to the point that some apartment blocks within those areas, for instance, Ponte City in Berea bear names such as 'the Zairean Tower' or 'Little Kinshasa' (Bouillon 2001:35).

Although for some migrants, as indicated above, Johannesburg seems to be a place where it is still best to remain a stranger, a place of transiency (Simone 2001:164; Landau 2006:136), most of the Congolese migrants have come to South Africa with a hope to integrate. Segale (2004:50) maintains that integration remains essential for the refugee's social and economic survival. In other words, for a migrant to succeed in his integration enterprise 'it becomes necessary to acquire the norms, values, and behaviour of the greater society to gain access to and function within that group' (Kvernmo *et al.* 2004:515). Similarly, Groot (2004:41) claims that in South Africa local integration has been – and remains – an option for many refugees who contribute to the development and wealth of the South African economy (see also Danso and McDonald 2000:14).

### **1.7. Yahweh Shammah Assembly (YSA) background**

Yahweh Shammah Assembly, herein shortened as 'YSA', was founded in 1992. It is after two years (in 1994) that the Church got officially registered as a non-profit

organization, under Section 21 of the Companies Act of the Republic of South Africa. Yahweh Shammah Assembly is a Pentecostal Church. Its main aim is ‘to conduct a local Church under the direction of the Lord Jesus Christ and under the leadership of the Holy Spirit in accordance with all the commandments and the provisions set forth in the Holy Bible’ (See YSA informational leaflet). The Church claims an overall membership of about 1500 nominal members distributed among its six branches. Pastor Muteba B- Kusanka from DRC is the founder and the current senior pastor of Yahweh Shammah Assembly. Currently the Church has six branches respectively in Krugersdorp, Sandton, Pretoria, Tzaneen, Lesotho, and in the United Kingdom. These branches operate independently but always liaise with the headquarters for coordination, special support and counselling purposes<sup>19</sup>.

The Church is located at 88 Kotze Street, in the heart of Hillbrow<sup>20</sup>, Johannesburg. The church hires almost the half of the first floor of a two-storey old building the other half being occupied by another Pentecostal church headed by a Nigerian pastor. The ground floor is entirely occupied by businesses mainly shops and restaurants. The place is always busy during the day: many people, cars and much noise. But on Sunday, the loudness of musical instruments played during church services seems to engulf all other voices around and make the place melodically look like a small Vatican.

### **1.7.1. Church Mission**

---

<sup>19</sup> From the interview with the assistant pastor.

<sup>20</sup> For more details about Hillbrow neighbourhood, see Chapter 2

The Church's mission is to fulfil the biblical Great Commission as commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ according to the gospel of Matthew 28:16-20:

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age.' (Matthew 28:16-20)<sup>21</sup>

Yahweh Shammah Assembly believes that 'this Great Commission is binding on every believer to go into the entire world preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God to every creature making disciples of all nation' (see the Church's leaflet).

### **1.7.2. Church's vision**

The vision of the church draws on the biblical Great Commission as quoted above. In the church's leaflet the vision<sup>22</sup> reads thus:

First of all, we, as the Church of Christ, our primary vision is lined with Matthew 28:19 'Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...'. Indeed, our vision is in the book of 1 Samuel 2:4 'The bows of strong soldiers are broken, but the weak are girded with strength their belt'.

The Church believes that this particular passage gives them the strength and courage not to step down nor grow weary in fulfilling the Great Commission. The church's

---

<sup>21</sup> Quoted from the Holy Bible - New International Version (NIV). First edition, 2008. International Bible Society: Colorado.

<sup>22</sup> The pamphlet contains French version as well, which reads as follows: Premièrement, nous, étant l'Eglise de Jésus Christ, notre vision primaire s'aligne avec Matthieu 28:19 'Allez et faire de toutes les nations mes disciples...'. De toute manière, notre vision se trouve dans le livre de 1 Samuel 2:4 'L'arc des puissants est brisé, et les faibles ont la force pour ceinture'.

vision articulates upon three main axles: Evangelization, extensions and praise and worship. One of the strategies to carry out the vision of the church is to maintain spiritual growth and the increase in church membership. The church's creed affirms that 'members of Yahweh Shammah Assembly are convinced themselves of the importance of giving to the Church' and that 'this mechanism will facilitate the future Church development and enlargement'.

### **1.7.3. Church programme**

Yahweh Shammah Assembly provides a variety of services to its community. These include among many others: pastoral care, Sunday services, Friday evening prayer worship, daily morning devotions and intercessions from Monday to Friday, and Wednesday Bible study. In addition, the Church runs a 'Hand of Compassion ministry' whose activity is to cater for the needy people in the community, and the Outreach evangelism which aims at proselytizing the surrounding community. Moreover, the Church organises annual celebrations, seminars and conferences, women and youth ministries for information sharing and skill development, communications through the production of a monthly newsletter, etc.

Briefly, the weekly Church programme looks as follows:

Monday to Friday (08:00 – 09:00): Morning intercession prayer

Tuesday (23:00 – 01:00): Overnight prayer

Wednesday (18:00 – 19:00): Prayer of deliverance

Thursday (19:00 – 20:00): Home cell groups meetings

Thursday (23:00 – 01:00): Overnight prayer

Friday (18:00 – 19:00): Worship service at the church

Sunday (10:30 – 13:30): Sunday church service

Church services are conducted in both English and French or sometimes Lingala and last three hours or more depending on the length of the sermon or special events or celebrations occurring during the service. As it might be a common pattern for Pentecostal churches, church services are vividly participative and exhilarating involving periods of dancing, singing (Tonah 2007:16), praising, loud prayers and sporadic applause for preachers during pulpit sermons.

On the other hand, Yahweh Shammah Assembly runs a crèche on its premises and a separate Sunday school which meets every Sunday in parallel with the main church service. The crèche is run by one of the members of the church and is mostly attended by the children from Congolese migrant community. The crèche helps children to learn English and parents to be able to go to work or freely engage in other businesses while their children are kept in the crèche.

## **1.8. Conclusion**

In this introductory chapter both the background of the Congolese migrants, the subjects of this study, and their country of origin (the Democratic Republic of Congo) are extensively discussed. Based on mega data about the country it is particularly noted that Congolese are highly religious. More so, earlier studies among Congolese migrants in South Africa (see for instance Forced Migration Studies 2006; Mavungu 2006;

Vigneswaran 2007) and elsewhere (see Swyngedouw and Swyngedouw 2009) have also revealed the same trend. The present case study investigates the impact this religious continuity has on the process of integration of Congolese migrants into South African host society. Yahweh Shammah Assembly is the case laboratory for this study. Detailed socio-demographic profiles of informants who participated in this study will be discussed in the next chapter, which looks at the research design and methods used in collecting and analysing data for this particular study.

## **CHAPTER TWO. METHODS**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research design and methods used in the collection and analysis of data used in this study. It reviews the main tasks upon which the study articulates and different methodological approaches for data collection. The chapter also gives an overview on the socio-demographic profile of the population, researched, that is, Congolese migrants. In order to understand the socio-geographic context of this case study, this chapter offers a general brief description of Hillbrow, the neighbourhood in which the church under investigation operates and factors that contributed to the choice of this particular site and Yahweh Shammah Assembly as objects for the study. The chapter proceeds with the methodological pitfalls and other predictable and unpredictable challenges linked to the field work. The chapter closes with some ethical and limitative considerations inherent to the study.

### **2.2. Main tasks**

In order to explore the role of the church and its impact on the dynamics of integration of Congolese migrants, the following key tasks were systematically carried out and consisted in:

1. Identifying Congolese migrants' form of belonging through levels of integration.

Using both African Cities Project survey data and narratives from respondents, the study intended to establish whether or not affiliation to a migrant church constitutes a form of belonging for its members.

2. Identifying Congolese migrants' level of church-going, the study used open-ended interviews in order to get background information on the migrants' pre-migration religious attendance in terms of beliefs, practices and church affiliation in their countries of origin. By so doing, the study particularly aimed at establishing whether displacement had an impact on migrants' pre-migration religious identity, i.e. whether the patterns of religious loyalty underwent both temporal and spatial alterations during migratory process and why. Anticipatorily data from this rubric would inform whether migrants become more or less religious in host society (see Sommers 2001; Warner 2000).
3. Determining whether Congolese migrants perceive own religious affiliation as an identity or as a new form of belonging alongside other forms of identification within the host society. To achieve this, the study largely relied on narratives respondents gave about their motivation to seek membership into a predominantly Congolese church.
4. Determining whether Congolese migrants' church fosters integration or whether it somehow helps to resist integration, or else whether migrants themselves are inherently set not to integrate into the host society. In this respect, the study got substantial qualitative data through open-ended interviews. Open-ended questions

on the role of the church in creating a sense of belonging, transnational networks between host and sending communities, and on migrant's process of integration yielded potential results in this respect, as discussed in subsequent chapters.

## **2.3. Research design**

### **2.3.1. A qualitative approach**

As earlier discussed the present study is a case study. Greenstein (2006:88) defines a case study as 'typically an intensive, in-depth study of a few cases – often a single case – where the goal is to develop as full an understanding of that case as possible'. More particularly Greenstein explains that the specific case is usually selected because it is presumed to typify similar cases and the examination of that case can help illuminate the nature of similar cases (Greenstein 2006:89). In a similar way, Bryman (2004:51) notes that cases - or 'exemplifying cases' – 'are often chosen not because they are extreme or unusual in some way but because they will provide a suitable context for certain research questions to be answered'. By narrowing the study to one congregation this study was able to thoroughly scan through the inner being of the church in order to shed brighter light to existing studies which consisted in multiple-cases type of qualitative research. In other words the choice of a case study approach enabled the researcher to carry a primary and exhaustive investigation of the subjects in their own settings. Greenstein (2006:87-88) points out that 'a hallmark of qualitative research is that it is naturalist – it tends to study people and groups in their natural setting'. In addition, the 'single-case-study approach' (Greenstein 2006) seemed well appropriate

for the researcher to understand pre-migration trajectories of people sharing same nationality and common cultural and religious backgrounds and the impact these processes have on their integration in the host community.

Although the study draws on relevant quantitative data from the African Cities Project survey to corroborate some specific findings, this study remains, however, essentially qualitative. The main reason for a limited use and relative reliance on statistical findings in this particular study is that, while qualitative investigators can get closer to the actor's perspective through interviewing and observation, in most cases, quantitative researchers are seldom able to capture their subject's perspectives because they have to rely on more remote, inferential empirical methods and materials (Seale *et al.* 2004:4). Similarly, in his extensive work on Family Research methods, Greenstein (2006:34) unequivocally confirms that 'many qualitative studies are exploratory in nature'<sup>23</sup>. McMichael (2002:174) concurs with Greenstein by pointing out that qualitative methods allow exploration of the quality of experience through the study of meanings and processes. In other words, qualitative methods take into account respondents'

---

<sup>23</sup> Greenstein (2006) outlines the height key characteristics of a qualitative research as suggested by Miles and Huberman:

1. Qualitative research is conducted through intense and prolonged contact with the context under study.
2. The goal of the researcher is to gain a holistic overview of the context under study.
3. The researcher attempts to understand the context from the standpoint of the participants themselves rather than from the researcher's own perspective.
4. Although the research may, over time, isolate certain themes that may be reviewed with the participants themselves, the field notes and observations should be maintained in their original forms throughout the study.
5. A primary goal of qualitative research is to understand the ways that people come to understand, account for, take action, and otherwise manage their day-to-day activities.
6. Whereas any interpretations of the field notes are possible, some are more compelling than others for theoretical reasons or for reasons of internal consistency.
7. Relatively little standardized instrumentation is used. (Greenstein 2006:88)
8. Most analysis is done with words (as opposed to numbers)

opinions, views and feelings about the topic under investigation (Creswell 2003:188). In order to serve this purpose, the interview schedule for this particular study consisted of open-ended questions which allowed participants to freely share their experience and opinions.

On the other hand, one of the chief reasons for conducting a qualitative study, Creswell (2003:30) explains, is that the study is essentially exploratory, that is, no much has been written about the topic or the population being studied, and the researcher seeks to listen to participants and build an in-depth understanding based on their ideas. To achieve this golden goal, the researcher did all the interviews by himself in order to attentively and extensively listen to the selected participants and clearly understand their original personal ideas and specific pre and post- migration experiences. No intermediate research assistance was used in conducting interviews. While the use of research assistants remains common in quantitative studies and virtually inevitable in baseline or longitudinal qualitative surveys, Fontana and Frey (2003:77) warns that the anthropological researchers relying on interpreters may become vulnerable to added layers of meanings, biases, and interpretations, which may lead to disastrous misunderstandings.

In addition, due to the fact that respondents were free to choose to express in any three of the four main languages spoken within Congolese migrant community leaving in Johannesburg (French, Swahili, English and Lingala), and which the researcher speaks and understands as well, the researcher had an opportunity to draw full benefit from the above-mentioned advantages pertaining to a qualitative study. As Fontana and Frey

(2003:76) rightly put it, understanding the language and the culture of the respondents helps overcome a number of language and cultural problems. It is however worth noting that the freedom accorded to respondents to choose which language to use for the interview sometimes gave rise to unpredicted technical hiccups. At any time of the interview some respondents, deliberately or by inadvertence, often switched between these three languages. Amisi and Ballard (2005) experienced similar technical problems in their study of Congolese refugee struggle and organisation in South Africa, where interviews switched between as many as four languages including English, French, Swahili and the specific language of the respondents (2005:20). These sporadic improvisations in many instances had an impact on the duration of the interview where the interviewer promptly had to simultaneously translate and transcribe the conversation into the language of the questionnaire. In their extensive work on interview methods, Fontana and Frey (2003:70) warn interviewers that they should 'be aware of respondent differences and must be able to make the proper adjustments called for by unanticipated developments'.

### **2.3.2. Population of the study and Sampling strategy**

The population of this study consists of Congolese migrants members of Yahweh Shammah Assembly, one of Pentecostal churches in Johannesburg. The church is located in Hillbrow, one of the Johannesburg inner-city multicultural neighbourhoods. According to UNHCR statistics Congolese migrants currently form the largest refugee community in South Africa where the majority of them live in Johannesburg (Department of Home Affairs 2002; Amisi and Ballard 2005). Details about the

background of Congolese and Yahweh Shammah Assembly have been discussed earlier in the introductory chapter.

#### **2.3.3.1. Why Pentecostal Church?**

The choice of a Pentecostal denomination rather than any other ‘mainline’ denominations is not incidental. Two main reasons motivate this option. The first reason refers to the doctrinal differentiation between the two denominations; the second is of a structural difference.

Ideologically mainline churches represent ‘established’ churches, such as the Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic (Garner 2000:318, Tonah 2007:15). They are mainly characterized by conservatism (Helgesson 2006:21), continuity and orthodoxy (Synan 1997:293), and less insistence on the work of the Holy Spirit and the gift of speaking in tongues. Independent churches, mainly Pentecostals and charismatics, in contrast, put emphasis on the present action of the Spirit in the Church through the gifts of the Holy Spirit (Synan 1997: 291; Howell 2003:245), and on manifestation of emotional and religious experiences and practices, such as divine healing, exorcism, prophecy, revelation, and speaking in tongues (Allan and Pillay 1997:227). Asked about what made him to convert to a Pentecostal church one respondent replied

I took the decision to convert to Pentecostal faith in 1993 due to a serious sickness; it is when I also realised that my soul needed to be saved.

The above statement further reveals an implicit doctrinal distinction between the two features of a Pentecostal church, that is, physical or body healing and spiritual healing. The respondent concomitantly received a double healing: a physical and spiritual healing, or spiritual 'rebirth' (a 'born again' Christian experience). According to the statement, the former led to the latter.

Furthermore, taking into account the fact that Pentecostalism focuses on 'experience' rather than on dogma and adapts more to the modernity rather than the traditional way of life, it is believed that Pentecostalism has the potential to change or transform individuals and societies at large (Helgesson 2006:23) because Pentecostal message appeals to every area in the life of an individual (2006:27). Similarly, Tonah (2007) asserts that:

Charismatic churches in particular place emphasis on a practical and rhetorical modernist discourse that deals with central experiences of migration, reflect them religiously and empowers the believers to further action. (Tonah 2007:19)

It is, however, important in this context to note that, according to Sommers (2001:367), the term 'Pentecostalist' refers not only to Pentecostal churches formally named as such, but also to other related churches such as the Assemblies of God and assorted evangelical churches where a number of doctrines and practices mentioned above are observed.

Structurally the two main denominations further differ in ways they are established. In fact, the establishment of an independent church seems to be technically much easier than that of a mainline church. As Sommers (2001:363) points out, 'Pentecostalism

proved far more portable than Catholicism' (see also Meyer 2004:467). Indeed, as Steve Tonah (2007:15) rightly puts it, Pentecostal churches are often characterized by the fact that they do not have a clearly laid out structure of leadership and a traditional church hierarchy. In other words, while the establishment of an independent church can merely result from a unilateral initiative (conventionally referred to as divine calling) – and this is the case of the church under investigation – the establishment of a mainline church branch can only be decided by a corporate ecclesiastic body, to which it remains organically and structurally subordinate. Commenting on the managerial aspect of Pentecostal churches, Tonah (2007) analytically points out a range of multifaceted characteristics of these churches. He argues that:

The management of these churches rests largely in the hands of a small group of charismatic pastors and founders. The membership of these Pentecostal churches are dominated by young middle class professionals and businessmen most of whom look forward to a prosperous and successful life. This is reflected in the main strands of their church teachings that emphasize prosperity and success in life... Materialism permeates all aspects of church teachings and being financially successful in life is considered a blessing of God and a goal to be attained by all members. (Tonah 2007:15)

It is often hypothesized that it is mainly the structural flexibility and the preaching of the 'prosperity gospel' within independent churches as succinctly described above that significantly, contributes to the burgeoning of independent churches within migrant communities in Johannesburg, including the church under investigation (see also Jayasuriya 2008:208; Nzayabino 2005:21-22). Dreyer (1989:117), however, points out that the proliferation of independent churches springs from the inability of orthodox/formal churches to effect social change, and to 'adapt to changed social conditions' in the ever changing environment (see also Daneel 1987:132). In her study

of Christian conversion among Khmer refugees in the United States, Smith-Hefner (1994:29) argues that '[T]he loose structure of evangelical churches allows for a great measure of institutional flexibility as well as considerable pastoral autonomy'. In their study among immigrants in America, Portes and Rumbaut (2006) note that:

The hierarchical character of Catholicism and the failure of some Catholic churches to actively respond to the emotional and economic needs of poor immigrants in the contemporary period have led to them to join evangelical congregations. (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:326)

The ideological distinction between a mainline church and a Pentecostal or charismatic church was further reflected through the discourse of a number of respondents. Asked about what made him to make a decision to go to church one respondent who grew up in a Catholic family for instance stated:

I decided to go to church due to the type of life I was living in my family. My father worked at customs but he was an irresponsible father. I was suffering a lot because I had many basic needs that were not met. When I started going to a Pentecostal church in 1992 my problems began to disappear. (Respondent 34)

In addition, subscribing to the global understanding of refugeehood as an experience-based phenomenon, studying refugee socio-religious issues within a Pentecostal church becomes particularly relevant because, as Helgesson (2006) convincingly points out:

The uniqueness of Pentecostalism is seen to be in its focus on *experience* rather

than on dogma ... The focus on the religious experience opens up opportunities for participation on the part of the individual believer, opportunities the mainline denominations, such as the Catholic Church or the Anglican Church have not managed to offer their adherents to the same extent. (Helgesson 2006:23)

It is, nevertheless, important to note that the above factors that contribute to the establishment of Pentecostal churches do not exclude the plausibility that the migrant's pre-migration religious background may also play a significant role in this respect. That is, the propagation of independent churches, as the present study has revealed, may be partially linked to the fact that many migrants possess Pentecostal background which they transplant from their home countries into the host community. As Stevens (2004:135) rightly puts it, 'the meanings of religious traditions in immigrants' home countries shape how they are able to incorporate them in their new context'.

#### **2.3.4. Site Selection**

##### **2.3.4.1. Johannesburg inner-city**

I chose to carry the study in the city of Johannesburg because, on the one hand, in South Africa contemporary immigrants are concentrated in metropolitan areas where cultural pluralism and cosmopolitanism are part of their everyday lives (Fenggang 2001) and on the other hand, Johannesburg is among the youngest cities in the world and is essentially a city of migrants (Crush 2005:144; Gotz in Landau 2004:29), a focal point for much migratory inflows (Hlobo 2004:12). In their study of partnerships between the poor and local government in Johannesburg, Everatt, Gotz and Jennings (2004:24)

argue that ‘Johannesburg has become a vibrant African centre, a magnet for people from throughout the continent and important as a place of emerging economy and trade’.

In their explorative study of partnerships between the poor and local Government in Johannesburg, Everatt *et al.* (2004:27) describe the city of Johannesburg as ‘an economic refuge’, and ‘a zone of intense economic and social competition by multiple groups, all desperate to escape poverty through various pursuits, making it almost a frontier territory, where survival is a competitive struggle for moments of temporary advantage against other residents’. Statistically, Balbo and Marconi (cited in Landau and Haupt 2007:5) report that international migrants represent 6.2 percent of Johannesburg’s total population, and that 25 percent of its residents are foreign born (see also Everatt *et al.* 2004:3). In certain Johannesburg’s neighbourhoods such as Yeoville and Berea, Landau and Haupt (2007:5) note, foreigners now make up the majority or close to it.

Moreover, as the region’s sole metropolis, Landau *et al.* (2007:4) argue, the city of Johannesburg shapes and is shaped by socio-economic dynamics throughout Southern Africa and the world, including migration. Johannesburg therefore follows the trend of most contemporary mega cities around the globe, which ‘historically grew and continue to grow due to the integration of newcomers. Bosswick (2006:17) argues that ‘despite the social imbalances have often accompanied this process, cities still functioned as ‘integration machines’’. Being essentially a city of migrants, Johannesburg has become a rich laboratory for experimenting migrants’ religious life because churches, Bouillon

(2001:120) notes, are a key feature of francophone African life in Johannesburg.

Hillbrow neighbourhood<sup>24</sup> has been selected because it is one of the Johannesburg's high density suburbs that historically accommodate many migrants (CASE 2003; Landau 2004; 2006; Everatt *et al.* 2004) and eventually many churches (Winkler 2006; Everatt *et al.* 2004), especially Congolese Pentecostal Churches (*see* Bouillon 2001:120). Winkler (2006:7) points out, Hillbrow has always functioned as Johannesburg's port-of-entry neighbourhood, and consequently a significant proportion of its residents, both South African and foreign nationals, are thus transient (*see* also Gotz 2004:30-31; Everatt *et al.* 2004:26). Moreover, as Foner (1987:18) notes, as immigrant groups cluster in particular communities within each borough, they have had a dramatic effect on these neighbourhoods, especially where they have moved in large numbers. More specifically Foner sustains that clusters of new immigrants in specific communities have affected the composition of local schools and churches (1987:18). For instance, replying to the question about voluntary activities undertaken in Hillbrow during a study conducted by Everatt, Gotz and Jennings (2004) in the inner city of Johannesburg, a Hillbrow resident declared:

Hillbrow has a disparateness about it [initiative]. I've never seen so many new churches. And you won't believe the proliferation of preschools started by people looking for something to do... (Everatt *et*

---

<sup>24</sup> Historically, Hillbrow is also known for its high tower 'Hillbrow Tower' which serves as the beacon of the city of Johannesburg. According to Lucille Davie (2004), 'Hillbrow Tower' is one of the tallest towers in Africa. The Tower dominates the Johannesburg skyline, visible to visitors long before they reach the city itself. The tower, named the JG Strijdom Tower after a former South African prime minister (1954 to 1958), was built over three years between June 1968 and April 1971. It is 270-metres (or 90 storeys) high, making it one of the tallest man-made structures with a lift in Africa. (Excerpted from Davie 2004. 'Hillbrow Tower – Symbol of Johannesburg', posted at *SouthAfrica.info*). For more detailed information about the Hillbrow Tower, visit <http://www.southafrica.info/travel/cities/hillbrowtower.htm> Accessed 18 July 2010.

*al.* 2004:35)

In the same way the well-known neighbourhood of ‘Matonge’<sup>25</sup> in Brussels ‘has increasingly become a pivotal pole for Congolese immigrants to conduct all manner of transactions and celebrating a wide range of activities (Swyngedouw and Swyngedouw 2009:72) Hillbrow accommodates a vast variety of businesses at both local and supra-local levels. It is however worth noting that whilst Hillbrow has mainly been populated by European immigrants its socio-racial demographics significantly changed since 1994 mainly due to the demise of the apartheid regime and the subsequent massive influx of migrants from African continent (Everatt *et al.* 2004:26) in quest for safe haven and/or economic betterment.

### **2.2.5. Sampling design**

As Greenstein (2006:104) explains, a sample is the collection of elements drawn from the population that are actually studied. The data presented in this study were collected from a total of thirty-nine Congolese migrants and members of Yahweh Shammah Assembly, including three members from the church leadership. A separate unstructured questionnaire was used for the latter group of respondents (church officials). To be eligible for an interview a respondent had to be a Congolese migrant of 18 years old upwards and has been a member of Yahweh Shammah Assembly for at

---

<sup>25</sup> According to Swyngedouw and Swyngedouw (2009) the conventional district of ‘Matonge’ historically emerged as a meeting place for high-ranking officials of the Mobutu regime, former Belgian colonialists, and the Belgian and Congolese security services. Actually this ‘Matonge’ is but a nominal duplication of another place called ‘Matonge’ which is in Kinshasa – in this context, a kind of a *Matonge* away from *Matonge*.

least one year at the date of interview. The study used a combination of purposive and snowball techniques of sampling.

#### **2.3.5.1. Purposive sampling**

According to Bryman (2004:333-334) purposive sampling aims at establishing a good correspondence between research questions and sampling so as to allow the researcher to only interview people who are relevant to the research questions. Most of the respondents were purposefully selected at the church site, immediately at the end of the church service. Others were selected during weekly morning devotions to which the researcher also took part at least two times a week. The motivation for using purposeful sampling method was that the study sought to involve members from a variety of backgrounds and from different geographical locations in their country of origin for a more balanced demographics and opinions (Kadima 2001:90). The purposive sampling yielded a mixed sample which included participants from both rural and urban areas ranging from uneducated, students, professionals, businessmen to unemployed (see discussion of respondents' socio-demographic profile). The study predicted that people with differing socio-geographical backgrounds tend to be different in a way they interpret or respond to experiential occurrences associated with their post migration livelihood within the host society. Greenstein (2006:110) explains that in purposive sampling 'specific cases are selected precisely because they are believed to be typical' and 'represent the population of interest'.

#### **2.3.5.2. Snowball sampling**

The purposive sampling was supplemented by a snowball sampling, a technique used ‘to study groups or individuals that are hard to identify or locate’ (Greenstein 2006:110). Snowball technique allows the researcher ‘to make initial contact with a small group of people who are relevant to the research topic and then uses these to establish contacts with others’ (Bryman 2004:100). Simply put, it is a ‘non-probability sampling procedure in which the sample grows by adding individuals identified by respondents or informants’ (2006:194). The snowball technique allowed the researcher to identify other respondents falling into the pre-defined residential strata and professional categories. This technique proved successful in locating respondents within this ‘family of God’ (Cao 2005; Hegelsson 2006) where everybody seems to know everyone. Being aware of the potential bias linked to snowball sampling (Greenstein 2006:111) the researcher checked every new respondent against the selection criteria before their inclusion in the sample. One of the concerns associated with a snowball sampling is that there is a possibility for potential bias in the sample due to the fact that members of a snowball sample know each other (Greenstein 2006:111). The second drawback of the snowball sampling is that it is very unlikely that the sample will be representative (Bryman 2004:102). Arguably, this seems to be one of the reasons why snowball sampling is seldom used in quantitative inquiries, which traditionally are more concerned with generalizable results qualitative inquiries (Bryman 2004:102). In other words, potential effects the disadvantages of a snowball sampling may have on the research process or results significantly depend on the types or methods of research involved. For instance, (Bryman 2004:102) argues that ‘there is a much better ‘fit’

between snowball sampling and the theoretical sampling strategy of qualitative research than with the statistical approach of quantitative research'. He further maintains that 'concerns about external validity and ability to generalize do not loom as large within a qualitative research one' (Bryman 2004:102).

## **2.3.6. Data collection**

### **2.3.6.1. Triangulated methods**

The study used a combination of data collection methods, broadly referred to as 'triangulation' by Fontana and Frey (2003:99); Bryman (2004:275) and Silverman (2005:380). According to Bryman (2004:275) triangulation 'refers to an approach that uses 'multiple' observers, theoretical perspectives, sources of data, and methodologies'. Triangulation was originally designed as an approach to the development of measures of concepts, whereby more than one method would be employed in the development of measures, resulting in greater confidence in findings (Bryman 2004:275). Advocating for the use of triangulated methods, Fontana *et al.* (2003:99) argue that, 'human beings are complex, and their lives are ever changing; the more methods we use to study them, the better our chances to gain some understanding of how they construct their lives and the stories they tell us about them'. Simply put, in a qualitative enquiry triangulation 'allows researchers to use different methods in different combinations' (Fontana *et al.* 2003:99) so as to check 'whether they corroborate one another' (Silverman 2005:380). For instance, triangulation helps researchers checking the reliability of their observations with interview questions to determine whether they might have

misunderstood what they have seen (Bryman 2004:275). In this study triangulated methods of data collection included face-to-face in-depth interviews, informal conversations, participant observation, home visits and field notes taking. The combination of multiple methods of data collection is not a methodological paradox for a case study such as this. In most case studies, Greenstein (2006:89) notes, ‘researcher is likely to use multiple sources of data and methods of data collection’.

#### **2.2.6.2. In-depth Interviews**

The use of interviewing to acquire information is so extensive today that it has been said that we live in an ‘interview society’

(Fontana and Frey 2003:62).

One aspect for the fieldwork for this study consisted in ethnographic interviewing which, according to Fontana and Frey (2003) is a universal mode of systematic inquiry (2003:63) and one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow human beings (2003:62; Silverman 2005:378). As Mouton (2003:197) points out, qualitative interviews emphasize the relativism of culture, the active participation of the interviewer, and the importance of giving the interviewee voice. Interviewing remains a commonly used technique within social sciences. It is, just to borrow Fontana and Frey’s metaphorical wording, ‘rather like a marriage: because every-body knows what it is’ (2003:99). In this study individual in-depth interviews were conducted with church officials and ordinary members. The unstructured face-to-face interviews consisted of open-ended questions regarding the role of the church, migrant’s church attendance, church’s involvement in

transnationalism (see appendix?). This technique proved appropriate for this study; it allowed interviewees to express themselves in their words. Moreover, Face-to-face interviews allowed the researcher to read ‘non-verbal behaviour and other personal characteristics of the respondents’ (Fontana and Frey 2003:97), which were virtually essential to the analysis and interpretation of a number of attitudinal descriptive questions of the interview schedule.

However, as Fontana and Frey (2003:61) note, asking questions and getting answers is a much harder task than it may seem at first. During interviews, a significant number of respondents (about 45 per cent) refused to answer the question about things they do not like in the church. Arguably, such a reaction however does not seem paradoxical for a couple of reasons. First, at the beginning of the interview respondents were plainly told about their freedom not to answer any question they would not feel comfortable. Second, respondents were free to withdraw from the interview at any time without giving notice or seeking advice from the interviewer. Additionally, the researcher was aware of the fact that, in a bid of keeping church’s sanctity and reputation some church leaders would tend not to talk about negative happenings within their church while others abstractly attempt to give these ‘fortuitous’ occurrences a divine explanation. Illustratively, one of the respondents who answered the question about what he does not like in the church indicated:

This is a difficult question. Me I do believe in God. If there is something bizarre in the Church God allows it to happen for a reason. (Respondent 16)

While this cannot be the case for all respondents, yet there is wide room to think that some respondents who refused to answer the questions about what they do not like

within their church did so for fear that the researcher might perhaps report them to the church leadership.

Since the study mainly dealt with a French speaking community, the interview schedule was elaborated in English and then translated into French, and back-translated into the former to ensure accuracy of the translation. The interviews were therefore conducted in either language depending on the respondent's choice. During interviews there was no need for interpretation since the researcher himself is fluent in both languages. Each individual interviewee was briefly informed about the aim of the research, and ensured of the confidentiality of the information provided. Bearing in mind that one of the objectives of interviewing is to obtain rich and in-depth experiential information, respondents were given wide free room to account their life stories and experiences which were substantially useful for this study. Plummer (quoted in Thomson 2009:46) points out 'stories are the pathways to understanding the bases of identity'. Each interview session took between one hour and half and two hours. Indeed, lengthy interviews are not strange in qualitative studies such as this. Bryman (2004:338) notes that in qualitative research interviews using open questions can practically last many hours, because interviewees, Bryman adds, 'are likely to talk for longer than is usually the case with a comparable closed question' (2004:145). Contrary to the researcher's expectations few interviews were tape-recorded. Most of respondents simply indicated that they do not like being tape-recorded. While it is widely believed that tape recorded interviews take less time than face-to-face unrecorded interviews<sup>26</sup> respondents'

---

<sup>26</sup> But, at the same, time Stubbs (1983) warns that one should also be aware that a tape-recorder, whilst providing more objective and detailed data, is indiscriminating and may well provide too much

preference for the latter had an impact on the overall length of individual interviews as well as on the overall interviewing timeframe. The interviews stretched over a period of twelve months. The span does not however include the four months period of participant observation that preceded interviews. In addition, it is worth mentioning that the xenophobic violence that occurred in May-June 2008<sup>27</sup> had adverse effect on the overall process of interviewing. Indeed, for sake of safety of the respondents and the researcher alike, interviews stalled for a period of about four months and were resumed later, albeit at a slow motion, after fears had relatively subsided.

### **2.3.6.3. Participant observation**

Participant observation technique was particularly helpful in sustaining individualised interactions with church members to get a general picture of their daily life involvements. As Bryman (2004:339) points out, participant observation allows the researcher to confront members of a social setting in their natural environments. More particularly participation observation gives the observer, Bryman (2004:338) insists, ‘the ability to observe behaviour and implicit features rather than just rely on what is

---

data requiring much longer transcription. Five minutes of conversation, he adds, may take over an hour to transcribe if the recording is clear, and correspondingly much longer for a poor recording (Stubbs 1983:42).

<sup>27</sup> According to the study conducted by Misago, Landau and Monson (2009:2) the violence against foreign nationals that reached its climax in May 2008, is one of the most widespread xenophobic attacks ever recorded in the post-Apartheid South Africa. According to the report, the violence started in a black dominated township of Alexandra on 11 May 2008, and then speedily spread to other townships and informal settlements across the country. The study reports the death toll of about 62 people, including 21 South Africans, 670 wounded, and dozens of women raped. According to the same source, at least 100 000 people were displaced and a significant number of properties were looted, destroyed or seized by local residents and leaders.

For more details about the report, see Misago, J. Landau, L. and Monson, T. 2009. *Towards Tolerance, Law, and Dignity: Addressing Violence against Foreign Nationals in South Africa*. International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Regional Office for Southern Africa: Pretoria.

said'. Participant observation, Silverman (2005:379) argues, assumes that, in order to understand the world 'first hand', you must participate yourself rather than just observe at a distance. Similarly, Jandt (2007:381) points out that a participant observer of a subgroup should be accepted as a member of that subgroup. In this study the participant observation mainly consisted in intermittently attending Sunday services at the church over a period of four months prior to interviews. Bryman (2004:338) notes that the researcher's prolonged immersion in a social setting would seem 'to make him or her better equipped to see as others see' and therefore to know better what is happening within that particular group.

During this period, the researcher unobtrusively observed and took notes of anything relevant to the study or unfamiliar to him that happened during church services. Particular attention was drawn on ways pastors preach, recurrent themes in their sermons, languages and signs used in preaching, and different ways congregants responded or reacted to sermons, and other indoor practices performed during church services. The researcher also paid attention to the way worship, prayer and songs were conducted. Overall, this phase yielded substantial information that subsequently enabled the researcher to trace some 'deviant' or 'hidden' activities that insiders are usually not open or willing to talk about in an interview context alone (Bryman 2004:338-339).

In addition, although in most cases observation may mean 'keeping on target, while hanging loose' (Mouton 2003:195), the researcher took an active part in a number of activities and events which the church ran during the period of observation. In his

extensive work on research methods approaches, Creswell (2003:21) points out that 'One of the key elements of collecting data is to observe participants' behaviours by participating in their activities'. These involvements consisted notably in participating in a number of social events, such as funeral<sup>28</sup> and wedding ceremonies, and taking part in regular one-hour (from 08:00 to 09:00) morning devotions at least three days a week. It is during this period a great deal of comprehensive field notes were taken and potential respondents for subsequent interviews identified. As Fontana and Frey (2003:74) note, interviewing and participant observation go hand in hand.

Traditionally, in ethnographic surveys 'researcher needs to establish some trust with the respondents' (Fontana and Frey 2003:78) because fieldwork, Neuman (2003:375) notes, 'involves social relationships and personal feelings'. Thus, during the period of observation the researcher was able to socialise with church members in order to build up trust with them. Helgesson (2006) argues that

[F]ieldwork experience is a powerful experience, where personal and professional roles are melded [and]...is about relationships of intimacy and familiarity, where the relationship constitutes the fundamental medium of investigation for the ethnographer. (Helgesson 2006:36)

Trust building process was mainly achieved through involvement in various in/outdoors church activities mentioned earlier. But securing trust from respondents is one thing; maintaining it another thing. During fieldwork I understood that respondent's trust is like an egg that must be handled with much care at each stage of the fieldwork. Fontana

---

<sup>28</sup> One instance of a funeral event I witnessed was one of a former WITS graduate and member of Yahweh Shammah Assembly. He died in car accident while returning home from work. He was newly hired by one of engineering companies in Pretoria.

and Frey (2003:78) caution that ‘once gained, trust can still be very fragile’. More particularly during interviews, taking respondent’s gained trust or consent for granted and overusing it may significantly jeopardise the remaining part of the interview process. It was anticipated that as the researcher interacts and converses with some congregants he would get to know them better and consequently draw a panoramic picture of what is happening within the church. It is particularly during this particular period the researcher was able to gather basic information about the demographics of the informants, notably their place of origin back to the DRC, their residential status. The present study hypothesizes that migrants from different residential settings (urban versus rural areas) in homeland, varying professional backgrounds, were likely to display different attitudes and perceptions with regard to identitive ideals and aspirations to integrate into the host community. In his intercultural study among various immigrant groups in United States, Jandt (2007:307) points out that ‘they can be differences among immigrants from the same country – depending on, for example, whether they grew up in a cosmopolitan urban centre or in a rural area where there existed relatively less outside influence’.

#### **2.3.6.4. Secondary sources**

Secondary sources particularly involved a series of reports and longitudinal empirical studies that document a number of aspects of this research. These included mainly data from African Cities Project survey<sup>29</sup> (Migration and the New African City) conducted

---

<sup>29</sup> The African Cities Project (ACP) extends its survey to other African inner-cities including Maputo (Mozambique), Nairobi (Kenya) and Lubumbashi (Democratic Republic of Congo) (see

by the University of the Witwatersrand, Forced Migration Studies Programme in 2006. The survey provides a wider baseline data on varied communities of migrants living in seven central Johannesburg neighbourhoods. The survey draws on a sample of a total of 847 respondents including Congolese (253), Mozambicans (203), Somalis (186), and South Africans (190) (Landau 2009:199). Data on church-related variables from the survey were comparatively interpreted in line with the theoretical framework of the present study. In terms of results, the survey was particularly useful in providing important comparative data on socio-demographic profile of the respondents in both studies, with particular focus on religious background and transnational networks between migrants and their communities of origin. These data were also helpful in assessing the contribution of the church in the development of networks among migrants.

### **2.3.7. Data analysis and interpretation**

As Mouton (2003:108) points out, data analysis involves ‘breaking up’ the data into manageable themes, patterns and trends in order to understand the relationships between concepts, constructs or variables, and to see whether there are any patterns or trends that can be identified or isolated, or establish themes in the data.

#### **2.3.7.1. Thematic content analysis**

The present study used the content analysis technique to analyze and interpret the data

---

Vigneswaran 2007:4; Landau 2009:199).

collected by means of interviews. According to Wilkinson (2004:183) Content analysis is based on examination of the data for recurrent instances of some kind, and then systematically identified across the data set, and grouped together by means of a coding system. The content analysis of the data collected during face-to-face in-depth interviews consisted mainly in reading through the content of every transcript, and writing down key recurrent themes or points that emerge from each interview. Audio-taped interviews were transcribed verbatim from the tape to the interview sheet and analysed in the same way as other transcripts. In order to prevent unpredictable waste of time and any loss or misplacement whatsoever of collected data, both data collection and gradual raw data analysis run concomitantly. Data interpretation culminated in relating results and findings reached in this study to existing theoretical frameworks (see chapter three), and showing whether these theories are supported or falsified by the new interpretation (See Mouton 2003:109).

## **2.4. Ethical considerations**

The present research adheres to the general ethical standards of social research involving human subjects set by the Ethics Committee, University of the Witwatersrand. The ethical compliance was mainly achieved in the following ways. At the beginning of each interview informants were informed about the nature of the research, its purpose, and the approximate length of the interview. Respondents were also informed about their freedom to choose not to answer any question for which they may feel uncomfortable or even withdraw from the interview at any time without any consequence. I also showed each participant the written permission from their pastor to

conduct the research within the congregation. Each informant was given a form to sign as a proof for his/her written consent before the commencement of the interview. In addition, interviewees were assured of anonymity and confidentiality of the information they provide. In order to comply with this ethical requirement, the names of the informants did not appear on the questionnaire nor mentioned in any part of this thesis. Where need be, conventional coding was pseudonymously used instead of names. During interviews, I also avoided touching issues that are particularly sensitive to refugees, such as stereotype-driven identifications, derogatory labelling and personal privacy, especially when probing some responses. I also told respondents that they can get the feedback on the final conclusions of my research.

## **2.5. Socio-demographic Profile of respondents**

The section tabulates the demographic composition of all the respondents who voluntarily took part in this study. More particularly data on respondents' educational, residential, economic as well as their professional status both in country of origin and host country are presented. In terms of residential profile back home, most of respondents have lived or spent most of their life in urban areas (76 per cent), mainly Kinshasa (38 per cent), the capital city of the DRC, and Lubumbashi (38 per cent). The rest of the respondents (24 per cent) grew up or spent most of their life in rural areas or small towns across the country, mostly eastern parts of the country. As mentioned earlier (see country profile, chapter 1) since almost a couple of decades the eastern part of Congo has been the scene of recurrent civil wars and political contestations which culminated in enormous loss of lives and massive displacements of people. A couple of

respondents were Cameroonian citizens who joined the church mainly for language reasons. These were particularly included in the sample for sake of balance control. The data collected from this minority sub-group were particularly useful in exploring dimensions of cross-cultural interactions between the two co-existing groups, and the impact the embedding of these dynamics have on the integration of the former into the majority ethnic group.

### **2.5.1. Age groups**

In terms of age, the most represented age group (62 per cent) is between the ages of 26 and 35, followed by 36 to 45 (21 per cent). The age distribution for the rest of the respondents ranges respectively between the ages of 46 and 55 (13 per cent) and between 18 and 25 (5 per cent).

As profiling data show, the population researched is essentially young and active. Based on the findings of earlier empirical surveys this particular characteristic seems to be the general demographic trend of most of migrant communities in South Africa. For instance, the longitudinal study carried by the University of the Witwatersrand, Forced Migration Studies Programme (2006:2)<sup>30</sup> among four different migrant groups living in Johannesburg found that Congolese participants aged between 26 and 35 represented 61 per cent, followed by those between 18 and 25 (about 21 per cent). According to the

---

<sup>30</sup> For more details about statistical data of the study, see Forced Migration Studies Programme (2006). *Migration and the New African City: Citizenship, Transit, and Transnationalism – Descriptive data for Johannesburg*.

same source, Mozambican respondents aged between 26 and 35 represented 45 per cent, followed by 23 per cent of the group age between 18 and 25. Respondents from Somali migrant community follow the same statistical pattern with about 50 per cent of age group between 26 and 35, and about 20 per cent of respondents aged between 18 and 25. The survey further revealed that other migrant communities, which were randomly included in the sample, displayed similar demographic features with about 47 per cent of respondents aged between 26 and 35, and 13 per cent of participants aged between 18 and 25.

### **2.5.2. Marital status and length of residence**

As regards marital status, the majority of respondents were married couples (56 per cent) while those who were never married at the time of interviews accounted for about 41 per cent. About 3 per cent of respondents were widowed. About 46 per cent of respondents, mainly single (never married) young women and men did not have children. Only a couple of respondents (males) who were single mentioned having children with their former partners. The number of children for respondents who declared having children (54 per cent) varies between 1 and 5 children per family unit.

Residentially, the majority of participants reside in the close vicinity of the church specifically in the neighbourhoods of Berea (49 per cent), Hillbrow (about 28 per cent) and Yeoville (about 15 per cent). The rest of respondents stay as far as Turfontein, Rosettenville and Albertville (8 per cent), that is, approximately 7 kilometres from the Church. The majority of the respondents (52 per cent) joined Yahweh Shammah

Assembly between 2005-2007 and 2000-2004 (about 26 per cent). While some respondents (10 per cent) have been staying in South Africa for more than ten years (second wave migrants)<sup>31</sup> the rest of the respondents (90 per cent) belong to the third wave migration<sup>32</sup> which coincided with the end of the then long-standing apartheid system and the concomitant launch of economic and political liberalisation era in South Africa in 1994. Most of these (77 per cent) arrived in South Africa during the period 2003-2006. Looking back to the historical background of DRC<sup>33</sup>, this period corresponded to the aftermath of what Turner (2007:1) called ‘Africa’s First World War’ (1998-2003), which culminated in the reversal of the then President Laurent Kabila and entronement of his son in his stead. The chronic precariousness of human safety since the beginning of civil wars in the country in 1996, compounded by worsening economic hardships were main contributing factors for subsequent increasing internal displacements and cross-border migrations.

### **2.5.3. Legal status in South Africa**

Though during introduction almost all respondents generally tended to identify themselves as ‘refugees’, a number of categories were however spotted when asked about their current residential status and types of documentation they held at the time of the interview. Thus, it was revealed that most of the respondents who participated in this study (about 59 per cent) are asylum seekers<sup>34</sup>, that is, do not yet have legal refugee

---

<sup>31</sup> For more details about Congolese migratory waves, see chapter 1

<sup>32</sup> For more details about Congolese migratory waves, see chapter 1

<sup>33</sup> Details on the historical background of the Democratic Republic of Congo are discussed in chapter 1

<sup>34</sup> Simply put, asylum seekers are individuals who have applied for asylum and whose claims for

status. Only about 36 per cent declared having formal refugee status. Two of the respondents held respectively a study permit and work permit.

#### **2.5.4. Levels of education**

##### ***2.5.4.1. Before leaving the country***

About 90 per cent of the respondents who participated in this study held either university qualifications (41 per cent) or have at least completed secondary education level (51 per cent). The rest (8 per cent) have only achieved primary schooling. Overall, these figures are remarkably significant in a country where 21 per cent of the population had no schooling, 46 per cent had primary schooling, 30 per cent had secondary schooling, and 3 per cent had university schooling in 2007 (Missionary Atlas Project 2007)<sup>35</sup>. On the other hand, it is worth noting that, in this particular case study, there was no respondent who declared to having no formal education. Arguably, this demographic feature strongly confirms Kleist's premise according to which, when a war occurs in a country most of the educated people and people who are important to the country are the first ones to move out (Kleist 2007:120).

---

refugee status have not yet been determined (UNHCR 2009:5; Nzayabino 2010:1). In South Africa most of asylum seekers who report to the Department of Home Affairs are issued with temporary permits which can be extended for a period ranging from one month to six months maximum.

<sup>35</sup> According to estimates made in 2000, 41.7 per cent of the population had no schooling, 42.2 per cent had primary schooling, 15.4 per cent had secondary schooling, and 0.7 per cent had university schooling. See US Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.htm>. Accessed on 01 July 2010

See also Missionary Atlas Project Africa: Democratic Republic of Congo – Basic Facts, at [http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic per cent20republic per cent20of per cent20the per cent20congo/Republic per cent20of per cent20the per cent20Congo.pdf](http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic%20republic%20of%20the%20cent20congo/Republic%20of%20the%20Congo.pdf) . Accessed on 15 June 2010

#### **2.5.4.2. *Current level of education***

Though some respondents (20 per cent) have been able to upgrade their skills through short-term training in Johannesburg, yet this did not statistically change the pre-migration levels of education as described above. Most of these trainings consisted in vocational short courses at low fee-paying institutes or colleges offering certificates and/or diplomas. Most of these trainings ranged from Biblical studies, security, catering, marketing and computing to information technology.

#### **2.5.5. Occupation back home**

The respondents' occupational profiling in their country of origin varies widely. However, respondents who were involved in business industry were the most represented category (41 per cent). Other respondents introduced themselves as university students (23 per cent) and Engineers (8 per cent) before leaving their country. Other categories (20 per cent) of respondents included mainly evangelists, nurses, medical doctors, teachers and other occupations. The last group of respondents (8 per cent) involved those who were unemployed in their home country.

##### **2.5.5.1. Current occupation**

In the same way many participants had been working in business activities back home, most of the respondents (31 per cent) are self-employed in informal business industry in Johannesburg. Business activities included mainly import/export brokering, mini shops,

street vending, music production, barbershops and hairdressing and running child care centres or crèches among many others. About 23 per cent of the respondents work in security industry while about 15 per cent get involved in evangelising activities. However, nearly 21 per cent of the respondents remain unemployed. It is worth noting that most of the respondents engage simultaneously in more than one occupation. Moreover, a number of respondents who, for survival sake, get involved in activities other than those for which they are qualified. This is the case, for instance, of one female respondent who is a professional nurse but now she is working in a restaurant. Another striking example concerns a graduate of Applied Social Sciences and former medical student who sells shoes in one of the busiest streets in the inner-city of Johannesburg.

#### **2.5.6. Main reasons for leaving country of origin**

The majority of the respondents (about 46 per cent) said that they fled their country due to economic reasons, mainly unemployment. About 38 per cent fled because of war while others (18 per cent) put forward other reasons including studies, business, and family reunification. In his study of intercultural communication, Jandt (2007:293) confirms that ‘people migrate for a variety of reasons – from fleeing from war or persecution to better economic opportunity, from political conflict to labour surplus’. Similarly, respondents who indicated they chose to come to South Africa because of economic or employment opportunities remain the most represented category (51 per cent) while about 21 per cent chose South Africa for safe haven reasons. Other respondents declared they came to South Africa because they could not make it to go

where they actually wanted to (15 per cent). Some of these were unable to raise enough money to pay for their airfare; others were stuck due to visa complications. In their study of individual determinants of the adaptation of immigrants, Scott and Scott (1989:2) point out that ‘the choice of destination is restricted, not only by unwillingness of countries to accept immigrants of particular types, but also by the emigrant’s own limited information and resources for mobility’. Alternative countries considered by this group of respondents include mainly, Europe (country not specified), Canada, United States, Australia and New Zealand. About 10 per cent of the participants chose to come to South Africa for sake of studies, though most of them were not able to achieve their dream. For instance, one respondent who came to South Africa on a student visa ended up doing casual jobs in building industry because he could not financially afford schooling.

## **2.6. Conclusion**

This chapter outlined the research design and briefly reviewed the main tasks involved in this qualitative study. Relevant methods and techniques used in collecting, analyzing and interpreting both theoretical and empirical data guiding the study were systematically discussed in details. The chapter further gives ample explanations as regards the selection of the site and the population of the study. Ethical issues were also taken into consideration and different approaches to deal with them were thus discussed. The section closes with a detailed discussion of socio-demographic profile of all respondents involved in this study. The next chapter discusses theoretical framework and provides definition of key concepts before proceeding with the literature review.

## **CHAPTER THREE. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter looks respectively at major theoretical sources and early schools of thought that inform the literature reviewed in this study. The framework outlines 1) different theoretical approaches to the understanding of the relationship between space and people; 2) Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion together with Weber's consequences of religious affiliation; 3) homophily theory; 4) Mullins' life-cycle model of the development of ethnic churches, and 5) Hofstede's dimensions of culture. The chapter closes with a detailed explanation and contextualization of key concepts that are used throughout the thesis. These include concepts such as: belonging, religious identity, ethnic identity, cultural identity, refugee/forced migrant versus asylum seeker, economic migrant, transnationalism, and integration.

### **3.2. Theoretical framework**

#### **3.2.1. Essentialist versus alternative approach**

The understanding of the relationship between space and belonging during displacement processes remains overly crucial. As Brun (2001) rightly points out, diverse ways space and place are conceptualised, applied and expressed within the field of refugee studies and in policy work become particularly salient for how refugees are

understood and represented. What is at stake in this conceptual expository is the question whether belonging is inherently rooted in a physically defined territory, or whether belonging is still possible without reference to a territorial entity. Conceptually, the debates over the relationship between people and place during migration processes revolve around two divergent approaches to place: an 'essentialist' approach and an 'alternative' approach (Brun 2001).

The essentialist approach suggests that 'all people have a natural place in the world, and therefore refugees have been regarded as being torn loose from their place and thus from their culture and identity' (Brun 2001:15). Conversely, the alternative understanding of space and people 'separates identity from place to show that though refugees have to move from their places of origin, they do not lose their identity and ability to exercise power' (Brun 2001:15). According to the alternative approach, some migrants are imaginably able to experience a kind of ambivalent spatialized belonging through the process of reterritorialization, which Brun defines as:

'Spatial process' and spatial strategies that refugees and displaced people develop, in the contradictory experience of being physically present in one location, but at the same time living with a feeling of belonging somewhere else (Brun 2001:23).

Similarly, but basing his thinking on the fluidity of ethnic identity, Merks (2000:6), claims that many ethnic groups are 'deterritorialized' and live in diasporas, but still maintain their identity because, he adds, 'people in Africa often do not identify themselves with a certain location, but instead with their clan or ethnic group, wherever it is located at any given moment'.

Nevertheless, Brun's hybridized understanding of the interplay between place and people did not survive scholarly challenges from his contemporaries. Peterson, Vasquez *et al.* (2001:18), for instance, seem to implicitly reject both approaches by suggesting another view of a de-territorialized belonging, which rather situates transnational migrants into an imaginary supra-space, a 'nowhere' kind of belonging. They suggest the concept of 'dual disenfranchisement' whereby, because of their liminality migrants experience a sort of spaceless or homeless life which makes them to belong neither to the groups in host society nor to their country of origin (see also Merx 2000; Bosswick 2006). Similarly, subscribing to the hypothetical liminality of refugeehood other scholars argue that in most cases the uprooted people choose to remain 'transient' (Landau 2006:127, Shami 1996:6) and artificially invent a temporal 'supra-local' homeland or an 'extraterritorial' space (Landau 2006:140) within the host land where they may keep a handful of the soil (or seeds) they took along from their country (Malkki 1992:27) and where they maintain their personal autonomy vis-à-vis host community (Connor 1989:905).

In the same line of thinking – but making his point from a religious viewpoint – Van Dijk (cited in Helgesson 2006) puts forward the concept of 'universal home', another form of 'de-territorialised' belonging which is metaphysically rooted neither into the host society nor into sending community (Helgesson 2006:28). This is what Howell (2003) earlier in his advocacy for shift from a traditionally localised Christianity to a post-modern 'glocalized' Christianity, or just to use Roudometof's terminology 'glocalised religiosity' (2008:71). Discussing the rise and increasing access of Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches (PCCs) to the public space, Gifford (quoted in

Meyer 2004:463) argues that '[F]or all the talk within African circles of localisation, inculturalisation, Africanisation or indigenisation, external links have become more important than ever'.

Howell argues that 'it is becoming clear that we need to work out our understandings of how Christianity can be held to be both locally specific and globally interrelated simultaneously' (2003:234). In a similar vein, Swyngedouw and Swyngedouw (2009:72) later found that 'daily life is constructed through a dialectical interaction between the global and the local'. This process is referred to as 'glocalism' by several scholars of transnationalism and globalisation (See Howell 2003; Swyngedouw and Swyngedouw 2009; Casanova 2001; Roudometof 2008). Also termed as 'extraversion' – because of its potential to 'deliberately develop external links and sustain connection with the world' (Meyer 2004:468) - glocalisation enables modern Christianity to engage 'in the global order while in many ways reinforcing traditional beliefs' (Gifford quoted in Meyer 2004:463).

It is worth noting that Van Dijk's supra-territorial understanding of belonging, to some extent, crosscuts Peterson's view of a 'de-territorialized' mode of belonging explained above. The sole difference is that in stead of a 'dual disenfranchisement' – which virtually appears to be the consequence of a 'nowhere' belonging – Van Dijk places [Pentecostal] migrants into rather a globalised belonging, a corporate 'family of God' which connects all Pentecostal churches all over the world (Helgesson 2006:28). The

Coalition des Eglises Francophones (COEF)<sup>36</sup> which links together all Pentecostal churches of the French-speaking communities becomes a sub-family of this broad family (Bouillon 2001:120).

### **3.2.2. Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion and Weber's economic consequences of religious affiliation**

According to functionalist theory of religion 'religious beliefs and rituals [...] bind individuals together and provide the social context necessary for the transmission of traditions and values' (Mullins 1987:322). More particularly, in diasporic communities functionalist theorists argue that 'religious beliefs can support both the ethnic and assimilation functions of immigrant churches and therefore play a differing role in different communities [...] but their efforts may be directed primarily towards their own ethnic' (Stevens 2004:135). This faith-based function refers to what Mullins (1987:322) calls 'integrative consequence of religion'.

Socio-cultural functions of religion are often paralleled by economic function which, according to Portes and Rumbaut (2006:301) corresponds to Weber's analysis of economic consequences of religious affiliation. They argue that 'by reaffirming their religious traditions or embracing new ones, they [newcomers] could do well by doing good' (2006:301). They particularly contend that 'immigrants have taken refuge in their

---

<sup>36</sup> See Antoine, Bouillon. 2001. *African Francophone Migrants to South Africa: Languages, Images and Relationships*. The Francophone Coalition 'COEF' refers to the 'Communion of works and Churches of French-speaking communities on the five continents', a body offering active and prophetic mobilization towards the French-speaking authorities or else a platform for information and exchange, and development projects. Established in 1992, it was solemnly launched at a large gathering of '1 700 Christians from 33 French-speaking nations' in Bordeaux on 1 August 1993 (p.120 – footnotes).

churches, synagogues, or temples, finding there the resources to maintain their self-respect and often the networks to launch viable careers' (Portes *et al.* 2006:351). Similarly, Ammerman (2006:360) maintains that '[P]eople who are affiliated with a synagogue and identify with one of the recognized denominations become part of an institutionalised package of practices, beliefs and relationships that reinforce each other and have far-reaching effects on how people order their lives'. Jandt (2007:225) stresses the economic aspect of Weberian consequence of religious affiliation in the following statement:

Islam encourages Muslims to work, to engage in free enterprise, and to earn and possess [...]. This means the Muslim has a responsibility to invest and spend wisely. Just as Islam provides the values for work, it also guides other aspects of human activity. Islam encourages practicality. It does not encourage wishful thinking [...] (Jandt 2007:225).

In a similar vein, writing about migrant churches in Johannesburg Landau *et al.* (2007:14) point out that, in many cases the churches prepare people for a life beyond any material nation by offering up that 'health and wealth' promises seen elsewhere in evangelical communities, promises that offer an alternative to the material deprivation many migrants experience. Moreover, an increasing number of contemporary literature highlights the increasingly expanding involvement of diasporic religious institutions in the development of sending countries through remittances and other transnational activities and services (Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Portes 2008; Kleist 2007; Orozco 2007). This body of theories remains significantly relevant to this study, which explores the multifaceted role of the church under investigation. The study tests whether both Durkheimian and Weberian socio-economic consequences of religious affiliation apply to the case study, and to what extent these functions are achieved.

### 3.2.3. Homophily theory

Homophily principle consists in that ‘a contact between similar people occurs at a higher rate than among dissimilar people’ (McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook 2001:416). It is ‘the tendency of people with similar traits (including physical, cultural, and attitudinal characteristics) to interact with one another more than with people with dissimilar traits’ (Centola, Gonzalez-Avella, Eguiluz and Miguel 2007:905-906), ‘a preferential interaction of like with like’ (Centola *et al.* 2007:925).

Homophily principle thus rests on the ‘assumption that people are attracted to those like themselves and repelled by others who are racially different’ (Hwang and Murdock 1998:541). Drawing on the theories of Aristotle and Plato, McPherson *et al.* (2001:416) argue that because ‘similarity begets friendship’ people have strong proclivity to ‘love those who are like themselves’. In most cases, Centola *et al.* (2007:925) point out, ‘people have strong tendency to self-organize into culturally defined groups’. In his extensive study of cultural and intercultural dynamics among immigrant communities, Jandt (2007:307) claims that ‘the similarity of the original culture to the new host culture is one of the most important factors in successful acculturation’. That is, cultural similarity is a salient ‘predictor of an immigrant’s success in acculturation’ (Jandt 2007:306).

Krause and Wulff (2004:38) however note that, since homophily principle implies ‘similarity in attitudes, beliefs, and values [that tend] to promote interpersonal attraction and affiliation [then], by the same token, a loss of shared values and beliefs should lead

to social disengagement’. Regardless of how it arises, Krause *et al.* (2004:38) maintain, ‘the loss of support from fellow church members may deprive a person [...] of a potentially important health-enhancing resource’.

Drawing on Lazarsfeld and Merton [1954], McPherson *et al.* (2001:419) distinguish two types of homophily: ‘status homophily’ and ‘value homophily’. Later on, however, Centola *et al.* (2007:906) added a third one, referred to as ‘induced homophily’. While status homophily refers to similarity based on informal, formal, or ascribed status, value homophily consists in values, attitudes, and beliefs (McPherson *et al.* 2001:419; Centola *et al.* 2007:906). According to McPherson (2001:419) ‘status homophily includes the major sociodemographic dimension that stratify society – ascribed characteristics like race, ethnicity, sex, or age, and acquired characteristics like religion, education, occupation, or behaviour patterns’. In contrast, value homophily involves a ‘wide variety of internal states presumed to shape our orientation toward future behaviour’ (McPherson 2001:419). While both status and value homophily spontaneously ‘emerge from individual choice’, ‘induced homophily’ by contrast stems ‘from influence dynamics that make individuals more similar over time’ (Centola *et al.* 2007:906). The induced dimension of homophily – also referred to as ‘principle of social influence’ – predicts that ‘the more that people interact with one another, the more similar they become’ (Centola 2007:906).

Homophily principle is increasingly becoming a powerful analytical model in studying social and organisational group dynamics across multiple disciplines of social sciences (Hwang and Murdock 1998; Centola *et al.* 2007). Homophily theories as described

above are relevant to this study, which among other aspects looks at what draws people to join or establish minority ethnic churches alongside majority host churches. More particularly as a tool for understanding the dynamics of group formation, homophily theories were salient in determining to what extent sameness or similarity in sociodemographic backgrounds influence the affiliation to or establishment of ethnic churches, such as Yahweh Shammah Assembly. Homophily theories and Mullins' (1987) model of ethnic church development, where cultural and linguistic homophily play a vital role particularly during the initial stage of development, were used concomitantly.

### **3.2.4. Mullins' Life-cycle model of ethnic churches**

Churches must change or perish [...]. When resource conditions change, organisations must find ways of modifying their activities to take advantage of new resource pools, or die. (Stevens 2004:123)

In his analytical study of immigrant ethnic churches, Mullins (1987; 1988) depicts 'an ideal-typical model of ethnic church development', which he calls 'life-cycle stages of ethnic churches' (Mullins 1987:321). The three-stage archetypal pattern describes 'the process by which immigrant ethnic churches become more assimilated over time, moving from mono-lingual churches where services are conducted in the immigrants' home language to bi-lingual or mono-lingual churches where English predominates' (Stevens 2004:121).

During the initial stage of development, Mullins (1987:325) argues, 'ethnic churches

are naturally oriented to the first generation and dominated by the language of the old country'. It is argued that 'in many cases, discrimination on the part of the host society and exclusion from Anglo-churches make the formation of new ethnic churches the only realistic and desirable alternative' (Mullins 1988:228; see also Mullins 1987:323). In other words, both xenophobia-based separation and segregation be it secular or religious, significantly contribute to the establishment of homophilous ethnic churches within a host society (see Coker 2004).

As ethnic group gradually and culturally assimilate into the host society, the church enters the second stage where social changes and transformations take places in many areas (Mullins 187:325; Stevens 2004:122). At this level, the need for ethnic churches to recruit bilingual religious leaders becomes overly binding and additional English language services and other parachurch activities must be initiated (Mullins 1987:325; Stevens 2004:122). During this phase of development ethnic churches strive to disentangle themselves from a homophily based organisation to a more culturally and linguistically accommodative style of management. Arguably, tangible success at this level should lead ethnic churches to the next and final layer of their life-cycle, that is, the third stage of development.

An ethnic church enters the third stage of development 'when subsequent generations become more structurally assimilated and enter into the cliques, clubs and institutions of the host society' (Stevens 2004:122). As the ethnic minority becomes acculturated and the barriers to full participation in the host institutions are reduced, Mullins (1987:326) argues, 'the appeal to ethnic churches tends to gradually diminish since

social and religious needs can be met equally well within the organisations of the host society' (Mullins 1987:326). Otherwise stated, 'as the exclusionary practices of the dominant group decline, permitting structural assimilation to proceed, the external pressure encouraging ethnic church persistence is also eliminated' (Mullins 1987:326-327). During this developmental phase, ethnic churches are 'transformed into a multi-ethnic, English-speaking congregation' (Stevens 2004:122). That is, the homophily motivated goal of ethnic churches, that is 'to provide a safe and comfortable social space for new immigrants' becomes more and more irrelevant once an immigrant community has a significant acculturated second and third generation' (Stevens 2004:123). At this final stage, Mullins (1987:326) notes, 'ethnic churches are again a monolingual organisation, but at this point they are dominated by the language of the host society'.

Mullins' life-cycle of ethnic churches is summarised in the following schema:

*Figure 1: Mullins' Selected Organizational Aspects of Ethnic Church Evolution*

| Stages | Characteristics of Membership                                | Environmental Changes                                                                                                 | Adaptation Required                                              | Consequences for Organization                       |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| First  | Original immigrants;<br>Monolingual                          |                                                                                                                       |                                                                  |                                                     |
| Second | Original immigrants and Native-Born generation;<br>Bilingual | Cultural Assimilation                                                                                                 | Bilingual minister and introduction of English language services | Effective recruitment of acculturated generation    |
| Third  | Monolingual                                                  | Structural Assimilation; membership leakage through mobility and intermarriage; disappearance of immigrant generation | Goal succession and de-ethnicization                             | Transformed from ethnic to multiethnic organization |

*Source:* Mullins, M. (1987). The Life-Cycle of Ethnic Churches in Sociological Perspective. *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, p. 324.

According to Mullins' model, immigrant churches tend to be culturally and linguistically homophilous and conservative in their early stage of development, as they seek to maintain their distinction from other groups (Mullins 1987:322-323). Mullins (1987:323) argues that 'the tendency toward conformity is ultimately the dominant force shaping their character'. However, as some church members in their effort to integrate into the host society feel the need to interact with the 'other', then the ethnic

church is forced to change the gear and ‘adapt to the prevailing culture to curtail the loss of more assimilated members’ (Mullins 1987:323). That is, the process of assimilation of both the members and the church as an institution<sup>37</sup> ‘forced the churches to choose between accommodation and extinction’ (Mullins 1987:323; Mullins 1988:218; see also Stevens 2004:121). In other words, ‘the survival of ethnic churches requires organisational adaptation’ (Mullins 1987:323). Mullins (1987:327) further warns that ‘if ethnic churches continue to base their relevance upon ‘ethnic enclosure and support’ [...], their future is likely to be one of eventual disappearance as structural assimilation continues to take its toll’. Mullins, therefore, views both cultural and linguistic adjustments of ethnic churches more as an absolute necessity for their survival than an option. He stresses his point in the following statement:

The acculturation of native-born generations eventually forces ethnic church to choose between accommodation and extinction. As the environment of organisations change, organisations must, if they are to persist, be able to adapt goals, structure, and services. The more successful religion becomes, the more de-ethnicised it becomes, the more amenable to mergers with other de-ethnicised churches and the more disinterested in language maintenance (Mullins 1988:218).

Similarly (Stevens 2004:121) points out that ‘as second and third-generation church members attempt to meet their own unique social needs, ethnic churches are forced to revise their goals and structures in order to ensure the survival of their organisation’. Mullins’ model was instrumental in analysing the life-cycle of Yahweh Shammah Assembly. More particularly Mullins’ characteristics of membership within each phase

---

<sup>37</sup> For more details about ‘institutional integration’ of the church itself alongside integration of church members, see Nzayabino, V. 2005. *The Role of Refugee Established Churches in the Lives of Forced Migrants: A case study of Word of Life Assembly in Yeoville, Johannesburg*. University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. MA Thesis.

of church development were useful in determining in which development stage does Yahweh Shammah Assembly currently stands.

### **3.2.5. Hofstede's dimensions of culture**

As Jandt (2007:181) rightly put it, 'cultures can be compared by measuring their [value] dimensions'. Though in his recent writings Hofstede (1993) identifies five dimensions of culture which include 'power distance', 'individualism versus collectivism', 'masculinity versus femininity', 'uncertainty avoidance', and 'Confucian work dynamism', I only focus on the first four dimensions which appear in his early publication (1980) because they are most relevant to this study.

#### **3.2.5.1. Power distance culture**

Power distance refers to 'the degree of inequality among people which the population of a country considers as normal: from relatively equal (that is, small power distance) to extremely unequal (large power distance)' (Hofstede 1993:89). In his subsequent writings, Hofstede (1997) refined the above definition. He redefines power distance as 'the extent to which less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally' (Hofstede cited in Jandt 2007:172). Power distance is therefore concerned with the conventional distribution of influence within a particular culture (Jandt 2007:182). According to Jandt (2007:172), 'power distance also refers to the extent to which power, prestige, and wealth are distributed within a culture'.

Drawing on the above definition of power distance, Hofstede postulates that ‘all societies are unequal, but some are more unequal than others’ (Hofstede 1993:89). Hence, the binary distinction between ‘large power distance’ societies and ‘small power distance’ societies (Hofstede 1980:46) or, to borrow Jandt’s terminology, ‘high power distance’ cultures and ‘low power distance’ cultures (Jandt 2007:172-173). In high power cultures, Jandt (2007:172) argues, ‘power and influence are concentrated in the hands of a few rather than distributed throughout the population’. High power distance societies ‘tend to be more authoritarian and may communicate in a way to limit interaction and reinforce the differences between people’ (Jandt 2007:172). More particularly as regards children-parents-children relationships in high power distance cultures ‘children are expected to be obedient toward parents versus being rated more or less as equals’ (Jandt 2007:172). Conversely, in low power distance societies, there is increased freedom, consultation and interaction between group members at all levels (Jandt 2007:173).

### **3.2.5.2. Individualistic versus collectivist culture**

The individualistic dimension of culture refers to ‘the degree to which people in a country prefer to act as individuals rather than as members of groups’ (Hofstede 1993:89). Individualistic culture ‘implies a loosely knit social framework in which people are supposed to take care of themselves and of their immediate families only (Hofstede 1980:45). Individualistic cultures give more importance and preferences to individuals’ needs than societal concerns (Jandt 2007:181-182). Conversely, collectivist

culture simply refers to a 'low individualism' (Hofstede 1993:89; Hofstede 1980:46).

Contrary to individualistic cultures, collectivist societies are 'characterised by a tight social framework in which people distinguish between in-group (relatives, clan, organisation) to look after them, and in exchange for that they feel they owe absolute loyalty to it' (Hofstede 1980:45). Within collectivist cultures, Jandt (2007:226) explains, 'social lives are organised around the family and tribal line', that is, 'individuals subordinate personal needs' to the well-being 'of the family and the community'. That is, collectivist cultures put increased emphasis on socialization, loyalty and symbiotic interdependence between group members. Illustratively, Hofstede (1993) distinguishes between the two dimensions of power distance scale in the following statement:

In collectivist societies a child learns to respect the group to which it belongs, usually the family, and to differentiate between in-group members and out-group members (that is, all other people). When children grow up they remain members of their group, and they expect the group to protect them when they are in trouble. In return, they have to remain loyal to their group throughout life. In individualistic societies, a child learns very early to think of itself as 'I' instead of as part of 'we'. It expects one day to have to stand on its own feet and not to get protection from its group any more; and therefore it does not feel a need for strong loyalty (Hofstede 1993:89-90).

### **3.2.5.3. Masculine versus feminine cultures**

According to Hofstede (1993) masculinity refers to:

[...] the degree to which tough values like assertiveness, performance, success and competition, which in nearly all societies are associated with the role of men, prevail over tender values like the quality of life, maintaining warm personal relationships, service, care for the weak, and solidarity, which in nearly

all societies are more associated with women's roles (Hofstede 1993:90).

Drawing on Hofstede, Jandt (2007) notes that 'masculine cultures 'strive for maximal distinction between what women and men are expected to do' (2007:182), as well as between their behaviours (2007:171).

While masculine cultures put forward 'assertiveness, competition and material success', feminine cultures 'permit more overlapping social roles for the sexes' (Jandt 2007:171). That is, 'feminine cultures may have overlapping gender roles and focus on quality of life, interpersonal relationships, and concern for the weak' (Jandt 2007:182). Hofstede (1993:90) notes that in principle 'women's roles differ from men's roles in all countries; but in tough societies, the differences are larger than in tender ones'.

#### **3.2.5.4. Uncertainty avoidance**

The fourth Hofstede's (1980:45) dimension of culture consists in 'uncertainty avoidance', which 'indicates the extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations and tries to avoid these situations...' (Hofstede 1980:45). Uncertainty avoidance measures how much ambiguity people will endure and how much risk they like to take. Hofstede (1980) lists a number of mechanisms often used to avoid these uncertainties. These include among other things, establishing more formal rules, not tolerating deviant ideas and behaviours, and believing in absolute truths (Hofstede 1980:45; see also Jandt 2007:174). Arguably, cultures displaying a high degree of uncertainty avoidance 'are active, aggressive, emotional, compulsive, security

seeking, and intolerant' (Jandt 2007:174) whereas cultures that are low in uncertainty avoidance are thoughtful, relaxed, less aggressive, accepting of risks, and generally tolerant' (Jandt 2007:182).

Though Hofstede's theoretical model is primarily and widely used in the culture of management and leadership in various institutions and organisations within different societies, yet the model remains as well relevant to this study. First, Hofstede's cultural model offers a clear theoretical pattern to screening the dynamics of power distance status within ethnic church as an institution. Second, the model proves genuine and accurate in exploring gender relations based on the premise that masculine or feminine cultural background potentially affects both membership and leadership of ethnic churches. Since each country or ethnic group often its specific culture(s), cultures tend to be more dissimilar than similar. Therefore, it is salient to closely probe intercultural relationships of migrants who move for instance from a 'high power distance' to a 'low power distance' society or from a highly 'masculine' culture to a 'feminine' host culture. The next section of this chapter defines key concepts and clearly contextualises their usage throughout the study.

### **3.3. Definition of key concepts**

As mentioned earlier this section defines key words and accurately situates them in specific frames and contexts relevant to this particular research. These include concepts such as: belonging, religious identity, ethnic identity, cultural identity, refugee/forced migrant versus asylum seeker, economic migrant, transnationalism, and integration.

### **3.3.1. Belonging**

In contemporary globalizing society, ways in which people claim identity and belonging are various, complex and contradictory, and do not allow for simple definition or analysis (Brown 2006:1). Nyamnjoh (2005:18) points out that in Africa, as elsewhere, there is a growing obsession with belonging, along with new questions concerning conventional assumptions about nationality and citizenship. More so, new forms and conceptions of belonging precipitated by both contemporary dynamics of displacement and the development of global politics, economics, and ever-heightening ethnic, racial, gender, political, and normative heterogeneity (Landau 2007:1) raise theoretical and empirical debates around the linkage between home and territorial place. Leonard (1999:120) goes even further and asserts that postmodern identities can be construed as fragmented, shifting, contextually and constantly reformulated, far more so than in the past because, Gupta (1999:196) explains, the processes of migration, displacement, and deterritorialization are increasingly sundering the fixed association between identity, culture, and place.

Despite the above theoretical paradox associated with the phenomenon of belonging, yet a number of scholars from diverse disciplines of social sciences and geographies endeavour to unfold the multi-stranded meaning of this concept. According to Helgesson (2006:36), belonging is understood as a continuous process between 'being' and 'nothingness', between being active and passive, to reach a state of balance where one is in control, and at-home-in-the-world. Lovell (1998) defines belonging from anthropological and territorial perspectives. She understands belonging as a way of

remembering instrumental in the construction of collective memory surrounding place.

From this angle, she argues that:

Belonging to a particular locality evokes the notion of loyalty to a place, a loyalty that may be expressed through oral or written histories, narratives of origin as belonging, the focality of certain objects, myths, religious and ritual performances, or the setting up of shrines such as museums and exhibitions (Lovell 1998:1).

One of the key arguments in Lovell's understanding of belonging is that belonging is susceptible of social construction through memories. Even in displacement, Lovell (1998:4) argues, the memory of a collective identity may crystallise around a notion of place because, she adds, 'remembered time becomes a substitute for geography in migrants' memory' (Lovell 1998:15).

Many other writers seem to navigate the same conceptual itinerary which tends to link people to their original geographical places through imagined processes or memories. In this respect, Archetti (1998:189) for instance argues that landscape imagery (myths and memories) is powerful because of its tendency to combine a geographical belonging with complex narratives of human exploits. In the same vein, Bohlin (1998:168) maintains that the criteria of belonging are grounded in territoriality and memories of belonging.

In contrast, Edwards (1998:161) defines belonging with reference to what De Boeck (1998:29) calls *representational space*, that is, 'space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols' (Lefebvre cited by Kleist 2007:111), such as body, house, village, land, graveyard and so on. De Boeck claims that:

To belong to a locality implies that you belong along with all kinds of other things such as houses, factories, services and pasts; belonging entails a claim on, and a connection to, these things and, therefore, a say in any changes to them, especially changes engineered from the outside (by those who do not belong). (De Boeck 1998:29)

According to Edwards (1998), belonging is inherently rooted in a well defined geographical locality with all its physical features thus making belonging a more static and immutable attribute. Edwards' essentialist understanding of the overlapping link between place and belonging, however, opens room for further explorative interrogations when scaled against other contemporary thinkers on the subject. Archetti (1998), for instance, maintains that belonging to imaginary territory of a nation is made possible

in a global scene where the production of local territories and identities is supposedly difficult to sustain because of the dispersed nature of globalism and nationhood, and where the life-worlds of local subjects tend to become de-territorialised, diasporic and transnational... (Archetti 1998:207)

Other scholars, such as De Boeck (1998:26) conversely argue that although place and sense of locality and belonging, are strongly situated in socially and spatially defined communities, they are also in a sense 'transportable' and 'repetitive'. Metaphorically, De Boeck contends that '...locality can be moved through space, recreated or repeated in different spaces, by planting new trees and thus creating or 'growing' memory, history and belonging' (1998:26). Migrants are believed to have 'one foot at home and another abroad' (Tonah 2007:20).

This genre of ambivalent belonging which consists in a concomitant belonging to and involvement in two or multiple groups or communities is not unpredictable in today's

glocalizing society. Preston-Whyte *et al.* (2006:334) maintain that ‘the emergence of migrants who are at once deeply engaged in local affairs while remaining connected to home and diasporic society is helping to reshape the boundaries of communities’. Similarly, in his study among Mozambican migrants in Southern Mozambique, Covane (2001:60) found that in most cases migrant families tend to maintain a home both in their home villages, as well as in the area where they were refugees. The following song of one respondent in this study underscores Covane’s conclusion:

Goodbye my neighbour  
You will stay to look after m children  
You stay to look after my house  
You stay to look after my children

Goodbye my neighbour  
The war is over  
My children are in the secondary school  
The trees I am leaving here in town are seeds  
The real trees are in my home village. (Covane 2001:60)

The frequent use of trees to illustrate certain phenomena regarding human history and behaviour is not incidental. One of the underlying reasons is that, in African context particularly, it is traditionally believed that ‘trees convey a meaning of rootedness, of immobility’ (De Boeck 1998:25). A growing number of scholars of anthropology and human geographies often make use of botanical metaphors in their attempts to elucidate the intriguing and often contested link between space and people. (see Malkki 1992, Landau 2006; 2007).

In another instance one informant (a traditional healer) in Dreyer’s study of modern African elite of South Africa explains his dual belonging in the following terms:

Ethnicity is important...I feel no affinity to my homeland – we must overcome

it because it divides people....I visit there regularly – I go to the mountains to get herbs. I'd never consider living there. I want to be buried there, though. That is the only connection. You don't get a proper funeral in town. Coffins are stolen and second-hand ones sold. (Dreyer 1989:104)

This statement, however ambiguous, implicitly shows how people remain strongly attached to their homeland whether such an attachment involves sustained engagement or not. In migration processes it is more often possible than never to tactically belong to a milieu or group without involvement. It is also possible, particularly for a migrant, to actively get involved in host community without necessarily taking full membership into it (Landau and Haupt 2007:12). This is what Landau *et al.* (2007) term as 'tactical cosmopolitanism'. As discussed earlier, some people may achieve their belonging through reconstruction of their memories around places and re-inscription of spirits onto their bodies (Larsen 1998).

### **3.3.2. Religious identity**

... Being African is not a static or frozen state of existence, but a dynamic identity that keeps redefining itself with new experiences and contacts with other peoples and cultures. (Nyamnjoh 2005:91)

As for the concept of belonging, the notion of identity has been subject to multilayered and often conflicting conceptualisations within contemporary literature. This theoretical complexity is often associated with the emergence of new logics and ways by which people claim and negotiate identity and belonging (Brown 2006:1) within an exclusionary social group. Bohlin (1998:168) attests to this dynamic shift by contending that the criteria for belonging to territorialized groups tend to change over

time, in a process which creates complex and partly overlapping identities.

In religious realms, the role and power of religion in creating identity and belongingness remains highly topical among scholars of sociology of religion (Lovell 1998:2). While a number of scholars portray religion as a smooth and serene avenue to negotiating identity and belonging, others argue that religion is itself both an identity and belonging. Aligning himself with the former cluster, Cumpsty (1991) argues that:

[R]eligion is about belonging affectively and cognitively to the ultimately-real and the ultimately-real is understood as that to which the individual most feels the need to belong in order that life might have meaning, security, warmth, or to be otherwise enriched. (Cumpsty 1991:160)

For Cumpsty 'the drive for identity is the more important factor in religion' (1991:162). Cumpsty's understanding of the 'ultimately-real' offers grounds to premise that religious identity intimates identification of an individual either with a divine being or anything else in a secular realms in search for belonging. He maintains that religion is primarily concerned with the identity drive, rather than with anything in the realm of the physical (Cumpsty 1991:163). His strong argument about the pivotal role religion plays in maintaining identity is intimately embedded in his statement of faith below:

... I believe science to be man's most organized attempt to maintain and realize his physical potential, religion to be his most organized attempt to develop and maintain identity. (Cumpsty 1991:163)

Similarly, in her gender-based study of the complexity of women's identity and belonging within the church, Helgesson (2006:198) convincingly argues that identity formation is an important part in the process of becoming both a born-again Christian and a member of a congregation and thus joining a commitment system. She further

claims that, how to behave and live as a Pentecostal man and as a Pentecostal woman is part of that process of establishing a new social identity (Helgesson 2006:198). Ammerman (2006:362) maintains that 'religious organisations do provide settings in which religious and ethnic identities and behaviours are defined and shaped'. In the same way, Winkler (2006) points out that one of the important things faith-based organisations do is that they create, however tenuously, a sense of belonging for their members. Similarly, Willaime (2004:375) maintains that 'increasingly, religion provides identities and offers to individuals the possibility of social integration and direction within individualistic and pluralistic societies'.

### **3.3.3. Ethnic identity**

As for the notion of culture, the concept of ethnicity is complex and highly contested in socio-anthropological literature (Okely 1996:4; Eagleton 2000:1; Chamba 2007:8). According to Jandt (2007), ethnic identity refers to identification with and perceived acceptance into a group with shared heritage and cultural traits such as language, religion, and customs that are passed on to the children (Jandt 2007:17, 25). Basch, Schiller and Blanc (1995) by contrast define ethnicity from a different angle. They understand ethnicity, not as a form of identification *per se*, but as an ensemble of cultural practices, beliefs and values. In this context, 'ethnic' refers to a set of cultural practices, beliefs, and values that are imputed to have originated in the shared tradition of a nation, territory, or language grouping...' (Basch *et al.* 1995:43). However, Kvernmo and Heyerdahl (2004) view ethnic identity rather as a dynamic social construction and an attitudinal form of identification. For them, 'ethnic identity is a

multidimensional dynamic construct and includes the kind of identification and sense of attachment that individuals have with their ethnic group as well as knowledge about and attitudes toward their ethnic backgrounds' (Kvernmo *et al.* 2004:512).

Drawing on Schiller and Fouron's understanding of ethnic identity as a sense of belonging to a particular ethnic and having cultural differences with the dominant population (Schiller and Fouron, cited in Chamba 2007), Chamba (2007:7–9) views different African migrant communities living in Johannesburg as ethnic minority groups within a dominant host population. In addition to clan and national identities, Al-Sharmani (2004:25) argues, new diasporic identities are formed by the refugees based on their shared experiences in previous host societies. In this sense, national ethnic identity and diasporic identities cannot be construed as separate from each other; they are interdependently contiguous, complementary and they shape mutually. These diasporic identities, Jayasuriya (2008:105) explains, connect migrants to a particular territory or homeland with which they identify or have a sense of belonging.

Similarly, Zmegac (2005:199, 210) argues that the intrusion of any migrant group, whether or not it shares ethnicity, cultural traits, language, and/or structural features with the local population, sets the stage for cultural differentiation and the formation of a separate migrant identity. In this context, ethnicity refers to the differential and often-negotiable relationship between insiders and outsiders (Bekker 2001:4), 'autochthons' and 'allochthons' (Konings 2003:53), where it emerges either as an 'ascribed' or 'self-ascribed' identity (Lindgren 2002:24) within a particular community. For the purposes of this study, the concept 'minority ethnic group' refers to Congolese migrants living in

South Africa while the term ‘majority (or dominant) ethnic group’ concomitantly applies to South African host society as a whole.

#### **3.3.4. Cultural identity**

Jandt defines cultural identity as an ‘identification with and perceived acceptance into a culture’ (Jandt 2007:426). While ‘Ethnic group’ refers to a ‘subgroup identified by shared descent and heritage’ (Jandt 2007:428), ‘ethnic identity’ involves ‘identification with and perceived acceptance into an ethnic group’ (Jandt 2007:428). A growing number of scholars argue that religion is a key aspect of cultural identity (Bosswick 2006:15), and that ‘refugees and other diasporics, or at least some of them, are active cultural producers’ (Schein 2004:457). This study explores ways church’s involvement in the production and reproduction of religious, cultural or ethnic identities and how these identitive dynamics shape the processes of integration of migrants into host society.

#### **3.3.5. Refugee/forced migrant**

In terms of the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, a refugee is:

A person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of this nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it ....(UN Convention of 1951, Article 1A [2])

The 1969 Refugee Convention of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU), has extended the definition to include a person who,

owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing or disrupting public order in either a part or the whole of his or her country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his or her place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge elsewhere. (1969 OAU Refugee Convention, Article 1 [2]; Refugee Act No.130, 1998, Section 3 [b])

It is worthy noting here that the terms ‘refugee’ and ‘forced migrant’ are commonly used interchangeably. For the purposes of this study the same conceptual analogy has been adopted. Almost all respondents who participated in this study belong to this category, even though some of them are still asylum-seekers.

### **3.3.6. Asylum seeker**

Whereas refugees include individuals who have been formally granted refugee status under the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, or under the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, asylum-seekers are, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), individuals who have applied for asylum and whose claims for refugee status have not yet been determined (UNHCR 2009:5).

In South Africa, most of asylum seekers who report to the Department of Home Affairs are issued with temporary permits, which can be extended for a period ranging from one month to six months maximum pending the outcome of their applications. These

permits allow them to sojourn in the Republic temporarily and give them the right to work and study. According to current migration regulations, asylum claims are to be adjudicated within a period of six months. However, in practice many cases take longer than the prescribed period before decisions are made. Due to persistent backlog, many asylum applications stay pending for several months and more often than not, many years to be processed by the refugee status determination officer (Chamba 2006). The lack of competent human resources and adequate technological equipment have allegedly been identified as major inhibiting factors for endless puzzle. Furthermore, it is worth noting here that it has been widely documented that this procedural setback puts asylum seekers at risk of frequent harassments and unlawful arrests by South African police (Chamba 2006; Matsinhe 2009). In addition, despite their entitlement to employment, yet the temporariness of their permits negatively affects their chances of securing a job from potential employers who view their legal status relatively precarious and dubious.

### **3.3.7. Economic migrant**

Unlike refugees who flee their country of origin due to socio-political persecution or war and who cannot return home for fear of persecution, economic migrants are those fleeing their country primarily for economic reasons. Whereas economic migrants falls under the category of what Portes *et al.* (2006) call ‘apolitical immigrants’, where migration is dictated exclusively by economic conditions, refugees belong to a distinct category of ‘political immigrants’, that is, those who flee from ‘an oppressive regime’ (Portes *et al.* 2006:128).

In terms of both the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention, economic migrants do not fall under the definition of a 'refugee' and are therefore not eligible for refugee status or international protection. It is, however, important to note that there are unending and often conflicting debates among contemporary scholars and professionals concerning the issue of migration and displacement about the inclusion of economic factors and other natural/environmental and human-made causes of displacement into the existing, narrow legal definition of a 'refugee' (Black 2001; Stojanov 2004; Bogardi and Renaud 2006; Betts and Kaytaz 2009; Nzayabino 2010).

### **3.3.8. Transnationalism**

The idiom of the autonomous nation remains intact, but in the new world of transnational practices, geographic boundaries are no longer understood to contain all the state's citizens or political processes essential to its perpetuation. (Basch *et al.* 1995:269)

The concept of transnationalism has been subject to widely varying definitions in both academic and paracademic spheres. More particularly in the field of migration 'the cognate notions of transnationalism, globalisation and diaspora have gained currency as means of making sense of migrant and refugee practices and the long-term, long-distance, connections maintained between family members, communities and states across international borders' (Sorensen 2007:3). For Van Hear (1998:4), transnationalism refers to 'the formation of social, political and economic relationships among migrants that span several societies'. That is, transnationalism has the potential to produce 'people with multiple allegiances to place' (Van Hear 1998:4).

Basch *et al.* 1995:27 view transnationalism as a process of creating social spaces beyond national territorial shells. They therefore conceptualise transnationalism as ‘a process by which migrants, through their daily life activities and social, economic, and political relations, create social fields that cross national boundaries’. In more concrete words, Basch *et al.* (1995:27) argue that ‘the term ‘transnational’ is used to signal the fluidity with which ideas, objects, capital, and people now move across borders and boundaries’. Drawing on Basch *et al.*, Swyngedouw and Swyngedouw (2009:72) give a more comprehensive definition. For them, transnationalism refers to

...[t]he process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. We call these processes transnationalism to emphasize that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural and political borders. Immigrants who develop and maintain multiple relationships – familial, economic, social, organisational, religious and political – that span borders we call transmigrants. (Swyngedouw and Swyngedouw 2009:72)

Though this study does not promise to venture into extensive discussions about transnationalism, yet the above definitions remain salient and helpful in the understanding of current religious engagements into transnational processes and their impact on the dynamics of integration of transnational migrants. In their study of immigrant communities in the United States, Portes and Rumbaut (2006:137) for instance point out that ‘at first glance, the rise of transnational activism among today’s immigrants and the numerous programs of sending-country governments aimed at strengthening it appear to undermine the process of assimilation and retard the integration of immigrants into the American body politic’. For the purposes of this study, however, particular attention will focus on what can be termed as ‘religious

transnationalism' (Portes *et al.* 2006:313), that is, religiously inspired or motivated networks and engagements between host societies and home countries.

### **3.3.9. Integration**

According to Meyer (2008:6), there are three key 'durable solutions' to the protracted situation of refugees: repatriation to the country of origin, resettlement in a third country, or local integration in the country to which the refugee has fled. Of these, the concept of integration has been a source of increased debate among scholars and others concerned with migration studies. The definitional complexity of the notion of integration has resulted, epistemologically, in the use of a varied and often conflicting terminology, such as local settlement, assimilation, acculturation, adaptation, local integration versus intermediate integration and so on – thus rendering the concept itself more confusing (Meyer 2008:5). Many of the debates polarise around the meaning of integration, what it entails (requirements and entitlements) and its effects both on migrants and on the host society. Different forms and aspects of integration will be discussed in more details later in the literature review.

According to Preston (1999:25) 'integration refers to the ability of individuals and groups to interact cohesively, overcoming differences without a breakdown of social relationships and conflict.' Barbara Harrel-Bond's (cited in Dryden-Peterson and Hovil 2003:3) understanding of integration somehow cross-cuts Preston's definition, where a social cohesion and peaceful coexistence are key elements of integration. She defines integration as 'a situation in which host and refugee communities are able to co-exist,

sharing the same resources – both economic and social – with no greater mutual conflict than that which exists within the host community’ (Harrel-Bond, cited in Dryden-Peterson and Hovil 2003:3). Bosswick and Heckmann (2006) offer a very simple and brief definition. They understand integration as a process of inclusion of immigrants in the institutions and relationships of the host society (Bosswick *et al.* 2006:1). In a similar line of thought but basing their idea on ‘structural assimilation’<sup>38</sup>, Wright and Ellis (2000) define integration in the following terms:

... integration presupposes the elimination of hard and fast barriers in the primary group relations and communal life of the various ethnic groups of the nation. It involves easy and fluid mixtures of people of diverse, racial, religious, and nationality backgrounds in social cliques, families (i.e. intermarriages), private organisations, and intimate friendships. (Wright *et al.* 2000:201)

Drawing on Kuhlman, Dryden-Peterson and Hovil (2003) give a more detailed definition of integration, which simply combines a number of characteristics of a successful integration, which include the: socio-cultural change [that] refugees undergo [and which] permits them to maintain an identity of their own and to adjust psychologically to their new situation, [whether] the friction between host populations and refugees is ... worse than within the host populations itself, [and whether] refugees ... encounter more discrimination than exists between groups previously settled within the host society (Kuhlman, Dryden-Peterson and Hovil 2003:3). In contrast, Banki (2004:2) deliberately avoids using the term (local) ‘integration’ as such and prefers to use integration in the ‘intermediate’ term instead, which she defines as ‘the ability of the refugee to participate with relative freedom in the economic and communal life of the host region’.

---

<sup>38</sup>

Detailed discussions of this concept are found in chapter 4 – literature review

Banki's terminological choice is not incidental. First, while local integration might also include cultural and political participation, Banki argues, integration in the intermediate term does not emphasise the latter two (2004:2). Second, Banki's use of integration in the intermediate term is based on her understanding of integration not as a permanent solution, but as an intermediate/temporary mechanism intrinsically linked to the liminality of refugeehood. Merx (cited by Dryden-Peterson and Hovil 2003:21) implicitly seems to support Banki's argument when commenting on the UNHCR's refugee self-reliance strategy. He points out that the UNHCR still maintains the terminology of 'local settlement' as one of the 'durable solutions' and prefers not to talk about integration, because this might have connotations of assimilation and permanence<sup>39</sup>.

Bosswick (2006) defines integration from a sociological context. According to him, integration refers to stable, cooperative relations within a clearly defined social system (2006:2). He views integration as 'a process of strengthening relationships within a social system, and of introducing new actors and groups into the system and its institutions' (Bosswick 2006:2). Contrary to assimilation by which migrants relinquish their original culture, language or identity for that of the dominant culture, Jayasuriaya (2008:100) defines integration is the process by which different groups have closer social, economic, and political relationships, while maintaining their own identities. As

---

<sup>39</sup> For more details about the definition of integration, see Nzayabino (2010). 'The Role of Refugee-established Churches in Integrating Forced Migrants': A case study of Word of Life Assembly in Yeoville, Johannesburg. Available at <http://www.hts.org.za>

indicated above, assimilationist approach to integration and other functional aspects and forms of integration are discussed in more details in the next chapter, which looks at the literature review.

### **3.4. Conclusion**

This section examined the theoretical framework and background of this study. Different schools of thoughts were briefly discussed and clearly embedded within the context of this study. These theories offered a solid theoretical hook to the literature review outlined in the next section. Moreover, the section discussed the meaning of key concepts and highlighted their relevance to the context of the study. Both the theoretical framework and the conceptualisation of key words were salient resources for the understanding of the literature review to be discussed in the next part of the chapter.

### **3.5. LITERATURE REVIEW**

‘The authors’ goal in the literature review is not only to show what’s already been done on the topic but more important, to show what hasn’t been done and why their study must be done’ (Greenstein 2006:33).

#### **3.5.1. Introduction**

This section contextually situates the present research within contemporary literature and empirical studies on migration, religion and integration. Broadly, the study engages three main bodies of literature: the relationship between territory and belonging, religion and transnationalism and key theories on integration. As Creswell (2003:29-30) points out, the literature review shares with the reader the results of other studies that are closely related to the study being reported. It provides a theoretical framework for establishing the importance of the study with other relevant theories and empirical studies within the field of migration. More particularly this chapter discusses key theories around the concepts of space and belonging, the linkage between religion and space (territoriality of religion) and contemporary patterns and processes of integration of migrants into host societies. Structurally, the chapter explores 1) the relationship between territory and people; then proceeds with 2) territorial rootedness and fluidity of religious identity; 3) the role of religion during migratory and integrative processes drawing particularly on attribution and deprivation theories; 4) migration-induced transnationalism where different types of transnationalism: migrant-led transnationalism, state-led transnationalism and religious transnationalism; 5) strategies

and levels of integration and 6) theories on culture shock and acculturative stress and their impact on the processes of integration.

### **3.5.2. Conceptualizing the relationship between territory and people**

#### **3.5.2.1. Introduction**

The concepts of space and belonging increasingly ignite much and often divergent debates within social and political science arenas. Zmegac (2005:206) points out that ‘there are more and more groups in the contemporary world who identify beyond the localities in which they live’, thus rendering the concept of ‘territorial’ belonging more complex and often confusing. More particularly in religious spheres discourses around immovability versus fluidity of religious identity and belonging remain endlessly topical among contemporary theologians and scholars of geographies of religion. The dominant rhetoric has notably focused on the relationship between place and belonging and consisted in establishing whether religion – as both an identity and mode of belonging – is immovably rooted in a territorial locus or whether it is a mobile identity that one can transplant and move with anywhere in the cosmos without altering or losing it. Based on current theories on identity and belonging in the context of displacement through the lens of both the ‘essentialist’ and ‘alternative’ approaches (Brun 2001) to the understanding of the relationship between place and people this section theorises different ways scholars conceptualise and interpret this dynamic relationship, particularly during the course of human displacement.

Debate around the link between space and belonging is indubitably long-standing and unending. As mentioned above the complex understanding of the intertwined relationship between territory and people is further compounded by the emergence of new forms of identities and belonging created and fostered by post-modern global processes beyond territorial confines. Nyamnjoh (2005:18) rightly points out that in Africa, as elsewhere, there is a growing obsession with belonging, along with new questions concerning conventional assumptions about nationality and citizenship. In other words, new forms and conceptions of belonging precipitated by both contemporary dynamics of displacement and the development of global politics, economics, and ever-heightening ethnic, racial, gender, political, and normative heterogeneity (Landau 2007:1) raise theoretical and empirical debates around the linkage between home and territorial place. Leonard (1999:120) goes even further and asserts that post-modern identities can be construed as fragmented, shifting, contextually and constantly reformulated, far more so than in the past. The fluidity of these emerging identitive patterns follows the growing conceptual shift in understanding the link between place and people. As Gupta (1999:196) explains, the processes of migration, displacement, and de-territorialisation are increasingly sundering the fixed association between identity, culture, and place. In other words, the formations of imagined transnational identities 'de-essentialise' the conservative approach which binds identity to a physically defined territory. Exploring the phenomenon of cultural pluralism as one of the key factors that foster integration, Basch *et al.* (1995:43 ) argue that 'cultural pluralists have viewed the culture of immigrants in terms of a metaphor of roots that could be transplanted rather than as tendrils that maintain living vital links'. In this context, distance and barriers to

movement are no longer absolute but become elastic and negotiable (Wilson 2007:42) in the course of displacement.

Briefly what is at stake in this conceptual expository, is the question whether belonging is inherently rooted in a physically defined territory, or whether belonging is still possible without reference to a territorial entity. An increasing body of contemporary anthropological literature tends to describe place more as a fluid and mobile cosmic identity than a territorially bound locus (Van den Bos and Nell 2006). This conceptual shift from essentialist to alternative approach to understanding of place is not inspirationally groundless. Indeed, current transnational and global processes accelerated by new technologies in communication and increasing socio-political upheavals and the resulting economic hardships constitute a substantial challenge to the notions of citizenry, identity and belonging. Moreover, several post-modern scholars of human movements conclusively point out that people are ‘chronically mobile’ (Malkki 1992:24) and increasingly ‘moving between multiple homes’ (Golob 2009:71) within and outside state physical borders. Transnationalism has been widely credited for its potential to give rise to spatial identities that are ‘powerfully shaped by the accompanying processes of de-territorialisation and displacement’ (Gupta 1999:181). Similarly Wilson (2007:40) predictably warns that transnational mobility could ‘disrupt the stable isomorphism of identity and territory’. Whilst earlier scholars mapped out the same trend (see Malkki 1992; Archetti 1998; De Boeck 1998; Van den Bos and Nell 2006), a growing body of population and movement studies bolster the fulfilment of Wilson’s postulate.

The above exploration of the territoriality of belonging and its implication on individual's identification and sense of belonging becomes particularly salient in understanding contemporary debates around the territoriality of religion.

### **3.5.2.2. Territorial rootedness and fluidity of religious identity**

In religious realm, the debates on the relationship between place and belonging during migratory processes consist in establishing whether religion – as a mode of belonging – is immovably rooted in a geographically demarcated locality or whether it is a mobile identity that one can transplant and move with anywhere without altering or losing it. A significant number of scholars of geographies of religion have heavily relied on the essentialist perspective to theorize the concept of space as a dwelling place for spirits and forefathers. In this sense, territory is defined both as a metaphysical domain and a terrestrial entity (Lovell 1998:55). For some migrants, Lovell notes, home is understood as a traditional place of return, an original parental settlement where peace can finally be found and experienced, even after death (Lovell 1998:2). In this context, Lovell argues, locality is constructed through the intermediary of deities which are themselves extensions of natural and environmental features (Lovell 1998:55). She maintains that deities are believed to dwell on another plane, but also need to have their presence manifested and anchored on earth in order for humans to appropriate and propitiate them properly (Lovell 1998:55). Similarly, Arhem (1998) highlights the affiliation of spirits to specific places by arguing that:

...even for those who have never lived there, nor ever visited it, the ancestral territory is their spiritual home in the cosmos...a repository of their immaterial

sacred property and life-sustaining powers. (Arhem 1998:97)

The discourse of rootedness of spirits in homeland settlement can be summarised in a statement of one of the Hmong<sup>40</sup> Christian refugees in Ontario-Canada, who was worried that 'because Hmong were no longer in Laos, the spirits would not be effective...[because] 'The spirits here are not ours' (see Winland 1994:22). Larsen (1998) revealed a similar creed with regard to mythical deification found in some traditional communities in Zanzibar. He found that

While humans are characterised in social discourse as having ambiguous and shifting relationships to locality and identity, spirits known to Zanzibari women and men are, by contrast, perceived as having clear and distinctive identities and affiliations to specific places'. (Larsen 1998:125)

Conversely, other scholars de-essentialise the territorial connection between spirit and locality and conceptualise religion as a fluid or mobile entity distinguishable from a territory bound institution. They contend that, as a mode of belonging religion is not territory-bound and therefore spiritual assets and convictions are mutable, portable and inherently anchored onto people – not in physical place. In this context, religious identity is described as a 'deterritorialized' socially constructed identity (Gupta and

---

<sup>40</sup> The name 'Hmong', literally meaning 'free men' (Jandt 2007:318), refers to Vietnamese living in Laos and have now resettled mainly in Canada and the United States of America (Jandt 2007:429). Historically, the Hmong 'are an ancient Asian hill tribe that has resisted assimilation for millennia' (Jandt 2007:319). According to Jandt, it is believed that Hmong originated in the Russia and have been pushed out of China in the early 1800s for refusing to discard unique ways. As a result, the Hmong kept on migrating south to the highlands of northern Laos. It is reported that during the communist war in the 1960s and 1970s many Hmong died and others fled to Thailand (Jandt 2007:319). Later Hmong refugees migrated to Australia, Canada, France, United States and other parts of the world. Jandt reports that more than 200,000 Hmong reside in the United States (Jandt 2007:320). The Hmong' religious practices include essentially ancestor worship, animal sacrifice, and spiritual healing. These sectarianising practices are thought to be the main source of prejudice against Hmong immigrants in the United States (Jandt 2007:320). Jandt (2007:318) reports that the Hmong are among recent immigrants perceived 'to be the most ill-prepared people ever to immigrate to the United States'. For more details about Hmong history and migratory experiences, see (Jandt 2007: 318-321).

Ferguson 1999:40) which moves with the bearer beyond territorial enclaves. Similarly, quoting from Appadurai, Larsen (1998:125) claims that by treating spirit possession as an ‘inscription of locality onto...bodies’ one may consider this phenomenon as a continuous social construction of both identity and locality.

Drawing on the ‘alternative’ school of thought Fenggang and Ebaugh (2001:270) sustain that in the course of immigration and settlement, immigrants commonly transplant their traditional religious institutions in their new land. Sol’s law of continuity of religion, which suggests that ‘when people move, the church moves’ (Sol 1982:38) belongs to this current of thought. Religious fluidity consists in that refugees carry with them cultural practices and beliefs that previously contributed to both the stabilization and necessary dynamics of their communities of origin (Coker 2004:402). Sol’s law of both temporal and spatial continuity of religion is based on his claim that, refugees in reality move from one ecclesiastical jurisdiction to another, similar or dissimilar denomination, within host community and that, in this situation, pastoral service to refugees amounts essentially to an effort of co-ordination (Sol 1982:38; Nzayabino 2010:5). In a similar vein, Larsen (1998:138) goes further and argues that, even ‘the preference of humans and spirits for certain dishes is one way of inscribing localities onto human bodies and, hence, of localising spirits socially and spatially’.

### **3.5.2.3. Conclusion**

This section explored the theoretical understanding of the relationship between place and people in light of the existing theories on the topic. Drawing on the essentialist

and alternative understanding of the association between space and identity the paper argues that the essentialist approach which tends to bind identity to physical place is increasingly losing ground on behalf of the alternative approach. Due chiefly to contemporary global and transnational processes accelerated by the development in technologies and communications national borders are increasingly becoming porous and fluid. These cross-border dynamics have potential momentum to make people increasingly mobile and open to multiples identities beyond their nation-state. Similarly, in religious spheres, the shift from an essentialist approach which traditionally grounds spirits into a physical locale did not survive the challenges posed by post-modern globalization. Religion is particularly being substantially shaped by 'glocalizing' processes, which tend to push a traditional religiosity out of its localized shell onto a supra-localized and globalized religious world. This shift towards a post-modernized *modus operandi* of a religious entity is also facilitated by transnational processes, which have culminated in the creation of an 'electronic church' or 'electronic pulpit', paralleled by the emergence of a growing number of inter-denominational and ecumenical bodies across the globe. These global trends are increasingly becoming salient and significantly shaping religious realms, to the extent that religious identification can no longer be confined within static locales without betraying its ever growing territorial fluidity and glocalising momentum. The discussion on religious identities as shaped by global processes further helps us to understand the ever growing and often complex theories on transnationalism outlined in the next part of the literature review.

### 3.5.3. Role of religion during migration and integration processes: A psychological outlook

Each new cultural demand may pose a stress.  
(*Scott and Scott 1989:16.*)

Unless you are prepared to function in the new culture, the situation can be highly stressful.  
(*Jandt 2007:290*)

A growing body of migration scholars (Berry 1997; Warner 2000; Menjivar 2003; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Jandt 2007) have extensively documented the intimate interlink between religion and migration. Some of these scholarships describe migration as a traumatic experience and often prescribe religiosity as one of the soothing alternative therapies. In this respect, for instance, Smith (quoted by Menjivar 2003:25) argues that immigration itself is often a ‘theologizing experience’, because religion provides an ethical slant and the resources that nourish the immigrants’ outlook as they react to the confusion and alienation that result from their uprooting (see also Portes *et al.* 2006:325,331,350). In a similar vein, reinforcing the link between religion and migration, Portes *et al.* (2006:301) argue that ‘religion has accompanied the process of migration, seeking to ameliorate the traumas of departure and early settlement, to protect immigrants against external attacks and discrimination, and to smooth their acculturation to the new environment’. More particularly Portes *et al.* (2006) underscore the added-value religion brings to immigration. They hypothesize that

If immigration is a ‘theologizing experience’ because of the challenges and psychological trauma that it poses, [*then*] the tendency for most of those who confront them is to hold tight to what they already have – reaffirming traditional beliefs and rituals as a source of comfort and protection (Portes *et al.*, 2006:326) [Emphasis is mine].

Furthermore, several scholars in migration studies have defined integration ‘as a basic psychological shift in self-identity, values, and goals’ (Portes 1969:508), thereby making the process of integration a source of stress for many newcomers (Berry 1997; Portes *et al.* 2006). Portes (1969) understands this psychological shift as ‘a pervasive desire to return to the old life’ back in the country of origin, and ‘a pervasive wish to ascend in the socioeconomic hierarchy of the new country’ (Portes 1969:510). It is useful to note that most of the above theorists draw both on the ‘attribution’ or ‘deprivation’ theories as discussed in the following section.

### **3.5.3.1. Attribution and Deprivation theories**

#### **3.5.3.1.1. Attribution theory**

Most of the literature that links religion with migration or portrays religion as one of the coping strategies at the disposal of migrants has overwhelmingly relied on both ‘attribution’ and ‘deprivation’ theories on relationship between religion and migration. Attribution theorists claim that ‘refugees who have developed religious attributions are more likely to cope with trauma of the resettlement experience successfully, because religion provides the opportunity to ‘make sense’ out of a disorderly world’ (Burwell 1986:357). Refugees manifesting higher levels of religiosity, Burwell argues, will be more likely better integrated than those with low level of religiosity (Burwell 1986:357; see also Nzayabino 2010:1). Jayasuriya (2008:104) maintains that ‘African religious background provided mechanisms through which Africans coped with the psychological trauma brought about by enslavement, transportation, and transplantation

into alien cultural environments'. Similarly, Church (1992:834) emphatically argues that religion provides 'a holy security and serenity of mind, arising from a confidence in God, and his power and promise'. In a similar vein and quoting from LaMothe, Pargament *et al.* (2005:61) sustain that 'sacred objects can help provide a sense of personal identity, continuity, and cohesion, and can soothe and comfort people in times of stress'. Likewise, in their analysis of the social function of religion, Portes *et al.* (2006:301) maintain that the church, temple, or mosque become source of comfort and protection particularly during the early traumatic stage of arrival and resettlement within the host society. In their study on the psychological meaning of religion, Van der Merwe, Van Eeden *et al.* (2010) concluded that:

Experiences of adversity can be worked through by means of religious coping methods and the optimism and hope that religious affiliation seems to instil in people's views [...]. Religious beliefs and experiences may provide an important source of personal strength that promotes psycho-social well-being, mental and physical health and positive emotions such as joy, gratitude, forgiveness, hope and optimism – all building blocks of psychological well-being (van der Merwe, 2010:8)<sup>41</sup>

In a similar vein, Scott and Scott (1989:62) 'the theoretical relevance of religious affiliation to migrant adaptation flows from the potential it offers for peace of mind and interpersonal gratification during a period of uncertainty and stress'. Smith-Hefner's (1994:24) study among [Cambodian] Kymer refugees in the United States lends strong support to the substance of the attribution theory. Talking specifically of those [Kymer refugees] 'who converted to Christianity in the refugee camps before coming to the

---

<sup>41</sup> For more details about the findings of this study, see Van der Merwe, EK., Van Eeden, C. and Van Deventer, H.J.M., 2010, 'A psychological perspective on god-belief as a source of well-being and meaning', HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies 66(1), Art. #332, 10 pages. DOI:10.4102/hts.v66i1.332.  
Available at: <http://www.hts.org.za>  
Accessed on 19 June 2010

United States', Smith-Hefner (1994) describes how these conversions were mainly triggered off by individuals' protracted pain and suffering. She notes that 'many of these people [Kymer refugees] link their conversion to the suffering and pain they experienced [...] and to what they regard as their miraculous escape from Cambodia to Tailand' (Smith-Hefner 1994:27 – emphasis is mine).

Whilst some of proponents of acculturation, such as Berry (1997) rejects the view according to which 'acculturation inevitably brings social and psychological problems' because, they argue, 'psychological changes' and 'behavioural shifts' or 'cultural learning' (Szkudlarek 2010) are easy to accomplish (Berry 1997:12), other scholars establish that acculturation is not without repercussions particularly at the detriment of the acculturating minority group. For instance, Portes *et al.* (2006:199) argue that 'acculturation is not a simple solution to the traumas of immigration because it can be a traumatic process itself'. Illustratively, Portes *et al.* (2006:199) conclude that 'among lower-class immigrants and their children premature acculturation may lead to a higher incidence of mental illness and drug dependence as they lose their sense of identity and traditional social controls while being exposed to deviant practices in their new environment'. Similarly, Portes (1969:515) notes that, 'in reality, integration is not a static rational decision but a large series of minor, often unconscious, changes'. Briefly, the road to acculturation is not without potholes. As Portes *et al.* (2006:13) emphatically claim, there are those 'who cannot even take the first step toward assimilation because of the insecurity linked to an uncertain legal status'. More often than not, there are costs and consequences resulting from cultural confrontation and shedding of one's culture on behalf of the new one.

### 3.5.3.1.2. Deprivation theory

Proponents of deprivation theory claim that the less predictable and explainable life has been, the greater the need for an explanatory construct such as religion (Burwell 1986:357). That is, people who experience deprivations including social, economic and organismic (Burwell 186:357) or traumatic hardships, are more likely to resort to religion as a 'coping strategy' (Pargament *et al.* 2005:61-62). Quoting from Roger Ballard, Basch *et al.* (1995:26) point out that 'migrants often find themselves socially, politically and economically vulnerable, no less in the society they have left than in the one they have joined'. This is the case, for instance, of Ghana where Tonah (2007) points out,

[T]he spread and growth of these Pentecostal/Charismatic churches (the largest group of churches in Ghana) coincided with the period of economic decline in Ghana during which most Ghanaians found it difficult to make ends meet. [Thus], the newly established churches brought some amount of hope and confidence to their congregations at a time of national gloom. (Tonah 2007:15).

Similarly, Landau and Haupt (2007) argue that

[...] In many cases, the churches prepare people for a life beyond any material nation. Many of these churches offer up that 'health and wealth' promises seen elsewhere in evangelical communities, promises that offer an alternative to the material deprivation many migrants experience. (Landau and Haupt 2007:14).

A number of other studies substantially support the theory of deprivation. In her studies of Christian conversion among Khmer refugees in the united States, Smith-Hefner (1994:28) reports that 'for individuals who found themselves adrift, bereft of moral and economic support [...], Christianity offered consolation and hope, the promise of a new life, and a new Christian family'. More particularly, Smith-Hefner (1994) adds, Khmer

women's conversion narratives 'tend to focus on suffering, depression, and loss of support as their primary motives for turning to Christianity' (Smith-Hefner 1994:28). Furthermore, in their comparative study of the level of religiosity of people in developing countries, Portes *et al.* (2006) found a strong negative correlation between religious attitudes and national wealth. They concluded that 'the poorer the country, the greater the importance of religion – with the notable exception of the United States',<sup>42</sup> (Portes *et al.* 2006:307). Similarly, in her study among Jamaican church in the United States, Austin-Broos (cited in Howell 2003:245) confirms that the [abundant] material wealth and culture of the United States made their churches less vibrant and receptive than [Jamaican] immigrant churches (2003:245).

The theories of attribution and deprivation have further inspired several writers to expand the meaning and role of religion beyond spiritual boundaries. For instance, Fenggang (2001:275) and Kim (1987:233) argue that immigrant congregations are no

---

<sup>42</sup> Portes and Rumbaut (2006:307) contend that, 'That religion has always been a vital part of immigrant life is one of the reasons the United States remains one of the most religious nations in the world'. They insist that 'Religion is far more important to Americans than to people living in other wealthy nations' (2006:307). They claim that 'Six out of ten (59 percent) people in the United States say religion plays a 'very important' role in their lives – twice the percentage of self-avowed religious people in Canada (30 percent) and an even higher proportion when compared with Japan (12 percent) and Western Europe, including Catholic Italy (27 percent) and France (11 percent) (Portes *et al.* 2007:307; see also Jandt 2007:190).]. In a similar vein, stressing the importance of religiosity in America Ammerman (2006:362-363) notes:

No particular religious identification or organisational membership is necessary to sustain these affirmations, since American culture as a whole seems committed to the notion that good and trustworthy people recognize a 'higher power' beyond themselves (witness the consistent reluctance of the U.S. public to say atheists should be (p.362) allowed to speak or teach.

Similarly, Jandt (2007:189) maintains that the United States remains the most religious among the world's industrialized nations. Statistically, Jandt (2007:189) claims that while for instance England and Sweden account for only 31 per cent and 19 per cent respectively, 95 per cent of U.S. citizens believe there is a God or universal spirit. He emphatically argues that 'U.S. citizens are more likely to believe in heaven, hell, the Devil, and life after death' (2007:189). Jandt credits American religious hegemony to the assertion that United States separates church and state and makes religious loyalty a voluntary individual choice (2007:189).

longer just sites for religious worship; they are assuming multiple functions, including both religious and secular classes, provision of social services, recreational centres, and social spaces for civic functions. Fenggang gives an illustration of this operational shift by asserting that:

Like U.S. Christian churches, Buddhist and Hindu temples, Islamic mosques, and Zoroastrian centres are changing from prayer and ritual centres to community centres where immigrants celebrate wedding, conduct funerals, counsel families, provide social services to the needy, hold cultural activities, and so on. (Fenggang 2001:275).

In other words, some congregants may attend churches not only for religious salvation but also for secular economic and social reasons (Kim 1987:234). Welbourn (1965:14) describes Christianity as a 'religion' which has more than merely 'religious' implications. Arguably, different faiths and practices are massively stepping into the larger social fabric and are no longer an alien concept to be held at bay, but become part of the living body politic and human relations (IOM 2006:35). In his study among Burundi refugee youths in Tanzania, (Sommers 2001:362) points out that [Pentecostal] churches give people a sense of dignity, a place in a community of friends which often stands as a surrogate for an extended family fractured by mobility and change (see also Cao 2005; Meyer 2004). Speaking particularly of urban churches, Sommers notes that Pentecostals provide a community which helps the urban dweller build a survival network (2001:363). More particularly, Portes *et al.* (2006:300) maintain that 'religion has never ceased to be a crucial presence in the process of incorporation'. Many migrant churches, including YSA, are actively involved in the establishment and/or promotion of social networks among migrant groups. According to Noyoo (2007:9), 'social networks are regarded as organisational arrangements which are based on social

ties that allow individuals or marginalised groups to circumvent institutional constraints and structures of exclusion within the wider society'. These networks 'can also be used to mobilise a range of specifically economic resources, including credit, cheap labour, training, business contacts and information, further enhancing the competitiveness of communal networks' (Meagher, cited in Noyoo, 2007:9). In a more simplified wording, Amisi *et al.* (2005:11) define social networks 'as communities of support which provide both monetary assistance and knowledge, and encouragement to overcome local difficulties'. The reason for the formation of networks, Amisi *et al.* (2005:11) argue, is 'to help newcomers who would otherwise have to sleep on the streets when they arrive'.

Exploring the links between religion and contemporary cultural, economic, and political changes in the Americas, Peterson *et al.* (2001:210) maintain that 'people draw on religious beliefs, practices, and organizations to build and sustain individual and collective identities in the face of transitions to democracy, economic restructuring, transnational migration, and other globalizing dynamics'. Ebaugh *et al.* (1999) highlights the role of immigrant churches in helping migrants in their process of adaptation to the host society. They argue that:

Immigrant religious institutions play central roles simultaneously in helping new immigrants to adapt to U.S. society and in re-creating and reproducing traditional ethnic culture. They provide one of the most important physical and social spaces, if not the most important, in which both the changes required by the new social milieu and the continuities desired by immigrant members can be achieved. (Ebaugh *et al.* 1999:585).

In a similar vein, in his study of the role of spirituality and religion in the resettlement of Kosovar Albanians, Gozdzia (2002:136) argues that 'religion and spirituality sustain many refugees in their process of uprooting, forced migration, and integration

into the host society'. Ebaugh *et al.* (1999:587) maintain that faith-based organizations occupy the frontline in the settlement and integration process of new immigrants. Thus, for instance, when some of the Hungarian refugees arrived in Los Angeles in late 1950s, Harrel-Bond (1999:144) points out, there were no formal government-funded welfare programmes or language-training facilities for these refugees, and both their assistance and settlement in various parts of the United States became the responsibility of their sponsors, mostly church groups. The above theories remain relevant to this study, which among other aspects investigates the impact these para-church activities have on the integration migrants into the host society. It also establishes to what extent the theories of attribution and deprivation do apply to the present case study. The next section explores contemporary theories on the topical concept of 'culture shock', which most of migration scholars describe as a psychological or behavioural experience. Irwin (2007:3) rightly notes that 'most research on culture shock originates within the psychological disciplines'.

### **3.5.4. Exploring the impact of culture shock on the processes of integration**

#### **3.5.4.1. Berry's acculturative stress theory**

Culture shock is largely neglected within anthropology, even becoming anathema amongst anthropologists [...]. Anthropologists can feel a certain *culture shock* within their own academic community, because their experiences of culture shock *in the field* remain unacknowledged, and they are feeling something that they believe they ought not feel. (Irwin 2007:5)

While lending a relative credit to the above statement, it is however important to acknowledge the increasing number of scholars who theorize on culture shock or

acculturative stress. The following section reviews some of these scholarships.

According to Berry (1997:13), psychological adaptations to acculturation ‘requires some ‘culture shedding’, that is, the ‘unlearning of aspects of one’s repertoire that are no longer appropriate’; ‘and may be accompanied by some moderate culture conflict where incompatible behaviours create difficulties for the individual’ (see also Portes 1969:510). Culture shock or ‘acculturative stress’ occurs when ‘serious conflict exists’ between two cultures where groups ‘cannot easily change their repertoire’ (Berry 1997:13). In their study among Asian immigrants in the United States, Lueck and Wilson (2010:48) define acculturative stress as ‘a reduction in mental health and well being of ethnic minorities that occurs during the process of adaptation to a new culture’. Scott and Scott (1989:16) note that ‘each new cultural demand may pose a stress’. Similarly, Jandt (2007:290) adds that ‘unless you are prepared to function in the new culture, the situation can be highly stressful’. For him, culture shock as a ‘form of stress and anxiety results from an awareness that one’s basic assumptions about life and one’s familiar ways of behaving are no longer appropriate or functional’ (Jandt 2007:290). For Irwin (2007), culture shock depends on the level of perceived cultural risk involved in the process of integration. In this case, ‘culture shock occurs when one is placed into an environment with different symbols and with different notions of types of and acceptable level of risk than what is ‘normal’ in one’s own culture’ (Irwin 2007:4).

However, Berry avoids using the concept of ‘culture shock’ in his psychological analysis mainly because the term, he argues, ‘suggests the presence of only negative experiences and outcomes of intercultural contact’ (Berry, 1997:13). Instead, he prefers

using the concept of ‘acculturative stress’ for two main reasons. First, according to him ‘the source of the problems that do arise’ [during acculturation processes] are not cultural, but intercultural’ (Berry 1997:13 – emphasis is mine). The second reason that makes Berry to avoid using the concept of culture shock is that, during integration or acculturation, Berry (1997) argues, only moderate difficulties are usually experienced as other psychological processes (such as problem appraisal and coping strategies) are usually available to the acculturating individual’ (Berry 1997:13). Irwin (2007) seems to lend some support to Berry’s acculturative stress perspective by arguing that ‘culture shock is not necessarily an acute illness’ (2007:2). In a similar vein, Lueck *et al.* (2010:55) maintain that ‘stress is not always seen as a such but it is rather seen as temporary challenge immigrants can overcome’. Lueck *et al.* (2010) build their positivist thinking on what they call ‘cognitive flexibility’, that is, ‘an enhanced awareness that in any problem situation there are several alternative options available to solve the problem’ (2010:55). When ‘changes in the cultural context exceed the individual’s capacity to cope, because of the magnitude, speed, or some other aspect of the change, leading to serious psychological disturbances, such as clinical depression, and incapacitating anxiety’, then ‘psychopathology’ or ‘mental disease’ (Berry 2002:13) is defined in lieu of acculturative stress – which Oberg ([1960] 2006:142) describes rather as ‘an occupational disease’. It is worthy noting that while several writers primarily describe stress as a psychological paranoia other culturalist scholars within the field of migration conceptualise stress as an identity crisis. For instance, Kim (cited in Lueck *et al.* (2010) argues that stress involves ‘a kind of identity conflict rooted in resistance to change, the desire to retain old customs in keeping with the original identity, on the one hand, and the desire to change behaviour in seeking

harmony with the new milieu, on the other' (2010:56).

#### **3.5.4.2. Impact of culture shock on the integration of migrants**

According to 'culture shock' hypothesis 'urban reared immigrants should adapt better to a new culture (typically urban for newcomers) than immigrants from more simple rural backgrounds' (Scott and Scott 1989:61). Similarly, in his study of social changes in immigrant communities, Portes (2008:16) argues that 'flows composed of poorly-educated workers can have a more durable impact because of their initial ignorance of the host language and culture and the tendency, especially among migrants from rural origin, to adhere tightly to their customs'. Viewed as a gradual adjustment/dis-adjustment rather than instantaneous reaction to the culturally unusual or abnormal, culture shock develops through a number of levels or stages.

Acculturation stress, Lueck *et al.* (2010:48) argue, 'can lead to adjustment-related difficulties, expressed in negative reactions to the tensions between two cultures'. Oberg ([1960] 2006:142-143) draws a long list of symptoms of culture shock, which include among many other things, fear of physical contact with host citizens, a far-away stare; a feeling of helplessness and a desire for dependence on long-term residents of one's own nationality; fits of anger over delays and other minor frustrations; delay and outright refusal to learn the language of the host country; excessive fear of being cheated, robbed, or injured; terrible longing to be back home, to visit one's relatives, and, in general, to talk to people who really make sense.

Jandt (2007:306) points out that 'individuals do differ [...] as to what degree they become acculturated'. Predictors, such as age, level of education and previous travel networks with overseas friends and family members and mass media significantly influence the process of acculturation (Jandt 2007:307). Jandt particularly argues that 'younger immigrants adapt more easily than older ones' (Jandt 2007:307). Similarly, people differ in the ways they experience and manage culture shock situations. Upon shock, some give up and retreat back home (avoidance principle) while others adopt 'a this is my cross and I have to bear it' approach, or take it as another way of living (Oberg [1960] 2006:143). Others tend to ignore it by adopting a cultural indifferentism. As Lueck *et al.* (2010: 48) point out 'some migrants use coping strategies that allow them to acculturate more successfully while others encounter difficulties and face high levels of acculturative stress'. Arguably, 'migrants with low levels of acculturation had high levels of acculturative stress' (Lueck *et al.* 2010:48), because integration is more often than not believed to enhance psychological adjustment of immigrants and favourable intergroup attitudes (Liu 2007:764). In this context, Berry (1997) distinguishes between 'psychological' and 'sociocultural' adaptation. Psychological adaptation 'refers to a set of *internal* psychological outcomes including a clear sense of personal and cultural identity, good mental health, and the achievement of personal satisfaction in the new cultural context' (Berry 1997:14). Conversely, sociocultural adaptation consists in 'a set of *external* psychological outcomes that link individuals to their new context, including their ability to deal with daily problems, particularly in the areas of family life, work and school' (Berry 1997:14). It is however worthy noting that successful sociocultural adaptation largely depends on an individual's 'adaptation potential', that is, 'possible success in adapting to a new culture' (Jandt 2007:424).

According to Berry (1997:20) 'psychological adaptation largely involves one's psychological and physical well-being, while sociocultural adaptation refers to how well an acculturating individual is able to manage daily life in the new cultural context'. In addition Berry (1997) maintains that 'good psychological adaptation is predicted by personality variables, life change events and social support, while good sociocultural adaptation is predicted by cultural knowledge, degree of contact, and intergroup attitudes' (Berry 1997:20-21).

In addition to age, a number of scholars establish a positively significant correlation between length of residence and level of acculturative stress experience. Thus, for instance, in their study among Asian immigrants in the United States, Lueck *et al.* (2010:48) found that migration at a younger age and a longer residence in the US contributed to higher acculturation and to lower levels of acculturative stress (see also Kibreab 2000:250). It is further argued that 'immigrants with higher education have more intellectual resources that help them to cope with problems and changes' (Lueck *et al.* 2010:48).

Besides age, length of stay and level of education, language also accounts among primary factors influencing acculturative stress. In their study among Asian immigrants in the United States, Lueck *et al.* (2010:48) found 'significantly higher acculturative stress levels among younger immigrants who could not speak their native language fluently'. That is, 'societies with assimilationist policies [such as the United States] cause higher acculturative stress levels than pluralistic societies' (Lueck *et al.* 2010:48). In other words, the loss of the native language significantly contributes to increased

acculturative stress (Lueck *et al.* 2010:55). Conversely, ‘those who are able to integrate (i.e. bicultural and bilingual or even multilingual) have significantly lower stress levels than those who are separated from the new culture or their ethnic culture’ (Lueck *et al.* 2010:48) [because immigrants] ‘are able to build up networks of support within and outside their community’ (2010:53) (emphasis is mine).

Finally, Lueck and Wilson’s (2010) study reveals that both separation and marginalisation (based on discrimination, prejudice, etc.) and high stress levels are positively related (Lueck *et al.* 2010:48). More particularly, Lueck *et al.* (2010) argue that ‘discrimination is a major source of acculturative stress in immigrant and ethnic minorities’ (Lueck *et al.* 2010:55).

Schematically, Berry and Lueck’s descriptions of forms of acculturation and the corresponding acculturative stress levels can be summarised as follows:

*Figure 2: Forms of acculturation and acculturative stress levels*

| <b>Forms of acculturation</b>             | <b>Acculturative stress level</b> |      |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------|
|                                           | Low                               | High |
| Assimilation                              |                                   | √    |
| Pluralism                                 | √                                 |      |
| Integration<br>(bi/multicultural/lingual) | √                                 |      |
| Separation                                |                                   | √    |
| Marginalisation                           |                                   | √    |
| Segregation                               |                                   | √    |

Drawing chiefly on Oberg's (1960) famous stage-model of culture shock the following section discusses the four stages of the culture shock process.

#### **3.5.4.3. Oberg's stages of culture shock**

Oberg ([1960] 2006) distinguishes four stages of culture shock: honeymoon, disintegration (crisis), reintegration (recovery), and adjustment (see also Jandt 2007; Irwin 2007). Jandt (2007:290-291) extends Oberg's list by adding a fifth stage: reciprocal interdependence (biculturalism).

The first stage, the 'honeymoon stage' or 'initial euphoria', is where 'individuals are fascinated by the new' (Oberg [1960] 2006:143). That is, everything looks new, exciting and fascinating (Irwin 2007:2). During this short period, the new unaccustomed newcomer 'associates with nationals who speak their language and are polite and gracious' to him or her (Oberg [1960] 2006:143). At this stage, Jandt (2007:290) explains, the individual is basically a tourist with her or his basic identity still rooted in the home culture.

The second stage 'involves disintegration of familiar cues and irritation and hostility with the differences experienced in the new culture' (Jandt 2007:290). This reactive attitude can sometimes lead to withdrawal or isolation from the host culture. As Oberg [1960] (2006:143) rightly put it, 'if you overcome it [second stage], you stay; if not, you leave before you reach the stage of a nervous breakdown' (emphasis is mine). During this stage Oberg ([1960] 2006:143) notes, 'you take refuge in the colony of your

countrymen and its cocktail circuit which often becomes the fountain-head of emotionally charged labels known as stereotypes'. Once in his or her ethnic colony, the culturally shocked individual freely 'vents his or her dissatisfaction towards the host country when amongst fellow ex-patriots' (Irwin 2007:2). In other words, it is during this stage 'one has seriously to cope with the real conditions of life' (Irwin (2007:2).

The third stage largely depends on the success achieved in the second stage. Referred to as a stage of 'recovery' (Oberg [1960] 2006:143) the third stage 'involves a reintegration of new cues and increased ability to function in the new culture' (Jandt 2007:290). At this stage the migrant begins 'to open the way into the new cultural environment' (Oberg [1960] 2006:143), learns the language of the host society and 'can negotiate daily life on his or her own', or even 'help others who may be new to the situation' (Irwin 2007:3). Jandt (2007:290) notes, however, that emotions often expressed through anger and resentment toward the new culture for 'being different' may still arise at this stage; but Irwin (2007:3) assures Jandt that 'the visitor is able to handle them'. At this stage feelings of or proclivity for isolation or separation alternative are significantly mitigated.

During the fourth stage the individual 'accepts the customs of the country as just another way of living' (Oberg [1960] 2006:143). The individual 'has adjusted considerably' (Irwin 2007:3) and 'operates within the new milieu without a feeling of anxiety although there are moments of strain' (Oberg [1960] 2006:143). During this stage the migrant's 'gradual adjustment continues toward gradual autonomy and seeing 'good' and 'bad' elements in both the home and new cultures' (Jandt 2007:290). There

are fewer feelings of isolation, and the individual 'becomes more comfortable in the new culture as more things are predictable' (Jandt 2007:290).

The fifth and final stage (as suggested by Jandt 2007), involves 'a reciprocal interdependence where the person has achieved 'biculturalism' by becoming able to cope comfortably in both the home and new cultures' (Jandt 2007:291). However, Jandt (2007:291) notes, 'full adjustment can take years'.

#### **3.5.4.3.1. Critics against Oberg's model of culture shock**

Although Oberg's model of culture shock has inspired and influenced a wide range of both anthropological and psychological scholarship yet it is not immune to literary critics. For instance, in her study of culture shock among contemporary anthropologist researchers, Irwin (2007:2-3) notes that Oberg's stages of culture shock, 'although useful, are somewhat artificial [...], arbitrary and simplistic categories'. Irwin puts forward two reasons to justify her viewpoint. First, Irwin (2007) argues, 'the progression of culture shock is not necessarily linear'. Sojourners, Irwin (2007:3) argues, 'do not necessarily go through all of them [stages] or in that particular order' (emphasis is mine). That is, one may for instance, 'experience multiple stages at one time or may 'revert' to an earlier stage during a time of crisis or other activity' (2007:2). Second, Irwin (2007:2) explains, 'each individual reacts differently and some may not progress to the final stage before returning home'. Similarly, in their study of acculturative stress in Asian immigrants, Lueck and Wilson (2010:48) note that 'acculturation stress can vary, depending on the level of differences between the ethnic

and the new host culture’.

Furthermore, Oberg’s culture shock model seems to define culture shock from a relatively ‘reductionist’ perspective (Irwin 2007) where only one group, the minority group, is concerned. More specifically, the model falls short of pointing out that during the process of acculturation the host society may also experience cultural and psychological stress though in a dissimilar way with immigrant group. In other words, Oberg’s analysis lends wide room to think that culture shock is an exclusive experience of the acculturating individual. However, as it is likely that during accidental ‘shock’ or ‘collision’ between two or more things only one gets harmed or damaged, so is quite implausible that during ‘cultural clash’ the other party will remain unaffected. Irwin (2007:3) blames psychology approaches for ‘placing the crux of the problem [culture shock] in the individual’s inability to create meaning and to negotiate through the new social environment’ (emphasis is mine).

However, as Liu (2007:770) rightly notes, ‘not only the immigrant group but also the host nationals are undergoing psychological and sociological adjustment as a result of the presence of culturally distinctive ‘others’. Similarly, in his study of resistance, displacement and identity among Eritrean refugees in Sudan, Kibreab (2000:272) maintains that ‘refugees and migrants are perceived as a threat to the receiving societies’ cultural identity’. In a similar vein, Irwin (2007:7) points out that because ‘natives are perceptive [...] they will sense the frustration and aggressive attitude that one feels towards them and react accordingly’. Such cultural reactivity and hostility are some of the symptoms of culture shock mentioned above. In this perspective, the

dominant cultural group is also vulnerable to culture shock, albeit in different manner and disproportionate degrees compared to the minority group. Oberg ([1960] 2006:143) confirms that ‘individuals differ greatly in the degree in which culture shock affects them’. As Liu (2007:770) rightly put it, ‘the mainstreamers might not be equally well-prepared to accept or adjust to various changes in their lives brought about by the immigrant population’. Emphatically Liu warns that ‘under some circumstances, the psychological adjustment for mainstreamers might seem even more difficult as compared to that experienced by immigrants’ (2007:770). The reason for this experiential inequality, Liu adds, is that ‘immigrants in many cases are aware of the need to adjust to their host cultural environment at the time, if not well before, they set their foot in their host country’ (2007:770). Liu further notes that ‘in studying multiculturalism and acculturation, it is important to take into consideration both the ethnic minority and the majority group members because a lack of reciprocal attitudes may hamper the realisation of a positively diverse and equal society’(Liu 2007:770).

### **3.5.5. Migration-induced Transnationalism**

#### **3.5.5.1. De-essentialising theory**

A growing body of post-modern rhetoric lends a strong assent to the globalizing perspective according to which ‘increasing migration has been closely related to globalisation and the greater porosity of borders for all manner of transactions and movements’ (Swyngedouw and Swyngedouw 2009:72). Similarly, Sorensen (2007:4) maintains that ‘in exploring the increasing new forms of dispersion, diasporization and

transnationalization of populations across geographic regions and continents, migration studies have re-emerged as a vibrant area of research'. As Gupta (1999:180) rightly put it, 'recent moves in anthropological theory urge us to go beyond 'the field' to see how transnationalism refracts and shapes 'the local'. That is, 'the emergence of 'transnationalism' and transnational identities that are no longer structured through national embedding but through post-national conditions are increasingly the defining transactional experience' (Swyngedouw and Swyngedouw 2009:72).

In contemporary globalizing society, human activities and behavioural relations undergo spatial and multi-stranded transformation through increasing transnational processes that transcend national borders. That is, 'social space is no more an empty box waiting to be filled but is instead produced through the movement of people, things and ideas' (Wilson 2007:42). The formation of imagined transnational identities, therefore, de-essentialise the essentialist approach which binds identity to a physically defined territory. In transnational context, spatially defined constraints and restraints to both social, human and economic capital movements and flows are no longer absolute; they increasingly become elastically negotiable (Wilson 2007:42). Nevertheless, at the same time, Wilson keenly warns that transnational mobility could 'disrupt the stable isomorphism of identity and territory' (2007: 40), one of the far-reaching consequences of displacement. Okely (1996:4) points out that since the advent of migratory waves 'anthropology has had to confront the consequences of migrations, refugee dispersals and the multicultural metropolis' where hybrid and multiples identities inextricably flourish. As Jarasuriya (2008:113) explains, identities are not static and they change depending on the pressures placed upon them. Hybrid and multiple identities can

therefore normatively be negotiated and mediated during migration processes. Okely (1996:4) argues that '[A]ll cultures are provisional';[and therefore] 'it is possible that all are hybrid, not just those once labelled syncretic as a consequence of migration and invasions'.

More particularly in the field of migration, Johnson (1997:1285) warns that immigrants may 'resist full assimilation into the mainstream because of their transnational identity'. He argues that 'both physical and transnationalised proximity contribute to the formation and perpetuation of this hybridised identity' (1997:1285). Bisharat (1999) seems to express similar apprehensions by stating that

Place is becoming more important to the degree that the authenticity of dwelling is being undermined by political-economic processes of spatial transformation and place construction. In other words, it is precisely under conditions of challenge and threat to connections between peoples and places that identities are most vehemently, even lethally, spatialized. (Bisharat 1999:204)

An increasing body of literature endorses the claim that transnationalism gives rise to spatial identities that are 'powerfully shaped by the accompanying processes of de-territorialization and displacement' (Gupta 1999:181). As a result of this transformative phenomenon Gupta suggests that '...[W]e need to investigate processes of place making, of how feelings of belonging to an imagined community bind identity to spatial location such that differences between communities and places are created' (1999:179-180). In a similar vein, Swyngedouw and Swyngedouw (2009:73) point out that 'social identities become deterritorialised. However, as they territorialise again in new configurations, new forms of 'hybrid' identity will gain importance'.

It is worthy noting that despite the fact that the concept of transnationalism has attracted increased attention over the last decades, Basch *et al.* (1995:32) note however that ‘the people of the world have long been interconnected, populations often have been mobile, and their identities have long been fluid, multiple, and contextualised’. More particularly as regards current migration dynamics, transnational studies have drawn attention to the fact that many migrants are engaged in both their countries of origin as well as the receiving countries (Tonah 2007:19). In this context, it is often argued that transnationalism is accelerated by ‘instant exchanges of information and fast and increasingly accessible air transportation link immigrant communities to their hometowns and countries as never before’ (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:314). Despite this global trend, Portes *et al.* (2006) deplore the fact that studies on religion and migration have tended to overlook the magnitude of these homeland-centred transnational ties and their impact on the process of migrants’ integration into host societies. ‘While the literature on religion and immigration, they argue, has focused overwhelmingly on the adaptation and successful integration of migrants in a new land, the fact is that they seldom forget where they came from and that ties with the homeland, at least in the first generation, remain strong’ (Portes *et al.* 2006:312).

#### **3.5.5.2. Types of transnationalism: *Migrant-led* versus *State-led* transnationalism**

Luin Goldring (cited in Orozco 2007:31) distinguishes two types of transnationalism: ‘migrant-led transnationalism’ and ‘State-led transnationalism’. Migrant-led transnationalism refers to transnational activities and processes operated by transmigrant organisations and associations. Through this type of transnationalism

migrant organisations bring together people of the same locality in an effort to maintain contact with their hometown and support its development notably through remittances and other transnational activities and services (Portes *et al.* 2006:136).

Conversely, State-led transnationalism occurs when the state encourages remittances and donations sending by migrants through legal and fiscal relaxation mechanisms. This type of transnationalism falls under what Portes *et al.* (2006:128) call ‘politicized immigration’ where a sending country ‘makes use of its nationals abroad’ for their participation in and contribution to the economic development of their home society. Quoting from Ellis, Van Hear (1998) underscores the link between these state-motivated diasporic processes with sending communities:

Africans who are finding it difficult to earn a living at home in straitened circumstances may use the international networks emanating from the African metropolitan areas to see work in the big cities of Europe and North America, keeping entire families back home solvent with remittances. Citizens of some African countries, such as Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal, are spreading out as fast as international immigration officials will allow them, forming international diasporas which also function as trading networks. (Van Hear 1998:250)

In a similar vein, in his conceptual reflections on migration and social changes, Portes (2008) highlights the impacts these State-led transnational processes have on sending state-nations. He points out that ‘telluric movements’ that see an entire people decamp and move to other parts of the planet in search of better future can have dramatic consequences in the places that they leave and in those where they settle’ (Portes 2008:14). In the same vein, in their study among a variety of immigrants communities in the United States, Portes *et al.* (2006:314) argue that ‘the most part, and despite some downsides, dense transnational ties tend to be beneficial to places of origin as they

channel to them an increasing flow of otherwise unavailable information and material resources'. Talking about Somalis living in the West and the Gulf States, the Somali governor in Burao explained the State's expectations from the Somali diaspora in these terms:

If the diaspora returns with money and helps with their own accommodation, etc., it is good. We thank the countries that they are living in. If they cannot take care of themselves, they should not come back but send money. As the government, we cannot afford their accommodation as they demand more than the local people. They must come with their own materials and money. When we find oil and diamonds, then they can come back. We're happy that some come back, but as a government we cannot afford it [...]. (Kleist 2007:119-120)

### **3.5.6. Typology of integrative strategies**

In migration processes there are winners and losers, those who are included while others are excluded, those who are engaged and those who are marginalized, those gaining skills and recognition by mobilizing their existence and those becoming deskilled and perhaps further marginalized in the process. (Sorensen 2007:4)

#### **3.5.6.1. Berry's integration strategies**

In his analytical study of strategies of integration, Berry (1997) identifies four main forms of integration based on levels of dis/engagement in cultural, social, economic and political relationships between ethnic minority group and the host society. These strategies include mainly: acculturation, assimilation, marginalisation, separation and segregation. The differentiation between some of these integrative mechanisms is not always a self-evident or crystal-clear-cut distinction. For instance, in most cases the concepts of integration, assimilation and acculturation are used interchangeably notwithstanding their differences in both meaning and entailment. As these conceptual

nuances are often subtly overlapping and intertwining further theoretical elaborations and clarifications beyond definitional scope outlined earlier in this chapter (see definition of key concepts) become indispensable.

#### **3.5.6.1.1. Acculturation strategy**

##### **A multi-stranded definition**

The complex literature on acculturation has been the subject of numerous conceptual frameworks' (Berry 1997:14) and 'measurement in the last decades' (Ho 2010:30). Also termed socialisation, acculturation is the process by which an individual acquires the knowledge, cultural standards and competencies needed to interact successfully in a society (Bosswick 2006:3). In this context, *acculturation* is understood as one of the forms of 'social integration' (this concept is discussed in more details later in this section). Unlike Bosswick who describes acculturation as a social process (Bosswick 2006:1), Kvernmo and Heyerdahl (2004) view acculturation as a psychological, attitudinal and behavioural trend. They argue that acculturation 'relates to interethnic contact and describes the psychological and cultural changes that occur as a result of continual contacts between people belonging to different cultural or ethnic groups' (Kvernmo *et al.*2004:513). In a similar vein of thought, Ho (2010:22) defines acculturation as 'a process of behavioural and attitudinal change that results when individuals make contact with a new culture'. According to her, acculturation entails changes in cultural attitudes, values, and behaviours that result from contact between two distinct cultures (Ho 2010:23). She argues that being a 'multi-domain phenomenon', acculturation 'includes language, identity, and behaviours' (Ho 2010:23,

30; see also Lueck and Wilson 2010:55). Ho (2010) further maintains specifically that acculturation has been noted as an important predictor of adaptation for immigrants (Ho 2010:22).

Drawing particularly on Redfield and a number of other classical scholars, Berry (1997) gives a more classical definition of acculturation. According to him, 'Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups' (Berry 1997:7). Lueck and Wilson (2010) go beyond Berry's broad definition to shed clear light upon those core cultural elements. They define acculturation 'as the process by which individuals incorporate beliefs, behaviours and values from the new host culture into the context of beliefs, behaviours and values of the native culture' (Lueck *et al.* 2010:48). In this context acculturation becomes the sum total of original culture and new culture.

It is worth noting that acculturation is not always a smooth sailing experience. More often than not, acculturation involves a wide range of challenges and compelling changes, and different levels of modification, survival, adaptation, domination, resistance, culture shock and stress (Lueck *et al.* 2010:55; Jandt 2007:). For Van Hear (1998) acculturation simultaneously involves increased relationships with the host culture and maintenance of the acculturating cultural minority group. He argues that acculturation is 'determined by a minority's relations with other groups on one hand and maintenance of cultural identity on the other' (Van Hear (1998:55). In a similar vein, Berry (1997) identifies two major issues migrants need to deal with in their

process of acculturation: ‘*Cultural maintenance* (to what extent are cultural identity and characteristics considered to be important, and their maintenance strived for); and *contact and participation* (to what extent should they become involved in other cultural groups, or remain primarily among themselves)’ (Berry 1997:9). Van Hear (1998:63) warns that ‘migration raises issues of social, political and economic participation that have a profound bearing on social integration and cohesion’ of migrants into host society.

On the other hand, while a number of early reductionist scholars have tended to describe integration as a single pathway process which places much responsibility in facilitating the process of integration upon the receiving society contemporary scholars, in contrast, describe integration as a two-way process, which involves a mutual commitment. As Bosswick (2006:11) rightly put it, ‘integration is an ongoing and interactive process between immigrants and the host society’. Either party has a shared responsibility in this process, albeit at different levels. In other words, successful integration is not exclusively the work of the sole integrationist society. Bosswick (2006:11) notes that ‘integration is the outcome of immigrants’ actions’, that is, the role the migrant plays in this process remains equally paramount. It is worthy, however, noting that the success in this interactive process will largely ‘depend upon the opportunities and restrictions that immigrants encounter in the host society – general economic and social conditions in the new country and the country’s integration policies’, because in this interaction, (Bosswick 2006) adds, ‘the host society has more power and more prestige’ (Bosswick 2006:11). Migrant’s pre-migration factors and his/her proclivity and readiness to integrate remain instrumentally influential in the

process of integration. More specifically, Berry (1997:16) notes that ‘the combination of political, economic, and demographic conditions being faced by individuals in their society of origin also needs to be studied as a basis for understanding the degree of *voluntariness* in the migration motivation of acculturating individuals’. For instance, because of the stringent observance of their cultural and religious traditions, Hmong immigrants in the United States are reportedly included among recent immigrants perceived ‘to be the most ill-prepared people ever to immigrate to the United States’ (Jandt (2007:318).

Likewise, the host majority society is expected to show its willingness to incorporate the guest. As Liu (2007:770) rightly notes, ‘in studying multiculturalism and acculturation, it is important to take into consideration both the ethnic minority and the majority group members because a lack of reciprocal attitudes may hamper the realisation of a positively diverse and equal society’. Emphatically, Bosswick (2006:9) unequivocally argues that the host society must engage in a mutual process of integration, particularly through ‘opening up institutions and granting equal opportunities to immigrants’ (Bosswick 2006:11). Briefly, the process of integration requires an increased degree of voluntariness and changes from either part involved in the course. Scott and Scott (1989:11) point out that ‘[A]ssimilation results not simply from interaction between two cultures, but often between that of the receiving society and immigrants who were spiritually half-assimilated before they left their native lands’. In a similar vein, Bosswick (2006:10), for instance, points out that ‘[W]hile cultural integration primarily concerns the immigrants and their children and grandchildren, it is also an interactive, mutual process – one that changes the host

society, which must learn new ways of relating to immigrants and adapting to their needs'. Berry (1997) seems to implicitly allude to this 'acculturative reciprocity' by noting that although acculturation is a neutral term in principle (that is, change may take place in either or both groups), in practice acculturation tends to induce more change in one of the groups than in the other (Berry 1997:7). In a similar vein, commenting on Berry's work<sup>43</sup>, Horenczyk (1997) argues that

The acculturation of immigrants does not take place in a social vacuum; it occurs and unfolds itself within the context of intragroup and intergroup relations that provide at times the support and at times the challenge for the reconstruction of selves and identities. (Horenczyk 1997:34)

Stressing on the 'mutual accommodation' involved in the process of acculturation, Berry (1997) identifies three facets (or 'protective factors) of acculturation strategy: a willingness for mutual accommodation (the presence of mutual positive attitudes, and absence of prejudice and discrimination), involvement in two cultural communities (having two social support systems), and being flexible in personality (Berry 1997:24). In other words, assimilation and integration depend on the host societies and whether they would discriminate on the basis of race or would be open and accept them (Jayasuriya 2008:108), because both strategies involve respectively 'submersion' or 'participation' in the dominant host society (Van Hear 1998:55). Citing Berry, Lueck *et al.* (2010:48) argue that 'the process of acculturation is influenced by the nature of the host society (based on pluralism, assimilation or exclusion), the nature of the acculturating group (for example, sojourner versus immigrant), and the mode of acculturation'. Mullins (1987:330) documented a number of factors to consider when

---

<sup>43</sup> For more details, see Berry, J. (1997). Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 46 (1), pp 34-38.

assessing the success of the process of assimilation into the host society. These include:

the degree of difference between the host and immigrant cultures, the racial difference between the immigrant population and the host society, the degree of geographical concentration or dispersion of the minority group, the comparative size of the groups involved, the degree of institutional completeness, whether the economy is open and expanding, the legal status of the minority group, and the minority group experience of discrimination and prejudice (Mullins 1987:330; Mullins 1988:230-231).

Briefly, 'essentialist' theories tend to describe the concept of acculturation as a one-way process where only one party (mostly the acculturating minority group) is active or, to say the least, more active than the other. This view still seems to get relative support mostly within 'assimilationist' or 'melting pot' societies, where cultural power relations persist between two cultures. A growing number of migration scholarships, however, conceptualize acculturation as a two-way process where both the acculturating minority group and the host have reciprocal commitments, and where accommodative changes are expected from both parties to the process.

#### **3.5.6.1.2. Forms of acculturation**

Acculturation is not a straightforward route from one destination to the other. It has different ramifications and avenues through which minority migrants use as they culturally incorporate into majority host society. Depending on socio-cultural background and integrative imaginaries of the minority ethnic group on the one hand, and the attitudes and behaviours of the receiving community on the other hand, the acculturative group may adopt any of the following ways: selective acculturation, dissonant acculturation, or assimilation.

#### **3.5.6.1.2.1. Selective acculturation**

Selective acculturation refers to a process of integration in which children of immigrants learn the language and culture of the new country while preserving their parents' language and key elements of their own culture (Portes *et al.* 2006:267,316,327). It is believed that *selective acculturation* 'offers the best means to fend off challenges to successful adaptation and educational achievement', and that 'immigrant religions play a central part in this process' (Portes *et al.* 2006:316).

#### **3.5.6.1.2.2. Dissonant acculturation**

In contrast, dissonant acculturation occurs when by learning new language and culture immigrants' children abandon their parents' language and culture (Portes *et al.* 2006). Dissonant acculturation, Portes *et al.* (2006:267) argue, 'does not necessarily lead to downward assimilation, but it places children at risk because of the absence or weakening of family supports as they confront the external threats and barriers'. They further maintain that 'bilingual parents who try to educate their children in their mother tongue confront the immense pressure for cultural conformity from peers, friends, teachers, and the media' (Portes *et al.* 2006:242). In other words, dissonant acculturation may over time potentially ignite the 'fear of linguistic and cultural fragmentation' (2006:242). In her analytical and comparative study of 'acculturation gaps' between children and adults among Vietnamese migrants in the United States, Ho (2010) raises a similar cultural concern. She notes that '[T]he process of acculturation

may create discrepancies in values between children and adults that affect family relationships' (2010:23). That is, 'acculturation gaps, which are thought to develop between parents and children negatively affect family relationships' (Ho 2010:23). She particularly maintains that 'immigrant parents who are more oriented toward their native culture may find traditional parenting styles to be ineffective with children who are quickly adopting the host culture' (2010:23).

Besides relational impact, acculturation gaps, Ho (2010) argues, may also cause language and communication difficulties among family members. That is why 'immigrant children are often called upon to serve as language and culture brokers between their parents and members of the host culture, at the expense of their own adjustment' (Ho 2010:23). This conflict is referred to as 'intergenerational conflict' (Ho 2010:23). For Vietnamese migrant community, acculturation gap consisted in that 'parents were more Vietnamese acculturated than their children, and children were more American acculturated than their parents' (Ho 2010:26). That is, 'parents tightly endorsed a higher identification with Vietnamese culture, and engaged in more Vietnamese activities compared to their adolescents, while adolescents endorsed a higher English language ability, higher identification with American culture, and engaged in more American activities compared to their parents' (Ho 2010:26). In this context, acculturation gap is gauged by the level of cultural identification of minority ethnic group with the dominant ethnic group and the degree of involvement by minority group in the majority ethnic group activities. It is however worthy noting that when a migrant group is forced to learn the language of the host society (for instance English in US or Australia) only, 'linguistic assimilation is measured rather than integration'

(Lueck *et al.* 2010:55) or acculturation. According to Portes and Rumbaut's (2006) essentialist approach, Luek's linguistic assimilation shifts to 'substructive assimilation' or 'language shedding' when migrants are required not only to learn a new language but also to give up their native language (Portes *et al.* 2006:241-242).

### **3.5.6.1.3. Dimensions of acculturation**

According to Liu (2007:763), acculturation has three dimensions: cultural maintenance, intergroup contact and participation, and the power to decide on how to acculturate. Drawing on Berry, Kim and Boski, Jandt (2007:309) distinguishes only two dimensions, which is but a summary of Liu's description: the value placed on maintaining one's original cultural identity and the value given to maintaining relationships with other groups in one's new culture. While assimilation implies abandonment of old culture and concomitant embrace of new culture (see details in the next section) integration, by contrast, allows minority group to take root 'in the host culture while maintaining ties with their own ethnic heritage' (Liu 2007:763). That is, integration ensures a continuity of culture (Jandt 2007:310).

#### **3.5.6.1.3.1. Assimilation strategy: From an 'outsider' to an 'insider'**

The second strategy of integration refers to assimilation. Though the concepts assimilation and integration are more often associated than differentiated and therefore used interchangeably, yet there exist differences between these two integrative strategies (see discussions on integration above). According to Mesch (2002:916),

‘assimilation occurs when individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek daily interaction with other cultures’. It is worthy noting here that, migrants’ ‘voluntariness’ in shedding their cultural identity in order to assimilate remains highly debatable. A growing number of scholars view assimilation more as an enforceable immigration state policy - a ‘melting pot’ regime - than a migrant’s optional strategy. Moreover, it has been widely documented that the process of integration offers migrants increased degree of freedom than assimilation. In this context, assimilation is a one-way process where the outsiders relinquish their own culture for that of the dominant culture (Jayasuriya 2008:100). Bosswick (2006:4) explains the enforcing nature of assimilation in the following statement:

In 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century European societies [...] assimilation means an attempt to create culturally homogenous nations. In the process, assimilation became associated with ethnocentrism, cultural suppression and often with the use of violence to force minorities to conform. (Bosswick 2006:4).

It is also worthy noting that, understood from a ‘melting pot’ perspective, assimilation has often been confounded with ‘deculturation’ and hence used interchangeably. The chief reason is that both terminologies imply the loss of the minority cultural identity on behalf of the majority culture (Scott and Scott 1989:14; Lueck *et al.* 2010:56). Comparing it with other acculturation strategies, Scott and Scott (1989:14) argues that, ‘assimilation entails the adoption by the minority of the majority culture; separation consists in a parallel existence of the two distinct cultures, with neither affecting the other; integration refers to a blending of the two cultures in some balanced fashion; while deculturation describes the loss of the minority culture’.

### 3.5.6.2. Chicago School of Sociology

According to Wright and Ellis (2000), the term assimilation sprouted in immigration discourse around the turn of the century, and it gained widespread application in the social sciences through scholarship emerging from what is commonly referred to as the ‘Chicago School of Sociology’<sup>44</sup>. Stressing the definitional complexity of the concept of assimilation, Wright *et al.* (2000:200) note that ‘the meaning of assimilation and pluralism depends on the era in which they are invoked, inseparable from the specific characteristics of immigration and the larger debates about nation, ‘race’, and public life of the time’. Consequently, they argue that ‘evaluations of assimilation reveal its abuses, multiple meanings, complexity and durability’ (2000:200).

Classical view of assimilation argues that assimilation leads to mono-national and mono-cultural identification (Wright *et al.* 2000:201). According to Dryden-Peterson and Hovil (2003:2-3), assimilation implies the disappearance of difference between refugees and their hosts as well as permanence within the host society (see also Jacobsen 2001:1). Concretely, assimilationist scholars contend that ‘as immigrant groups became integrated into the new society, they would eventually shed old cultural traits and become acculturated to the new society, resulting in an eventual

---

<sup>44</sup> It is argued that ‘U.S. social science, since its founding, has played an important role in shaping the manner in which immigrant populations were understood to relate to U.S. nation’ (Basch *et al.* 1995:41). More particularly, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Basch *et al.* (1995:41) argue, the Chicago School of Sociology, led by Park and Burgess, defined their problematic as one of maintaining political order... in a community that has no common culture. Their emphasis was not on the study of differences but on the necessity of assimilation. Migrants were viewed as ‘peoples who have abandoned the *political allegiances* of the old country, and are gradually acquiring the culture of the new (Basch *et al.* 1995:41).

disappearance of ethnic identity' (Levine 2001:9). She maintains that although ethnic identities might be useful in the initial stages of immigration and settlement, the longer a group is in the new country, the less ethnic identities would remain salient (Levine 2001:9; see also Portes 1969:516). During the process of assimilation it is understood as the expectation that migrants discard their values and practises of their countries of origin and adopt those of their host country (Bosswick 2006:7).

According to the classical assimilationist view, Wright *et al.* (2000:205) remark, groups that 'fail' to shed the old are not just less assimilated; they represent threats to the idea of America itself, unless that idea expands to include more than a white, Anglo-conformist vision'. Similarly, Johnson (1997:1277) argues that 'we should not ignore either the assimilation limits or the toll the process takes on individuals'. The process of assimilation, Johnson (1997:1276) explains, very often involves human pain, suffering and casualties. It is however important to note that, as Wright *et al.* (2000:204) observe 'the idea of a unitary American culture is fading in the US despite the repeated efforts of assimilationists to the contrary'. Similarly, writing about Mexican-American experience in the United States, Johnson (1997:1261) concludes that 'today's immigrants refuse to assimilate' thus 'running afoul of the 'Melting Pot' mythology of assimilation'.

### 3.5.6.3. A de-essentialised approach to assimilation

In contrast with 'integration' process whereby an immigrants 'maintain important parts of their original culture' (Jandt 2007:310), assimilation has been understood as a one-

sided process, in which immigrants and their descendants give up their original cultural identity and adapt completely to the new culture of the dominant group (Bosswick 2006:4; Jandt 2007:310). Assimilation, Jayasuriya (2008:100) argues, is the process by which a minority gradually adapts the customs and attitudes of the prevailing culture. While classical view of assimilation tends to enforce assimilation (complete renouncement of ethnic, cultural and linguistic heritage by the minority group and the subsequent embracing of the culture of the dominant ethnic group), the de-essentialising approach to assimilation envisages a less binding assimilation which results from a gradual adjustment and integration into the host society. Assimilation involves a long-term process in which ‘the person identifies with the country and not an ethnic group’ (Jandt 2007:310). Similarly, Bosswick (2006:16) notes that both ‘immigration and integration are processes that take time’ and therefore, Bosswick conjectures, ‘immigrants will normally maintain ethnic group identification for at least two generations’. Berry (1997) simply views integration as a ‘mild expression’ of assimilation. Arguably, this means that a prolonged absorption and successful integration of an immigrant group into a host society would ultimately culminate into a full-fledged assimilation into that specific society. Bosswick (2006:16) postulates that ‘over time, integration means that such group identity and ethnic classification slowly loses its relevance both for the immigrant and native populations’.

While lending substantial support to the above de-essentialising approaches to assimilation, it is however worthy noting that this type of integration-induced assimilation is likely to occur in societies that are primarily integrative and culturally pluralistic. By contrast, in ‘melting pot’ oriented societies, that is, those whose

immigration regime require immigrants to give up their cultural and linguistic identities in order to adopt the culture and language of the dominant society (Foner 1987:12; Mullins 1988:231; Shorter 1991:25; Johnson 1997: 1261,1277; Peterson 2001:17; Turner 2007:64; Jandt 2007:316), assimilation strategy is often enforced upon immigrants' landing into the latter. Understanding integration as a process which leads to a durable solution for refugees, Crisp (2004:1) maintains that 'the concept of local integration does not imply the assimilation of refugees in the society where that [sic] have found asylum'. Crisp explains his point in the following terms:

While the concept of assimilation is to be found in the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, the international community has always rejected the notion that refugees should be required or expected to abandon their own culture, so as to become indistinguishable from members of the host community (Crisp 2004:2).

For Crisp and many other ethno-pluralist theorists, ethnic identities and other cultural values and patterns remain salient even when migrant groups are fully adapted to the host society (Levine 2001:9). Although Crisp (2004:3) believes that 'the notion of local integration is based on the assumption that refugees will remain indefinitely in their country of asylum and find solution to their plight in that state', yet he does not concur with the assimilationist intimation according to which, fully and permanently integrated migrants become *ipso facto* assimilated into their host societies.

#### 3.5.6.4. Dimensions of assimilation

##### 3.5.6.4.1. Structural assimilation

Also commonly referred to as 'social integration' (Bosswick 2006:11), structural

assimilation refers to 'the acquisition of rights and the access to position and status in the core institutions of the host society: the economy and labour market, education and qualification systems, the housing system, welfare state institutions (including the health system), and full political citizenship' (Berry 1997:12). Simply put, structural assimilation involves large-scale entrance into the cliques, clubs, kinship relations and other primary institutions and associations of the dominant sectors of the host society (Mullins 1987:326; Portes 1969:505,508 and Berry 1997:12), a full-fledged insertion into both local and regional contexts (Bosswick 2006:9). Social integration can be defined as the inclusion and acceptance of immigrants into the core institutions, relationships and positions of a host society.

While Bosswick (2006:9) underlines the acquisition of citizenship and gaining recognition as key indicators of structural assimilation, Mullins (1987:326) puts forward intermarriage as a key element of structural integration. He argues that assimilation of a minority group leads to increasing intermarriage among subsequent generations, contributing further to the de-ethnicisation of the immigrant group (Mullins 1987:326). Illustratively, Mullins conjectures that 'if a significant number of exogamous marriages are integrated into ethnic churches, the most obvious result will be a diminishing sense of ethnic distinctiveness (Mullins 1987:326). In his study of Japanese Buddhist in Canada, Mullins (1988:231) argues that '[T]he loss of ethnic language ability and the unusually high rates of intermarriage demonstrate that the preservation of ethnic ties and heritage is a low priority'.

#### **3.5.6.4.2. Cultural assimilation**

According to Bosswick (2006:10), cultural integration or ‘cultural assimilation, (Mullins 1987:325; Berry 1997:12) refers to an individual’s cognitive, behavioural and attitudinal change in line with the dominant culture. Similarly, Portes (1969) views assimilation as a fundamental shift from strong psychological attachment to the past to values and identities congruent with the new environment. He argues that an integrated [assimilated] family is one that has given up living in memories and attachments to old goals and values and reoriented its cognitive and motivational structure to the opportunities offered by the new life (Portes 1969:505,510). Conversely, cultural or ethnic differentiation refers to the group formation on a cultural or ethnic basis after immigration into a country (Bosswick 2006:4).

In the course of cultural assimilation, (Mullins 1987:326) argues, both language and culture of the minority ethnic group disappear on behalf of the dominant language of the host society. According to him, language is a key indicator of cultural assimilation (Mullins 1988:220). That is, the more immigrants relinquish their original culture and language and start learning and using the language of the host the more assimilated they become. Emphatically, Bosswick (2006:10) argues that ‘immigrants can only claim rights and assume positions in their new society if they acquire the core competencies of that culture and society’. This type of integration is also often referred to as ‘behavioural’ assimilation (Portes 1969:505).

#### **3.5.6.4.3. Marginalisation**

The third strategy of integration refers to marginalisation. According to Mesch (2002:916), 'marginalisation occurs when there is little possibility of or interest in cultural maintenance because of forced cultural loss or minimal desire for relations with others because of exclusion'. Berry (1997) offers a very similar definition. He argues that 'when there is little possibility or interest in cultural maintenance (often for reasons of enforced cultural loss), and little interest in having relations with others (often for reasons of exclusion or discrimination) then marginalisation is defined' (Berry 1997:9). Simply put, marginalisation arises 'where a group loses its own identity, but does not become part of the larger society' (Van Hear 1998:55). In other words, marginalisation results from the loss of minority group's original culture or identity followed by a hostile rejection by the dominant society (Berry 1997:24). The marginalised minority group, therefore, experiences a dual cultural disenfranchisement, that is, a 'nowhere' kind of belongingness floating in a cultural vacuum.

#### **3.5.6.4.4. Separation**

The fourth strategic option immigrants may choose in their process of integration consists in cultural separation or dissociation from the dominant culture. 'Separation' alternative occurs when individuals place a value on retaining their original culture and, at the same time wish to avoid interaction with other groups (Berry 1997:9; Mesch 2002:916). Separation involves rejection of the dominant culture (Berry 1997:24).

Based on Liu's (2007) study of Asian immigrants into Anglo-Australian society, separation alternative can be proactive or reactive depending respectively on the cultural orientation of the minority group or the state of relationship with the host dominant culture. In other words, proactive separation occurs when traditionally culture-oriented groups choose to freeze their cultural identity by isolating themselves from other cultural groups. This is for instance the case of Hmong and Amish refugee communities in the United States and Canada. Arguably, these cultural communities are believed to be traditionally and religiously conservative and therefore widely perceived to resist assimilation into host cultures (see Jandt 2007:320-322). Conversely, reactive separation occurs when a minority group is increasingly confronted with threats and pressures from the dominant culture. Liu (2007:772) confirms that 'separation' or 'insular' (Jandt 2007:309) orientation occurs when due the prevailing threat level the minority group starts acting as a distinctive and collective entity within the host society.

Van Hear (1998:55) differentiates between 'separation' and 'segregation'. On the one hand, while in a case of separation, minority group migrants may choose to separate themselves and potentially minimise interactions with the dominant ethnic group, 'segregation' is by contrast unilaterally 'imposed' by the latter (Van Hear 1998:55). On the other hand, whilst separation contains immigrant ethnic group into 'immigrant enclaves' segregation isolates migrants from the dominant ethnic group and confines them into what Wright and Ellis (2000:202) call 'outcast ghettos'. Segregation strategy occurs where cultural 'superiority and inferiority' power rapports, as well as prejudice and hatred exist between minority and majority groups (Jandt 2007:309). In his study of integration of Asian immigrants into Anglo-Australian society, Liu (2007:764) notes

that ‘the majority group members [...] may see ethnic minorities and their desire to maintain their own cultures as a threat to the mainstream cultural identity and higher status position’. In this context, separation can potentially ignite segregation and vice-versa. That is, a minority group may choose to isolate (‘voluntary’ separation) or be forced to separate (‘forced’ separation or ‘segregation’) as a result of discrimination or rejection by the dominant ethnic group.

It is, however, argued that ‘when the perceived threat level is low, the need to cling tightly onto their own ethnic group for moral support might not be as strong due to less pressure from the host society’ (Liu 2007:772). Moreover, Liu (2007:772) goes on arguing ‘being in a presumably low status group, when the perceived threat level is high, they might try to assimilate to the host society due to more pressure from the host society’. On the other hand, it is worthy noting that migrants with a strong sense of ethnic identity’ are more likely to separate from the dominant group than those displaying low sense of ethnic loyalty (Jandt (2007:309). Furthermore, as Berry (1997:11) rightly notes ‘integration (and separation) can only be pursued when other members of one’s ethnocultural group share in the wish to maintain the group’s cultural heritage’ (See also Stevens 2004:122).

### **3.5.7. Conclusion on integration strategies: A balanced view**

The above section reviewed theories on the phenomenon of integration and its variant concepts. More particularly, different strategies and forms of integration were explored. Though it is not the researcher’s work to determine which of these strategies is the best

- because such task would involve a close examination of a number of other factors, which nevertheless fall beyond the ambit of this study – some scholars have attempted to do the task. Most of these scholars view integration as a well-balanced alternative acculturation strategy between acculturation, assimilation and separation. For Mesch (2002:916) ‘integration is a possible outcome when there is an interest in maintaining one’s original culture in daily interactions in parallel to the attempt to play an integral part in the larger social network’. Similarly, Portes and Rumbaut (2006:199) note that ‘the best way of dealing with the challenge of acculturation is apparently to balance its progress with retention of select elements of the immigrants’ culture and a parallel reaffirmation of primary social ties within the ethnic community’. Other scholarships argue that since integration promotes cultural diversity and intergroup contact and enhances migrants’ social status (Liu 2007:764,771) it [integration] remains the most adaptive strategy (Berry 1997:24; Liu 2007:764), especially ‘in societies that are more ‘melting Pot’ or assimilationist in orientation’ (Berry 1997:25). Assimilation or separation comes second [after integration] while marginalisation seems to be the least preferred (Liu 2007:764). Van Hear (1998) lends strong support to Liu’s comparative ranking. He concludes that ‘integration implies a greater degree of choice on the part of newcomers than assimilation, marginalisation or segregation’ (Van Hear 1998:55). Separation, Van Hear adds, may be a choice by newcomers, at least in part (1998:55) [voluntary separation versus forced separation].

Overall, the chapter extensively reviewed theoretical framework and the contemporary literature on the territoriality of religious identity in light of the relationship between territory and people. The chapter also explored the literature dealing with the role of

religion during migratory and integrative processes. Attribution and deprivation theories were instrumental in this analysis. In addition, chapter four looked at the theories on culture shock and its impact on the processes of integration of migrants. In this section, Berry's theory of acculturative stress, Oberg's model of culture shock and its critics were explored in details. The chapter further reviewed theories on migration-induced transnationalism where different types of transnationalism, including migrant-led transnationalism, state-led transnationalism and religious transnationalism were particularly were amply discussed. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the typology of integrative strategies, notably integration, acculturation, deculturation, assimilation, separation, marginalisation, and segregation. The next chapter describes in more details socio- cultural and religious backgrounds of Congolese migrants as well as the impacts these have on their process of integration into South African society.

## **CHAPTER FOUR. PRE-MIGRATION PATTERNS OF CONGOLESE MIGRANTS AND THEIR IMPACT ON PROCESS OF INTEGRATION**

### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter discusses in more details socioeconomic, cultural and religious backgrounds of Congolese migrants living in Johannesburg and their impact on the process of integration into South African society before discussing the actual role of the church plays in the lives of the members. Structurally, the chapter examines pre-migration cultural and religious patterns, the theory of religious reactivity, gender issues and their repercussions on both religious and secular realms. The analysis of migrants' pre-migration backgrounds revealed wide cultural and religious disparities between Congolese community and South African society. These incongruities essentially stem from subjective binaries that tend to scale religions against religions and cultures against cultures, in terms of 'low versus high' spirituality and 'bad versus good' culture respectively. The implications of these cultural and religious dynamics on the process of integration within local religious institutions are highlighted. Overall, the study revealed that both cultural and religious backgrounds significantly shape migrants' proclivity to integrate into the host community.

### **4.2. Pre-migration patterns and their impact on the process of integration**

For the purposes of this study, both cultural and religious backgrounds are salient variables in assessing the impact of the church on the process of integration of a

migrant into a particular host society. In their exposé on homophily principle, Krause and Wulf (2004:38) maintain that 'similarity in attitudes, beliefs, and values tends to promote interpersonal attraction and affiliation to one congregational body' (see also McPherson *et al.* 2001:416). Most the participants in this study have joined Yahweh Shammah Assembly without having visited any local church around. This quasi-direct affiliation is mainly due to the fact that many migrants used church based social network that linked them to the Congolese community in general and to Yahweh Shammah Assembly in particular before leaving home country. The fact that most migrants join their Congolese community upon arrival is not a new trend in transnational migrants. This lends significant support to Van Hear's (1998:256) postulate according to which 'all the putative members of a given transnational or migrant community necessarily embrace that community'.

Certainly, though the majority of the respondents declared they stayed and got first hand assistance from their compatriots upon arrival in Johannesburg, yet this does not automatically imply full membership into the ethnic group. In some cases, due to ethno-political antagonisms in country of origin or post-migration divisions that may arise within a particular ethnic group, some members often choose to insulate themselves away from their ethnic community. Another shortcoming of Van Hear's 'blanket' assumption is that, not all migrants are inherently reactive against absorption or insertion into the host community. As Mesch (2002:916) rightly put it, some migrants, particularly those 'whose motivation for migration was proactive are considered more likely to get involved with the general population and to avoid neighbourhoods with a high percentage of residents who are immigrants'. Mesch (2002) further argues that

‘ethnic neighbourhood delays the process of social integration in the new society because it nurtures informal ethnic social networks that provide incomplete information and retard the process of language acquisition’ (Mesch 2002:912).

As mentioned earlier, successful integration is not exclusively the work of the sole integrationist society. The role the newcomer plays in this process cannot be underestimated. More particularly, migrant’s pre-migration factors and his/her proclivity and readiness to integrate remain instrumentally influential in the process of integration. As indicated earlier (see demographic profiles in chapter two), various ‘push and pull’ factors ranging from political, educational to economic reasons were identified as chief motives for migration decision-making. While a large number of respondents left their country due to political instability, others simply fled because of economic hardships including lack of basic infrastructures back home and unemployment.

I fled because of economic reasons. For example, you can have everything at home but you do not have electricity. (Respondent 37)

I started envying South Africa when I was still small. I heard that in South Africa one can develop much easily. (Respondent 35)

A Congolese friend who used to travel to and from between South Africa and Congo told me that if I came here I would get a job or study. (Respondent 36)

In his study among Nicaraguan migrants in Costa Rica, Steen (2007:90) points out that economic, poverty and lack of job opportunities at home remain ‘the prime motive for migration’ (see also Chamba 2006:111). The economic push/pull factor explains the ‘neo-classical equilibrium’ approach, which underpins ‘migration as either a function of

wage-level differentials, employment opportunities, or human safety, thereby understanding human mobility as a way of maximizing resources and minimizing risks' (Sorensen 2007:3). Asked about the reasons why they chose to come to South Africa, some respondents replied:

South Africa is the most economically powerful countries in Africa. I think every young man in all world would like to come to a greener pasture and make life. As most of my fellow friends, we were looking for green pasture. (Respondent 15)

I came to study here because I learned that South Africa is highly advanced in high technology. I also wanted to learn in English system. (Respondent 11)

Arguably, the history of migration evidences that 'growing disparities in the levels of livelihood possibilities and human security' (Sorensen 2007:5) remain the main causes of human displacement and consequential transnational processes. In his description of cosmopolitan citizenship, Amuwo (2007:7) offers a more detailed description of neo-classical equilibrium approach to migration. He argues that:

The factors aiding and abetting emigration include the following: opportunities, real or imagined, of skilled personnel to move has increased with globalization and the shift to a service economy; the accelerated globalisation of consumer capitalism; changing economic fortunes of home state and the resultant 'need to keep hope alive' by moving to 'more successful and better organised sites of accumulation'; the illusion of a sense of economic entitlement at home which, rather paradoxally, they expect host states to rectify, notwithstanding their own economic crisis; cross-border trade as an important strategy for escaping poverty; fear of violence, discrimination, employment-seeking, etc. (AMUWO 2007:7)

Potes and Rumbaut (2006:15) argue that 'neoclassical economic theories have generally assumed that labour migration flows occur because of an imbalance between labour demands and wages in sending and receiving areas'. At the individual level, Portes *et*

*al.* (2006) go on arguing, 'neoclassical theory translates into the prediction that people in less developed countries will rationally calculate the gap between their present wages and those that they could earn abroad' (2006:15). However, Portes *et al.* (2006:15) explains, 'the option of moving abroad in order to improve their economic situation is not self-evident and is foreign to many of the world's poor'. In most cases, the decision to move involves a combination of factors and a fulfilment of number of pre-conditions, including a sufficient economic and social capital within the sending community as well as a sustained network within the envisaged receiving community. In their study among Haitian immigrants in the United States, Basch *et al.* (1995:196) found that 'Haitian pastors and congregants arrive with some type of transnational connection to the United States'. Similarly, the present study revealed that most of the respondents made the decision to move after establishing sustained contacts with their family members, friends or fellow 'brothers' and 'sisters' in Christ (Meyer 2004:461) living in South Africa:

I have always wanted to come here in SA. My friends informed me that there is better life here. As soon as I got means I decided to come. (Respondent 35)

I have been influenced by a friend to come and further my studies. (Respondent 07)

My brother in Christ interested me to come here. (Respondent 05)

Other respondents declared they came to South Africa under a divine calling and guidance in order to do God's work:

My spiritual father (God) guided me here. I am here upon God's mandate. (Respondent 09)

I am a Christian. We have to be attentive to what we have been taught this morning. God told me to come here in order to achieve my objectives. And I have already realised this is exactly the right place to be! (Respondent 16)

The latter respondent is here referring to the message preached by one of the leaders of morning devotions<sup>45</sup>. On that particular day the sermon was drawn from the book of Hebrews, chapter 10, verses 38 and 39. The passage reads as follows:

<sup>38</sup>But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him. <sup>39</sup>But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved. (Hebrews 10:38-39 – New International version)

In his exegesis (delivered in French) the morning devotions' leader insisted on the following points:

Among us there are people who have the faith to go to Europe. Hold firmly onto that faith and persevere. I know there are obstacles but do not give up, Live up your faith. Do not change your vision. Keep on declaring and confessing what you believe both in private and public gathering. The more you confess things the more these things do happen. Keep up your faith and one day it will materialise. (Sermon of morning devotions' leader)

The discourse of divine intervention in migration processes can be depicted in other empirical studies conducted within the field of religion and migration. For instance, in their study among Haitian immigrants in Miami, one respondent indicated that God made him to land in Miami in the following statement:

We are immigrants, and immigrants must work harder to overcome hardship... I know that there is discrimination, racism, but you can't let that bother you.... God has brought us here, and God will lead us farther. (Portes *et al.* 2006:281)

These social networks provide important resources to potential migrants in home

---

<sup>45</sup> The research took part to these regular morning devotions as part of participant observation. These devotions are mostly conducted by lay leaders on a **rotational** basis.

country or elsewhere. Depending both on the socio-economic status and the type of relationship between the individuals involved social networks provide onsite general information about the receiving county and/or funding for the envisaged journey. As Portes *et al.* (2006:16) indicate, ‘the first reason that the poorest of the poor seldom migrate is that they lack the necessary contacts and information to make such a move meaningful’. Similarly, this study revealed that some migrants came to South Africa because they were not able to go where they intended to go prior to leaving their homeland due to inability to secure a visa or to raise enough fare for their long and often costly journey. The following statements were collected from respondents belonging to this strand:

It was so hard for me to get a visa to Europe. Then I got good news from my friends in South Africa to come and improve my qualifications. (Respondent 12)<sup>46</sup>

It was not my vision to come down here. I have a dream to go to Canada. I have been checking everything on internet and I like Canada especially for the sake of studies. (Respondent 21)

It was not my own choice. Friends convinced me to come. My first choice was to go to Europe. In fact, South Africa was not my plan A but plan B. (Respondent 08)

My first destination was USA. I only wanted to come to SA as a transit point. It was not my choice to stay here. (Respondent 32)

I did not choose to come here. I was supposed to go to US to pursue military studies. But during that time (looting period) bursaries were unfortunately stopped. I had already done with my Basic English lessons but I was refused to sit for the test because military relationships between Congo and US were unexpectedly brought to a standstill due to political upheavals in our country. I

---

<sup>46</sup> The respondent was enrolled in Engineering bridging course at one of the Universities in Johannesburg but was not able to continue with his studies due to lack of funding.

came here because it was difficult for me to get a visa to go to Europe and I heard that it was very easy to get a visa from here. Therefore, I came down here. (Respondent 26 – a church deacon)

I was informed that South Africa is a country through which one can easily transit. I did not have any intention to stay here. If God is gracious to me, I want to get out of South Africa and go to another country where life conditions are better than in South Africa, for instance Australia, New Zealand, etc. (Respondent 34)

Earlier studies conducted among various migrant groups including Congolese in Johannesburg portray Johannesburg as a strategic world-class city of transit for some migrants. In their diagnostic study of partnerships between the poor and local government in Johannesburg, Everatt *et al.* (2004) point out that,

For most, the inner city is not a place of neighbourhoods where residents envisage their futures in comfortable settings and in which they are therefore prepared to invest energy and resources for the long term; rather, it is a place to be used for whatever it can give, a temporary way-station on a journey elsewhere, to be left as soon as maximum benefit at the least cost can be extracted. (Everatt *et al.* 2004:27)

In a similar vein, Preston-Whyte (2006:336) maintains that ‘for many, cities are merely sites of trade and transit, not belonging’. In his study of African migration in the inner-city Johannesburg, Simone (2001:165) convincingly concludes that,

Johannesburg is simply ‘there’, on air-routes connecting it with a large number of African cities. It is not viewed as a permanent home but rather as a temporary place of opportunity as it becomes an increasingly important player in a broad range of commercial and financial networks. (Simone 2001:165)

Simone’s above conclusions were later confirmed by Landau (2006:137) whose empirical longitudinal study revealed a generalised tendency among migrants to see Johannesburg as a site of temporary residence.

### 4.3. Pre-migration religious and cultural patterns

#### 4.3.1. Religious patterns

As stated in the introduction to this chapter migrant's pre-migration background plays a pivotal role in social, cultural, and religious integration. This study revealed that migrants with high levels of church involvement are more likely to display low interest in visiting or integrating into local churches than those with moderate religiosity. Fear of spiritual deculturation or 'prostitution' (so some call it) and loyalty to ethnic church creed are overriding reasons for this religious conservatism. Several statements such as the following epitomise this trend:

The training I received from my church back home cannot be changed. If I go to a South African church there are many things that differ from our church and thus I run the risk to depart from the things I was taught in Congo. (Respondent 18)

It is a matter of spiritual engagement. Church is like a woman. We have to avoid a spiritual prostitution. Problems are everywhere. Some members had left us but they came back again! (Respondent 27)

*Sisikii roho yangu inanituma kuenda huko* (I do not feel like going there). (Respondent 30) .

They do not yet understand Christianity (e.g. Shembe, etc...). Their way of praying and dressing is different from ours. I have seen them on TV. For example, they wear pieces of animal skins while praying. Maybe they worship other deities than the God we worship. (Respondent 32)

South African churches are not serious. For them going to church is like sitting down and eat pap or drink water. (Respondent 33)

Asked to mention what makes Congolese migrants to join Yahweh Shammah

Assembly, one of the church leaders explained:

The simple reason is that the church is a francophone church. First, we had South Africans but keeping South Africans for six months is a miracle! They are not stable at all. They like liberty, and they are somehow lost when we preach about holiness. We have a different culture; they are too free insofar as spirituality is concerned. We even had one of them who sung in church choir and she left. Others just come looking for financial assistance.

English people are not like us. They act by feelings and they are introverts. You can bring 30 South Africans in the church today and tomorrow they run away. They are not patient. For instance, a South African choir member got married to a Congolese brother few years ago but now they are no more coming to church. (Respondent 26 – a member of church leadership)

Another group of respondents expressed their disposition and readiness to integrate into local churches but some of them feel that such a mixture would to some extent compromise their original faith:

There are at the same time advantages and disadvantage. First, mixing will create union. But the danger here is that it is very difficult to keep the doctrine of the church without compromising it, because there will be a conflict between the cultural and the spiritual springing from the mixture of two different cultures in the same church. (Respondent 32)

People have tendency to speak about their cultures using their mother tongues. They greet each other and you are left aside. Moreover, they take the church as a place of social or cultural meeting. They are less interested in spirituality. Culture comes before religion and there is much mixture of tradition and religion. They even confess this in the church; they are not ashamed to talk about their ancestors during church services. Another thing I do not like in those churches is those stories of boy/girl friends, and unfortunately many churches in South Africa do not condemn such sinful relationships. (Respondent 22 – from a rural area)

You know there are many doctrines, for example, we do not drink alcohol while in another church they may allow it. In one church they give tithes while other churches do not consider it; others believe in ancestors and worship them. (Respondent 36)

We cannot take a soul and send it somewhere else. What we do is to make effort in speaking and using English in our church. We have noted that South Africans that join us do not feel comfortable; they feel strangers vis-à-vis us. It is very hard to mix. In addition we have two different cultures and joining them together becomes very hard or would take long time to achieve. (Respondent 19)

– a member of church leadership)

#### **4.3.2. ‘Theology of inclusion’ and ‘Theology of exclusion’ (Germond 1997)**

The above statements bring to the fore the problem linked to the binary conception of 'low versus high spirituality' on the one hand, and 'low versus high culture' on the other hand. These cultural and spiritual confrontations have potential implications on the process of integration into majority group churches. In his exploration of heterosexism, homosexuality and the Bible, Germond (1997:188) explains that such doctrinal 'binary oppositions' stem from what he hermeneutically calls 'theology of inclusion' versus 'theology of exclusion'. Unlike the theology of exclusion, which tends to include some by excluding others often on subjective grounds, the theology of inclusion prescribes that 'all people are included in God's household and are to be welcomed into the church' (Germond 1997:188). Similarly, in his study of Ghanaian churches among diasporic communities, Tonah (2007:17) points out that 'the Ghanaian Catholic community in Germany [...] had a long struggle with the indigenous Catholic church before being able to bring their particular culture, history and experience into their Catholic faith'. Portes *et al.* (2006) document a similar scenario where some migrant religious groups were not very well accepted in the American Catholic church because of their religious traditions (Portes *et al.* 2006:333). In her study of African identity in Asia, Jayasuriya (2008:17) notes that in a bid to perpetuate their culture and religion 'Africans held on to their religious beliefs, expressing them through spirit possession ceremonies'.

#### 4.3.3. Comparing pre-migration and current religious commitment

This section outlines the comparison between the level of migrant's religious commitment before leaving home country and his current commitment within Yahweh Shammah Assembly. Briefly, the study revealed that, for at least half of the migrants the level of their current religious involvement has drastically decreased compared to their previous spiritual commitments in their respective home churches. The main reasons for this functional shortcoming include work, studies and other personal reasons such as lack of transport to come to church or to do evangelistic visits around, and non-recognition of the member's spiritual gifts by the church leadership<sup>47</sup>. Almost a half of the participants declared that they are 'too busy' to get time to take active part in various church activities.

My church commitment has decreased. We are in a country where everything is calculated. No time to waste because time is money. You have to pay rent (rent burden) whereas in Congo I entirely depended on my parents and therefore had much time for the church. Here we have become like Sunday Christians. Here life is hard but there is no excuse at all. (Respondent 32)

Less active. I am always on job alert; wherever they call me for a job I quickly run there. Even if they call me on a Sunday I have to go anyway. (Respondent 22)

Less active because I am no more regular in the church due to lack of time. I even work on Sundays. I only have one day off (Monday) a week and one Sunday a month. (Respondent 35)

---

<sup>47</sup> For instance one respondent disappointingly indicated:

I have become less active because I am not recognised as a servant of God by the church. I am an ordinary Christian. In addition, I am too busy. I must win my bread. I don't have enough time for the church; I have to fight in order to survive. (Respondent 09 – from another nationality)

In Congo, I was evangelist in charge of the department of youth and intercession, but now the only role I have in the church is to sing. I do not have time but the leadership system wouldn't allow me neither. (Respondents 21 – a church choir member)

Less active because of work. The job I am doing (restaurant waiter) takes almost all my time; I work five days, from 10:00 to midnight. (Respondent 23)

Less active. Life here is difficult; you have to work hard. You do not have time with God. Back home I used to go to church every day. (Respondent 33)

Less active. I am no more serving God regularly as I used to, and I myself feel I have lost something. I am working all the time. (Respondent 18)

Less active due to time constraints. I only work night shifts. I only go to church on Sunday. I do not participate into other church activities. Back to Lubumbashi, I used to preach, lead prayers, and get involved in all the programmes of the church. I remember, shortly after my arrival here in Johannesburg a young Congolese warned me: '*Mboka ya bana na bana* (this is a place for children only); *Tata te, mama te* (there is neither father nor mother); every man for himself. If your father were here, he could help you. I am a child, so are you too. How can I help or how can you help me?' His words scared me a lot. (Respondent 34)

In his work on religious beliefs and the evolution of immigrant congregations, Tonah (2007) found a similar trend. He points out that attendance to church meetings and services in immigrant congregations was very often low 'partly due to the heavy work schedule of many members' (Tonah 2007:13).

Other members however confirmed that they have become more active in Yahweh Shammah Assembly than they used to be in their homeland. It is however worth noting that the measurement of level of religious involvement, to some extent, differs among members. Some members define high level of commitment in terms of increased actual participation into different programmes and activities of the church. Other members, in contrast, understand the level of commitment in terms of the amount of individual sacrifice or efforts invested in these activities within the limits of time constraints. This means that some respondents could still say he is more actively committed to God's work than they used to be back home even if they only spend fewer hours in church

businesses compared to the past.

More active. Though I am not regular in the church activities yet I consider myself as more active here than I was in Congo. You see I have to work to pay out my rent and for food and I also manage to get time for the church. Even if it is a few times I do consider it as a sacrifice on my part. I am at the same level as somebody in Congo who has nothing else to do and hence would spend all the day in prayer at the church. We need to take into account the contrasted realities of the two countries. Many people here in South Africa have deserted their God because of work. As for me I am trying to have some time, little be it, with God. For me this is already a big thing. (Respondent 36)

More active, because in my country they were many things I couldn't see, such as rape, robbery, drugs, regular crime, wearing shorts, etc. I have now grown spiritually mature because I have to face all these new challenges; there are many temptations to conquer. (Respondent 04)

Same as before. Here everything is costly – rent, taxes, etc. However, the conscience does not accuse us. My irregularity in the church does not mean the lack of love toward my God. Even in Congo, people are not regular in the church despite the high unemployment rate in the country. Thus, I cannot say 'more' or 'less' active. (Respondent 37)

The discussion of levels pre-migration and post-migration religious participation is paramount to understanding Congolese migrants' spiritual life. The next section looks at different ways Congolese migrants appraise and scale their spiritual status against the host society's faith.

#### **4.3.4. Spiritual scaling: Low versus high religiosity**

Non-Western Christians frequently and often vehemently defend and valorise their own unique congregation lives and cultural influences, in which the local context creates conditions that they regard as spiritually superior or at least culturally and contextually appropriate. (Howell 2003:246).

As earlier discussed, most of migrants transplant both their culture and religious beliefs in the host society. Thus, the encounter and interaction between 'foreign' and 'host' beliefs need further exploration. Arguably, the incorporation of migrants' faiths into

host religious institutions will largely depend on whether these congregations are open and willing to welcome and integrate the newcomers and whether migrants themselves are religiously flexible and willing to fellowship with them. Although most of the respondents claim cultural, linguistic and religious similarity between them (homophily principle), yet there are significant differences as regards the way they perceive their culture and religion and react to the host religiosity and culture. Those who consider as highly spiritual likely display negative attitudes toward local churches on various grounds, ranging from 'wrong' beliefs and practices, witchcraft, ancestral worshipping, syncretism, secularisation of religion to indecent dressing. For instance, replying to the question whether it is important for migrants to have their own place of worship or to mix with South Africans in domestic churches, some respondents indicated:

It would be good to mix for sake of integration. But many South African churches do not pray like ours; for instance Universal Church, Zion church, Shembe, etc. We are different in many ways. (Respondent 31)

They do things like *marabouts* (witches). They are lots of dramas around cloths, pots, etc. We are not at the same 'faith' level. Many do not believe in God. They believe that magic is more powerful than God. They use magic since at small age. They have been initiated to it through incantation. This magic is rooted in their culture: here people are easily attracted by what they see. It (magic) is also attached to poverty and laziness. Here the rule is that you do nothing you have nothing. (Respondent 13)

There is at the same time an advantage and a disadvantage. First, mixing will create union. But the danger here is that it is very difficult to keep the doctrine of the church without compromising it, because there will be a conflict between the cultural and the spiritual springing from the mixture of two different cultures. (Respondent 32)

They mix so much tradition with God. For them they cannot break away with ancestors and sacrifices. For them you can be 'born again' and at the same time have a boy or girl friend. They also wear anyhow, even in the church. I cannot sit by a girl wearing mini-skirt; otherwise, she is going to attract me and entice me into sin. (Respondent 36)

In Amisi and Ballard's (2005) study, 'frequent mention was made of the way in which local women wear more revealing clothes, unmarried couples live together, and children disrespect their parents' (Amisi *et al.* 2005:13). For a Congolese believer, dressing code does matter. More particularly as regards church, you cannot wear anything and anyhow and go to [a Congolese] church. One informant (a South African woman and member of a Congolese Church) in Nzayabino's (2010) study of one of Congolese Churches in Yeoville, Johannesburg expresses her difficulty to integrate into the church mainly due to her dressing style in the following words:

[...] the only problem we have lies with the foreign [Congolese] women who do not feel comfortable when we are around; they tell us to not wear short skirts, and command us to cover whatever ... Maybe, they think that we are going to take their husbands'. (Nzayabino 2010:7 – emphasis is mine)

Stressing the impact of clothing during the process of integration, Huisman and Hondagneu-Sotelo (2005) discuss the challenges clothing may cause when two culturally different groups come into contact:

Dress holds different meanings for different groups. When people from one particular national or regional context migrate as a group, the audience changes, and they often encounter radically different gendered forms of clothing used for self and group presentation. They may cling to their original dress, they may embrace new gendered dress standards, or there may be family and community discord about the pace of change. Immigrant women's dress may come under special scrutiny from within the community as well as from outsiders. Tendencies are never absolute, and resettled migrants and refugees must assess what they stand to gain and what they stand to lose by either clinging to or adopting new ways of gendered dress. (Huisman *et al.* 2005:45-46).

In his study of Mexican-US transnational social space, Wilson (2007) points out that some people 'ceased to wear homemade clothing that denoted a specific locality and position in the socio/'racial' hierarchy [...] and adopted a more American way of dress'(Wilson 2007:41). For Mexican immigrants, Wilson (2007:41) argues 'change in

way of dress has generally been explained as indicating urbanisation, advancing modernity, integration into the wider society and national economy'. More specifically Wilson's research revealed some dress-related disagreements where 'some church members want to maintain and emulate the dress of their social/cultural betters while others want to look like their host neighbours who seem to care not so much about their way of dressing in the church (Wilson 2007:41; see Sanger 2009).

Likewise, in Congolese community dressing style has both cultural and spiritual meaning. In his extensive study of immigrants' intercultural communication, Jandt (2007:380) points out that 'the language and clothes say, 'I'm somebody'. Similarly, in Congolese context, the kind of clothes you wear and the way you dress will likely reveal who you are. In many African as well as Asian societies, clothing is one of the most common cultural identifiers besides language, music or dance, and culinary. Jandt (2007:426) rightly notes that 'clothing can be a nonverbal communication message'. A number of respondents (particularly males) confessed that the way South African women's dress sometimes induce them into sin. For instance, when asked to compare the level of his religious commitment back home with current involvement at YSA, one respondent answered:

I have become less active because I am no more regular in the church due to lack of time. I even work on Sundays. I only have one day off (Monday) a week and one Sunday a month. Because of this, I am faced with lots of distractions and possibilities of sinning. Look for example at the way South African girls dress; you only look at them and immediately you sin! (Respondent 35)

In Matsinhe's (2009) study of anti-African patriotism and xenophobia in South Africa, one respondent from Congo describes how South African police officers identify some

foreigners: '[T]hey use language and the way you look, also the dress code... because people from Congo, from Nigeria... you can see how they dress' (Matsinhe 2009:138-139). Another Congolese who participated in Swyngedouw and Swyngedouw (2009) study of Congolese diaspora in Brussels describes how dressing style is something that is traditionally embedded in Congolese's mentality. Speaking of Matonge, a famous place in the outskirts of Brussels known to accommodate many migrants mainly from Africa, the respondent indicated:

[...] I mean when I go there and I hear the people talking there: Lingala, not much Swahili, so a whole lot of Lingala from Kinshasa. And yes you see how they are doing, how they are dressed, the moaning, the bringing down of the price and stuff. That is really the Congolese mentality. You always cheer up for a bit when you are going there. (Swyngendouw *et al.* 2009:86)

As the following respondents point out in their statements, Congolese tend to consider themselves as highly prayerful people compared to South Africans: '*It is important to attend a Congolese church because the pastor knows very well that Congolese like praying*' (Respondent 24). Asked about what he does not like of the local churches another participant replied: 'They don't know God. They mix God with other things, such as 'Sangoma' and other kinds of witchcraft' (Respondent 33). To the same question, another respondent replied: '*They have high complacency with regard to sin. Also, Churches become empty or even close their doors during vacation*'. A number of earlier studies that included Congolese community among other migrant groups depict a similar trend. For instance, in their study of [Congolese] refugee organisations in South Africa, Amisi *et al.* (2005) found that

In face of xenophobic hostility, Congolese refugees respond with defiant pride in their culture – something they believe is not only valid but is actually *better*

than their new cultural environment. Rather than accepting the denigration heaped on them, they reverse the hierarchy of inferiority, placing themselves at the apex. In effect, they create a 'society outside society, a world of their own', which rejects 'both the activities and the value system of mainstream society' (Amisi *et al.* 2005:17).

Similarly, in their study of diasporic citizenship among Congolese in Brussels, Swyngedouw and Swyngedouw (2009) points out that Congolese 'carry their Congolese origin with pride in Belgium'. Illustratively, one participant in their study proudly explained his 'Congolese-ness':

Being Congolese is doing 'the good', that is the definition of being Congolese. They also do evil, that is obvious, but the Congolese have really pushed to do good. [...] Of course, I am more than proud to be Congolese. If God would recommence the world, I would ask him to be always Congolese. (Swyngedouw *et al.* 2009:82)

In response to the question whether he considers himself as part of South African or Congolese community, one respondent replied: 'I belong to the *Congolese community* because '*Je suis Congolais d'origine*' (*I am Congolese by origin*) (Respondent 07).

Besides religious differences, cultural dissimilarities between the two groups were also identified as major barriers to full integration of some Congolese migrants into local churches. That is, migrants who display strong spiritual and cultural sensibility are more unlikely to incorporate into or collaborate with domestic religious institutions than those who are religiously and culturally moderate. Both groups coexist in YSA. The next section looks at cultural background patterns where a cultural scaling was also identified. Gender role binaries are also highlighted.

#### **4.4. Cultural patterns**

##### **4.4.1. Discourses of cultural scaling: low versus high culture contexts**

A growing body of literature underscores the pivotal role culture plays in the process of integration of migrants in the host societies. Culture, as well as religion, saliently remains a portable capital asset for most refugees who have lost everything at homeland. Drawing on Martin's work on charismatic churches, Meyer (2004:461) confirms that 'Charismatic Christianity is the portable identity of people in diaspora'. This study revealed that culture and religion are often inextricably intertwined. In addition, despite the commonly accepted principle according to which 'each culture is unique' and therefore, no culture can be thought to be better than the other, cultural discourses within Yahweh Shammah Assembly seem to override this universal cultural code by overrating their culture. In their study among Congolese refugee organisations in South Africa, Amisi *et al.* (2005:17) argue that 'ethnic networks amongst Congolese refugees assert a kind of uncritical ethnic essentialism based in a sense of historical rootedness and authenticity'. Asked whether it is important to maintain Congolese culture and traditions or to adopt South African culture, one respondent promptly replied:

Better to maintain our culture because South Africans do not have culture. They adopt the culture of white people. These stories of boy/girl friendships I can never tolerate such behaviour. But here people take it as normal, even for married people. (Respondent 23)

Promiscuity, high level of complacency and tolerance toward crime and other sinful behaviours (especially regarding the acceptance of homosexuality), and unreligious

behaviour (Landau and Haupt 2007:12) are the most recurrent charges migrants file against South African society. Jandt (2007:155) rightly notes that ‘cultures often do not share the same experiences’.

Hofstede (1993:89) maintains that ‘all societies are unequal, but some are more unequal than others’. That is, people who are culturally conservative and intolerant tend to erect cultural fortresses around them, walls which in principle cannot be justified. In his study of intercultural communication, Jandt (2007:46) argues that a ‘multicultural person is one who respects cultures and has tolerance for differences’. Describing the dimensions of culture, Jandt (2007) particularly distinguishes between ‘individualist cultures and ‘collectivist cultures’. Whilst ‘individualist cultures stress self-direction and self-achievement, collectivist cultures stress ingroup loyalty and conformity’ (Jandt 2007:160). Cultural superiority can be depicted through several statements from the participants. Asked whether it is important for Congolese children to maintain Congolese culture or adopt South African culture, some respondents replied:

They have to adopt and adapt to our Congolese culture and traditions because South African culture is not good. I don’t like this kind of girl-boy friendships for instance. (Respondent 02)

I prefer Congolese culture to South African culture. South African culture is a bit bizarre especially with regard to teenage girls. They are given lots of freedom. In my culture, it is not the same. I have the right to educate my child until the age of 20-25. Here teenagers do whatever they like. Basic education is completely flawed. (Respondent 07)

They must maintain Congolese culture. Here children live in promiscuity –not in liberty. Children do not respect their parents. Our culture gives liberty – not libertinage. South African culture promotes libertinage. (Respondent 17)

Us, we have our culture. What is best we take. We can’t copy whatsoever. First

us... as the Jewish tradition prescribes. We have our tradition in the Bible.  
(Respondent 16)

For this category of migrants, the level of cultural accommodation or ‘cultural penetration’ (Portes *et al.* 2006:18) becomes relatively slim. In their study of Congolese refugee organisations in South Africa, Amisi *et al.* (2005:13) found ‘a sense of incompatibility between refugee culture and local culture [and] at times [an] outright antipathy towards local culture, which is seen to be permissive’. More particularly their study revealed that ‘South Africans are seen to be more Western, resulting in a lack of respect towards elders’ (Amisi *et al.* 2005:13) and outsiders. Similarly, in their study among Haitian immigrants in United States, Basch *et al.* (1995:195) reported that ‘eight-five percent of the leaders interviewed said that Haitians should maintain their own culture in the United States and their emphasis on cultural persistence was linked to their identification with the future of Haiti’.

#### **4.5. Gender-based barriers to integration**

A growing number of cultural studies point out the central role gender plays in creating power relations and cultural distances within a particular society. Gender binary issues occur both in secular world and religious domain, albeit at different levels and with differing manifestations. For instance, in some Muslim cultures – which are essentially male dominated - gender equality may not mean ‘sameness’ in terms of roles and responsibilities between men and women. By contrast, the dominant conventional view in these cultures consists in that, ‘the rights and responsibilities of women are equal to those of men but not identical with them’ (Jandt 2007:227). The subtle

justification for this gendered misinterpretation is that ‘women are deprived in some ways but are compensated in other ways’ (Jandt 2007:227). Eventually, the question remains about how precise and fair are the indicators used to measure this de facto compensation. In these ‘masculine cultures’, there is no clear reasons why for instance a Muslim man is legally (by ‘Sharia’) permitted to marry up to four wives at once, while a woman can only marry one man (Jandt 2007:252).

Contemporary as well as pre-modernist scholarly literature on religion in general, and church history in particular overwhelmingly replete with the endless issue of gender in/equality. Although the discussion of this topic seems to fall beyond the ambit of this study, yet it is important to find out whether the rhetoric of ‘gender binarity’ (Schein 2004:438) does occur among members of YSA and their impact on the integration of migrants. In his study among Hmong refugees in United States, Schein (2004) maintains that ‘along with economic circumstances, gender is another axis along which the ‘refugee’ is differentiated’ (Schein 2004:457). Discourses from respondents revealed that gender equality remains problematic even within post-modern religious bodies. More importantly, the study revealed that the inextricable embeddedness of religion into cultural tenets gives gender inequality both cultural and spiritual justifications. The following statements suggest how gender issues shape the process of cultural integration of the members of YSA:

They only sing in Zulu. When I asked them why they don’t use English they never answered me [...]. I also don’t like the way women are wearing and some churches allow homosexual marriages. (Respondent 04)

Through these activities I am discovering many things about myself. I now

know that, as a woman there are many things I can do. God can change my thinking. Not only men can work. God did not say men only shall go. I am learning this through the teaching I am getting here. (Respondent 10 – a female)<sup>48</sup>

What I do not like is that women are not allowed to preach whereas the Bible says in the time to come God will pour my spirit on men and women and they shall prophesy. Women are denied access to main posts of responsibilities within this church. (Respondent 39 – a medical doctor - female)<sup>49</sup>

Our pastor invites somebody he knows very well. For example, our next door Nigerian church allows women to preach – the pastor’s wife preaches in that church as well – but us, we cannot allow such practice in our church. Women cannot climb up the pulpit to preach! (Respondent 22)

The above statement lends to ask following questions: What happens when religion and culture conflict? Or, when the Bible says ‘YES’ and the culture ‘NO’ to women’s priesthood? In this context, there is a room to think that, either the biblical creed is being misunderstood and hence misinterpreted, or simply cultural imprints take precedence over religion. Since recent emergence of feminist movements across the globe and the post-modernist rhetoric on the promotion of human rights and gender equality in all spheres of public life there is increasing debate around women’s empowerment both within secular and religious realms. Religious and cultural practices have been identified as main roots of gender inequalities and therefore, potential

---

<sup>48</sup> The respondent alludes to what is commonly referred to in the Bible as ‘The Great Commission’ found in the gospel of Matthew, chapter 28, from verses 18 to 20. The portion reads as follows:

<sup>18</sup>Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given o me.

<sup>19</sup>Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Matthew 28:18-20 – New International Version).

<sup>49</sup> The respondent is here referring to the biblical prophecy in the book of the prophet Joel, chapter 2, from verses 28 to 29. The passage reads thus:

<sup>28</sup>And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. <sup>29</sup>Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. (Joel 2:28-29 – New International Version)

obstacles to achieving viable gender equality and women's empowerment in many societies. In his examination of cultural dimensions of masculinity versus femininity, Hofstede (cited in Jandt 2007:171) found that 'women's social role varied less from culture to culture than men's'. In some societies, women's involvement is often undermined or even resisted in a number of key activities in the church on cultural or religious grounds or a combination of both factors. For instance, in her study of 'Zar Cult' in northern Sudan, Boddy (1989:5) notes that, due to the 'localized version of Islam ostensibly controlled by men [...], gender asymmetries [...] speak with 'muted' voice'. Similarly, a study conducted in some Hindu immigrant churches in the United States revealed that 'when a move was afoot to include women in the *Hindu* temple's governing board, word had to be sent back to India requesting authorization from Hindu leaders there' (Portes *et al.* 2006:314).

Paradoxically, a number of respondents (mainly females) seem not to believe in gender equality. More particularly, they perceive the promotion and protection of both women's freedom and children's rights as culturally irrelevant and subversive. Asked whether it is important for migrants to maintain their own culture or to adopt South African culture, some respondents replied:

Important to maintain Congolese culture. Here children do only have rights; they do not have duties. In addition there is high juvenile delinquency and parents do not have right to chastise their children, a situation I cannot tolerate. Furthermore, here it is only women who have monopoly in the judiciary system. In South African Constitution, it is written that there is equality between sexes but in practice, it is not so especially with regard to matters relating to marriage. Normally, it is a man who marries a woman and not the other way around. Here they follow matrimonial system and in our country we follow patrimonial system and I cannot change. (Respondent 32 – an economist graduate woman)

In a similar vein, in his study among Mexican immigrants in the United States, Wilson (2007:52) found that some Mexicans ‘had been greatly shocked by the freedom of women in the US, finding American practices of divorce and birth control repellent and against the teachings of the Catholic Church’ (Wilson 2007:52). When another respondent was asked to say whether it is important for migrants’ children to maintain their parents’ culture or to adopt South African culture, she indicated:

Yes, they should maintain our culture. The South African cultural system is not good. Children are not even afraid to bring their boy/girlfriends home. Our culture can never tolerate such a immorality. It is therefore important to maintain Congolese culture. Another thing is that in South African men do not enjoy full human rights. Only women and children have rights; men have no more rights. In Congo, men cannot be arrested and imprisoned for domestic matters; they tell then to fix their matters amiably. (Respondent 28 – a female)

It is however worth noting that critics against South African ‘feminist culture’ does not solely occur within migrant audience. A number of studies that involve both migrant and local communities reveal that some local citizens share similar reaction. For instance in Sanger’s (2009) study of xenophobic attitude, gender and male violence, a South African male respondent complained about government’s developments in protecting women’s rights in following terms: ‘In the past I used to sort my family - whether I was beating her, it’s the way I solve my house problem’ (Sanger 2009:11).

The statements above highlight Hofstede’s (1980) model of ‘dimensions of culture’<sup>50</sup> earlier discussed in the study’s theoretical framework. In this case, ‘power distance’ and ‘masculine’ versus ‘feminine’ culture dimensions are defined. The discourse of the

---

<sup>50</sup> For more details about Hofstede’s dimensional model of culture, see chapter three which discusses the theoretical framework and definition of key concepts

respondents suggest that Congolese society ranks among other African societies with high masculine culture, that is, those 'that strive for maximal distinction between what women and men are expected to do' (Jandt 2007:171) and where women often occupy inferior or subordinate status in main areas of social, economic and political life. Jandt (2007:231) rightly notes that 'the status of children, women, and families in diverse countries tells us much about the cultures of those countries'. In other words, both gender power relations and the level of power distance between children and their parents are saliently pivotal to the understanding of cultural dynamics of a particular ethnic group or community.

Jandt (2007:250) claims that 'African societies are largely patriarchal societies'. In Congo and many other African patriarchal societies alike<sup>51</sup>, 'domestic violence is treated as a private, family matter' (Jandt 2007:239), where extra-judiciary arrangements are traditionally and even lawfully permitted. Similar patriarchal practices are also found in other societies beyond African continent, mostly in Asia and Latin America. Jandt (2007:239) points out that 'many countries have no laws on violence against women'. He gives an example of Latin America, where in most cases 'the law excuses the murder of a woman by her husband if she is in the act of adultery' (Jandt 2007:239). Despite the plethora of cases that depict systematic denial, abuse or infringement of women's rights, yet 'the naming of male power within a patriarchal state and society is often hidden' (Sanger 2009:4). That is, 'the analytical discourses on

---

<sup>51</sup> Jandt (2007:250-256) gives a case of Zimbabwe where, for example, a Supreme Court issued an official ruling in 1999 declared that

'It is in 'the nature of African society that women are not equal to men. Women should never be considered adults within the family, but only as a junior male or teenager'.

violence, ranging between academia and the media, often hide the ways that masculinity is constructed in a patriarchal society and operates in invisible ways' (Sanger 2009:4).

Furthermore, the respondents quoted above tend to accuse South African system to be 'feminine-culture' in orientation. As discussed earlier, feminine cultures uphold gender equality with high concern for the weak, that is, mostly women and children (Jandt 2007:171). It is interesting to find out that Sanger's (2009) comparative study of xenophobic attitude, gender and male violence among both migrant and South African communities in Cape Town revealed a similar trend. Discussing some responses from South African male participants, Sanger reported:

Local men narrated how they felt emasculated due to an apparent espousal of women's rights in South Africa. These men lamented feelings of emasculation, claiming that the government was 'oppressing men's rights'. Consequently, they complained of a lack of respect by their wives and girlfriends, who were believed to have more rights than they have, which affected how they were able to 'discipline' them [...]. South African male participants felt that government 'interference' in family life, through the setting up of constitutional courts, hampered the ways in which men could control their wives and families; control they felt was an entitlement built through *lobola* processes and negotiations. [...] These kinds of beliefs were not restricted to South African men. Male migrants similarly believed that South African women were 'allowed' too much equality. They spoke of local women's independence, autonomy, lack of respect for men, and revengeful tactics. (Sanger 2009:10-11)

In conclusion, the analysis of migrants' pre-migration backgrounds revealed wide cultural and religious disparities between Congolese community and South African society. These incongruities essentially stem from subjective binaries that tend to scale religions against religions and cultures against cultures, in terms of 'low versus high' spirituality or 'bad versus good' culture respectively. The section also looked at the

conception of gender roles within the two communities. It is imperative to say, however, that the exploration of gender equality and women's empowerment within religious domain remains paradox and calls for more advanced exegetical and theological elaborations, which nevertheless fall beyond the ambit of this social enquiry. The next section discusses the impact of these dynamic features on the process of integration of migrants both into religious and secular life of the host society.

#### **4.6. Impact of pre-migration patterns on the process of integration**

The society of origin has been widely documented as one of the key factors influencing integration and segregation (Mesch 2002:916). Based on this premise, Mesch (2002) further maintains that motivation for migration can be 'reactive' or 'proactive'. While reactive migration 'refers to factors present in the country of origin that are negative in nature', proactive migration points to 'facilitating or enabling factors that are positive in nature' (Mesch 2002:916). These 'contrasting factors' are often referred to as 'push/pull factors' (Berry 1997:16) in migration scholarship. According to Mesch's survey, 'immigrants whose motivation for migration was proactive are considered more likely to get involved with the general population and to avoid neighbourhoods with a high percentage of residents who are immigrants'. Similarly, Berry (1997:16) argues that 'reactive' conditions while the 'proactive conditions are motivated by factors that are facilitating or enabling, and generally positive in character.

In a similar vein, but from a religious perspective, Portes *et al.* (2006:325) distinguish between 'linear affiliation' and 'reactive affiliation'. They argue that

[...] ethnic identities and affiliation could be linear or reactive, representing either a continuation of the cultural traditions learned and brought from the home country or an emergent product, created by the confrontation with different and frequently harsh realities in the host society (Portes and Rumbaut 2006:325).

Despite the fact that, in most cases, ethnic identification may sometimes seem superfluous in country of origin, it is widely documented that ethnic identification remains salient within diasporic communities. In their analysis of the role of immigrants in the process of assimilation, Scott *et al.* (1989:11) argue that 'it is only after arrival in the new country that some of them [immigrants], for social or political reasons, identify their 'ethnicity' in terms of former nationality' (emphasis is mine). Emphatically, Berry (1997:16) argues that 'the combination of political, economic, and demographic conditions being faced by individuals in their society of origin also needs to be studied as a basis for understanding the degree of *voluntariness* in the migration motivation of acculturating individuals'. Writing in the same line of thought, Van Hear (1998:256) comments that 'while transnational communities can be the source of useful sustaining networks and solidarity, there may also be profound divisions within them'. Drawing particularly on the case study of Sri Lankan Tamil in Switzerland, Van Hear (1998:256) argues that divisions of class, caste and place of origin among transnational communities 'may reproduce cleavages at home – and may indeed be one of the reasons for people to leave'.

In their study of cosmopolitanism and belonging in the city of Johannesburg, Landau and Haupt (2007:15) caution that, even among Somali traders – a more insular community – fragmentation, mistrust and other divisions often trump solidarity ties (see

also Al-Sharmani 2004:25). In fact, pre-migratory ethnic or religious antagonisms and asymmetries are likely to replicate among migrants in host communities, albeit perhaps with less intensity than in the country of origin. Indeed, as Connor (1989:906) explains:

Simply because persons have fled from the same country and, perhaps, from the same source of conflict, does not mean that they have much else in common or, indeed, that they are even compatible...; varying background characteristics and refugee-related experiences cause some refugees to be antagonistic toward others.

These conflicting behaviours, or 'diasporic fragmentations' (Turner 2007:65) and asymmetries (Schein 2004:438) are, however, more likely to happen or replicate within 'refugee' communities than within voluntary migrant communities (see Portes and Rumbaut 2006:129). That is, economic migrants, or 'apolitical immigrants' to (Portes *et al.* 2006:128) can associate and cohere more easily than political migrants or refugees who, unlike voluntary migrants, bring with them the unavoidable antagonisms attendant to refugee status (Connor 1989: 906; Amisi and Ballard 2005:16). Similarly, in his study conducted among immigrants in New York, Foner (1987:20) unequivocally points out that sometimes relationships between immigrant groups are amicable and cooperative, but sometimes they are tinged with conflict and tension linked to cultural and linguistic differences (see also Van Hear 1998:256; Al-Sharmani 2004:26; Johnson 1997:1287). Fangen (2006) came to identical conclusion in her study among Somali migrants in Norway. She found that 'humiliation occurring in the home country might continue in the new country, and new types of humiliating situations might develop between individuals from the home country in the new setting' (2006:69). Johnson (1997:1287) convincingly argues that significant identificational differences based on national origin diversity often exist among immigrants in the host society. For instance,

when one respondent was asked about anything he might not like in the church, he replied:

Yes I deplore the way musicians are being treated here. They sacrifice themselves but they earn nothing; they only tell them that God will reward them. In Congo they were told that they would be paid. Some of them have already left to join other local churches where they will be paid something. (Respondent 21)

It is however worthy noting that such divisions do not only occur between migrants and their compatriots back home. As Van Hear (1998) rightly notes 'divisions may also arise between the established populations of migrant origin and newcomers – including different cohorts of the same ethnic or national group' (Van Hear 1998:256). Van Hear makes his point in the following comment:

While much is made of the embrace of transnational networks, not all members of transnational populations see such networks as wholly beneficial. Indeed, there are many who wish to have as little to do with their co-ethnics as possible, not least because engagement with co-ethnics can involve enormous burdens of hospitality and assistance that it may be impossible to sustain, given the limited resources particularly of recently arrived migrants. (Van Hear 1998:256)

Asked about things he does not like in the church, one respondent indicated:

There are lots of stories I do not like such as the way women are dressed which is not acceptable in a church of God - married women with tight pants, miniskirts for small and young girls – and nothing is said about it; small groups that are formed according to the levels of education, income and wealth. Another thing I do not like is that a church is not a hospital. Why does the pastor come to sit in the church office and expect people to come and see him instead of him going out looking for the flock right where they are? Another thing is that all people do not know each other and do not always visit each other. We have got levels: those who came in 2000, 2004, etc, and those who have got cars, big businesses... and you can even see it on the pulpit! (Respondent 22)

The above statement, to some extent, reveals the existence of some divisive features based on social status, wealth, individual's migratory history and implementation of

cultural and spiritual code within the church. As discussed earlier, this study revealed that Congolese community have, to a greater extent, transplanted both their religious ways of worship and distinctive traditional dressing styles into the host society. The same way the Amish immigrants in the United States 'are often referred to as 'plain people' because of dress and lifestyle' (Jandt 2007:322), Congolese migrants are known for their remarkable cultural dressing style.

The respondent's statement further reveals the complexity of cultural uniformity and ethnic allegiance within a particular migrant community. In their study of Congolese refugee organisations in South Africa, Amisi and Ballard (2005:10) revealed that 'ethnicity remains a vital basis for identification' in these organisations. According to Amisi and Ballard's findings, there are about 17 different Congolese tribal groups in Durban, 11 in Cape Town, and many more in the city of Johannesburg, which is believed to harbour the biggest size of the Congolese migrants in South Africa (Amisi *et al.* 2005:10). In many cases, this tribal heterogeneity leads to the formation of subcultural cliques within the same national group, thus rendering the ideal of cultural uniformity more complex. Scott and Scott (1989:14) point out that 'while there may be some ways in which a culture expects and enforces uniformity of behaviour among its members – for instance, in rules of monogamy or polygamy – a great many other living patterns that distinguish cultures are sanctioned only loosely and selectively'. In other words, similarity in national or group identity does not necessarily entail similarity in cultural behaviour and attitude. More particularly during the process of integration, 'a particular individual may undergo assimilation in dress, integration in language and food preferences, separation in nuptial practices, and deculturation in superstitious

belief; but what happens to this individual is unlikely to be duplicated in the experience of another' (Scott *et al.* 1989:15; see also Jandt 2007:330). Drawing on this cultural fluidity, Scott *et al.* (1989:15) conclude that any attempt 'to consider [...] cultural patterns as 'rules' is to exaggerate both their universality and their rigidity' (Scott and Scott 1989:15). Oberg [1960] (2006:145) rightly notes that 'the culture of one's own nation is complex'; 'it [...] differs by region and class'. Moreover, 'individuals differ greatly in the degree in which culture shock affects them' (Oberg [1960] (2006:143). For instance, though most of the respondents prefer staying in place where many other migrants live, yet there are also those who choose to live in neighbourhoods with many South African citizens. In this respect, for instance, one respondent stated:

It is better to stay where people are willing to accept and help me. There are South Africans who are ready to help like those I was staying with before. It is our Congolese brothers who sometimes cause us to suffer. For example I know a Congolese who chased away his own brother who was staying with him! (Respondent 34)

Asked whether he considers himself as part of South African or Congolese community, another respondent indicated:

I consider myself as part of South African community because I do not share same opinions with Congolese but rather with autochthons. Here I follow Paul's example<sup>52</sup>: we need to identify with the people we are living with. I am trying to interact with many foreigners; I am the only Congolese where I am staying. (Respondent 21).

Discussing the complex dynamics of cosmopolitanism in Johannesburg, Landau and Haupt (2007) underline the need for migrants to incorporate themselves into host

<sup>52</sup>

The respondent makes reference to the Holy Bible where Paul, the apostle, writes:

To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but I am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. (1 Corinthians 9:20-21 - New International Version)

populations in their effort of integration. They argue that 'given that South Africans are seen as a privileged community given their rights to the city, it is the migrants who ultimately have the most to gain from insinuating themselves into citizens' families' (Landau *et al.* 2007:13). In a similar vein, Liu (2007:771) notes that in most cases immigrants' efforts 'to achieve a positive social identity are focussed on integrating into the host group, rather than remaining as a member of the 'stranger' (outgroup)'. Liu (2007) builds his integrationist viewpoint upon the theory of 'social identity'. According to the social identity theory 'membership in a high-status group [dominant group] is desirable because it may contribute to positive social identity' (Liu 2007:771 – emphasis is mine). Liu contends that such 'integration probably benefits immigrants more as it, among other things, provides them an opportunity to upgrade their group's lower social status' (2007:771). Individuals who belong to a group of subordinate status, Liu (2007:771) maintains, 'may either strive for a higher status by leaving their low status group or try to upgrade the status position of their group as a whole'. Liu notes, however, that 'in the case of immigrants, it is very difficult, if not impossible, for them to upgrade the status position of their ethnic groups as a whole, as they came to the host country from different walks of life and for various reasons' (2007:771).

Exploring the predictors of emigration, Scott *et al.* (1989:10-11) identify three classes of 'distinctive characteristics of migrants': 'those which distinguish emigrants within their countries of origin; characteristics which initially distinguish immigrants from native-born in their countries of destination; and distinctive characteristics which develop out of the immigrants' relationship to their new circumstances'. A number of factors, such as, immigration status, duration of residency in the host country, social

status or valuation, linguistic abilities and the circumstances under which migration occurred substantially shape both the relationships among migrants and the process of their integration in the host society (Johnson 1997:1290; Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner and Cain 2001:45). Similarly, in their study of Congolese organisations in South Africa, Amisi and Ballard (2005:3) found that 'Congolese refugees have, instead, atomised into ethnic groupings, linked to the language group and corresponding province from which they originated'. Moreover, besides what migrants themselves bring with them during displacement, Steven (2004:135) reaffirms that 'the connections that immigrants maintain to their country of origin through transnational ties continually infuse religious practices in their new country with practices from home'.

#### **4.7. Impact of religious reactivity on migrant's integration**

For the purposes of this study, religious attendance was measured through the degree of migrant's level involvement in church activities both in country of origin and in the host society, and through the application of Portes and Rumbaut's (2006) theory of 'religious reactivity'. According to religious reactivity, Portes *et al.* (2006:326) argue that religion may sometimes become reactive 'because of the failure of religious traditions brought from the home country to meet immigrants' needs and the presence of more attractive alternatives'. In other words, religion becomes *reactive* when it 'signals a break from the past' (Portes *et al.* 2006:326) when confronted with individual, institutional or structural challenges of the host society. In this context, religious reactivity becomes indirectly positive and potentially susceptible to increase migrant's proclivity to seek integration into local churches besides homeland-oriented ethnic congregations. More

often than not, immigrants' children display religious reactivity due to the 'dissatisfaction with home-country religious affiliations [...] or with parents themselves and attempts to move away from their traditions' (Portes *et al.* 2006:327). In his case study of online and offline transnational networks of Iranian and Turkish-Kurdish immigrants in the Netherlands, Matthi (2006) revealed that 'while older immigrants prefer content exclusively related to their cultural backgrounds, younger ones seem to want a broader variety' (2006:215), that is, they favour multi-layered identities (2006:211).

Similarly, in this study many of the respondents converted/broke away from their parents' religion to convert to Pentecostal faith because their former religion could no longer adequately respond to their new challenges and emerging needs. A significant number of respondents were raised in Roman Catholic faith before embracing protestant or evangelical confessions:

I was born in Roman Catholic family, then I changed to Pentecostal when I was young .(Respondent 33).

I was Catholic by birth and converted to Pentecostal in 1985. (Respondent 22).

I began serving the Lord in 1998 under the influence of my friends. I initially belonged to a Catholic Church (Respondent 23).

In their extensive study of various immigrant communities in the United States, Portes *et al.* (2006:328) point out that 'religious 'rebirths' may take the form of reembracing the parents' faith or adopting a new one'. More particularly their study revealed that 'evangelical Protestantism and, to a lesser extent, charismatic Catholicism plus non-orthodox religion are the favoured choices for such reactive conversions' (Portes *et al.*

2006:329). They argue that hierarchical character of Catholicism and the failure of some Catholic churches to respond actively to the emotional and economic needs of poor immigrants in the contemporary period have led to them to join evangelical congregations (Portes *et al.* 2006:326).

Conversely, when religious reactivity results from the 'confrontation of harsh realities in the host society' (Portes *et al.* 2006:325) migrants tend to insulate themselves from the latter by building religious ghettos often within their ethnic loci, thereby reducing their likelihood to integrate into the host community (See Mullins 1987; Mullins 1988; Winland 1994). Kvernmo *et al.* (2004:514) call this process 'self-labelling'. In this context, religious reactivity becomes indirectly negative as it avoids interaction and communion with the host by creating ethnic confinement and separation - inimical and inhibiting factors to successful integration.

The increasing recognition of the role immigrant churches play in the preservation of ethnic, cultural and linguistic identity has led a number of scholars to interrogate the traditional role of religious institutions in integrating migrants into the host society. While some of writers understand the church as an important integrative tool, others view it as a disintegrative or 'separatist' instrument because 'it limits migrants' potential and ability to explore multiple alternatives' (Winland 1994:35) within the host society (see also Mesch 2002:921). Quoting from Anderson and Frideres, Mullins (1987) describes the multifaceted conservative functions of religion in following terms:

[...] religion contributes to a sense of identity in an age of depersonalization; it may be a nationalistic force and assume the role of protector of ethnic identity; it promotes social integration, it attempts to validate a people's customs and

values through socialization; it affirms the dignity of ethnic group members who might be considered by nonmembers as having low status; it tends to be a pillar of conservatism; and it often encourages conscious social isolation from outsiders. (Mullins 1987:322)

In this study alike, several statements from respondents suggest that the confinement trend as described above is equally traceable within Yahweh Shammah Assembly. For instance, asked whether sometimes he does visit some other [local] churches around, some respondents replied:

No. First I do have a Congolese family, my church. Then if you find yourself comfortable in your community I do not see the reason to go to another foreign community. (Respondent 37)

No. The first time I came to this church I appreciated it. No need to go anywhere else. (Respondent 11)

No. I feel comfortable because I have found my Congolese brothers, and I can pray freely because I am with my fellows and understand the language very well. (Respondent 34)

Mesch (2002:921) maintains that 'the role of immigrants NGO in relation to social integration and ethnic identity has been questioned in several ways, and the NGO has been seen both as helping immigrants to integrate, through providing a community for them within the host society, and as creating a separatist environment'. For instance, when asked whether the church plays any role in helping migrants to integrate into South African society, one respondent (a businessman) stated:

No role. When I am in this church I see that I am in a Congolese church. I do not think this church could help me to integrate. We are only Congolese. I would rather go to a South African church if I want to integrate. (Respondent 33)

Similarly, using a case study of Amish<sup>53</sup> immigrants in the United States, a people perceived to display high level of religious, cultural and traditional conservatism, Jandt (2007:321) argues that 'religion provides a complete defining cultural identity for the Amish who have voluntarily chosen to live apart from the dominant cultures and resist acculturation'. In his study of the life-cycle of ethnic churches, Mullins (1988:218) notes that 'religious institutions are generally recognized as conservative and notoriously slow in making adaptations to changes in the social environment'. Mullins particularly points out that the problem of adaptation does frequently occur in 'foreign-oriented churches because of their organisation dependence upon a religious body overseas' (1988:218), as well as in immigrant churches that are culture and home-language centred. Exploring the dynamics of exclusion and religion in Johannesburg, Landau (2009) argues that

Religion often serves to stabilise and bind communities, simultaneously defining communities by providing avenues of incorporation and mechanisms of exclusion. Its ability to promote cohesion and resistance often becomes most tested and visible in the face of unbelieving or differently believing new arrivals. (Landau 2009:200)

---

<sup>53</sup> According to Jandt (2007:322), as a religious community Amish were historically named after the leader Jacob Ammann, a Swiss Mennonite bishop. In the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Amish broke away from the Mennonites, who had begun taking a more liberal view over the policy of shunning the excommunicated. As regards their daily socio-religious life, the Amish, Jandt (2007:322) explains, believe in complete submission to God and do not separate religion and life. The Amish home serves as the church. Every moment in Amish life is a religious one. As Anabaptists, the Amish believe in adult baptism and living apart from the world, preferring a simple lifestyle. Humility, obedience, simplicity, sharing and community cooperation are highly valued. Startlingly, 'the Amish do not pay or accept Social Security; elderly Amish remain in the family's home' (Jandt 2007:322). Amish children are not taught religion in the schools 'as it [religion] is believed to be too important to be taught there instead of in the family and church' (Jandt 2007:323). The Amish migratory history started in 1720s from Switzerland to Pennsylvania, and it is reported that more than 130,000 Amish immigrants live in North America (Jandt 2007:322). For a more detailed description of Amish religion and history, see Jandt 2007:321-326).

#### **4.8. Conclusion**

The aim of this chapter was to provide a detailed profiling and understanding of socioeconomic, cultural and religious background of the population of the study and their implication on post-migration dynamics. The analysis of migrants' pre-migration backgrounds revealed wide cultural and religious disparities between Congolese community and South African society. These incongruities essentially stem from subjective binaries that tend to scale religions against religions and cultures against cultures, in terms of 'low versus high' spirituality and 'bad versus good' culture respectively. The implications of these cultural and religious dynamics on the process of integration within local religious institutions were highlighted. Overall, the study revealed that both cultural and religious backgrounds significantly shape migrants' proclivity to integrate into the host community.

In this context, the study found that religious integration in local churches remains problematic mainly due to language and differing beliefs. Moreover, cultural and religious binaries (low versus high religiosity and low versus high context culture) were identified within Congolese community. Gender issues were also highlighted among inhibiting factors to integrating in local churches.

## **CHAPTER FIVE. UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter explores the multifaceted role Yahweh Shammah Assembly plays in the lives of Congolese community at large and its members in particular. Specifically the chapter demonstrates how the church shapes the production, reproduction, and preservation of both religious and cultural identities. The study revealed that negative perceptions migrants have of South African culture as a whole had significant repercussions on local churches. In other words, South African churches are screened and judged through cultural and traditional lenses rather than against biblical creed. In addition, this chapter looks at the involvement of the church in transnational networks and the impact this engagement has on the process of integration. The results reveal a significant involvement of YSA in church-based transnational activities ranging from visits to other churches in home country and abroad, issuing letters of invitation to prospective migrants to helping members in their transnational transactions.

### **5.2. Feeding the flock and fishing the lost**

This section looks at the level of members' involvement in church activities and how these involvements likely shape their daily lives. For the purposes of this study, religious participation refers to the involvement in church social events, such as wedding and birthday celebrations, funerals, and other partying occasions that take

place within the church. A great deal of these activities consist in extra-mural activities, which bring Yahweh Shammah Assembly members into contact with the rest of the heterogeneous community members, thereby facilitating their integration into the latter. The study found that apart from daily routine survival activities, a significant number of church members, especially those who are not full time in their secular businesses spend a considerable part of their time in church-related activities.

The involvement in various church activities significantly increases socialisation and solidarity among members and increasingly exposes them to their culture and traditions embedded in these activities. The study found that the participation of the church in social and cultural activities remains salient both for the welfare of the members and the expansion of the church because these involvements seem to be effective means of proselytising besides pulpit evangelism. Stressing the importance of church activities, Ammerman (2006:362) further argues that 'both in Europe and in the United States, people who are not themselves affiliated nevertheless expect religious institutions to be present to help them celebrate births and deaths and marriages'. In this study, most of the participants indicated they received assistance from Yahweh Shammah Assembly, ranging from material, moral, social, spiritual care to small businesses support. The following statements highlight the multifaceted role the church plays in the secular life of the members which underlines Weberian socio-economic consequences of religious affiliation. Asked whether the church plays any important role besides spirituality, one respondent replied:

Church is salient for the spirituality of the members, the spirituality that leads to social and economic welfare. Traditionally the church is not meant to do business but this conception is increasingly becoming obsolete. If for example

the church builds a school it obviously expects learners to pay school fees. (Respondent 26)

A moral support through our pastor. The pastor contacts a number of business partners in Europe and America whenever he goes overseas for my business. He is a good man. I came with a recommendation letter from my church to introduce myself to the pastor and I was welcome in the church. (Respondent 09)<sup>54</sup>

Another respondent who runs an import business and helps in the church's music department stated:

Yes, sometimes the pastor funds my business (import). I also made an album and the church substantially helped me in its production. (Respondent 20)

Other respondents recognise the moral support from the church through God's intervention in blessing members' businesses:

When I do not come to church I do not feel well. Prayers help me to do well in my business and plans. (Respondent 33)

Whenever there is a cleaning job (carpet, chairs) somewhere they call me. The church does also marketing for my cleaning business and I am grateful for that. (Respondent 32)

Religion helps me a lot in my social life. It helps me avoid sins. When I am about sinning, I immediately remember that I am a Christian and I stop there.

When we are together I feel the spirit of fraternity. The church helps me to avoid many bad things; I do not take alcohol and I avoid bad company. (Respondent 38)

Religion represents the balance/equilibrium for my life. I feel comfortably secure when I am in Christ. (Respondent 39 – a medical doctor)

If I had not prayed I am sure I would have died already. Prayer has given me peace. I have had lots of accidents. One day a car was about to hit me; if I had

---

<sup>54</sup> Back home the respondent is a member of Communauté des Eglises Evangelistes Missionnaires (CEEM). During interview the respondent often uses a French term *mon papa* ('my father') each time he refers to his home pastor. The colloquial 'papa' is commonly used in Congolese community, especially when addressing a male adult in a respectful way. Etymologically, the term 'papa' means 'father' but in Congo its original meaning has been culturally extended to other people irrespective of kindred relationships. When addressing a female adult, the word 'mama' is used instead of 'papa'.

not prayed I would have died that time. (Respondent 28)

The church helps me when I am in a material need. Also the church allows us to come together as mothers and discuss about how to survive here in Johannesburg. It encourages us to engage in small societies.... (Respondent 30)

In his analysis of Pentecostal and denominational Christianity from a 'glocal' perspective, Howell (2003:242) notes that in many cases 'sermon would be a means of promoting spiritual growth and moral improvement among the members'. Conceptualising prayer as a 'means of coping mechanism', Baker (2008) argues that 'prayer is not simply a ritual, but an action that participants believe has impact on their lives and world' (Baker 2008:169-170). Besides ordinary members, respondents from church leadership claim that the church significantly contributes to the general well-being of its members. For instance, asked to mention the reasons why he thinks Congolese join Yahweh Shammah Assembly, one respondent confidently replied:

Because of the language barrier. Many Congolese do not understand English. Secondly, the culture. A Congolese would feel better in a Congolese church rather than a South African church with different culture. Thirdly, assistance and support. Those who attend white churches do not get assistance but when they join their compatriots they feel comfortable to ask for assistance. (Respondent 19 – a member of church leadership)

Another respondent seems to confirm the application of Hirschman's (cited in Portes *et al.* (2006:301) theory of 'social functions of religion', which he summarises in the 'three Rs': Refuge, respect, and resources (See also discussion of Weber's economic consequences of religion). The respondent, who is a member of the pastoral team explains how the church encourages its members to integrate into the host society:

The church remains important for migrants because it teaches them to keep away from crime, to respect and value others and educates them on how to live a

better life. The church also helps them to be accepted by the State. We help them to get jobs especially through issuing letters of recommendation.

The church helps them to integrate into the society as well. We are encouraging each and every member to associate with the society in which he/she lives and to take full part into what is done in the society, that is, employment, businesses and studies unless the society itself [host society] puts barriers. That is why here in South Africa our children study and work. (Respondent 01- a member of church pastoral team)

Another respondent, who is also a member of leadership team, stresses on the potential contribution of the church to the development of the host country. When asked about the group of population they target in their evangelisation outreach, the respondent replied:

First, South Africans because we are in their country. If you are in a country God brought you there for a purpose. We must bring our contribution to the building of South Africa by converting them to God. (Respondent 14 – a member of church leadership team)

Similarly, asked about what the church does to help members to integrate into South African community, another respondent who is also a member of the church leadership replied:

We do encourage people to work to meet their basic needs. We preach to them the gospel and tell them to put it into practice, to implement it. ‘Hand of Compassion’ is there to help those in an emergency, disadvantaged and desperate church members. (Respondent 15 – a member of church leadership team)

The above statements lend substantial support to Weberian classical theory of ‘economic consequences of religious affiliation’ (see detailed discussion in chapter three). In her study conducted among two Pentecostal Churches in Durban area, Helgesson (2006:28) points out that pastors emphasise the responsibility of South African Pentecostals and evangelical Christians in the process of forming a ‘new South

Africa'. It is often argued that 'religion is more a social tradition than a conviction' (Jandt 2007:166) and therefore, 'Churches appear to be well placed' for 'mobilizing common interests' (Everrat *et al.* 2004:12).

In their study among immigrant communities in the United States, Portes *et al.* (2006) draw a comparative table (Figure 3) describing the areas of interventions and different approaches and strategies adopted by the secular state and religious institutions in the management of the processes of migration and integration.

Figure 3: Religion and immigrant incorporation: Integration effects

| Secular Side                                                                                                                                | Religious Side                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Economic and political conditions prompt individuals and families to emigrate.                                                           | 1. Churches, mosques, and so forth, in sending countries, guide migrants and facilitate their departure.                                                      |
| 2. Host societies adopt different attitudes toward newcomers, ranging from sympathy and support to open hostility.                          | 2. Religious institutions in host country support favourable receptions and counterbalance negative ones.                                                     |
| 3. Host country states adopt various policies to incorporate or exclude newcomers, affecting their choices for successful incorporation.    | 3. Religious organisations collaborate with authorities in promoting incorporation, while protecting immigrants from exclusionary policies.                   |
| 4. Pressures erupt from civil society on already established immigrant groups to assimilate promptly to the linguistic/cultural mainstream. | 4. Immigrants join churches, mosques, and so forth, seeking to protect their cultural heritage, as they learn the host country language and culture.          |
| 5. Host states/civil society support naturalization and complete abandonment of past political loyalties.                                   | 5. Religious institutions support selective acculturation and transnational ties.                                                                             |
| 6. Second generation emerges and grows up on conditions of relative advantage or disadvantage.                                              | 6. Churches, mosques, and so forth, support parents' efforts toward overcoming discrimination and other barriers to successful adaptation of their offspring. |

Source: Portes and Rumbaut (2006), *Immigrant America: A portrait*, third ed., p.305.

According to the figure above (Fig.3), Portes *et al.* (2006:306) conclude that as regards facilitating integration the state is doing rather little compared to religious institutions. They particularly deplore the fact that ‘the lessons of religiously imbued ethnic communities and institutions providing a first leg up on the way to successful integration have somehow been lost by the nativists of yesterday and today’ (Portes *et al.* 2006:306).

Though some elements of the comparative model as described above did not directly apply to the present case study, yet the model was helpful in assessing the role of the church in the lives of its members. For instance, with regard to the first stage where ‘churches, mosques, and so forth, in sending countries, guide migrants and facilitate their departure’, some respondents indicated that their church back home issued them letters of recommendation to present to the leadership of Yahweh Shammah Assembly:

[...]The pastor contacts a number of business partners in Europe and America whenever he goes overseas for my business. He is a good man. I came with a recommendation letter from my church to present myself to the pastor [of Yahweh Shammah Assembly]. (Respondent 09 – emphasis is mine)

[...] If somebody comes from Congo and he is a musician for example, he has to be on probation for six months. He should also bring a recommendation letter from his pastor. (Respondent 26 – a member of church leadership)

At the second and third stages where immigrant religious organisations in the host country bid favourable welcome to newcomers, and collaborate with authorities to promote their incorporation into the mainstream society, the study revealed that Yahweh Shammah Assembly is, to a greater extent, involved in these activities. More particularly, the church helps members in finding jobs and assists new comers in getting refugee papers from the South African Department of Home Affairs (DHA). Portes *et*

*al.* (2006:325) maintain that ‘at macrosocial level, religion interacts with other social forces’ including the state and the civil society at large.

For instance, in response to the question about what other role the church plays in the lives of its members apart from the spiritual one respondent, a member of church pastoral team, replied:

[...] The church also helps them to be accepted by the State. We help them to get jobs especially through issuing letters of recommendation. The church helps them to integrate into the society as well. We are encouraging each and every member to associate with the society in which he/she lives and to take full part into what is done in the society, that is, employment, businesses and studies unless the society itself [host society] puts barriers. That is why here in South Africa our children study and work. (Respondent 01 – a member of church pastoral team)

Some of them get social help through ‘Hand of Compassion’. We also help them with recommendation issued by the leadership to connect some people to certain companies. They also get proper directions of where they can go or what they can do. (Respondent 14 – a member of church leadership)

The church must also be an organ of support and assistance through intervention in the social lives of its members. For instance, when there is a job offer somewhere the church informs its members and encourages them to apply. (Respondent 19)

Portes *et al.* (2006) document the protective role churches play in the lives of their respective members. Stressing the economic function of church affiliation Portes *et al.* (2006:303) argue that ‘economic consequences flowed out of the temple, in the form of support for members in search of employment and housing loans’.

At the fourth stage of intervention, that is, where immigrant religious institutions protect migrants’ culture while learning the language and culture of the dominant group Yahweh Shammah Assembly’s involvement in these activities remains overwhelmingly

visible. As discussed in the next section, the church is actively involved in the production, reinforcement and preservation of religious and cultural identities of the members. However, the church also helps members to learn English by encouraging them to attend English classes at the church or elsewhere, and through the introduction of a bilingual church service (English and French or Lingala).

At YSA, the introduction of English service ultimately serves three cumulative purposes: to attract English speaking migrant communities and locals, opportunity to learn or practice English for the ethnic group and to keep those who have linguistically assimilated. Stevens (2004:121) maintains that ‘holding services in English is a strategy that these communities use to become more inclusive since English-language services allow for participation across ethnic groups and across generations within immigrant communities’. The introduction of English service at Yahweh Shammah Assembly promoted the church from stage one to stage two of Mullins’ (1987) life-cycle model of development of ethnic churches (detailed discussions of Mullins’s life-cycle model are provided in chapter three – theoretical framework).

For a quick review, during first stage, ethnic churches are established ‘in response to their cultural and linguistic differences, as well as discrimination faced in other churches’ (Stevens 2004:122). Similarly, Mullins (1988:228) notes that ‘cultural and language differences’ and the ‘discrimination and exclusionary practices on the part of the host society’ provide motivation and resources necessary to the establishment of ethnic churches. More so, ‘when the existing religious institutions do not provide services in the language of the immigrants, it is only natural that they organise their

own' (Mullins 1987:323). In their study of the Congolese refugee organisations in South Africa, Amisi and Ballard (2005:10) argue that 'the founding members [of these organisations] describe the motivation for their formation as being language, common nationality and the need to survive'. Similarly in their study of Haitian churches in United States, Basch *et al.* (1995:198) point out that most of them are still in their first stage of development, simply because 'Haitian of all classes insisted that the Catholic mass, with which they marked their baptisms, marriages, and funerals, could not be celebrated with the proper respect unless the priests spoke in French' (Basch *et al.* 1995:198). Moreover, Basch *et al.* (1995) go on saying, 'the priests maintained that Haitian masses should be in Kreyol because Kreyol was the language of the Haitian people' (Basch *et al.* 1995:198).

In most cases, during first stage the church services and activities are naturally dominated by the language and clergy from the old country and the emphasis on home culture (Mullins 1987:323; Stevens 2004:122). More particularly during this stage, Mullins (1987:323) argues 'ethnic churches are initially established to meet the needs of the immigrant generations', that is, 'the unique religious and social needs of a particular immigrant group' (Mullins 1987:327). At YSA, most of the assistance from 'Hands of Compassion' consists in providing accommodation, food or rentals to newcomers who join the church. For instance, in response to the question whether the church has in place a system to meet material needs of the members, some respondents from church leadership indicated:

Yes, we have a department of 'Hand of Compassion', which takes care for members of the church and other members of the community (clothes, food parcels, money (sometimes). We also provide some accommodation for

newcomers. Currently, following ongoing renovations and extensions of our church hall we no longer offer physical accommodation (since 2 years ago). Instead, we help them with some money to pay for clothes and shelter elsewhere. (Respondent 01 – a member of pastoral team)

Yes, we have the department of ‘Hand of Compassion’ which helps people who are in the need of food and clothing. For instance, we have provided help for some people during the recent xenophobic attacks to pay for their shelters. Also, we do help members in need. (Respondent 12 – a member of church leadership)

Yes, the Hands of Compassion department for social work in and outside the church. Reaching out to street kids with food, blankets, etc. we also help in funerals, even after funerals we support the family. We also assist sick people in the church by buying medication for them... We also offer temporary accommodation varying from three to six months. But that place is now used as a crèche. We also contribute towards rentals for certain church members in desperate situations. If the person is able to do something we connect him to a particular network to get a job. (Respondent 14 – a member of church leadership)

Another feature of a church in its initial stage found in YSA refers to the membership of the church leadership. All the members of pastoral and leadership teams are exclusively Congolese citizens. Arguably, these particular aspects may understandably place YSA back to the first stage of its life-cycle, but the introduction of English services and the ongoing efforts to translate some songs from French or Lingala into local languages, mostly Zulu, automatically shifts the church from initial stage to the second level. This shows that Mullins’ model is not without limitations. According to the model, a church may simply enter a particular stage upon the fulfilment of language requirement while the rest of other activities and services remain almost exclusively geared towards meeting the needs of immigrant members. This seems to be the case of YSA.

Whilst the second stage of development requires social, cultural and linguistic transformations, ethnic churches entering third stage are transformed into ‘multi-ethnic,

English-speaking congregations' (Stevens 2004:122). Stevens gives an excellent illustration from one respondent, a presiding elder of a Ghanaian Church in Chicago which is entering the third stage of development:

Our mission will fail [...] if the church thinks it can grow here in the United States without getting other United States nationals to be a part of our pastoral team. We have got to get other national to be a part of the pastoral team. And when they do that they can reach out to other nationals here and communicate better. (Stevens 2004:130).

It is worth noting that the access to this stage requires significant level of integration of the ethnic group and a parallel suppression or reduction of exclusionary practices from the host society (Mullins 1987:326). In South Africa, the ever-growing xenophobic sentiment among locals significantly hinders many foreign ethnic churches from reaching this final stage.

### **5.3. Church and the making and remaking of cultural and religious identities**

This section discusses the role of the church in the creation and reproduction of migrants' cultural and religious identities as well as their sense of belonging within the host society. In religious studies, the role and the power of religion in creating identity and belonging remains highly topical among scholars of sociology of religion (Mullins 1987; Lovell 1998:2; Tonah 2007:19). Mullins (1987) points out that 'many of the functions of religion are oriented toward the preservations of ethnic identity' (Mullins 1987:322). Portes *et al.* (2006:304) argue that religion plays an important role in the development of ethnic communities and the reassertion of national cultures and languages. Moreover, it is argued that churches provide migrants with a sense of

identity and self-worth within an increasingly hostile host society (Tonah 2007:20), that is, ‘an avenue to transcend animosities’ arising from receiving communities (Sorensen 2007:9).

Similarly, in their comprehensive study among various groups of immigrants in the United States, Portes *et al.* (2006:317) found that immigrant temples and their associated rituals ‘were not only for themselves but mainly for the children – a symbol of their origin, a rallying point for their culture pride, and a springboard for their successful adaptation to schools and society’. This study found that YSA reflects a similar orientation. Discourses from respondents suggest that both the church and home are the best milieus to teach culture and traditions to young migrant cohorts and migrants’ children. Asked to mention the most suitable place for children to learn about Congolese culture and tradition, some participants indicated:

Only at home because at the church there are many people with many different cultures. (Respondent 22)

At home and at the church because it is at the church where they will find Congolese sisters and brothers who will teach them about their culture. (Respondent 34)

At a Congolese church and at home where stories about their homeland are being narrated. (Respondent 11)

As Plummer (quoted in Thomson 2009:46) points out ‘stories are the pathways to understanding the bases of identity’. Other respondents in this group, however, tend to distinguish between ‘secular’ [Congolese] culture and ‘biblical’ culture, that is, the one prescribed or taught in the Bible in their responses:

At the church, I mean the Christian culture, not Congolese! (Respondent 31)

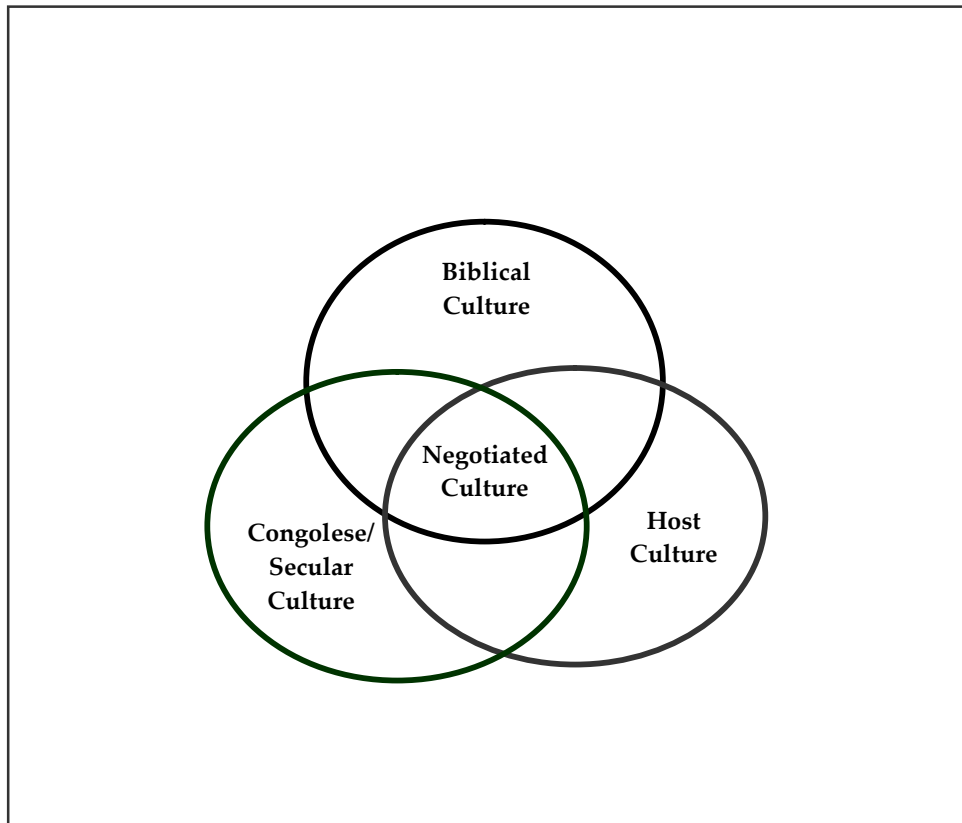
No where except in the Bible. Culture can make me wrong. I didn't grow up with my mother and father. They left me while I was very small. So I was not taught the culture, I can't teach culture to my kids. Biblical culture is enough. (Respondent 10)

At the church because it is there where they will learn how to fear God and what He does not like. (Respondent 30)

For this category of respondents, biblical culture seems to supersede secular/Congolese culture, though in principle the distinction between the two blocs remain intimately overlapping. In most cases, religion embeds culture and vice-versa to such an extent that attempt to isolate one from the other would significantly affect either side. Through religious lenses you can easily and clearly diagnose culture. Reciprocally, religion is most widely recognised as one of the core-elements of the cultural identity besides language, clothing and other cultural identifiers. For instance, the present study revealed that negative perceptions migrants have of South African culture as a whole had significant repercussions on local churches. In other words, South African churches are screened and judged through cultural and traditional lenses rather than against biblical creed. According to respondents, there is lots of 'cultural invasion' within local churches, particularly ancestral worship. The underlying question paused here is about conformity versus non-conformity of religion to culture.

Briefly, the above statements suggest the presence and coexistence of three cultures members at YSA have to face, that is, Congolese/secular culture, host culture and biblical culture. Schematically these cultural spheres interact as follows:

Figure 4: Cultural Interactive Diagram



According to the figure above, a ‘negotiated culture’ refers to different ways an individual member negotiates and appropriates any of these cultures or a combination of them (cultural ‘hybridity’). A biblical culture or tradition refers to sets of Christian beliefs, principles and ethics prescribed in the Bible to guide a Christian believer. Asked whether it is important to marry someone from own tribal group, one respondent replied: *‘Important if you are not in Christ. But not important if you are in Christ because you are a new creature, and because of this you are no longer bound by the culture’* (Respondent 37). A significant number of respondents claim living a secular-culture-free life though the real life and environment seem to prove that it is more often

unlikely than likely to live the religious beyond the cultural.

### **5.3.1. The betwixt and between: religion and ethnicity**

In the countries of immigration, migrant churches have always been the most effective bastions of ethnic preservation. (Mullins 1987:322)

A growing body of social and ethnographic scholarships highlights the tangential relationship between religion and ethnicity. In his study of Japanese ethnic churches in North America, Mullins (1987:321) concludes that ‘religion and ethnicity are closely related phenomena’ (Mullins 1987:321) and, therefore, ‘few sociologists would deny that religion is often oriented toward the maintenance of ethnicity’ (Mullins 1987:322). He further points out that ‘minority churches constitute a strong force for ethnic persistence and are an indicator of ways in which people are trying to maintain their language and succeeding’ (Mullins 1988:220). More particularly, ‘minority churches, Mullins (1988:217) further sustains, are regarded as an important social source for the persistence of ethnicity’ (1988:217), and ‘as agents of cultural preservation (Mullins 1988:218; Mullins 1987:322; Stevens 2004:136). He argues that ‘religion is often oriented toward the maintenance of ethnicity’ (Mullins 1988:217). Stated in a different way, Stevens (2004:135) notes that ‘within the Chinese community becoming Christian is often perceived as losing one’s Chinese identity’ on behalf of a Christian identity. However, despite the efforts of ‘Chinese Protestant churches in the United States’ to militate against such cultural ostracism, yet these churches still maintain the Chinese identity of the new convert ‘through inclusion of Chinese cultural symbols and practices in their congregations’ (Stevens 2004:136) to remain authentic and attractive to the

Chinese migrant community across the United States.

Several empirical studies in the field of migration tend to portray immigrant churches as ‘culture producers’ (Mullins 1987:322; Schein 2004:457; Ammerman 2006:364). Being a key aspect of cultural identity (Bosswick 2006:15) religion helps ‘refugees and other diasporics’ to become actively involved in the creation and reproduction of their culture and traditions (Schein 2004:457). Stevens (2004:136) argues that ‘religious ideas influence the choices immigrants make regarding which aspects of their ethnic culture to maintain or relinquish’. Stevens’s premise further highlights the influence the church exerts on the process of integration of migrants into the host society. In his study of intercultural communication among immigrant communities, Jandt (2007:230) notes that ‘the Islamic faith controls the lives of its members (called Muslims) in all areas of life’. He gives an example of Arab cultural values, which Jandt (2007) argues, ‘are strongly influenced by the Islamic religion’ (Jandt 2007:230). Similarly, Smith-Hefner (1994:24) maintains that ‘it is not surprising that cultural and historical factors [...] played a role in patterns of religious affiliation among Southeast Asian refugees in the United States’. At YSA, discourses from respondents reveal how the church significantly shapes the members’ cultural and religious identities. In response to the question whether it is important to marry someone from own tribe, some respondents replied:

My tribe is ‘Israel’. Therefore, it is very important to marry someone from my tribe (Israel) because according to the Bible we must not marry foreign wives. (Respondent 09)

I think it is important. It reduces expenditures and you are both familiar with the culture for mutual understanding. (Respondent 29 – from Cameroon)

It is necessary. There are many advantages, for example to discuss our problems in our mother tongue, etc. (Respondent 32)

Important if you are not in Christ. But not important if you are in Christ because you are a new creature, and because of this you are no longer bound by the culture. (Respondent 37)

Yes, it is important; otherwise people won't understand each other. In marriage there must be understanding and communication between partners is so important. (Respondent 16)

Not so important. But it is very important to marry somebody from your country with whom you share same behaviour, culture and respect. (Respondent 23)

Not important. Marriage is not a matter of tribe, but the Bible commands us not to marry from pagan people. (Respondent 27)

It is worth noting that, with regard to the question whether mix marriages between a member of YSA and a South African citizen or anyone outside Congolese community, the pastor told me that such marriages are very rare, omitting to give any precise figure. Responses from other respondents however indicated that marrying from own tribe does not matter at all. Most of them align their answers to the fact that marriage relationships simply depend on love and that God does not discriminate between tribes:

Not really important; it depends on love. For me tribe does matter very little. I would take any woman God gives me. (Respondent 20)

As a Christian the Bible tells us that there is neither Jew nor Gentile. (Respondent 21)

No, love does matter. But you need to contact God and take up who He gives you as wife or husband irrespective of nationality. (Respondent 10)

No, according to my experience I have come to understand that marriage is a gift from God. I have got problem though I married a woman from own tribe. (Respondent 22)

Both categories of respondents however used the Bible to support their answers. These dichotomic viewpoints, to some extent, underscore the complexity in interpreting and

applying scriptural principles to real life phenomena. This situation may sometimes create potential subcultures within a particular culture.

In his study among Ghanaian migrants in Germany, Tonah (2007:14) found that, ‘under the auspices of the church, [Ghanaian migrants] are constructing a new life and identity in Germany in line with a model that is imported from home’ (emphasis is mine). More particularly in South Africa, the maintaining of Congolese traditions is facilitated by ‘fresh arrivals who nourish and reinforce their religious traditions’ (Portes *et al.* 2006:333). Jandt (2007:318) argues that diaspora<sup>55</sup> ‘can have the effect of creating cultures within cultures in the country into which peoples move’. In her study among

---

<sup>55</sup> In its strict meaning, the term ‘diaspora’ refers to ‘the experiences of Jews and, later, Armenians who were both forcibly exiled from homelands’ (Jandt 2007:318; see also Basch *et al.* 1995:269). In its generic sense, the concept ‘includes all groups that move from one part of the world to another even if that migration was of free choice’ (Jandt 2007:318). Basch, Schiller and Blanc (1995:269) define diasporas as ‘populations that, while dispersed across boundaries and borders, salvage from their common loss and distance from home their identity and unity as ‘a people’. In addition, Basch *et al.* (1995:269) notes that most often ‘peoples living in the diaspora – Jews and Armenians, for example – are thought to have preserved their spiritual or cultural essence even when they had no state’.

However, Orozco (2007) tends to dismiss the above approaches that bind the concept of ‘diaspora’ to itinerancy or dispersal. He contends that:

Diasporas are not necessarily defined by dispersal. The act of migration, even to areas with high concentrations of migrants belonging to the same nationality or ethnic group, will not automatically nor necessarily lead to diaporic identifications. (Orozco 2007:32).

Similarly, Van Hear (1998) also rejects the dispersal connotation when defining the concept of ‘diaspora’ but on different theoretical grounds. Citing Cohen, Van Hear (1998) argues that :

the catastrophic connotations of diaspora deriving from the Jewish experience obscure the less main or at least neutral Greek origins of the term, which derives from words for ‘dispersion’ and ‘to sow or scatter. Van Hear (1998:5)

In order to obviate this conceptual distortion, Van Hear (1998:6) proposes three criteria upon which populations can be called diaspora:

First, the population is dispersed from a homeland to two or more other territories. Second, the presence abroad is enduring, although exile is not necessarily permanent, but may include movement between homeland and new host. And third there is some kind of exchange – social, economic, political or cultural – between or among the spatially separated populations comprising the diaspora. (Van Hear (1998:6)

Based on the above remarks, Van Hear (1998) prefers using rather the term ‘transnational community’, because he explains, it is more inclusive notion, which embraces diaspora, but also populations that are contiguous rather than scattered and may straddle just one border (Van Hear 1998:6).

Khmer refugees in the United States, Smith-Hefner (1994:26) documents a strong identification of religion and ethnic identity. She particularly found that ‘many Buddhist Khmer view disaffiliation from their religion as evidence of a person’s desire to adopt a new, non-Khmer identity’ because, for a Buddhist Khmer, ‘to be Khmer is to be Buddhist’ (Smith-Hefner 1994:26). In the same [Buddhist] Khmer community, it is further reported that ‘individuals who converts to Christianity are often subject to bitter accusations of having ‘forgotten their culture’ (Smith-Hefner 1994:26). This further highlights the interlocking identificational relationship between religion and culture in a particular group or community.

Mullins (1987) illustrates how the reinforcement and preservation of culture are one of the conservative functions of immigrant churches. Quoting from Millett, Mullins maintains that:

One observation occurs repeatedly as one studies various ethnic groups in Canada: of all the institutions supporting the survival of distinctive cultures, the church is usually the strongest and the most active. (Mullins 1987:322)

Similarly, stressing the importance of preserving their own culture, one respondent in Amisi *et al.*’s (2000) study of Congolese organisations in South Africa, indicated:

Our main concern is trying to bring on board anyone who has [tribal name] blood because we as [tribal name] want to protect and conserve our culture. The main focus is to preserve at all costs our mother tongue because whenever a [tribal name] is born we must try our best to teach him. The father must teach him that wherever he is born he must look for the [tribal name] community. Then he will feel secure because he will be among brothers and sisters. This does not mean excluding others or isolating ourselves but we must know what we are. (Amisi *et al.* 2000:12)

The involvement of Yahweh Shammah Assembly in culture production and preservation occurs in various forms, which include notably the use of ethnic languages

during church services and devotional sessions, and the production of audio-visual musicals in home languages. Some scholars claim that a strong orientation of ethnic churches to cultural and linguistic preservation may slow or retard the process of integration of migrants in the host society (Winland 1994:35). Mullins (1998:325) contends that 'organizational rigidity' rather than openness to change is a common characteristic of ethnic churches'. He particularly points out that 'ethnic churches have tendency to resist these adaptations due to their desire to preserve the old country language and culture' (Mullins 1998:325). Some responses to the question whether the church leadership would encourage migrants to attend local churches in their effort to integrate into the host community, the following statements from members of YSA leadership lend some support to Mullins's postulate:

We cannot take a soul and send it somewhere else. What we do is to make effort in speaking and using English in our church. We have noted that South Africans that join us do not feel comfortable; they feel strangers vis-à-vis us. It is very hard to mix. In addition, we have two different cultures and to join them together becomes very hard or would take long time to achieve. (Respondent 19 – a member of church leadership)

In the context of collaboration we allow *les notres* [ours] to visit others [nationals] and take part in certain activities to see what they do. Each person individually is free to take membership into those local churches, but we encourage them to integrate into our community to be able to commit and grow much easier. The way we comprehend things is different. For instance, in our community when a person dies everyone is affected. But here, especially in white communities only two people will be affected. (Respondent 01 – a member of church pastoral team)

This depends on the convictions of each. Some speculates for help within local churches around, others think they can go where their heart show them to go. You can't go to a church where you don't understand English. Even if you know English very well you must still go to a 'right' church God shows you – not where you get helped materially. I can direct him/her where there is prayer and Word of God. (Respondent 12 – a member of church leadership)

However, Portes and Rumbaut (2006:304) maintain that, 'the road to successful

integration has commonly passed through the creation of ethnic communities and the re-enactment of elements of the immigrants' culture, with strong religious undertones'. On the other hand, Portes *et al.* (2006:304) reject the nativistic view according to which 'immigrants' vigorous assertion of distinct ethnic identities and foreign cultures undermines the unity of the [host] nation and the preservation of its cultural integrity'. In other words, according to Portes *et al.* (2006) migrants can still integrate into the host society while maintaining and preserving their cultural and linguistic heritage. In her study of religious identities in contemporary American life, Ammerman (2006:364) maintains that 'acculturation and culture preservation can happen at once'.

## **5.4. Church engagement in transnational networks**

### **5.4.1. Introduction**

Recent transnational studies have drawn attention to the fact that many migrants are engaged in both their countries of origin as well as the receiving countries (Tonah 2007:19). New transnational social and religious institutions are building networks in an increasingly globalized world (Tonah 2007:20). As Van Hear (1998:256) notes, 'the proliferation of migrant networks and the burgeoning of migrant trafficking are further manifestations of transnationalism'. As Sorensen (2007:3) rightly put it, 'the transnational system that underpins current processes of globalization has led to increased mobility of capital, goods and information, and despite attempts to control, curtail or stem human mobility, global chains of interaction between migrants and family members left behind have lengthened and spread considerably'. In addition, the

overwhelming magnitude of transnational processes and the increasing engagements of migrants into these processes have recently led some ‘migrant romantics’<sup>56</sup> to suggest that allowing continued transnational mobility seems to be the best and most durable solution to post-conflict situations (Van Hear, cited in Sorensen 2007:201).

This growing ‘transnationalising’ phenomenon is often referred to as a two-way ‘religious transnationalism’, which consists in two-way religiously inspired or channelled activities between host communities and home countries (Portes *et al.* 2006:313; Tonah 2007:8). In their study of cosmopolitanism in Johannesburg, Landau and Haupt (2007:14) argue that ‘[...] Pentecostal churches operating within Johannesburg’s inner-city appear to be fashioning creating an organisational form that at once bridges barriers with South Africans (and South Africa) while preparing people for a life beyond South Africa’. As Howell (2003) rightly put it, because of the ‘increasing interconnectivity of Christian communities [...], it is important to ‘understand the internal dynamics of the congregations themselves’ (Howell 2003:246).

---

<sup>56</sup> Discussing the perspectives and approaches different scholars and advocates often adopt when dealing with migration issues, Van Hear (1998) distinguishes between two groups: *migrant romantics* and *migration paranoiacs*.

‘Migrant romantics’ is often used to refer to ‘liberal commentators and the advocates of migrants’ and refugees’ rights (Van Hear 1998:262). More specifically migrant romantics focus ‘on the rights of newcomers and migrants and how they are wronged’ (Van Hear 1998:262). While Van Hear seems to accord with the perspective of migrant romantics because, he argues, ‘in many cases migrants have unjustly been denied their rights’, yet he cautions that ‘the perspective of the established population should also be given greater consideration among those who aspire to a tolerant and pluralistic society’ (Van Hear 1998:262). Among the migrant romantics, Van Hear (1998) argues, ‘the established population tends to be seen implicitly as a body to be badgered or cajoled from its at best stubbornly inert position into accepting newcomers, or at worst its overtly racist, hostile and violent stance against accommodating them’ (Van Hear 1998:262).

‘Migration paranoiacs’ refers to ‘those who take the perspective of the state and see migration largely as a threat – have elevated to pre-eminence the rights of host, prior or established communities and have sometimes exploited their fears’ (Van Hear 1998:262).

#### 5.4.2. Church-based transnational networks

In their study of immigrant groups in the United States, Portes *et al.* (2006) argue that ‘evangelical churches have the upper hand because they are built around immigrants of the same nationality [...] and support their strong concerns and ties with specific localities back home’. More particularly, the pastors themselves take part in this transnational circuit, travelling back and forth between places of origin and of settlement, ministering to congregations in both, and sponsoring projects that bring them together’ (Portes *et al.* 2006:315). Viewed as a ‘newly emerging form of transnational’ religious identity broker (Swyngedouw *et al.* 2009:69) a glocalised church ‘carries the congregation to the non-local context of a global Church’ (Howell 2003:241). Writing about Brazilian Pentecostalism, Paul Freston (quoted by Casanova 2001:437) points out that ‘new churches are local expressions of a global culture, characterized by parallel invention, complex diffusion and international networks with multilateral flows’. In this context, Howell (2003:245) argues, post-modern Pentecostal Christians ‘view the preaching and the preacher as the means as by which they participate in the non-locally specific world of the global church’. For instance, in her anthropological study of [African] Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (PCCs), Meyer (2004) highlights the role gospel music plays in taking the PCCs from their local confines to the global scene. She particularly notes that video-taped sermons and music ‘that circulate in global Pentecostal networks [...] entice the constitution of a new public of born-again believers with a strong global outlook’ (Meyer 2004:461).

Furthermore, in their study among various immigrant communities in the United States,

Portes *et al.* (2006:313) found that most of transnational wealth in terms of currencies, goods, services and information exchange, was ‘religiously inspired or channelled through religious institutions’.

Similarly, in his study among diasporic Ghanaian churches, Tonah (2007:8) points out that because Churches are strongly linked with their ‘mother’ churches in Ghana there is frequent exchange of personnel and movement of goods to and from Ghana.

In their study of the dynamics of cosmopolitanism in Johannesburg, Landau *et al.* (2007:14) argue that, through particularly their strong links to communities in Nigeria, Ghana, and the United States, immigrant churches increasingly open further connections out of Johannesburg. This argument follows the claim that ‘many of the churches founding pastors see South Africa primarily as a place where they can enter global discourse and influence the lives of people across the continent and beyond’ (Landau *et al.* 2007:14). Quoting the statement of a Nigerian Pastor of one of Nigerian churches in Johannesburg, Landau *et al.* (2007:14) confirm that ‘Africa is shaped like a pistol and South Africa is the mouth from where you can shoot out the word of God’.

#### **5.4.3. Dynamics of transnational networks within YSA**

This section explores the role YSA plays in transnational networks. Overall, the study revealed that YSA as an institution is actively involved in transnational transactions and networks with other religious institutions both in homeland and abroad. In response to the question whether the respondent has been invited by another church in South Africa

or outside the country, some members of the church leadership replied:

Yes: in USA, Argentine, Europe, and Africa. I learned much from other churches – what they are doing, their organization – and I get inspired. By visiting South African churches, I get opportunity to build friendship with them and establish collaboration with neighbouring churches. (Respondent 01 – a member of church pastoral team)

Yes, many times especially our senior pastor. Me I have mostly been invited around SA. I can't go out myself. Last night for instance a pastor from Namibia called inviting me to visit them, but I can't go because I don't have passport. I also received other calls from Angola, Tanzania, Uganda and Europe (France and England) but there was no way of travelling; I was stuck in terms of documentation. (Respondent 14)

The word that comes from outside impacts differently on the listeners. The church makes itself known to the rest of the world, for instance through Television, radio and people will know that there exists a church called YSA in Johannesburg. (Respondent 19)<sup>57</sup>

Church's involvement in facilitating transnational movements, particularly between home and host, has been documented in a number of studies. In Germany for instance, Tonah (2007:19) reported that the Ghana Catholic Society support their members having difficulties with visa and work permits, and in the search for employment and accommodation in Hamburg. In most cases, (Howell 2003:240) points out, 'preachers came as guests, interim pastors, and prospective hires'.

Furthermore, the study also found that Yahweh Shammah Assembly significantly helps its members in their multifaceted transnational involvements:

It helps us a lot. For example, my wife had a problem to get a visa to come here, but my pastor signed a letter of invitation which allowed her to get a visa and come here without problem. The pastor also helps many married people to bring their spouses from Congo. (Respondent 27 – a church deacon)

---

<sup>57</sup> The respondent was primarily answering the question about what he benefits from sermons from visiting preachers.

Moreover, a significant number of participants in this study describe how they benefit from visiting preachers from different Pentecostal congregations in home country and elsewhere:

We benefit a lot because we feel at home and it is like a reminder of what is happening in the country especially when they speak our vernacular language. (Respondent 05)

Yes, very important. Some Congolese men of God have got different gifts. They bring us warmth from Congo. (Respondent 11)

They bring something to the church; they have different gifts. The majority of them come from DRC. (Respondent 16)

Yes, they help us in many things: spiritually, materially and sometimes they give a financial support to the church. (Respondent 20)

Yes they comfort us through messages of victory during hardships and hopelessness. They help us a lot. (Respondent 30)

Very important to have visiting pastors, because it enables us to verify whether the message preached in our church is the same as the message preached in other churches elsewhere. (Respondent 21)

The study further found that the level of member's involvement in transnational transactions largely depends on individuals' current socioeconomic status, and the reasons that motivated their flight (push/pull factors). As Orozco (2007:28) rightly put it, 'a diaspora may get involved in homeland issues to various degrees and at various levels'. In this context, the study found that migrants who are economically stable are more involved in remittances and other transnational activities than those who have financial hardships (especially those who are not employed or self-employed). The study also found that respondents with high level of education tend to get more involved in transnational activities than those with low level of education. In addition,

migrants whose motives and aspirations for migrating were mainly economic or educational tend to engage in transnational economic and social networks than those who alleged political or safety reasons. Most of the respondents who indicated that they never sent any money or goods back home declared they did not have means to do so. For instance, in response to the question about how often the respondent contacts his/her family or friends back home or abroad, one respondent replied:

Never. If you contact them they will always ask you to send them something while you do not have anything for yourself. Thus, it is better for me not to contact them at all. It gives me a bit of peace. (Respondent 22)

Similarly, in her work on the diaspora, development and transnational engagement, Sorensen (2007:201) confirms that ‘migrants engage in transnational activities only when they have the social and financial resources to do so’. Sorensen further argues that when such involvements do occur they ‘may be directed towards the family, the community or the social or political level’ (2007:201).

Moreover, the statement above explains what Nieswand (cited in Tonah 2007:11) calls ‘paradox of migration’, that is, ‘living in two status systems with contradictory attributions of prestige at the same time’. In other words, according to the paradox, migrants are often undermined by the host but much honoured by the homeland.

Writing about Ghanaian immigrants in Germany, Tonah (2007) remarks:

[...] back home, they [Ghanaian immigrants] are perceived as being successful and wealthy. Their relatives do not know or pretend not to know about the conditions under which their sons and daughters live and work in Germany. (Tonah 2007:11 – emphasis is mine)

One of the results of migration paradox is that, migrants who frequently send

remittances back home are more likely 'motivated to maintain links with their home societies because of the high social status that they gain in doing so' (Tonah 2007:11). This is what Chamba (2006:114) refers to as 'family pride' in his study among western African immigrants in Johannesburg (see details below).

The next section discusses some factors leading to transnational activities as well as the implications these engagements have on the integration of migrants into the host society.

#### **5.4.4. Factors contributing to transnational engagement**

##### ***5.4.4.1. Insecure livelihood and social pressures***

In his study of Ghanaian immigrant churches, Tonah (2007) identified a couple of key factors that contribute to the emergence of transnational transactions: insecure livelihood and social pressures from both the population and government (Tonah 2007:20). It is worth noting that the two actors involved in transnationalism - the population and government - respectively explain the two types of transnationalism earlier discussed, that is, 'migrant-led' transnationalism and 'State-led' transnationalism (see definition of key concepts in chapter three). Portes *et al.* (2006:313) argues that 'first-generation immigrants have always looked backward, and when the economic situation has permitted, they have sought to provide assistance not only to their families but to their communities and countries of birth'. Similarly, discussing the consequences of transnational involvements among Ghanaian migrants, Tonah (2007) argues that both 'insecure livelihood and social pressures' force most migrants 'to buy in and maintain

close social, cultural and religious networks in the countries in which they live in, while at the same time cultivating the links with their relatives, friends and institutions back home in Ghana' (Tonah 2007:20). In the research conducted among immigrant communities in the United States, Portes *et al.* (2006:17) note that in most cases, 'social networks built by migrants themselves can act as veritable human transmission belts, conveying information about job opportunities in New York or California to the most remote villages and towns in a number of sending countries'.

#### **5.4.4.2. Social solidarity: Economy of sharing and remittances**

As Sorensen (2007) rightly put it, 'migration is as much about people who stay behind [that is, those whom Wilson (2007:40) calls 'unadventurous stay-at-homes'] – as it is about those who move across international borders' (Sorensen 2007:4 – emphasis is mine).

Another factor that influences diasporic communities to engage in transnational activities is the need – or obligation in most cases – for remittance. An important part of transnational activities among migrant communities consists in exchange of information and sending remittances to relatives and friends in the country of origin. Remittances often serve multiple purposes in the destination community ranging from family sustenance for basic needs, paying school fees, building schools or churches, personal entrepreneurial investments to supporting a political association or government initiative (see Tonah 2007:10; Orozco 2007:28)).

Portes *et al.* (2006:312) argue that, since 'most immigrants come from poor nations and communities' remittance becomes a 'natural affinity', 'an impulse of helping those left behind, going beyond their immediate kin'. More particularly, as far as church is

concerned that impulse, Portes *et al.* (2006:312) argue, 'has a natural affinity with the general charitable orientation of church-led activities and certainly, with the needs of churches and congregations in the home countries'. In other words, for Portes *et al.* (2006) it seems quite natural for a church to engage in transnational activities. Asked whether he/she sends money or goods back home, one respondent replied:

Yes, I sent clothes back home and the church encourages us to provide for our families back home and they inform us that there are a number of agencies that can help us to send money or goods. (Respondent 36)

In contemporary glocalized society churches are increasingly becoming powerful transnational 'intermediaries' (Van Hear 1998:257) between diasporic communities and countries of origin, notably in channelling remittances and information. Arguably, churches serve as a reliable link with family members, relatives, and friends in sending countries (Tonah 2007:19). In response to the question whether the church helps the respondent in his/her transactions with home, one respondent stated: '*Yes, the church urges us to honour and not forget our families if we want to bless them, to do something for our families*' (Respondent 36)

According to Van Hear (1998:257), 'migration industry' includes a travel and shipping agents, consultants and advisors, lawyers, marriage and adoption agencies, smugglers, and purveyors of false documents'. As discussed above, the role Yahweh Shammah Assembly plays in transnational processes involves one or more of these activities, notably supporting shipping agents and transnational businessmen, providing advice and invitation letters for members who wish to bring in relatives or friends from country of origin, officiating marriages for ease access to travel documents, etc. Asked

how the respondent learned about YSA, one respondent proudly replied:

My church in Congo is in partnership with Yahweh Shammah, and I have been assisting the pastor whenever he would come to Kinshasa to visit, the time I was working at the airport. Such was in fact my duty within the church: helping people in immigration affairs. (Respondent 16)

Paerregaard (2007:193) notes that the church has the ability to ‘create global networks that link migrants not merely to relatives in their country of origin but also to migrants in other parts of the world’. The present research found an increased role of YSA in facilitating the channel of remittances and other financial transfers. Most of the respondents involved in sending remittances did it using what they commonly call ‘Agences Congolaises’, that is, small privately operated financial agencies that deal with sending and receiving currencies between South Africa and DRC and worldwide. A number of respondents said they normally use agencies that are run by some members of YSA.

The ‘economy of sharing’ consists in that ‘the wealthier provide for the less fortunate’ (Kleist 2007:120). The economy of sharing is often understood ‘both as an accepted cultural expectation and as a burden that makes it difficult to return’ (Kleist 2007:120). Through the economy of sharing, Kleist (2007:120) explains, ‘the diaspora is expected to accept their responsibility in supporting people economically and initiating projects that will benefit the local people as well’. Stressing the importance of economy of sharing in the mind of the beneficiaries, Kleist (2007) quotes the following statement from a mayor in Somaliland:

The economic support of family members is not expected to stop, even in the case of return’. If you have left without money, you cannot come back without money, resources or land. (Kleist 2007:120)

Portes *et al.* (2006:133) argue that ‘migration and remittances have become the true Adjustment Program of the poor’. Sending-country governments, Portes *et al.* (2006:132) ‘have taken an increasingly active role in the affairs of their communities abroad, seeking to rechannel and expand the flow of remittances, stimulate investment, and turn community leaders into representatives for their countries abroad’. Because of the significant contribution transmigrants bring to the development, Basch *et al.* (1995:259) argue, ‘transnational population in Haiti are identified as the *bank of the diaspora*’. In this context, Basch *et al.* (1995:258) argue, ‘remittances have been welcomed by all governments and have been the basis of policies that encourage investment by transmigrants’.

#### **5.4.4.3. Family pride**

Another factor that seems to push migrants into transnational activities, notably remittances, is what (Chamba 2006) calls ‘family pride’. According to family pride, ‘a happy and perhaps respected family is one with family members abroad’ (Chamba 2006:115). More particularly, in most Western Africa countries a successful and happy family means much more than just the parents having a good job, and the children attending good schools (2006:115). Such families, Chamba (2006:15) argues, ‘are highly respected and admired in their neighborhoods, and acquire a social status in the society, which commands much respect’.

After the examination of factors influencing migrants’ participation into transnational processes, the next section looks at the impact these engagements have on the

integration of migrants.

#### **5.4.5. Impact of transnational networks on the process of integration**

##### ***5.4.5.1. Portes and Rumbaut (2006) hypothesis***

In their study of immigrant communities in America, Portes *et al.* (2006) wrote the following concerning the impact of transnationalism on integration of migrants:

At first glance, the rise of transnational activism among today's immigrants and the numerous programs of sending-country governments aimed at strengthening it appear to undermine the process of assimilation and retard the integration of immigrants into the American body politic [...]. How could immigrants and their children start to turn their interests and attention to political life in their new country when they are still stuck in the affairs and loyalties of the old? (Portes *et al.* 2006:137-138).

Likewise, in religious scholarship, there are two divided views with regard to the impact of church-based transnational ties to migrant's communities of origin. While some scholars maintain that a [migrant] church with close ties to the home country may hinder immigrant's assimilation, others conversely argue that the church, rather than isolating newcomers, actually provides the organizational vehicles that allow them to participate in the host society (Mullins and Janowitz cited by Menjivar 2003:25; Basch *et al.* 1995:195-196). As earlier discussed in several sections of this research, immigrant churches have always played salient role in linking migrants' communities of origin with the new communities and in creating spaces for immigrants to remain actively

connected to their homelands (Menjivar 2003:26). More particularly, in the South African context (Helgesson (2006:28) argues, Pentecostalism offers a belonging that reaches across national borders and that unites South African Pentecostals with Pentecostals all over the world into a 'family of God' (2006:28). Though most of the above sources do not provide clear arguments to substantiate their relevant claims, yet the explanations Portes *et al.* (2006) propose are helpful in understanding these viewpoint binaries.

The answer Portes *et al.* (2006) give to the above questions is that, transnational activities are not, in principle, incompatible with integration. In other words, it is possible for a migrant to actively participate in both homeland and host society at a time. 'While it is possible that transnational activities may slow the acquisition of new loyalties and identities in some cases', Portes *et al.* (2006:138) explain, 'the bulk of the evidence indicates that this is not a zero-sum game and that many aspects of transnationalism end up *accelerating* the political integration of immigrants in the United States'. Portes *et al.* (2006) provide a couple of reasons to support their claim. The first reason is that 'political activism is not mutually exclusive, and skills learned in one context frequently travel to others'. The second reason is linked to the fact that 'in general, immigrants who are politically inactive in one setting tend to be inactive in others, whereas those who become involved in transnational political or civic activism are more likely to be interested and involved as well in domestic politics' (Portes *et al.* 2006:138).

In addition, Portes *et al.* (2006) explain the importance for migrants to maintain links

with home. First, sustained networks with country of origin enable immigrants to 'lose the fear of giving up their original nationality and attendant rights and (p138) of being perceived as 'defectors' at home'. The ability to hold on to their identities (and passports), Portes *et al.* (2006) go on arguing, 'removes a key disincentive against naturalisation and often encourages immigrants to acquire U.S. citizenship (Portes *et al.* 2006:138-139). The second reason for immigrant to hold on their national loyalty is that, 'assimilation and transnationalism are not necessarily at odds' because, Portes *et al.* (2006:139) add 'values and political practices of the host can be instilled in the home countries'.

Briefly, according to Portes *et al.* (2006) transnationalism increases more the 'propensity' to integrate than the unwillingness to integrate. Portes *et al.* (2006:315) conclude that 'transnationalism, religious and otherwise, and successful incorporation to the host society are not at all opposite'.

## **5.5. Discussion and conclusion**

Results from the present study lend substantial support to Portes and Rumbaut's arguments as discussed above. Arguably, transnational ties with home country may accelerate the process of integration rather than delaying it. As Stevens (2004:135) rightly put it, 'the connections that immigrants maintain to their country of origin through transnational ties continually infuse religious practices in their new country with practices from home'. In most cases, well integrated migrants tend to be more successful in transnational activities than those who have not yet achieved a significant level of integration due to barriers in host society. Those who are employed or

financially wealthy as well as those who have full refugee status or permanent residency are believed to have achieved a certain level of integration in the host country. This means that a migrant who aspires to activate his ties with home will likely strive to seek both legal (documentation and entitlement) and economic integration (employment) in the host society. In South Africa, for instance it is quite difficult for some undocumented migrants to use official channels to send remittances back home. Most often, financial institutions engaged in foreign money transfers require domestic identification documents (refugee identity, UNHCR travel document, etc.) while most of the migrants only hold temporary permits which are not recognised by these institutions. Briefly, the search for economic and legal resources necessary for entering transnational processes - especially remittances - will likely motivate a migrant to integrate in the host society.

Furthermore, in contemporary global society people may appropriate and live hybridized or multiple identities 'anywhere in the world and still not live outside the state' (Basch *et al.* 1995:269). In a similar vein, underlining the ambivalence of religious institutions, Stevens (2004:135) notes that 'immigrants churches are embedded in institutional fields both within and outside of the host country'. That is, the fact that migrants sustain strong links with homeland cannot be construed as negation to integrating into the host. More particularly in South African context other factors, such as xenophobia, immigration policy and associated practices, cultural and linguistic obstacles should rather draw public attention.

In conclusion, this chapter discussed the multifaceted role Yahweh Shammah Assembly

plays in Congolese community at large and in the lives of its members in particular. The study found that the church remains active in the socialisation of the members, providing a wide range of spiritual, material and social assistance to the members and other needy people from surrounding communities. The chapter also discussed the role of the church in the production and replication of ethnic identities and their implications on the integration of both the church as an institution and members. Then, the chapter proceeded with the examination of YSA's involvement in transnational networks with DRC and worldwide. The study found that both the church leadership as well as members are actively involved in transnational processes, which include mainly, exchange of information with country of origin, sending remittances, visiting other churches both inside and outside of South Africa, as well as receiving visiting preachers from abroad. The chapter ended with the discussions on the impact the multilayered transnational activities have on the process of integration of migrants in the host society.

The next chapter discusses the dynamics of xenophobia as a main barrier to integration of migrants in the South African society.

## **CHAPTER SIX. IMPACT OF XENOPHOBIA ON INTEGRATION PROCESS**

### **6.1. Introduction**

In post-modern society, nationalism, ethnicity and xenophobia are generally perceived to be the predominant expressive features of strong autochthonous sentiment which is also a salient barrier to migrant's social integration within a host community. More particularly since the beginning of the current decade, the increasing scholarly literature and discourse on migratory patterns have witnessed the emergence of a new wave of competing views around the dynamics of integration of migrants particularly in South Africa. Despite an increasing body of migration scholarships that highlights the integration of migrants into host societies as an ultimate goal and ideal, the new school of thought contends that not all migrants – including forced migrants – are willing to permanently settle into host communities, 'even if such an opportunity were made available to them' (Landau 2006:127; Landau 2007:10). Speaking of international migrants Preston-Whyte (2006:336) argues that:

International migrants working in the region's cities may actively resist 'transplanting' themselves and their families into these cities. From this vantage, they may look down upon local citizens as they prepare themselves for future migrations. For many, cities are merely sites of trade and transit, not belonging. Instead of integrating, or assimilating, they are rapidly forging a counter-idiom that, to borrow from Said, fetishes their position as the permanent outsider or wanderer in such a way that 'distanced him or her from all connections and commitments'. (Preston-Whyte 2006:336)

Similarly in his survey among migrants in Johannesburg, Landau (2006:138) reaches to the conclusion that:

Johannesburg's non-nationals are not an uprooted people who leave behind home and country to transplant themselves in a new terrain (...). They are rather an uprooted people determined to avoid establishing sustained connections with the new terrain.

While acknowledging the above conclusions to be relevant to some categories of migrants yet it seems unlikely to generalise such individual attitudes and behaviours to the rest of other migrants categories. The results of this study showed that the majority of respondents came to South Africa with an intention to integrate. As mentioned in the last section of chapter five, the maintenance of transnational ties and migrant's active involvement in transnational with country of origin do not necessarily imply lack of integration. Portes and Rumbaut (2006:35) contend that, 'the accusation that today's Latin immigrants do not want to learn English or integrate into the American mainstream runs against all empirical evidence and hardly deserves consideration'. This chapter seeks to challenge the above statement according to which all non-nationals in Johannesburg are inherently not set to integrate into or sustain connections with South African society. In this chapter, I argue that the majority of migrants, economic migrants and refugees alike, come to South Africa with an intention to permanently settle insofar as host circumstances allow. While acknowledging the merit of the aforementioned studies particularly in describing the lives and trajectories of migrants within the host society, yet they fall short of establishing the root causes of such disposition.

The central issue at play is, therefore, whether the non-taking root or the migrant's disinclination to permanently integrate into the host community, is inherently a pre-migratory disposition or whether it is a post-migration reaction a migrant adopts after

being confronted with a hostile host environment. Almost all the respondents in this study declared they left their homeland with integrative imaginaries but unpredictably stumbled against reactionary and xenophobic sentiment of the host community. For instance, asked why he decided to leave his country one respondent despondently replied:

I am a soccer player by profession. My family sent me here to enrol in one of the South African soccer teams. But, when I contacted *Pirates* [one of the South African soccer teams], they told me they cannot accept foreigners. I got frustrated. (Respondent 38 – emphasis is mine)

In addition, a number of recent empirical case studies reveal that both voluntary and forced migrants refuse to take root in a [South African] foreign land (see Simone 2001:162-163; Landau 2006; McDonald 2000:130-133), because either the soil is not as good as their native soil or because – just to borrow Malkki's botanical metaphor – the host soil itself contains harmful thistles and thorns that would not allow them to take root and grow (Malkki 1992). In other words, if migrants find the host soil well fertilized, exempted from all xenophobic oxidation and backlash; if they find Johannesburg's 'golden streets' well maintained and without any potholes – as they were told before leaving their homeland – then nothing would preclude them from deeply taking root into the hospitable host society. Indeed, as Jayasuriya (2008:108) rightly puts it, assimilation [or integration] depends on the host societies and whether they would discriminate on the basis of race or would be open and accept them.

Scott and Scott (1989) point out that:

Assimilation results not simply from interaction between two cultures, but often between that of the receiving society and immigrants who were spiritually half-assimilated before they left their native lands. It is only after arrival in the new country that some of them, for social or political reasons, identify their 'ethnicity' in terms of former nationality'. (Scott *et al.* 1989:11)

Similarly, writing about immigrant communities in the United States, Basch *et al.* (1995:42) argue that ‘ finding their own aspirations blocked, emergent ‘ethnic leaders’ organized forms of resistance and encouraged the development of ethnic institutions such as churches, schools, newspapers, and voluntary organisations’. In his study among Western Africa immigrants in South Africa, Chamba (2006:1) argues that ‘these immigrants have come to South Africa with many expectations; but the socioeconomic and political state of affairs in the country appears to prevent them from realizing their expectations’. Similarly, in their study of Congolese organisation in South Africa, Amisi *et al.* (2005:3) argue that

Transplanted to South Africa, refugees find themselves once again in the familiar position of being unable to draw on their citizenship to make demands on the state. [...] They express frustration, at times against the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, at times against NGOs, at times about the politics of the DRC, and against xenophobia. (Amisi *et al.* 2005:3)

Furthermore, despite the fact that refugeehood is basically viewed as temporary phenomena and, therefore, forced migrants regarded as potentially ‘mobile classes’ (Landau 2007:8; Brun 2001:18) or ‘transitory populations’ (Gotz 2004:29; Turki 1974:4), several professionals in the field of migration, such as Fedde Groot and Tebogo Segale claim that, in South Africa local integration has been and remains an option for many refugees (Groot 2004:41) or, that integration is inherently essential for their social and economic survival (Segale 2004:50-51).

Discussing the complex dynamics of cosmopolitanism in Johannesburg Landau *et al.* (2007:13) argue that ‘given that South Africans are seen as a privileged community given their rights to the city, it is the migrants who ultimately have the most to gain

from insinuating themselves into citizens' families'. Similarly, Jandt (2007:289) maintains that 'most immigrants are willing and eager to become members of the new culture and fully expect to remain in the new country'. Asked whether he considers himself as part of Congolese or South African society, one respondent replied:

I consider myself as part of South African community because I do not share same opinions with Congolese but rather with the autochthons. Here I follow Paul's example: we need to identify with the people we are living with. I am trying to interact with many foreigners; I am the only Congolese where I am staying. (Respondent 21)

The documented premise according to which, unlike earlier migrants contemporary immigrants 'forge and sustain simultaneous multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement' (Baia 2001:147; Menjivar 2003:26; Levitt 2004:5) and help them to resist assimilation into the 'melting pot' (Peterson 2001:17; Shorter 1991:25; Basch *et al.* 1995:43; Foner 1987:12; Berry 1997:25; Jandt 2007:316), does not *de facto* imply resistance to integrate because integration does not necessarily mean or lead to assimilation. One can integrate without assimilating, though the latter implies the former. The results of this study reveal that the majority of migrants, economic migrants and refugees alike, come in South Africa with an intention to permanently settle insofar as host circumstances allow. In its study on violence, discrimination and barriers to health for migrants in South Africa, Human Rights Watch (2009:14) confirms that some cross-border migrants from neighbouring countries may travel for short periods of time for the purposes of business, family visits, or informal labour, while others, fleeing intolerable socio-political conditions in their home countries or seeking greater economic opportunities, intend to stay indefinitely. The majority of the respondents indicated that they would like to integrate into South

African community were they given the opportunity to do so. In this regard, one respondent for instance declared:

The problem of South Africans is a behavioral one. You may be willing to integrate but they reject us by pejoratively calling us 'makwerekwere'. They should love us as their African brothers. We are even afraid of the way doctors treat us at hospitals. (Respondent 23)

Drawing on the pre-migration backgrounds of the respondents, I argue that the fact that, for some migrants, Johannesburg is viewed as a strategic world class transit city towards other destinations abroad does not *ipso facto* imply that they never intended to settle in the country before they took the decision to migrate, nor an evidence that they would not permanently remain in the country were they afforded such an opportunity. A number of respondents have indicated their desire to stay permanently in the country. In this respect, one respondent declared: *If they give me permanent residence I will establish myself here; I cannot return in Congo'. I have got a bad souvenir of a country where my father was killed* (Respondent 23). Another young man who primarily fled his country with high expectations from the host indicated: *I want to stay here as long as South Africa guarantees my safety. I like South Africa; even if my country would become right, I will go only to visit. I am planning to further my studies here* (Respondent 04).

Stressing the impact of xenophobia on the integrative aspirations of migrants, Tonah (2007:10) points out that

The generation of Ghanaian migrants in Germany have maintained close social, economic political, cultural and religious links with Ghana mainly because of the hostility of the indigenous population and the various forms of discrimination they face in that country. (Tonah 2007:10)

Bosswick *et al.* (2006) argument lends strong support to Tonah's statement. In their

assessment of the contribution of local and regional authorities to the integration of migrants, Bosswick *et al.* (2006:9) report that ‘Immigrants – both individuals and groups – will not always be received with open arms in the institutions and systems to which they aspire. They will encounter barriers to integration’.

## **6.2. Xenophobia: Historical considerations**

The term ‘host’ community is problematic, not least because it suggests a welcome that is not always present. (Van Hear 1998:55).

### **6.2.1. Defining xenophobia**

The concept of ‘Xenophobia’ has been commonly defined ‘the deep dislike of non-nationals by nationals of a recipient state’. It also refers to the ‘innate propensity of members of a particular human group to distinguish between insiders and outsiders through certain specific criteria of differentiation’ (Amuwo 2007:12). These criteria of differentiation – ‘veritable markers and identifiers of ethnic-nationalism, include darkness of the skin [dark-skinned], whiteness of the hair, height, inoculation marks’, etc (Amuwo 2007:12). More particularly in South African context, xenophobia has also been explicated as more than an attitude of mind and deep contempt for others, to the extent that it is violence-prone, involving, as it does, physical harm and murder (Nyamnjoh, cited in Amuwo 2007:12). But, ‘why should antforeigner sentiments and attitudes be animated by an obsessive valuation of apparently visible differences such as accents, dress, and shades of skin colour? Matsinhe (2009:16) asks.

Xenophobia is not a recent phenomenon in South African society. Several studies describe xenophobia as a 'syndrome' or 'pandemic' because of its magnitude and historical rootedness in the society. While some scholars situate xenophobia in the post-apartheid period, others locate it back in pre-apartheid era. Contemporary public discourses describe xenophobia as a new form of apartheid. 'Despite South Africa's ambitions to overcome past patterns of exclusion based on arbitrary social categories, xenophobic articulations in Johannesburg and elsewhere, starkly contrast with the country's commitment to tolerance and inclusion' (Landau *et al.* 2007:6).

In the next section, Liu (2007) attempts to explain the causes and development of xenophobic sentiment using the theory of 'integrated threat'.

#### **6.2.2. Integrated threat theory (Liu 2007:764-765)**

Most of the exclusionary attitudes and practices of the host society against immigrants are a result of perceptions of potential threat from the 'other'. In most cases, the mere presence of the 'other' in the 'us' zone can potentially ignite fear and threat - or even confrontation - in the psyche of the host. Liu (2007) explores these attitudinal binaries through the theory of integrated threat.

The integrated threat theory 'assumes that the host society could perceive migrants as a threat to the mainstream culture' (Liu (2007:767). Liu (2007:764) argues that 'the perception of threat plays an important role in prejudice towards outgroups in general and immigrants in particular'. Liu (2007:764-765) identifies four domains of threat: realistic threat, symbolic threat, stereotypical threat, and intergroup anxiety.

*Realistic threat* refers to ‘threat to the political and economic power of the ingroup, as well as threat to the well-being of the ingroup. Immigrants would (p.764) seem likely to evoke such threat as they always need jobs and they may require additional resources from the host society’ (Liu 2007:764-765).

*Symbolic threat* refers to ‘group differences in values, beliefs, morals and attitudes’ (Liu 2007:765).

*Negative stereotypes* ‘serve as a basis for negative expectations concerning the behaviour of members of the stereotyped group’. ‘For example, when migrant group (outgroup) members are perceived to be untrustworthy, the mainstreamer group (ingroup) members may feel threatened by interacting with them’ (Liu 2007:765). Johnson (1997:1278) notes that ‘racial and other differences prevent full acceptance by dominant society of some minority groups’.

*Intergroup anxiety*: ‘people may feel personally threatened in intergroup interactions because they are concerned about negative outcomes for the self, such as being embarrassed, rejected, or ridiculed’ (Liu 2007:765). In addition, Liu (2007) claims that ‘interacting with immigrants is often difficult for people from the host culture due to differences in language and cultural values, and this adds intergroup anxiety in interaction’ (Liu 2007:765).

Commenting on the last type of threat (intergroup anxiety), I argue that intergroup anxiety does not seem to occur as described above, i.e. as a reciprocated anxiety. In South African context, there seems to be a ‘one-way’ intergroup anxiety: immigrants often accuse South Africans of preventing migrants from addressing them in English, a

language in which migrants are however happy to be addressed. Similarly, the other group (migrants) feels the anxiety of being unable to speak Zulu, a language the host group wants migrants to use. In South Africa, migrants face what can be named ‘Zulu-conformity’ vs ‘Anglo-conformity’ binary (Mullins 1988:220). While ‘Anglo-conformity’ is ‘a dominant social reality’ of some integrationist countries, such as Canada (Mullins 1988; 1987), United States and Australia (Liu 2007), in South Africa ‘Zulu-conformity’ far overrides ‘Anglo-conformity’ particularly in both social and business spheres. It is worthy noting that in ‘melting pot’ assimilating societies the language of the majority ethnic group is often used to create or reinforce existing nationalistic sentiment. As Jandt (2007:138) cautions ‘when a group with more power enforces the use of its language on another group, it is also making its culture dominant’. He defines this process as ‘cultural invasion’, whereby ‘one group penetrates the culture of another group to impose its own view of the world’ (Jandt 2007:138, 427).

According to Van Hear (1998:4), ‘xenophobia and racism have become prominent once again in countries migrants aspire to reach’. Consequently, in post-modern society, nationalism, ethnicity and xenophobia are generally perceived to be the predominant expressive features of strong autochthonous sentiment which is also a salient barrier to migrant’s social integration within a host community. Peterson (2001:18) maintains that because of the liminality and the increasing stigma of illegality and the resulting widespread xenophobia on the other hand, migrants remain with no other available option than to learn new rules and adopt new roles to navigate the host society. More particularly, through an exhaustive empirical investigation into the root causes of the

xenophobic outbreak that took place in May 2008, Misago *et al.* (2009:22) confirm that xenophobic violence has been an ongoing reality in post-1994 South Africa and has steadily increased throughout the recent past. Similarly, in his study among immigrants from Western Africa in South Africa, Chamba (2006:2) argues that ‘since the democratic elections in 1994, African immigrants in South Africa have suffered serious human rights abuses, discrimination and xenophobia from the general public, police, traffic cops, and Home Affairs officials’. While several socio-political scholars documenting xenophobia in South Africa overwhelmingly portray it as a post-apartheid phenomenon, Matsinhe (2009) in contrast goes further to assert that the long-standing xenophobia in South Africa has cultural roots that can be traced back during the apartheid era. He argues that ‘while xenophobia is a worldwide phenomenon, South African antforeigner attitudes have specific cultural and historical contingencies’ (Matsinhe 2009:i). Matsinhe (2009) documents the historical patterns of xenophobia through the lens of a plethora of immigration laws and other domestic legislation applicable during the period of apartheid. He deplores the fact that contemporary scholars tend to overlook ‘the possibility that the imprints of the history of antagonistic group relations, notably the apartheid, on South African social *habitus* might be part of the conditions of possibility for these display of anti-African attitudes and practices’ (Matsinhe 2009:16).

### **6.3. Impact of xenophobia on integration**

Amisi and Ballard (2005:23) argue that in South Africa ‘reports of xenophobia are universal amongst refugees with attacks, aggression and name-calling being part of

everyday city life'. In more concrete terms, the problem here is not that migrants do not want to integrate into South African society. The underlying crucial issue is that South African community does not want to integrate those unwanted foreign parasites, commonly labelled as *makwerekwere*<sup>58</sup> by the *proudly South African*, flocking in to steal the fruits of the youngest and flourishing democracy. Talking about Somali migrants living in one of the provinces of South Africa, a South African indicated:

The approach for the Somalis to come and just settle in our mist is a wrong one. Somalis should remain in their country. They shouldn't come here to multiply and increase our population and in future, we shall suffer. The more they come to South Africa to do business, the more the locals will continue killing them. (Misago *et al.* 2009:17)

Moreover, in his study among Congolese migrants in Johannesburg, Simone (2001:164) argues that both the lack of cosmopolitanism and pervasive xenophobia makes it difficult to permanently settle within the city of Johannesburg (*see also* Segale 2004:50; Pursell 2004:96; Tlou 2004:44). This equally highlights the point that the lack of integration or, to say the least, a limited integration of migrants into South African community is not inherent to the migrant's pre-migration indisposition to integrate but to inhibiting host factors that reactively counteract a migrant in his process of integration. When answering to the question whether he considers staying permanently in South Africa, one respondent alludes to the xenophobic attacks on foreigners in May-June 2008 and declared:

I don't want to stay here anymore. This people since they have started these things of xenophobia they may start it over again anytime. They don't like us. I want to go to Zimbabwe or Zambia in future.

Similarly, the following statement of another young respondent strongly demonstrates

---

<sup>58</sup> The term 'makwerekwere' is a Zulu derogatory word used for foreigners.

that both xenophobia and the increasing nationalistic sentiment among the host population are major stumbling blocs to migrants' integration into South African community:

I am planning to go back to my home country. The people have shown us what is going to be in the future. It will be like in Rwanda. There is insecurity in South Africa. There is no more reason for me to establish here permanently.

### **6.3.1. Symptoms of xenophobia**

#### **6.3.1.1 Stereotype and phenotype profiling**

Stereotypes against migrants are common signs of xenophobic sentiment in South Africa. African migrants are commonly stereotyped as dark-skinned and prejudiced on this exclusionary ground (see also Matsinhe 2009; Chamba 2006). It is often argued that within racializing societies, darkness or blackness stereotypically 'connotes poverty, ignorance, and intemperate ways' (Basch *et al.* 1995:106). Some migrants are named 'People of color' (Basch *et al.* 1995:43). Though more often than not 'people place themselves in a category, and from that category they gain identity', [...] sometimes people are placed in categories or are forced to choose one they would not choose for themselves' (Jandt 2007:376). It has been widely documented that 'based on the awkward notion that international migrants are potential criminals' (Alegria 2005:248), 'migrants' suburbs soon gain notoriety for being a place for drug dealers, criminal gangs, alcoholics and the down trodden in society'(Tonah 2007:10).

In South Africa, numerous stereotypes are used to describe various groups of immigrants. This study discusses few of them, notably those that are frequent in public discourse. In their study of partnership between the poor and local government Everatt *et al.* (2004) report that ‘foreigners’, blacks from other African countries, [...] are accused of stealing South African jobs, women and houses, of drug-dealing, crime, spreading HIV/AIDS, and other social ills’(Everatt, *et al.* 2004:18). It is, however, worth noting that Everatt *et al.* (2004) seem to subscribe to these stereotypes by arguing that:

Livelihoods in the inner city are often dependent on clandestine activities, and the area has gained a reputation as a haven for criminals. Crime lords run once-attractive high-rise flats in Hillbrow as private fiefdoms, and are locked into an intricate social structure that distributes fixed pieces of criminal activity to different nationalities of migrant such as Congolese, Mozambican and Zimbabwean. The criminal networks are meshed with community organisations, associations and private companies used as fronts for the exchange of drugs and guns, the exploitation of poor immigrants or the laundering of funds. (Everatt *et al.* 2004:27)

Similarly in his study among Western African immigrants in Johannesburg, Chamba (2006) reports the following stereotyping formulas:

In South Africa, these categories of immigrants are seen as criminals and drug dealers, who disrupt the socio-economic stability of the state. These immigrants, easily identified from their physical and other socio-cultural characteristics, are often targets of police raids, harassments and xenophobia. They are the scapegoats for the high crime rates, and for the prevalence of diseases in the neighbourhood’. (Chamba 2006:1).

Several studies point out what is often referred to as ‘selective xenophobia’, that is, only some categories of racial groups, particularly African Blacks, or nationalities are more stereotypically targeted than others. In his exploration of xenophobia in South Africa, Matsinhe (2004:14) notes that ‘south African xenophobia is selective’. He explains:

The anti-immigrants display a great deal of white supremacy...Not all foreign nationals and immigrants are equally targeted. The hostility is not evenly distributed among foreign nationals. For example, African foreign nationals are the most frequent victims of anti-immigrant attitudes and practices. (Matsinhe 2009:14).

Similarly, Sanger<sup>59</sup> (2009) talks about 'Negrophobic xenophobia' instead of selective xenophobia' though the two terms signify the same. 'Negrophobic xenophobia' refers to the fear of the African 'other' (Gqola, quoted by Sanger 2009). Danso and McDonald (2000) use the terms 'racialised', and 'africanised' to intimate the selective nature of the criminalising stereotype portrayed in the print media. They explain this in the following statement:

the print media tend to nationalise and racialise crime involving migrants. Criminal syndicates, smuggling and drug-trafficking are usually associated with particular groups of foreign nationals in South Africa, with black Africans being portrayed either as perpetual criminals or more prone to commit serious crime than immigrants from non-African countries. (Danso and McDonald 2000:16)

Moreover, quoting Harris, Matsinhe (2009:14) describes the methods used by the Internal Tracing Units of the South African Police Service:

In trying to establish whether a suspect is an illegal or not, members of the internal tracing units focus on a number of aspects. One of these is language accent, the pronouncement of certain words (such as Zulu for 'elbow', or 'buttonhole' or the name of a meerkat). Some are asked what nationality they are and if they reply 'Sud' African this is a dead give-away for a Mozambican, while Malawians tend to pronounce the letter 'r' as 'errow'.... Appearance is another factor in trying to establish whether a suspect is illegal—hairstyle, type of clothing worn as well as actual physical appearance. In the case of Mozambicans a dead give-away is the vaccination mark on the lower left forearm... [while] those from Lesotho tend to wear gumboots, carry walking sticks or wear blankets (in the traditional manner), and also speak slightly different Sesotho. (Matsinhe 2009:15)

---

<sup>59</sup> See Sanger's paper: *'Foreigners know how to treat a woman. Our South African brothers are players, abuse physically and emotionally; you can't depend on them': Interrogating the links between xenophobic attitudes, gender and male violence in Du Noon, Cape Town* is available at [http://www.boell.org.za/downloads/Report\\_on\\_Xenophobia\\_and\\_Gender.pdf](http://www.boell.org.za/downloads/Report_on_Xenophobia_and_Gender.pdf)  
Accessed on 6 July 2010.

Based on 'selective xenophobia' it is particularly reported that 'African (and to a lesser extent Asian) migrants are associated with a criminal act the event becomes newsworthy, while the same crime committed by a white foreigner is ignored or given less publicity' (Danso and McDonald 2000:16). According to the stereotypes conveyed in the media, Danso and McDonald (2000) report:

Nigerians and Morocans are stereotypically associated with controlling the drug trade (especially that of cocaine), while Congolese are identified with passport racketeering, Zairians (DRC) with diamond smuggling and Lesotho nationals with the smuggling of gold dust and copper wire (back to Lesotho), Mozambicans and Zimbabwean women have been portrayed as indulging in prostitution and Mozambicans are alleged to be operating an international car-stealing syndicate' (Danso and McDonald 2000:16).

Additionally, according to the survey conducted by Danso and McDonald (2000:4) on behalf of the Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) in 1997-1998, Danso and McDonald briefly report on the perceptions and attitudes South Africans hold towards immigrants in the following terms:

South Africans hold strongly negative views about (im)migrants themselves, particularly people from other African countries. African migrants are perceived to be responsible for stealing jobs and causing crime in the country and for bringing in diseases like HIV/AIDS. In the 1997 survey, 37% of South Africans felt that 'people living in South Africa from neighbouring countries' are a threat to jobs and the economy, 48% believed that they are a criminal threat, and 29% believed that they bring diseases [...]. By contrast, only 25% of the sample said they had 'nothing to fear' from foreign migrants living in South Africa. (Danso and McDonald 2000:4).

A growing literature on integration highlights xenophobia as one of the major barriers to integration of migrants in host societies. Johnson (1997:1261) notes that 'barriers such as phenotype (physical appearance), language, and surnames make assimilation extremely difficult'. But at the same time, Johnson (1997:1261) optimistically believes that 'the increasing number of people of mixed heritage will blur the traditional lines of

demarcation between the races'. Similarly, Berry (1997:11) argues that 'those whose physical features set them apart from the society of settlement [...] may experience prejudice and discrimination, and thus be reluctant to pursue assimilation'. Moreover, Portes (1969:515) notes that, 'the sufferings and frustrations in the US strengthen old cultural attachments and return goals, which, in turn, may further isolate the family from its new environment, causing a nonintegrative circular pattern'. In response to the question to describe the general attitude of South Africans towards a number of respondents reported cases where they have been victims of xenophobia. Certainly, such responses were not surprising particularly due to the fact that the study was carried amid of the xenophobic violence that occurred in May-June 2008. Wounds and stories were still fresh in the minds of the respondents. This analysis, however, took this into account so as to avoid possible bias.

#### **6.4. Conclusion**

This chapter examined the phenomenon of xenophobia and its impact on the process of integration of migrants into South African society. Diverse forms of xenophobic discriminations were explored. The chapter reviewed several case studies that document the topic and discourses from respondents. Though the majority of members pointed to xenophobic attitude of South African, yet only a couple of cases of xenophobia in religious institutions were reported. In previous chapters, cultural and religious, and linguistic factors were rather reported as main barriers to integrating into local churches. The desire to integrate into the South African society remains the main option and ideal for many international migrants coming to South Africa. However, this study

maintains that migrant's integrative imaginaries they bring along with their welfare trajectories are often overpowered by a growing xenophobia within South African society. Many migrants seek full integration and membership within the community but the host society prevents them from achieving this ideal. To assert that migrants, particularly in South Africa, refuse themselves to integrate and take root into the community is to bluntly deny the increasing bald-faced xenophobia and camouflage its ostensible effect on migrants' integrative imaginaries. In most cases, the unwillingness to settle permanently in South Africa is rather a net-result of a post-migration encounter of an outsider with an insider, an allochthon with an autochthon within a historically xenophobic society – not necessarily a pre-migratory deliberate decision.

The next chapter discusses key findings and conclusions. It also suggests some areas that need future research.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN. KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **7.1. Introduction**

This chapter discusses the key findings of the study in relation to the research question, aim and objectives of the research as outlined in the introductory chapter. Briefly, this study sought to establish whether affiliation to a migrant's church is a salient form of belonging that fosters migrants' transience and shapes their motivation to integrate into South African society. Concretely, the study sought to establish whether displacement had an impact on migrants' pre-migration religious life, that is, whether pre-migration religious patterns undergo alterations during migratory processes and the implication of these on the integration of migrants in the host society. Second, the study sought to unpack the role of the church in transnational processes and the impact these engagements have on migrant's integration. Third, the research aimed at establishing whether religious affiliation is perceived as an identity and/or as a new form of belonging among other forms of identification and the role of the church in these identitive dynamics. Fourth, the study sought to establish to what extent the encounter between the two cultural and religious groups shapes the processes of integration. Lastly, the research sought to determine whether a migrants' church fosters integration of migrants or whether it somehow helps them to resist integration, or else whether migrants themselves are inherently set not to integrate into host society.

Overall, this study found that the desire to integrate into South African society remains the main option and ideal for many international migrants coming to South Africa. However, migrant's integrative imaginaries and welfare trajectories are often obstructed by a growing xenophobia within South African society. Many migrants seek full integration and membership within the community but the host society prevents them from achieving this ideal. Acknowledging the fact that a number of migrants came to South Africa with a view not to stay but to use the city of Johannesburg as a transit point to third countries abroad, yet this study found that a significant number of migrants wish to leave Johannesburg because it refused to accommodate them. In this context, the study identified three groups among Congolese community: those in quest of permanent settlement in South Africa, those in transit, and those who want to exit due notably to xenophobic backlash in the country.

Moreover, the study found that most of migrants transplanted both their culture and religious heritage in the host society. It was revealed that migrant's pre-migration religious background plays a salient role in social, cultural, religious and religious des/integration. In this respect, the study found that the encounter and interaction between 'foreign' and 'host' culture and beliefs had significant impact on the process of integration of Congolese migrants. The present study revealed that the negative perceptions migrants have of the South African culture as a whole significantly had repercussions on prospects of integrating into local churches. The study found that South African churches are screened and judged through cultural and traditional lenses besides religious grounds. According to respondents, there is lots of 'cultural invasion' within local churches, particularly ancestral worship.

Although most of the respondents claimed cultural, linguistic and religious similarity between them (homophily principle), yet there were significant differences as regards the way they perceive their culture and religion and react to the host religiosity and culture. This result proves that the 'homophily principle' as explained earlier (see chapter 3 – theoretical framework and literature review) is not without limitations. Those who considered as highly spiritual likely displayed negative attitudes toward local churches on various grounds, ranging from 'wrong' beliefs and practices, witchcraft, ancestral worshipping, syncretism, secularisation of religion to indecent dressing. Migrants with high levels of religiosity were more likely to display low interest in visiting or integrating into local churches than those with tolerant or moderate religiosity. Fear of spiritual deculturation or 'prostitution' (so some call it) and increased commitment to ethnic church creed were identified as overriding reasons for this religious conservatism.

Briefly, the analysis of migrants' pre-migration backgrounds revealed wide cultural and religious disparities between Congolese community and South African society. These incongruities essentially stem from subjective binaries that tend to scale religions against religions and cultures against cultures, in terms of 'low versus high' spirituality or 'bad versus good' culture respectively. The study revealed that culture and religion are often inextricably interwoven. There is a significant influence of the former (culture) on the latter (religion) to such an extent one can hardly exist apart from the other. Through the lenses of religion cultural patterns are easily diagnosed and vice-versa.

Furthermore, the study found that gender issues had a significant impact on the integration of migrants into local churches. Discourses from respondents revealed that gender equality remains problematic even within post-modern religious bodies. More importantly, the study revealed that the inextricable embeddedness of religion into traditional and cultural tenets increasingly tend to provide gender inequality with both cultural and spiritual justifications. One respondent, for instance declared:

Our pastor invites somebody he knows very well. For example, our next door Nigerian church allows women to preach – the pastor’s wife preaches in that church as well – but us, we cannot allow such practice in our church. Women cannot climb up the pulpit to preach! (Respondent 22)

During the four months of my participant observation at YSA (attending morning devotions and sometimes church services), I never saw a woman preaching or leading a prayer session. Paradoxically, the results of this study revealed that a number of respondents (mainly females) seemed not to believe in gender equality. Some of them viewed promotion and protection of both women’s freedom and children’s rights as culturally irrelevant and subversive to their culture as well as faith. This was quite surprising. My expectations were that, women would always be ready to defend their rights or commend anything or anyone advocating for their cause. This particular case to some extent underlines the influential character of a culture in a given ethnic group or society.

Moreover, the study found a relatively limited level of integration of other nationalities within YSA. Few nationalities still attend the church, others have left. Participants reported that a number of South African members left the church mainly due to disparities in religiosity and culture. For instance, in response to the question ‘what

makes Congolese migrants to join Yahweh Shammah Assembly', one of the church leaders promptly explained:

The simple reason is that the church is a francophone church. First, we had South Africans but keeping South Africans for six months is a miracle! They are not stable at all. They like liberty, and they are somehow lost when we preach about holiness. We have a different culture; they are too free insofar as spirituality is concerned. We even had one of them who sung in church choir and she left. Others just come looking for financial assistance.

English people are not like us. They act by feelings and they are introverts. You can bring 30 South Africans in the church today and tomorrow they run away. They are not patient. For instance, a South African choir member got married to a Congolese brother few years ago but now they are no more coming to church. (Respondent 26 – a member of church leadership)

Furthermore, the study revealed both spiritual and cultural value scaling by which Congolese members claim high levels of religiosity and culture. The erection of Congolese culture and religion as a yardstick to gauge the 'others' culture resulted in portraying South African society as low in terms of morals, spirituality and culture. Cultural and spiritual scaling has been identified as a major factor that hindered most of Congolese migrants from integrating into local churches. Other factors, notably language and the desire to be among 'my brothers and sisters' were also reported.

The church is actively involved in the production, reinforcement and preservation of religious and cultural identities of the members. This type of function reinforces the characteristic of YSA as an 'ethnic church' in terms of Mullins's (1987; 1988) life-cycle model of church development. However, the study also found that YSA helps its members by encouraging them to attend English classes at the church or elsewhere, and through the introduction of a bilingual church service (English and French or Lingala). The introduction of English service ultimately serves three cumulative purposes: To

attract English speaking migrant communities and locals, opportunity to learn or practice English for the ethnic group and to keep those who have linguistically assimilated.

In addition, English service (through interpreting) at YSA promoted the church from stage one to stage two of Mullins' (1987) life-cycle model of development of ethnic churches (detailed discussions of Mullins's life-cycle model are provided in chapter three). In most cases, during first stage the church services and activities are naturally dominated by the language and clergy from the old country and the emphasis on home culture (Mullins 1987:323; Stevens 2004:122). More particularly during this stage, Mullins (1987:323) argues 'ethnic churches are initially established to meet the needs of the immigrant generations', that is, 'the unique religious and social needs of a particular immigrant group' (Mullins 1987:327). At YSA, most of the assistance from 'Hands of Compassion' consists in providing accommodation, food or rentals to newcomers who join the church. Besides, all the members of pastoral and leadership teams are exclusively Congolese citizens. Other things remaining equal, these particular aspects may understandably place YSA back to the first stage of its life-cycle, but the introduction of English services and the ongoing efforts to translate some songs from French or Lingala into local languages, mostly Zulu, automatically shifts the church from initial stage to the second level. This shows that Mullins' model is not without limitations. According to the model, a church may simply enter a particular stage upon the fulfilment of language requirement while the rest of other activities and services remain almost exclusively geared towards meeting the needs of immigrant members. This seems to be the case of YSA.

Whilst the second stage of development requires social, cultural and linguistic transformations, ethnic churches entering third stage are transformed into ‘multi-ethnic, English-speaking congregations’ (Stevens 2004:122). Moreover, it is worth noting that the access to this stage requires significant level of integration of the ethnic group and a parallel suppression or reduction of exclusionary practices from the host society (Mullins 1987:326). The growing xenophobic sentiment in Johannesburg has been identified as one of the factors that hinder YSA from reaching this final stage.

Moreover, the study found that, besides ordinary church activities, members of YSA are also actively involved in a diverse range of para-church activities, which bring members of YSA into contact with the rest of the heterogeneous community members, thereby facilitating their integration into the latter. The study found that apart from daily survival activities, a significant number of church members, especially those who are not full time in their secular businesses spend a considerable part of their time in church-related activities. The involvement in various church activities increases socialisation and solidarity among members and increasingly exposes them to their culture and traditions embedded in these activities. The study found that the participation of the church in social and cultural activities remains salient both to the welfare of the members and to the expansion of the church because these involvements seem to be effective means of proselytising besides pulpit evangelism. These findings confirm Weber’s theory of ‘economic consequences of religious affiliation’ (see more details in chapter 3 – Theoretical framework and literature review).

As regards the role YSA plays in transnational processes, overall the study revealed that YSA as an institution is actively involved in transnational transactions and networks with other religious institutions both in homeland and abroad. Besides, the church substantially helps its members in their multifaceted transnational involvements. The study found that both the church leadership as well as members are actively involved in transnational processes, which include mainly, exchange of information with country of origin, sending remittances, visiting other churches both inside and outside of South Africa, as well as receiving visiting preachers from abroad. The study further found that the level of member's involvement in transnational transactions largely depends on individuals' current socioeconomic status and the reasons that motivated their flight (push/pull factors). In this context, the study found that migrants who are economically stable are more involved in remittances and other transnational activities than those who have financial hardships (especially those who are not employed or self-employed). The study also found that respondents with high level of education tend to get more involved in transnational activities than those with low level of education. The research also found a significant correlation between level of individual's transnational engagement and pre-migration push/pull factors. Migrants whose motives and aspirations for migrating were mainly economic or educational tend to engage in transnational economic and social networks than those who alleged political or safety reasons.

To the question whether increased engagement in transnational networks or maintenance of ties with homeland would decrease migrant's propensity to integrate into host societies, the results of this study lend substantial support to Portes and

Rumbaut's (2006) arguments earlier discussed in this work. Arguably, transnational ties with home country accelerate the process of integration rather than delaying it. In most cases, well integrated migrants tend to be more successful in transnational activities than those who have not yet achieved a significant level of integration due to barriers in host society. Those who are employed or financially wealthy as well as those who have full refugee status or permanent residency are believed to have achieved a certain level of integration in the host country. This means that a migrant who aspires to activate his ties with home will likely strive to seek both legal (documentation and entitlement) and economic integration (employment) in the host society. In South Africa, for instance, it is quite difficult for some undocumented migrants to use official channels to send remittances back home. Most often, financial institutions engaged in foreign money transfers require domestic identification documents (refugee identity, UNHCR travel document, etc.) while most of the migrants only hold temporary permits which are not recognised by these institutions. That is why many respondents who remit back home use private channels ('agences Congolaises') rather than official banking institutions. Briefly, the search for economic and legal resources necessary for entering transnational processes - especially remittances - will likely motivate a migrant to integrate in the host society.

Furthermore, in contemporary global society people may appropriate and live hybridized or multiple identities 'anywhere in the world and still not live outside the state' (Basch *et al.* 1995:269). In a similar vein, underlining the ambivalence of religious institutions, Stevens (2004:135) notes that 'immigrants churches are embedded in institutional fields both within and outside of the host country'. That is,

the fact that migrants sustain strong links with homeland cannot be construed as negation to integrating into the host. More particularly in South African context other factors, such as xenophobia, immigration policy and associated practices, cultural and linguistic obstacles should rather draw public attention.

## **7.2. Conclusion**

On the other hand, given the fact that a number of migrants came to South Africa with a view not to stay but to use the city of Johannesburg as a transit point to third countries abroad, yet many respondents wished to leave Johannesburg because it refused to accommodate them. In other words, with regard to settlement in the city of Johannesburg, contemporary international migrants, particularly those from African countries can be divided into three categories: those in quest of permanent settlement, those in transit, and those who want to exit due to xenophobic backlash. Finally, the study revealed that YSA was able to integrate Congolese migrants who could not otherwise integrate into host religious institutions.

## **7.3. Areas for future studies**

As shown in the present study, the exploration of women's empowerment within religious domain remains highly complex and calls for more advanced and focussed exegetical and theological elaborations beyond what this study attempted to reveal. An exploratory inquiry will therefore bring to the fore important data susceptible to inform

other scholarships in the field. More studies, therefore, are needed to closely investigate the dynamics of gender power relations within religious communities.

In addition, this research triggered another interesting inquiry about the relationship between religion and culture. There is a need to revisit this relationship to be able for instance to answer complex issues pertaining to the intertwining relationship between the two concepts. The question here is about conformity or non-conformity of religion to culture and vice-versa:

- Is the church/religion to conform to the culture or the other way around?
- Are the two entities (religion and culture) intimately interlocked together so that one cannot exist without the other? According to the results of this study the answer is yes. However, further theoretical and empirical inquiries are still needed to explore these relational dynamics in a more focussed perspective.

This study remains significantly helpful for a researcher willing to embark on any of the above topics. More specifically, the study offers a solid theoretical background regarding the close relationship between religion, culture and ethnicity.

## REFERENCES

- Agi, S. 1998. *Political History of Religious violence in Nigeria*. Calabar, Nigeria: Pigasiann and Grace International.
- Allan, H. and Pillay, G. 1997. 'The Segregated Spirit: The Pentecostals'. In *The Church of Modern South Africa*. Cape Town: David Philip.
- Alegria, T. 2005. 'Tijuana, Mexico: Integration, Growth, Social Structuring and Governance'. In M. Balbo, ed., *International Migrants and the City*, pp. 235-267. Nairobi: UN-HABITAT.
- Al-Sharmani, M. 2004. Refugee Livelihoods: Livelihood and Diasporic Identity Constructions of Somali Refugees in Cairo. New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper No. 104. Geneva: UNHCR.
- Amisi, B. and Ballard, R. 2005. In the Absence of Citizenship: Congolese Refugee Struggle and Organisation in South Africa. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, Forced Migration Studies Programme, Forced Migration Working paper Series #16. Available at <http://migration.wits.ac.za> . Accessed on 12/04/2010
- Ammerman, N. 2006. Religious Identities in Contemporary American Life: Lessons from the NJPS. *Sociology of Religion*, 67:4, pp 359-364.
- Amuwo, A. 2007. Cosmopolitan Citizenship and Identity Politics: A Theoretical Exploration. Symposium on Cosmopolitan Citizenship. School of Architecture and Planning – Unpublished manuscript. Johannesburg: Wits University.
- An-Na'im, A, ed. 1999. *Proselytization and Communal Self-Determination in Africa*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.

- Archetti, E. 1998. 'The Potrero and the Pibe: Territory and Belonging in the Mythical Account of Argentinean Football'. In N. Lovell, ed., *Locality and Belonging*, pp. 189-210. London and New York: Routledge.
- Arhem, K. 1998. 'Powers of place: Landscape, Territory and Local Belonging in Northwest Amazonia'. In N. Lovell, ed., *Locality and Belonging*, pp. 79-102. : London and New York: Routledge.
- Baia, L. 2001. 'Rethinking Transnationalism: National Identities among Peruvian Catholics in New Jersey.' In Peterson, A. et al., ed., *Christianity, Social Change, and Globalization in the Americas*, pp.147-164. New Brunswick, New Jersey, and London: Rutgers University Press.
- Baker, O. 2008. An Investigation of the Sociological Patterns of Prayer Frequency and Content. *Sociology of Religion*, Vol. 69, No. 2, pp. 169-185
- Banki, S. 2004. *Refugee Integration in the Intermediate Term: A Study of Nepal, Pakistan, and Kenya*. Geneva: New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper No. 108, UNHCR.
- Barro, R. and McCleary, R. 2003. 'Religion and Economic Growth across Countries'. *American Sociological Review*, Vol.68, No.5, pp. 760-781.
- Basch, L., Shiller, Glick and Blanc, C. 1995. Nations unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States. Basel: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers SA.
- Berry, J. 1997. Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 46 (1), 5-34

- Betts, A. and E. Kaytaz 2009. *National and international responses to the Zimbabwean exodus: Implication for the refugee protection regime*. Geneva: New Issues in Refugee Research: Working Paper 175, UNHCR.
- Bilhartz, T. 1986. *Urban Religion and the Second Great Awakening: Church and Society in Early National Baltimore*. London and Toronto: Associated University Presses.
- Bisharat, G. 1999. 'Exile to Compatriot: Transformation in the Social Identity of Palestinian Refugees in the West Bank'. In Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J., ed., *Culture, Power, Place: Exploration in Critical Anthropology*, pp. 203-233. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Black, R., 2001, 'Fifty years of refugee studies: From theory to policy'. *International Migration Review* 35(1), 57–78.
- Black, R. and Koser, K. ed. 1999. *The End of the Refugee Cycle? Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- Boddy, J. 1989. *Wombs and Alien Spirits: Women, Men, and the Zar Cult in Northern Sudan*. USA: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Bohlin, A. 1998. 'The Politics of Locality: Memories of District Six in Cape Town'. In N. Lovell, ed., *Locality and Belonging*, pp. 168-188. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bonino, M. 1983. *Towards a Christian Political Ethics*. USA: SCM Press Ltd.
- Born, J. 2004. A Personal Look at African Spiritual Churches - Reflections, challenges, hopes. *Mission Focus: Annual Review*, Vol. 12, pp 46-55.

- Bosswick, W. and Heckmann, F. 2006. Integration of Migrants: Contribution of local and regional authorities. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. Available at [www.eurofound.eu.int](http://www.eurofound.eu.int)
- Bouillon, A. 2001. 'African Francophone Migrants to South Africa: Languages, Images and Relationships'. In Morris, A. and A. Bouillon, eds., *African Immigration to South Africa: Francophone Migrants of the 1990s*, pp. 112-148. Pretoria: Protea Book House and IFAS.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Francophone African Migrants in South Africa: A Broad Overview. In Morris, A. and A. Bouillon, eds., *African Immigration to South Africa: Francophone Migrants of the 1990s*, pp. 19-67. : Pretoria: Protea Book House and IFAS.
- Braakman, M. and Schlenkhoff, A. 2007. Between Two Worlds: Feelings of Belonging While in Exile and the Question of Return. *Asien*, 104, S, 9-22
- Brandt, H. (ed.). 1988. *Outside the Camp: a collection of writings by Wolfram Kistner*. Johannesburg: SACC.
- Brown, D. 2006. *To Speak of this Land: Identity and Belonging in South Africa and Beyond*. University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.
- Brun, C. 2001. 'Reterritorializing the Relationship between People and Place in Refugee Studies'. *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography*, Vol.83, No. 1, pp. 15-25.
- Burwell, R. Hill, P. and Wicklin J. 1986. 'Religion and Refugee resettlement in the United States: A research Note'. *Review of Religious Research*, Vol.27, No. 4, pp. 356-366.

- Buursma, R. (ed). 1989. The NIV Topical Study Bible: New International Version. Zondervan Bible Publishers. Michigan: Grand Rapids.
- Bryman, A. 2004. *Social Research Methods*. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cao, N. 2005. The Church as a Surrogate Family for Working Class Immigrant Chinese Youth: An Ethnography of Segmented Assimilation. *Sociology of Religion*, 66:2 183-200.
- Casanova, J. 2001. 'Religion, the New Millennium, and Globalization'. *Sociology of Religion*, Vol. 62, No. 4, pp. 415-441- Special Issue: Religion and Globalization at the Turn of the Millennium..
- Centola, D., Gonzalez-Avella, J.C., Eguiluz, V., and Miguel, M. 2007. Homophily, Cultural Drift, and the Co-Evolution of Cultural Groups. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 51, No. 6, pp. 905-929.
- Chamba, P. L. 2006. The Development of Ethnic minorities: A case study of West Africans in South Africa, PhD thesis. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, Department of Sociology. PhD Thesis.
- Church, L. (ed.) 1992. *Zondervan NIV Matthew Henry Commentary in One Volume*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House.
- Coker, E. 2004. 'Dislocated Identity and the Fragmented Body: Discourses of Resistance among southern Sudanese Refugees in Cairo'. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 17, No.4, pp.401-419. Oxford University Press.
- Connor, K. 1989. 'Factors in the Residential Choices of Self-Settled Afghan Refugees in Peshawar, Pakistan'. In *International Migration Review*, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 904-932.

- Covane, A. 2001. 'Southern Mozambique: Migrant Labour and Post-Independence Challenges' in C. de Wet and R. Fox, ed., *Transforming Settlement in Southern Africa*. International African Seminars: Edinburgh University Press.
- Creswell, J. 2003. *Research Design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*, Second Ed.. Thousand Oaks. London. New Delhi: SAGE publications.
- Crisp, J. 2004. The Local Integration and Local Settlement of Refugees: A conceptual and historical analysis. New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper No. 102. Geneva: UNHCR.
- Crush, J. 2005. 'Johannesburg, South Africa: Breaking with Isolation'. In M. Balbo, (ed), *International Migrants and the City*, PP 113-150. Nairobi: UN-HABITAT.
- Cumpsty, J. 1991. *Religion as Belonging: A general theory of religion*. New York. London: University Press of America.
- Daneel, M.L. 1987. *Quest for Belonging: Introduction to the study of African Independent Churches*. Harare: Mambo Press.
- Danso, R. and McDonald, D. 2000. *Writing Xenophobia: Immigration and the press in post-apartheid South Africa*. Cape Town: Idasa.
- De Boeck, F. 1998. 'The Rootedness of Trees: Place as cultural and natural texture in rural southwest Congo'. In N. Lovell, (ed), *Locality and Belonging*, pp. 25-52. London and New York: Routledge.
- De Voe, P. 2002. 'Symbolic Action: Religion's Role in the Changing environment of

Young Somali Women.’ *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2.

Dodson, B. 2000. ‘Women on the Move: Gender and Cross-border Migration to South Africa from Lesotho, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.’ In David, McDonald, ed., *On Borders: Perspectives on International Migration in Southern Africa*. Southern African Migration Project: St. Martin’s Press.

Dreyer, L. 1989. *The Modern African Elite of South Africa*. New York: St. Martin’s Press.

Dryden-Peterson, S., and Hovil, L. 2003. *Local Integration as a Durable Solution: Refugees, Host Population and Education in Uganda*. New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper No. 93. Geneva: UNHCR.

Ebaugh, H., and Chafetz, J. 1999. ‘Agents for Cultural Reproduction and Structural Change: The Ironic Role of Women in Immigrant Religious Institutions’. *Social Forces*, Vol.78, No.2. pp. 585-613. The University of North Carolina Press.

Edwards, J. 1998. ‘The Need for a Bit of History’: Place and Past in English Identity. In N. Lovell, ed., *Locality and Belonging*, pp. 147-167. London and New York: Routledge.

Everatt, D., Gotz, G., and Jennings, R. 2004. Living for the sake of Living: Partnerships between the Poor and Local Government in Johannesburg. Democracy, governance and Human Rights Programme Paper Number 16. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

Eyber, C. 2004. ‘Forced Migrant Children and Youth in Johannesburg’. In L.B. Landau, (ed.), *Forced Migrants in the New Johannesburg: towards a Local Government Response*, pp. 70-76. Johannesburg: University of the

Witwatersrand, Forced Migration Studies Programme.

Fangen, K. 2006. Humiliation Experienced by Somali Refugees in Norway. *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol. 19, No. 1, pp 69-93. Oxford University Press.

Fenggang, Y. and Ebaugh, H. 2001. 'Transformations in New Immigrant Religions and Their Global Implications'. In *American Sociological Review*, vol.66, No.2, pp. 269-288.

Forced Migration Studies Programme. 2006. Migration and the New African City: Citizenship, Transit, and Transnationalism. Descriptive data - Johannesburg. University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Foner, N. ed. 1987. *New Immigrants in New York*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Fontana, A. and Frey, J. 2003. 'The Interview: From Structured Questions to Negotiated Text', in K. Denzin and S. Lincoln (eds.), *Collecting and Interpreting qualitative materials*, second edition, pp. 61-105. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Garrard-Burnett, V. 1993. 'Is This Latin America's Reformation?' In V. Garrard-Burnett and D. Stoll, eds., *Rethinking Protestantism in Latin America*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Germond, P. 1997. 'Heterosexism, homosexuality and the Bible', in P. Germond and S. de Gruchy, ed., *Aliens in the Household of God: Homosexuality and Christian Faith in South Africa*, pp 188-232. Claremont: David Philip Publishers.

Golob, T. 2009. 'Slovenian Migrants in Transnational social spaces: Exploring

Multilayered Identifications and Ambivalent Belongings'. *Anthropological Notebooks* 15 (3), pp. 65-77. Slovene Anthropological Society.

Gotz, G. 2004. 'The Role of Local Government towards Forced Migrants.' In L.B. Landau, ed., *Forced Migrants in the New Johannesburg: towards a Local Government Response*, pp. 24-36. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, Forced Migration Studies Programme.

Gozdziak, E. 2002. 'Spiritual Emergency Room: The Role of Spirituality and Religion in the Resettlement of Kosovar Albanians.' *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol.15, No 2.

Greenstein, N. 2006. *Methods of Family Research*, Second Ed. Thousand Oaks. London New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Grignon, F. 2004. International Response to the Illegal Exploitation of Resources in the DRC, in M. Malan and J. Porto (eds), *Challenges of Peace Implementation: The UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, pp 43-52. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies.

Groot, F. 2004. 'Challenges of the UNHCR's programme for urban Refugees in South Africa'. In L.B. Landau, (ed.), *Forced Migrants in the New Johannesburg: towards a Local Government Response*, 37-42. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, Forced Migration Studies Programme.

Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J., eds. 1999. 'Beyond 'Cultures', Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference'. In Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J., ed., *Culture, Power, Place: Exploration in Critical Anthropology*, pp. 33-50. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Gupta, A. 1999. 'The Song of the Nonaligned World: Transnational Identities and the

- Reinscription of Space in Late Capitalism'. In Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J., (ed.), *Culture, Power, Place: Exploration in Critical Anthropology*, pp. 179-199. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Guy, M (2005). The History of Congo, and: Imagining the Congo: The International Relations of Identity, and: Lumumba, un Crime d'État, and: Les Nouveaux Prédateurs: Politique des puissances en Afrique centrale, and: Kabila et la Révolution congolaise: Panafricanisme ou néocolonialisme, and: War and Peace in Zaire/Congo: Analyzing and Evaluating Intervention: 1996–1997. *African Studies Review*, Volume 48, Number 1, April 2005, pp. 127-137.
- Harrel-Bond. 1999. 'The Experience of Refugees as Recipients of Aid'. In A. Ager, ed., *Refugees: Perspectives on the Experience of Forced Migration*. New York, Cassell.
- Hein, J. 1993. 'Refugees, Immigrants, and the State'. In *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 19, pp. 43-59.
- Helgesson, K. 2006. *Walking in the Spirit: The Complexity of Belonging in Two Pentecostal Churches in Durban, South Africa*. Uppsala: DICA.
- Hing, J., Makanzu, M. and Graham, B. 1978. 'Marx, Moses and Messiah'. In M. Cassidy and G. Mensah, (ed.), *Together in One Place: The Story of PACLA*, pp.221-232. Nairobi: Evangel Publishing House.
- Hlobo, R. 2004. *Local Integration as a Durable Solution: A Study of Congolese Refugees in Johannesburg*. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, Forced Migration Studies. Unpublished MA Thesis.
- Ho, J. 2010. Acculturation gaps in Vietnamese immigrant families: Impact on family

relationships. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 34, 22-33.

Hofstede, G. 1980. 'Motivation, Leadership, and Organization: Do American Theories Apply Abroad'? *Organisational Dynamics*, pp 42-63. AMACOM, a division of American Management Associations.

Hofstede, G. 1993. 'Cultural constraints in management theories'. *The Academy of Management Executive*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp 81-94.

Holland, D., Lachicotte, W., Skinner, D., and Cain, C. 2001. *Identity and Agency in Cultural Worlds*. London: Harvard University Press.

Horenczyk, G. 1997. Immigrants' Perceptions of Host Attitudes and Their Reconstruction of Cultural Groups. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 46 (1), 34-38.

Howell, B. 2003. Practical belief and the localization of Christianity: Pentecostal and denominational Christianity in global/local perspective. *Religion* 33, pp 233-248.

Huisman, K. and Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. 2005. 'Dress Matters: Change and Continuity in the Dress Practices of Bosnian Muslim Refugee Women'. *Gender and Society*, Vol.19, No. 1, pp 44-65.

Available at <http://www.sagepublications.com> Downloaded from <http://gas.sagepub.com> on June 11, 2009.

Human Rights Watch. 2009. *No Healing Here: Violence, Discrimination and Barriers to Health for Migrants in South Africa*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch. 2005. *The Curse of Gold: Democratic Republic of Congo*. New York.

- Hwang, S., and Murdock, S.H. 1998. Racial Attraction or Racial Avoidance in American Suburbs. *Social Forces*, Vol. 77 (2), pp. 541-566. The University of North Carolina press.
- IOM International Migration for Migration. 2006. *Final Report of the Conference on Migration and Religion in a Globalized World, 5-6 December 2005*. Rabat: Morocco. At <http://www.iom.int/jahia/cache/bypass/pid/8?entryId=10257> visited on 08/09/2006.
- Irwin, R. 2007. Culture shock: negotiating feelings in the field. *Anthropology Matters Journal*, Vol. 9 (1), pp. 1-11.
- Jacobsen, K. 2001. *The Forgotten Solution: Local Integration for Refugees in Developing Countries*. New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper No. 45. Geneva: UNHCR.
- Jandt, E. 2007. An introduction to intercultural communication: Identities in a global community, 5th ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Jayasuriya, S. 2008. African Identity in Asia: Cultural Effects of Forced Migration. Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers.
- Johnson, K. 1997. 'Melting pot' or 'Ring of Fire'? : Assimilation and the Mexican-American Experience'. *California Law Review*, Vol. 85, No. 5, pp 1259-1313. LatCrit: Latinas/os and the Law: A Joint Symposium by *California Law Review* and *La Raza Law Journal*.
- Kadima, D. 2001. 'Motivation for Emigration and Character of the Economic Contribution of Congolese Emigrants in South Africa'. In A. Morris and A. Bouillon, eds., *African Immigration to South Africa: Francophone Migration*

of the 1990s, pp. 90-111. Pretoria: Protea Book House and IFAS.

Kalu, O. 2000. *Power, Poverty and Prayer: The Challenge of Poverty and Pluralism in African Christianity, 1960-1996*. Peter Lang, Europaischer Verlag der Wissenschaften.

Katjavivi, P., Frostin, P., and Mbuende, K. 1989. *Church and Liberation in Namibia*. London: Pluto Press.

Kibreab, G. 2000. 'Resistance, Displacement, and Identity: The case of Eritrean refugees in Sudan'. *Canadian Journal of African Studies/Revue Canadienne des Etudes Africaines*, Vol. 34, No. 2, pp.249-296.

Kiernan, J.P. 1990. *The Production and Management of Therapeutic power in Zionist Churches within a Zulu City*. Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press.

Kim, I. 1987. 'The Koreans: Small Business in an Urban Frontier'. In N. Foner, ed., *New Immigrants in New York*, pp. 219-241. New York: Columbia University Press.

Kleist, N. 2007. Somali-Scandinavian: A Dreaming When 'the Diaspora' Returns to the Desert. In N. Sorensen, (ed.), *Living Across Worlds: Diaspora, Development and Transnational Engagement*, pp107-128. Geneva: IOM International Organization for Migration.

Konings, P. 2003. 'Religious Revival in the Roman Catholic Church and the Autochthony-Allochthony Conflict in Cameroon.' *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 73, No.1, pp. 31-56.

Krause, N. and Wulff, K. 2004. 'Religious Doubt and Health: Exploring the Potential

- Dark Side of Religion. *Sociology of Religion*, Vol. 65, No. 1, pp. 35-56.
- Kretzschmar, L. 1986. *The Voice of Black Theology in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- Kvernmo, S and Heyerdahl, S. 2004. 'Ethnic Identity and Acculturation Attitudes among Indigenous Norwegian Sami and Ethnocultural Kven Adolescents'. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, Vol. 19, No.5, pp 512-532.
- Landau, L. and Haupt, I. 2007. *Tactical Cosmopolitanism and Idioms of Belonging: Insertion and Self-Exclusion in Johannesburg*. Paper Prepared for Cosmopolitan Citizenship: A symposium, 18-19 April 2007. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, School of Architecture and Planning.
- Landau, L. 2006. 'Transplants and Transients: Idioms of Belonging and Dislocation in Inner-City Johannesburg.' *African Studies review*, Vol. 49, No. 2, pp. 125-145.
- Landau, L. 2007. *Reconsidering Inclusion in Africa's Cities of Shifting Sands*. Working Paper series #30. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, Forced Migration Studies Programme.
- Landau, L. 2007. *Reconsidering Inclusion in Africa's Cities of Shifting Sands*. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, Forced Migration Studies Programme.
- Landau, L. 2009. 'Living Within and Beyond Johannesburg: Exclusion, Religion, and Emerging Forms of Being', *African Studies*, 68: 2, 197 — 214.
- Larsen, K. 1998. 'Spirit Possession as Historical Narrative: The Production of Identity and Locality in Zanzibar Town'. In N. Lovell, ed., *Locality and Belonging*, pp. 125-146. London and New York: Routledge.

- Leonard, K. 1999. 'Finding One's Own Place: Asian Landscapes Re-visioned in Rural California'. In Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J., ed., *Culture, Power, Place: Exploration in Critical Anthropology*, pp. 118-136. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Levine, R. 2001. *Class, Networks, and Identity: Replanting Jewish Lives from Nazi Germany to Rural New York*. Lanham, Boulder, New York, Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Levitt, P. 2004. Redefining the Boundaries of Belonging: The Institutional Character of Transnational Religious Life. *Sociology of Religion*, Vol. 65, No. 1, pp. 1-18.
- Liu, S. 2007. 'Living with others: Mapping the routes to acculturation in a multicultural society'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Vol. 31, pp 761-778.
- Lovell, N. 1998. 'Wild gods, Containing Wombs and Moving Pots: Emplacement and Transience in Watchi Belonging' In N. Lovell, ed., *Locality and Belonging*, pp. 53-77. London and New York: Routledge.
- Lovell, N. 1998. 'Introduction'. In N. Lovell, (ed.), *Locality and Belonging*, pp.1-24. London and New York: Routledge.
- Lueck, K. and Wilson, M. 2010. Acculturative Stress in Asian Immigrants: The impact of social and linguistic factors. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 34, 47-57.
- Malan, M., and Porto, J. (eds), *Challenges of Peace Implementation: The UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies.

- Malkki, L. 1992. 'National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees.' *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 24-44.
- Matsinhe, D. (2009). *Cleaning the Nation: Anti-African Patriotism and Xenophobia in South Africa*. Edmonton: University of Albarta.
- Matthi, J. 2006. Territorial bounds to virtual space: transnational online and offline networks of Iranian and Turkish-Kurdish immigrants in the Netherlands. *Global Networks* 6, 2, pp. 201-220. Blackwell Publishing Ltd and Global Networks Partnership .
- Mavungu, M. 2006. *Social Capital, Economic Performance and Political Engagement: A Case Study of Congolese Immigrants in Central Johannesburg*. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand. MA Thesis.
- Mayes, B. 2004. Syncretism in the Theology of Georg Calixt, Abraham Calov, and Johannes Musaus. *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, 68:3/4, pp291-318.
- Mayson, C. 2000. 'Listening for the Prophetic Voices: Where have all the Prophets gone? Prophetic Silences and the Incapacity of Religions to Take Us Forward' in C.W. du Toit, ed., *Violence, Truth and Prophetic Silence: Religion and the Quest for South African Common Good*, pp. 55-82. Pretoria: UNISA, Research Institute for Theology and Religion.
- McPherson, M., Smith-Lovin, L. and Cook, J. 2001. Birds of a Feather: Homophily in Social Networks. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27:415-444.
- Merkx, J. 2000. *Refugee Identities and Relief in an African Borderland: A Study of Northern Uganda and Southern Sudan*. New Issues in Refugee Research,

Working Paper No. 19. Geneva: UNHCR.

- Menjivar, C. 2003. 'Religion and Immigration in Comparative Perspective: Catholic and Evangelical Salvadorans in San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and Phoenix'. *Sociology of Religion*, Vol. 64, No. 1, pp. 21-45.
- Meyer, B. 2004. Christianity in Africa: From African Independent to Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 33, pp. 447-474. Available at <http://anthro.annualreviews.org>  
Accessed on 18/06/2011.
- Missionary Atlas Project Africa: Democratic Republic of Congo – Basic Facts, at [http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic\\_per\\_cent20republic\\_per\\_cent20of\\_per\\_cent20the\\_per\\_cent20congo/Republic\\_per\\_cent20of\\_per\\_cent20the\\_per\\_cent20Congo.pdf](http://worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/democratic_per_cent20republic_per_cent20of_per_cent20the_per_cent20congo/Republic_per_cent20of_per_cent20the_per_cent20Congo.pdf)  
Accessed on 15 June 2010.
- Morris, A and Bouillon, A (eds). 2001. *African Immigration to South Africa: Francophone Migrants of the 1990s*. Pretoria: Protea Book House and IFAS.
- Mouton, J. 2003. *How to succeed in your Master's and Doctoral Studies: A South African Guide and Resource Book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Mullins, M. 1987. 'The Life-Cycle of Ethnic Churches in Sociological Perspective'. *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 14/4, pp 321-334.
- Mullins, M. 1988. 'The Organisational Dilemmas of Ethnic Churches: A Case Study of Japanese Buddhism in Canada'. *Sociological Analysis*, 49, 3, pp 217-233.
- Nest, Mi. 2006. *The Democratic Republic of Congo: Economic Dimensions of War and Peace*. Boulder – London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

- Neuman, W. 2003. *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston and New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Nolan, A. 1988. *God in South Africa: The Challenge of the Gospel*. Cape Town and Johannesburg: David Philip.
- Noyoo, N. 2007. Urban social networks and the creation of new identities: A case of Johannesburg. *Cosmopolitan citizenship: a symposium* – Unpublished manuscript. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand.
- Nyamnjoh, F. 2005. *Africa's Media, Democracy and the Politics of Belonging*. London and New York: Zed Books. Pretoria: UNISA Press.
- Nzayabino, V. 2005. *The Role of Refugee Established Churches in the Lives of Forced Migrants: A Case Study of Word of Life Assembly in Yeoville, Johannesburg*. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand. MA Thesis.
- Nzayabino, V. 2010. 'The Role of Refugee Established Churches in Integrating Forced Migrants: A Case Study of Word of Life Assembly in Yeoville, Johannesburg'. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 66 (1), Art. #290. Available at: <http://www.hts.org.za> . Accessed 28/09/2010.
- Oberg, K. 1960. Cultural Shock: Adjustment to New Cultural Environments. *Practical Anthropology*, vol. 7, pp. 177-182. Reprinted in *Curare* 29 (2006)2+3, pp. 142-146.
- Ojo, A 2008. 'Modernity and social transformation in Nigerian Pentecostalism', in Southall R. and Rule S. (ed), *Faith on the Move: Pentecostalism and its potential contribution to development*, pp21-34. Johannesburg: Centre for Development and Enterprise.

- Okely, J. 1996. *Own or Other Culture*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Orozco, M. 2007. Conceptualizing Diasporas: Remarks About the Latino and Caribbean Experience, in N. Sorensen, ed., *Living Across Worlds: Diaspora, Development and Transnational Engagement*, pp 17-35. Geneva: IOM International Organization for Migration.
- Pargament, K., Magyar, G., Benore, E. and Mahoney, A. 2005. Sacrilege: A Study of Sacred Loss and Desecration and Their Implications for Health and Well-Being in a Community Sample. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 44(1), pp. 59–78.
- Paerregaard, K. (2007). Adios Peru: Persistence and Variation in Peruvian Transnational Engagement. In IOM, *Living Across Worlds: Diaspora, development and transnational engagement*, pp. 177-196. Geneva: IOM International Organization for Migration.
- Peterson, A., Vasquez, M. and Williams, P. (ed.). 2001. *Christianity, Social Change, and Globalization in the Americas*. New Brunswick, New Jersey, and London: Rutgers University Press.
- Pheko, Salzwedel and Oladipo, Emmanuel. 1978. 'Rendering to Caesar'. In M. Cassidy and G. Mensah, ed. *Together in One Place: The Story of PACLA*, pp. 209-220. Nairobi: Evangel Publishing House.
- Portes, A. 1969. 'Dilemmas of a Golden Exile. Integration of Cuban Refugee Families in Milwaukee'. *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 34, No. 4, pp. 505-518.
- Portes, A. 2008. *Migration and Social Changes: Some Conceptual Reflections*. Princeton University.

- Portes, A. and Rumbaut, R. 2006. *Immigrant America: A Portrait*. Third Edition. Berkely, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Posel, D. 2006. 'Moving On: Patterns of Labour Migration in Post-Apartheid South Africa'. In M. Tienda *et al.*, ed., *Africa on the Move: African Migration and Urbanisation in Comparative Perspective*, pp. 217-231. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Preston, R. 1999. 'Researching Repatriation and Reconstruction: Who is Researching What and Why?' In Black and Koser, (ed.), *The End of Refugee Cycle: Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- Preston-Whyte, E. *et al.* 2006. 'African Migration in the Twenty-First Century: Conclusion. In M. Tienda *et al.*, (ed.), *Africa on the Move: African Migration and Urbanisation in Comparative Perspective*, pp. 329-355. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Pursell, R. 2004. 'Accessing Health Services at Johannesburg's Clinics and Hospitals'. In L.B. Landau, ed., *Forced Migrants in the New Johannesburg: towards a Local Government Response*, 93-98. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, Forced Migration Studies Programme.
- Rebhun, U. and Levy, S. 2006. 'Jewish Identification in America and Israel 1990-2000'. *Sociology of Religion*, 67:4, pp 391-414.
- Rodgers, G. 1996. *'Place to Suffer': An Anthropological Study of Aid to Mozambican Refugees in a South African Settlement*. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand.

- Rogier, E. 2004. The inter-Congolese Dialogue: A Critical Overview. In Malan, M., and Porto J. (eds), *Challenges of Peace Implementation: The UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, pp. 25-42. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies.
- Roudometof, V. 2008. 'Greek Orthodoxy, Territoriality, and Globality: Religious Responses and Institutional Disputes'. *Sociology of Religion*, 69:1 67-91.
- Sanger, N. 2009. 'Foreigners know how to treat a woman. Our South African brothers are players, abuse physically and emotionally; you can't depend on them': Interrogating the links between xenophobic attitudes, gender and male violence in Du Noon, Cape Town. Available at [http://www.boell.org.za/downloads/Report\\_on\\_Xenophobia\\_and\\_Gender.pdf](http://www.boell.org.za/downloads/Report_on_Xenophobia_and_Gender.pdf) Accessed 6 July 2010.
- Schein, L. 2004. 'Homeland Beauty: Transnational Longing and Hmong American Video'. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 63, No.2. pp. 433-463.
- Schmeling, T. 2007. Lutheran Orthodoxy under Fire: An Exploratory Study of the Syncretistic Controversy and the Consensus Repetitus Fidei Vere Lutheranae. *Lutheran Synod Quarterly*, 47:4, pp316-355. <http://www.blts.edu/lsq/47-4.pdf>
- Scott, A. and Scott, R. 1989. *Adaptation of Immigrants: Individual Differences and Determinants*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J. and Silverman, D. 2004. *Qualitative Research Practice*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Segale, T. 2004. 'Forced Migrants and Social Exclusion in Johannesburg'. In L.B. Landau, ed., *Forced Migrants in the New Johannesburg: towards a Local Government Response*, 46-53. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand,

Forced Migration Studies Programme.

Shami, S. 1996. 'Transnationalism and Refugee Studies: Rethinking Forced Migration and Identity in the Middle East.' *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 9, No.1, pp. 3-26.

Sigmund, P., ed. 1999. *Religious Freedom and Evangelization in Latin America: The Challenge of Religious Pluralism*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.

Silverman, D. 2005. *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*. Second Ed. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage publications.

Smith-Hefner, J. 1994. 'Ethnicity and the Force of Faith: Christian conversion among Khmer refugees'. *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 67, No. 1, pp. 24-37.

Simone, A. 2001. 'African Migration and the Remaking of Inner-City Johannesburg.' In A. Morris and A. Bouillon, eds., *African Immigration to South Africa: Francophone Migration of the 1990s*, pp. 150-170. Pretoria: Protea Book House and IFAS.

Sol, J. (ed.). 1982. *Refugees: A Challenge to South African Churches – A Ministry to Refugees Handbook*. Pietermaritzburg: South African Council of Churches.

Sommers, M. 2001. 'Young, male and Pentecostal: Urban refugees in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 14 (4), pp.347-370.

Sorensen, N. (ed.) 2007. *Living Across Worlds: Diaspora, Development and Transnational Engagement – An Introduction*, pp. 1-15. Geneva: IOM International Organization for Migration.

- Steen, P. 2007. Spaces of Democratic Practice: Nicaraguans in San José, Costa Rica, in  
In N. Sorensen, ed., *Living Across Worlds: Diaspora, Development and  
Transnational Engagement*, pp. 83-106. Geneva: IOM International  
Organization for Migration.
- Steven, D. 2004. 'Spreading the Word: Religious Beliefs and the Evolution of  
Immigrant Congregations'. *Sociology of Religion*, Vol. 65, No. 2, pp. 121-138.
- Stojanov, R. 2004. 'Environmental Refugees: Introduction'. *Geographica* 38, pp. 77-  
88.
- Stubbs, M. 1983. *Discourse Analysis: The Sociolinguistic Analysis of Natural  
Language*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Swyngedouw, E. and Swyngedouw, E. 2009. 'The Congolese Diaspora in Brussels and  
Hybrid Identity Formation: Multi-scalarity and Diasporic Citizenship'.  
*Urban Research and Practice*, vol. 2, No. 1, 68-90.
- Synan, V. 1997. *The Holiness – Pentecostal Tradition: Centennial Reflections*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.  
Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Szkudlarek, B. 2010. 'Culture Learning Theory'. *International Journal of Intercultural  
Relations*, Vol. 34, pp. 1-21
- Tingle, R. 1992. *Revolution or Reconciliation? The Struggle in the Church in South  
Africa*. London: Christian Studies Centre.
- Tlou, J. 2004. 'Challenges Facing Forced Migrants in Johannesburg and the Non-  
governmental Response'. In L.B. Landau, ed., *Forced Migrants in the New  
Johannesburg: towards a Local Government Response*, pp. 43-45.  
Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, Forced Migration Studies

Programme.

Thomson, M. 2009. *Resisting Reconciliation: State Power and Everyday Life in Post-Genocide Rwanda*. Nova Scotia: Dalhousie University. PhD Dissertation.

Tonah, S. 2007. *Ghanaians Abroad and Their Ties Home: Cultural and Religious Dimensions of Transnational Migration*. COMCAD Arbeitspapiere – Working Papers, No. 25. Bielefeld, Germany: Centre for Interdisciplinary Research.

Toure M. and Fadayoni T., (ed.) 1992. *Migrations, Development and Urbanisation Policies in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Dakar: Codesria Book Series.

Turki, F. 1974. 'To be a Palestinian'. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 3-17.

Turner, S. 2007. Burundians in Belgium: Constructing, Performing and Contesting Diaspora, in N. Sorensen, ed., *Living Across Worlds: Diaspora, Development and Transnational Engagement*. Geneva: IOM International Organization for Migration.

United States Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs. At  
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.htm>  
Accessed on 15 June 2010.

Van den Bos, M. and Nell, L. 2006. 'Territorial bounds to virtual space: Transnational online and offline networks of Iranian and Turkish-Kurdish immigrants in the Netherlands'. *Global Networks* 6 (2), pp 201-220. Blackwell Publishing Ltd and Global Networks Partnership.

Van der Merwe, EK., Van Eeden, C. and Van Deventer, H.J.M., 2010, 'A psychological perspective on god-belief as a source of well-being and meaning', *HTS*

*Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 66(1), Art. #332, 10 pages.  
DOI:10.4102/hts.v66i1.332. Available at:  
<http://www.hts.org.za> . Accessed on 19 June 2010

Van Hear, N. 1998. *New Diasporas: The mass exodus, dispersal and regrouping of migrant communities*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Vigneswaran, D. 2007. Lost in Space: Residential Sampling and Johannesburg's Forced Migrants. *Migration Methods and Field Notes #4*. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, Forced Migration Studies.

Warner, S. 2000. 'The New Immigration Religion: An Update and Appraisal.' *EPIcenter, the Newsletter for the International Center for Migration, Ethnicity and Citizenship*, Vol. 5. Chicago: University of Illinois. Available at  
<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0813218.html>

Waters, T. 1995. 'Tutsi social Identity in Contemporary Africa'. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol.33, No. 2, pp. 343-347.

Welbourn, F.B. 1965. *East African Christian*. London: Oxford University Press.

Wilkinson, S. 2004. 'Focus Group research'. In David Siverman, ed. *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*, Second edition. London: SAGE Publications.

Willaime, J.P. 2004. The Cultural Turn in the Sociology of Religion in France. *Sociology of Religion*, 65:4, pp.373-389.

Wilson, F. 2007. 'Mestizaje and Clothing: Interpreting Mexican-US Transnational social Space', in N. Sorensen 2007: *Living Across Worlds: Diaspora, Development and Transnational Engagement – An Introduction*, pp. 37-59.

Geneva: IOM International Organization for Migration.

Winkler, T. 2006. *Super-Sizing Community Development: The Case of Hillbrow's Faith Sector*. School of Architecture and Planning, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. Unpublished paper.

Winland, D. 1994. 'Christianity and Community: Conversion and Adaptation among Hmong refugee Women'. *Canadian Journal of Sociology/Cahiers Canadiens de Sociologie*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 21-41.

Wright, R. and Ellis, M. 2000. 'Race, Region and the Territorial Politics of Immigration in the US'. *International Journal of Population Geography*, 6, pp. 197-211.

Zmegac, J. 2005. 'Ethnically Privileged Migrants in Their New Homeland'. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2. Oxford University Press.

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### **Section A:               Demographic profiles**

1.   Where were you living in DRC? (Urban/rural)?
2.   How old are you?
3.   Have you ever been married? If yes, how many children do you have?
4.   If you still remember, when did you join Yahweh Shammah Church?
5.   How long have you been in South Africa?
6.   Are you currently a recognized refugee or an asylum seeker?
7.   Which level of education did you achieve in DRC?
8.   What is your current level of education?
9.   What was your occupation before leaving DRC?
10.   What is your current occupation?
11.   Can you please briefly tell me how you left your home country and how you established yourself here in South Africa?
12.   Could you please tell me the main reason that made you to leave your country?
13.   Would you please tell me the reason you chose South Africa?

**Section B:                    Understanding the role of the church**

14. Where did you go when you first arrived in South Africa?
15. Would you like to tell me from whom you received your first assistance?
  - What was the nature of this assistance?
16. Where or with whom did you stay for your first month after arriving in South Africa?
17. Would you like to tell me what made you to join Yahweh Shammah church?
18. A part from the teaching/preaching what else makes you to like your church?
19. Would you please tell what you do not like in your church?
20. A part from spiritual help can you please tell me in what other area(s) your church is particularly helpful to you.
21. Do you get any assistance from the Yahweh Shammah? If yes, would you like to tell me what kind of assistance you receive?
22. Do you sometimes attend services at other churches around? If yes, do you receive any assistance from that (those) church (es)?

**Section C:                    Level of migrant's integration**

23. Which language(s) can you speak and understand?
24. Could you please tell me whether you consider yourself as part of the South African community or Congolese community? Please give some reasons.

25. Would you please tell me about your future plans – Are you planning to stay permanently in South Africa, to remain until it is safe to return to DRC, or to resettle in a third country if you had opportunity? Please elaborate.
26. According to you, what do you think the Government of South Africa should do in order for you to feel that you are fully integrated into South African community?
27. According to you, what do you think the South African community should do in order for you to feel that you are fully integrated into South African Community?
28. According to you, do you think South African churches (local churches) are doing enough to help migrants to integrate into South African society? Please give reasons.
29. What role, if any, does your church play in helping you become part of local community?
30. According to you, is it important to you to attend a Congolese church rather than any other local church? Why?
31. Would you please tell me what makes you to like Yahweh Shammah?
32. Can you please briefly tell me what makes you not to attend other local churches around?
33. Are your children attending the Yahweh Shammah's Sunday school?  
If yes, would you allow your children to attend a Sunday school at a local church if they can speak and understand English or any other local language?  
Why?

34. In your view, is it important for your children to learn and adhere to South African customs or maintain Congolese customs? Please give reasons.
35. According to you, what do you think is the most suitable place for your children to learn about Congolese culture and tradition?
36. In your view, is it better for a migrant to stay in cities or in townships? Why?
37. According to you, is it safer for migrants to stay in a place with more migrants than South African citizens? Why?
38. According to you, do you think it is important for migrants to have their own place of worship or to mix with South Africans within local churches? Why?
39. Would you like to tell me at least two (2) things you do not like within local churches in Johannesburg?
40. Did you ever attend any other church(es) in Johannesburg or elsewhere in South Africa before joining Yahweh Shammah? If yes, would you like to tell me what made you to leave that church? If no, why?
41. If you were able to understand and speak English more fluently than you do now, would you feel free to take membership in a South African Pentecostal white-majority church? Why?
42. If you were able to understand and speak any of other local languages spoken in Johannesburg (for instance esiZulu) fluently, would you feel free and ready to take membership in a South African Pentecostal Zulu-majority church? Why?

43. Would you like your children to grow up and permanently settle in South Africa? Why?
44. If you do not mind, how could you describe South Africans' attitude towards foreigners in general?

**Section D. Level of migrant's religious attendance**

45. If you had one, what was your religion/denomination in your home country?
46. When did you start going to church? Where?
47. Would you please tell what made you to decide to go to church?
48. Have you ever changed any of your religious beliefs or practices since you left your country? Why?
49. How did you know about Yahweh Shammah?
50. Would you please tell me the main reasons why you have chosen to join this church?
51. According to you, why is religion/church so important to you?
52. When you compare your present spiritual/Christian life with the one you lived before leaving your home country, would you say that you are now:
  - More active than before? Why?
  - Less active than before? Why?
  - The same as before? Why?

53. A part from ordinary Sunday services, what other church-related activities are you involved in during the week?
54. Can you please tell me in what area (s) of your daily life the involvement in these activities remain important and helpful to you?

**Section F.            Sense of Belonging**

55. Would you please tell me to whom you would go when you have problems in your family or with your partner? Why?
56. Have you ever felt stressed, traumatized, rejected or abused in your family or neighbourhood? If yes, where did you go for help and why?
57. Would you please tell me to whom you would go if you had a financial problem or no food in the house? Why?
58. With whom do you feel comfortable to share your personal matters or needs? Why?
59. Whom do you contact when you need a job? Why?
60. Do you think it is important to marry a person from your own tribe? Why?

61. Do you think it is important to marry a person from your own religion? Why?
62. Do you think it is important for your son or daughter to marry a South African citizen? Why?
63. According to you, is it better for migrants to maintain their customs or to adopt South African customs? Why?
64. In your view, is it important for your children to speak and understand their mother tongues? Why?
65. Do you think it is important for Congolese children to learn Congolese culture and traditions? Why?
66. Would you please tell me what language do you mostly use at home (with your children)? Why is it so important for you to use that language?
67. Would you please tell me where and at what occasion you often meet with other Congolese compatriots? Could you please briefly describe what you do or discuss during those occasions?
68. Would you please tell me why is it important for Congolese migrant community to meet together?

69. According to you, if you compare Congolese with South African Pentecostal churches' way of worship, which one do you like the most? Why?
70. If for one or other reason it happens that your church closes, would you seek membership into a local Pentecostal church or you would look for another Pentecostal church within Congolese community? Why?

**Section E. The role of the church in transnational networks**

*(This project assumes that a church with sustained transnational close ties to the home country may hinder or slow down migrant's integration into the host society)*

71. How often are you in contact with your family or friends:
- Back home? Never (1); occasionally (2); once a week (3); a few times a month (4); other (5).
  - Abroad? Never (1); occasionally (2); once a week (3); a few times a month (4); other (5).
72. What means do you use to contact them?

73. Does the church anyway help you in your contacts with family or friends? If yes, in which way?
74. Have you ever sent money or goods to your home country or abroad? If yes, how does the church help you in this transaction?
75. In your view, why is it important for your church to invite other pastors and evangelists particularly from DRC to come and preach to your congregation? In which ways are these preachers particularly helpful to you?

#### **Questions for church leadership**

1. When and where were you officially ordained to be a pastor?
2. What was your occupation in your home country?
3. Which language(s) can you speak and understand?
4. Which of these languages do you often use when preaching?
5. Which of these languages do you feel the most comfortable when preaching or praying? Why?

6. Do you think it is important for the congregants to pray and worship in their vernacular languages rather than English? Why?
7. Would you please tell me how you had a vision to establish Yahweh Shammah Church?
8. Would you please tell me more about the mission of your church?
9. Could you please tell me what motivated you to choose this area (Hillbrow) for your ministry?
10. According to you, what makes Congolese to attend your church in a big number?
11. Would you encourage migrants to attend local churches in their effort to integrate into local communities? Please give some reasons.
12. Could you please tell me how often did you conduct marriage ceremonies between:
  - a. Congolese themselves
  - b. A Congolese and a South African
  - c. A Congolese and any other national

Could you please give your opinion for each case?

13. Does your church have any program to meet physical needs of the members? Tell me more about it?
14. According to you, what kind of topics/sermons do you think are the most acclaimed by the congregation in general? Please give some reasons?
15. How do you select your topics/sermons? Does the overall spiritual state of your church members influence you in this selection?
16. What kind of spiritual and social struggles do you think they affect your church members?
17. Would you please tell me more about the main concerns people bring to your attention during your counseling sessions?
18. What is your main target group (s) of population or community in your evangelical outreaches? Why do you target this/these particular group(s)?
19. Do you think it is important for a Congolese migrant to attend a Congolese church? Why?

20. A part from purely spiritual benefits, what other areas do you think the church remains important for migrants?

**The role of the church in transnational networks**

21. Does your church have headquarter or mother church? If yes, where?
22. Could you please explain how coordination/collaboration is done between your church and the headquarter, if any?
23. Is your church affiliated to any national or international religious or ecumenical body? If yes, which one and how do you collaborate?
24. Does your church receive any support (financial or any other kind of aid) outside of South Africa? If yes, from where and what kind of support?
25. Does your church have branches? If yes, where and how coordination/collaboration is done between your church and this/these branch(es)?
26. Do you sometimes invite other pastors or evangelists to come and preach to your congregation? If yes, where do they come from? Why do you invite them?
27. In what ways do you think your congregation benefits from visiting ministers?

28. Have yourself ever been invited by another church within your denomination or from another denomination? If yes, where and what do you benefit from these visits?