



Assessment of Garrick Sokari Braide Movement in Ndokiland

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Review

Christian religion has its cradle in Palestine and Jesus Christ is the founder. It is commonly believed that the first Pentecost witnessed a great increase in the church's numerical strength and received impetus to witness universally to its Lord. No sooner than the church left Palestine than it spread rapidly to Greece, Rome, Europe and Africa under the "direction of the Holy Spirit, finger of God or divine providence. In Nigeria Christianity was introduced by freed slaves in the early 19th century. After the abolition of the Trans Atlantic Trade some freed slaves who were originally Nigerians (the Egbas) left Freetown and arrived Badagry on April, 1839. The leader of the group, Thomas petitioned the government to allow them own their colony under the British jurisdiction, where they could engage in trade and also plant Christianity. Following this request James Ferguson invited Church Missionary Society (CMS) in London to begin Missionary activities in Badagry. Consequently, Thomas Birch Freeman of the Methodist Church and his colleagues Revd. Henry Townsend of the Anglican Church arrived Badagry, and on September 24, 1842 the first ever Christian worship was held in Freeman's traveling tent. The Revd. Samuel Adjai Crowther who was ordained in 1842 later joined the mission team in 1846.

Following the successful establishment of Yoruba mission by the freed slaves another group became nostalgic and as a result took positive steps to return home. This group was the Igbo freed slaves settled in Sierra Leone. In their quest to establish a mission in their homeland they petitioned the local CMS committee to plant Christian religion in Niger "as it has done to the Yoruba" Adiele [1]. Consequently in 1853 the CMS commissioned Revd. Edward Jones to engage in expedition and explore the possibility of establishing missionary work in the Niger. Later in 1857 Rev Samuel Adjai Crowther led a CMS team including Revd. John C. Taylor Catechist Simon Jonas and Augustus Radillo, who were Igbo ex-slaves, to

open the 'Niger Mission' on July 27, 1857. It is worthy of note that the 1853 expedition of Jones was a precursor to the 1857 Crowther success story in founding the Niger mission, although Crowther worked in a supervisory capacity. In another development, King William Dappa Pepple came in contact with Christian religion while in London. Invited missionaries to Bonny his domain. He felt that the Whiteman had civilization through Christianity and education, therefore on his return to Bonny he wrote to Bishop Tait to come over to Bonny and introduce Christianity and school in order to civilize his people. The Bishop on receipt of the King's letter directed it to Revd. Henry Venn, the CMS General Secretary in London. In effect, Bishop Samuel Adjai Crowther was assigned to ensure that Niger Delta mission was opened. The Bishop's maiden visit was in 1864 and the mission work began on April 29, 1865. This mission became the nucleus of the Niger Delta Pastorate (NDP) with major centers in Bonny (October 1864), Brass (1868) and Kalabari (1874). On April 24, 1892 the Niger Delta Pastorate ruptured from the Church Missionary Society (CMS) for obvious reasons. Incidentally, Archdeacon Dandeson Crowther, the last son of Bishop Samuel Adjai Crowther became the sole Administrator of the Delta church, with Bishop James Johnson, the assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Equatorial Africa as supervisor. In his definition of the NDP Archdeacon Dandeson Crowther stated in May 1892 thus:

The Pastorate is a self-supporting, self-governing pastorate, instituted in full communion with the Church of England. We recognize the CMS as our originator (qtd. in Iwuagwu 2).

It was within this independent status of the Delta Church that a lay man of humble birth arose from St. Andrews's Church Bakana to cause a great revival in the whole church within the jurisdiction of both Niger delta and Niger churches. He was no other than Garrick Sokari Braide. According to Tasie "Braide was a man of humble background and his parents were not well to do..." (Isichei 4)

Garrick Sokari Braide In Perspective

A number of traditions surround Garrick Braide's birth, childhood and upbringing. The first is the Obonoma tradition. It is believed that Garrick Sokari Braide was born in 1882 and his father, Idaketima Marian Braide, a native of Bakana was married to Abarigania who gave birth to Garrick Sokari Braide at her home Obonoma following Kalabari custom that required expectant mothers to return to her maiden home until the period of delivery was over. This custom may have been followed in order to ensure the security of Kalabari daughters and guarantee the safe arrival of the new born baby. Abarigania belonged to a traditional religious family who were custodians and worshippers of Ogu divinity cult. Garrick Braide uncle was at one time the chief priest of Ogu cult in Obonoma. According to Bakana tradition, Idaketima was of Igbo origin, probably a slave in the Marian Braide's family. A story is told in Bakana that a priestess had prophesied to Abarigania that the foetus in her womb will be an exceptional child filled with the Holy Spirit whose ministry shall begin after his father's death. The prophecy went on to affirm that the unborn child will constitute a serious threat to the cults; events that unfolded in future proved the prophetess right. The young boy grew up in a pagan home and was initiated into the ogu cult of Obonoma by his mother [2].

Garrick Sokari Braide did not receive formal education, probably for the reason that he was of a humble background. However, he enjoyed the privilege of traditional education prevalent in his own time. Garrick Braide served in Chief Marian Braide's canoe where he learned commercial skill until he attained the retirement age of thirty. During this period of training he was exposed to travel far and near and this gave him an advantage when he later became an itinerant evangelist. Those areas where he visited for commercial purpose were to become his mission stations [3].

Church historians are not sure at what point Garrick Sokari Braide became a Christian. Open air services began in Bakana in 1886 where Christian converts met for worship and catechetical purposes. Garrick Sokari Braide out of curiosity may have availed himself the opportunity of this worship place. In 1890 Garrick Sokari Braide enrolled as an "inquirer" in St. Andrew's Sunday School, Bakana where he received instruction under Rev. M. A. Kemmer, of Kemmer town, Brass. In the school he learnt the basics of Christianity which include the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and memorization of Bible portions. Igbo language was also taught in the school. It took Garrick Sokari Braide two decades to grasp lessons in the school, for at that time it was the Anglican church policy that an Inquirer must show evidence of brilliant performance in the school before he/she could qualify to receive the sacrament of baptism. However, on January 23, 1910 Garrick Braide was baptized in St. Andrew's Church, Bakana after two years he was confirmed in 1912 [4].

Before the emergence of Garrick Sokari Braide as a spirit filled prophet the issue of appointment of indigenous agents in the Niger Delta Pastorate has been agitating the minds of the faithful in the area. The Delta worshippers made a representation to Bishop James Johnson, the supervisor of the NDP in 1905. They submitted that the Niger Delta pastorate has been self-supporting since its inception in 1890 but not self-governing, since its depended more on the Creoles and Yoruba agents for its staff. Furthermore, the delegations pointed out that since the inauguration of the Niger Delta Mission only one agent was appointed from among the indigenes. Tasia states:

Some pastorates which felt very strongly against the existing situation reiterated that unless action was taken to remedy the uncompromising situation, the Delta Church might split up (173).

In his response to this agitation Bishop James Johnson called a meeting of the Delta Church Conference in February 1905 where it was resolved that a theological institute be established in Bonny for the training of Delta indigenous agents to govern the Church in the Niger Delta Pastorate. Regrettably due to paucity of fund the project could not open till October 1912.

After he had received confirmation in 1912 Garrick Sokari Braide narrated his spiritual experience during his first communion in these words:

As I knelt down with others looking at the Holy Table with the elements laid down on the occasion, but more so as the minister pronounced the words as I was about to receive the elements: 'the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this is in remembrance that Christ died for thee and feed on Him in thy heart with thanksgiving'. A thrill came over me; a bright light flashed over my eyes and as the elements entered into my mouth, as it were still small voice said to me; 'Garrick Braide for you Jesus died, for you He gave his body and shed his most precious blood on the cross to wash away your sins. Have you been washed in his precious blood?' In deep and silent tone I replied: 'Lord wash me and I shall be wither than snow'. After the communion I knelt down in my pew and pour out my soul in prayer to God. I could not sleep the whole night; several times I got up from my bed and pray..... At about the still hours of the morning, I heard a still small voice saying Garrick! Garrick! Are you prepared to be my servant? Are you ready to witness to mankind the saving truths of the Gospel? (174 -175) [5].

Subsequently, Garrick Sokari Braide gradually developed his spiritual life by engaging in spiritual exercise. It is said he often spent time in the church alone lying prostrate on bare floor confessing his sins and asking Jesus Christ for forgiveness. At times Garrick Braide observe all night in the church fasting and praying

with his bible and prayer book. He also began to practice healing through prayers and recorded good success. Garrick Braide at some point noticed that he was developing spiritually and decided to give himself for the work of evangelist. Above experiences marked the call to ministry, training and inauguration of Garrick Braide's evangelistic outreach which was to span the whole of Southern part of Nigeria and swept many converts into Christianity [6].

Aside from Garrick Braide's personal spiritual experience on the first day of making his first communion in the Anglican Church and the direct call he received from God, his home pastor Revd. M. A. Kemmer reported from Bakana that Garrick Braide was gifted in healing the sick through prayers, prophetic (foretelling) utterances and performing miracles. He went on to appoint him his Pastor's warden. Garrick Braide visited Bonny at the instance of Chief Alexander Hart and there his ministry was recommended to the congregation of St. Stephen's Cathedral Bonny by their pastor, Revd. S.S. Macarthy and was thereafter nicknamed Elijah II and his home town Bakana was known as "Israel". Again, he was invited to Abonema shortly after his visit to Bonny. Garrick Sokari Braide arrived Abonema, some two and half kilometers to his mother's home Obonema, where he was born. The people were in high spirit to welcome him and he was enthusiastic to visit them. On January 5, 1916 Garrick Sokari Braide arrived Abonema amidst a rousing reception. On January 7, 1916 he launched an evangelistic crusade that resulted to many converts trooping to the Anglican church the next Sunday [7].

One may ask, what was the push and pull factors that characterized Garrick Braide's Evangelistic campaign? Before we can answer above question we need to appreciate the fact that the Anglican Christianity has touched the Delta soil in 1865, that is to say, five decades (fifty years) before the emergence of the Garrick Braide movement in 1915. The Anglican Church method of evangelism and church planting policy, we may recall, was "consolidation before expansion". Therefore the church's method of recruitment of membership was a rigorous 'Catechetical approach' of teaching "Inquirers" the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Catechism etc. For instance it took Garrick Braide over two decades (1890- 1912) to graduate from the status of Inquirer to a full communicant. Conversely Garrick Sokari Braide came with the method of "expansion before consolidation" following the Biblical parable of the dragnet. Therefore, "Converts were baptized in their hundreds without the usual preparation and examination". Added to this, was his iconoclastic method. He believed that it is only when people break loose from the grip of traditional religious practice such as charms, idols, shrines etc and abstain from alcoholic drink, and confess their sins would they become genuine Christians. Therefore, Garrick Sokari Braide evangelistic movement won many converts into Christianity in the Niger Delta. It spread into commercial cities, villages, hamlets, fishing ports and every

nook and cranny in Southern Nigeria. The push factor to Garrick Braide movement was the agitation for self-actualization and self-determination of the Niger Delta Christians and their resistance to perceived marginalization by Sierra Leone and Yoruba agents in the Delta church government [8].

To this end, the Delta people saw Garrick Braide Movement as coming to fulfill two major purposes for them. They felt that with the emergency of Garrick Sokari Braide, Christianity being a civilizing agent would be made more accessible to the Delta people. Second the monopoly of church government by Sierra Leoneans and Yoruba has been broken. Therefore, it was credited to Garrick Braide in January 7, 1916 during his address in a conference this statement: "that the time has come for Africans to actualize themselves and assume responsibility among their people". To back up this, the Chiefs and his kinsmen presented him to Bishop of the Diocese of Equatorial Africa, James Johnson to be recognized as an evangelist within the Anglican Church (Isichei 108). And to buttress this expectation he appointed evangelists to whom he delegated healing powers to different parts of Niger Delta. Following this were bands of self-acclaimed evangelists known as Ndi amuma "the sons of the prophets".

However, Bishop Johnson's refusal to grant the request of the Delta Chiefs left Garrick Braide and his people disappointed. In reaction, revolt against the NDP erupted. Many Churches of the NDP became empty on Sunday because many have sympathy for the new order. In response, the NDP authority disbanded Garrick Braide Movement and suspended pastors who gave it support. The Church further accused Garrick Sokari Braide Movement of abuse of healing practices and Prophetic ministry. For instance his followers deified him by calling him god; and even his bathe water was used for healing. Added to this, the colonial government represented by P. A. Talbot the District commissioner of Degema persecuted Garrick Sokari Braide. He tried the prophet three times in 1916 by accusing him of sedition, economic sabotage etc. Dayrell who was Talbot's successor joined force to accuse Garrick Sokari Braide of (1) obtaining by threats and false pretenses (2) behaviour likely to cause breach of the peace (3) Willfully damaging jujus (Iwuagwu 52-53). It was the intensity of the persecution from the church and the colonial government that hastened Garrick Sokari Braide's death on 15th November 1918. He foresaw his death and told his followers "my time is due and I will soon leave you" (Tasie 179) [9].

Doctrine of The Garrick Sokari Braide Movement

Garrick Sokari Braide Movement introduced an entirely new order into an existing (old) order in the Niger Delta Pastorate. The NDP vis-à-vis the Anglican Church was not designed for Africans, rather for English Anglicanism. The liturgy was fashioned to suit English conservatism and contains prayer for the monarch and prayers that have vestiges of the Reformation acrimony. The use of

prosaic hymnals and organ was meant for Western churchmanship. Moreover the missionaries' method of recruiting converts was rather clumsy and discouraging. In this vein, Garrick Braide was to up turn the near fruitless mainline churches' method and practices to favour a new dynamic, creative and innovative method and procedure.

First, he contextualized the gospel for his people by encouraging singing local or native airs in place of hymn book. This was to accommodate worshippers, majority of who were illiterates. Therefore the perfunctory form of worship gave way to participatory worship for all. Clapping of hands and ecstatic dancing which is African self-expression were encouraged. Little wonder Bishop N. B. Iyalla quipped concerning Garrick Sokari Braide that "he taught the African how to worship God in his own way" (Tasie 177).

Second, Braide encouraged worshippers to lose faith in traditional religious practices. Therefore he burnt shrines, charms, idols (juju) etc. In the Delta the drinking of gin and rum was a habit which the natives were addicted to and this led to moral decadence among the populace, even the Delta Christians and their leaders. The new prophet demanded abstinence from alcoholic drink and encouraged confession of sins and engagement in prayer (20 times a day) and fasting among adherents of Christianity.

Third, Garrick Sokari Braide laid emphasis on the fourth commandment "Remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy..." (Exodus 20:8-11 KJV). It would be recalled that Deltans, both Christians and pagans of Garrick Braide's home were in the habit of profaning the Sabbath (Sunday) in preference to their commercial activities and fishing business. Therefore, the prophet demanded strict observance of Sunday, only church worship and religious activities were allowed (Isichei 106-107).

Fourth, Garrick Sokari Braide movement was favorably disposed towards the institution of polygamy although himself had one wife. He may have glossed over polygamy for the useful purpose it serves among Africans including economic social and political.

Fifth, Garrick Sokari Braide healing ministry and miracles were practical tools that more than any factor attracted converts to the church since at the time there was little or no medical facilities in Nigeria. From above survey, we deduce that Garrick Braide came to fill a yawning gap in the NDP ministry among the Niger Delta people and by extension African Christianity.

In response to Garrick Braide's teaching there was mass conversion into Christianity in the NDP and Southern Nigeria was rapidly Christianized between 1915/1918. It must be observed that Garrick Sokari Braide methods and teachings were not inimical to or at aberrance with Orthodox Christian doctrines. It was in this

vein that S. A. Coker in a public lecture on Tuesday 10 April 1917 declared "I challenge the pastorate church to state publicly what portion of Garrick's theology is wrong supporting their statement from the Bible". He further asked "what evil then has Braide done? (Tasie 194-195). Of a truism Garrick Braide committed no evil and did not teach wrong doctrine. The NDP authority out of envy, jealousy, insensitivity, impatience and abuse of power accused the movement of abuse of prophecy and threw away the bath-water-with-the-baby. What a regrettable action?

Garrick Braide And The Founding Of A New Church

One of the negative sides of religion is pluralism and N.S.S Iwe avers that it could be harmful to society because its effect is "negative and repressive, disintegrative and counter-productive, violent and dangerous for humanity" (Iwe qtd in Asu 40). Garrick Sokar iBraide was therefore cautious enough not to compound the problem of the society to which he was called to serve. He was not ambitious or driven by filthy lucre because he was a man of quiet disposition and a man of God full of piety. To this effect, when his followers suggested to him to establish a church he replied, "my mission is that of a prophet; God has endowed me specially with this prophetic power and nothing can sway me from that... Let us not be hasty. Let us wait" (Tasie 201). Garrick Braide could have been justified if he had readily opened a new church for himself considering the persecution he received from the church and colonial government. To further buttress their leaders' position in founding a new church in the face of daunting circumstances his followers collaborated thus:

It must be mentioned that before the persecution came to a head, the prophet had no secular motive in his relationship with the parent church, neither had he any intention of seceding with his teaming flock from it. Rather, he continued his membership of that denomination, submissively and faithfully serving it (Iwuagwu 53).

The persecution notwithstanding Garrick Braide was clear of his divine mandate that is to 'fill the gap between the NDP and the eventual indigenization of Christianity' in Delta in particular and by extension Africa. Indeed this was the beginning of African quest to fill the spiritual and political gap created by early missionaries in their failure to contextualize the gospel on African soil (Nwoko 100). However, Garrick Braide followers was not to be as focused and patient as their leader. Therefore, one of the followers, Kurubo Pepple saw a vision that teaming population of "church rebels" who were persecuted and frustrated were God's own army consequently on January 30, 1916 the first schismatic group evolved from the Niger Delta pastorate (NDP) and knew itself as "Christ Army Church" (Iwuagwu 53) [10].

The Coming and Spread of Garrick Braide Movement In Ndoki land

In the West African sub-region there arose two important religious phenomena that brought revival in the churches within the region before and after the First World War in 1914. The first took place along the gulf of Guinea. Prophet Wade Haris emerged in the 1910 and brought about an unprecedented revival in the mainline churches and many folks believed and thronged around the charismatic figure. Again, between 1915 and 1918 another charismatic figure arose in the Niger Delta of Eastern Nigeria and caused revival in the Niger Delta Pastorate Church (NDP) and its influence precipitated in the Christianization of the entire Eastern Nigeria within a short period of three years (Kalu 95). Garrick Sokari Braide Movement began in St. Andrew's Anglican Church Bakana with performance of miracle and act of healing, iconoclastic ministry and abstinence. Many people within Bakana were attracted to the person of the founder of the evangelistic ministry, Garrick Sokari Braide, a humble man of God full of piety and the power of God [11].

In 1916 the "waves from the Rivers" blew in Ndoki land. Ndoki was accessible to the Garrick Sokari Braide just as it was to the Ubani traders who settled at the water fronts in different houses and established the Anglican Christianity in the area alongside their commercial business. The first entry point was Obunku Ugbo from where they visited other villages. According to S.C Chuta, in Akwete the priest of the arch-divinity Nwaiyieke woke up in the morning and fell into religious ecstasy, ran around the community summoning the people, then climbed the Nwaiyieke divinity tree and screamed:

Unu tuorom Ugbo – o-prepare a boat for me
 Agam ilaala-o-o-I must go away
 Unu tuorom Ugbo-o-o-prepare a boat for me
 Agam ilaala-o-o-I must go away
 Agham'huru kpunchu-o-the battle I perceive wears a hat
 Ha ti nwei ochicha-o-they are all dressed in white;
 Ha si ntukpu abia-o-o-they are coming from the water side

Following this clarion call and appeal devotees of the dreaded Nwaiyieke gathered, prepared a boat and gathered sacrificial materials into it and let the juju priest off; he set out and disappeared from sight. After two weeks the Garrick Braide movement arrived Akwete and burnt the Nwaiyieke shrine, an incident that hardly leaves any typical Akwete Christian which the community knows as era of "Igbu ekwensu" (Akparranta J OC). Garrick Braide evangelistic team revived the "Choochi Delinta" in Akwete. From thence "this new religious force, like a wave, swept through Akwete, obunku

(which became the headquarters), Ohambele, Azumini, Ohaobu to Mkpukpule desecrating religious shrines" (144).

According to oral source the Garrick Braide movement on arrival at Akwete paid a courtesy call on Chief Nwagbara Akpara who summoned his people together at Nwaiyieke shrine, the people surrendered the shrine to be burnt. The evangelists prayed and set the shrine ablaze as the people pour faggot in the blazing fire and sang "Ekwensu bialaa na Jisos abiala" (Satan pack and go; Jesus has come). To Akwete people the religion introduced to them in the 1880s by Ubani traders was simply "choochi Delinta". It was now the Garrick Braide Movement that brought "Jesus" to them in 1916.

Again, during the reign of chief Okereuku, the heir apparent to the Akawor chieftaincy stool Prophet Elijah II arrived Egberu from Bakana in 1916. He assembled everyone in Egberu at the shrines of "Wetiobu" and "Nneanyi". He offered prayer and poured kerosene on the shrine and set fire on them. The exercise Igbu Ekwensu extended to all public and private shrines in the village. Consequently, "Christ Army Church" was founded in Egberu. The first converts were chief Hudson Nwagbara, Francis Ogbuagu, Thompson Nnah Nwankwo Tata and Eli Okijah. The first teacher posted to the church by Prophet Elijah II was Mr. Aberdee alias Frank Nwaikpahia, a native of Ahoada. "The church was noted for healing the sick with holy water, mud and holy oil". It also emphasized fervent prayer and power to heal the sick. The church planted a junior primary school in Egberu which acted as spring board for civilizing the people (Akawor Harold). The influence of the movement later waned in Egberu as a result of low morals among its leadership and followers [12].

It is said that Prophet Garrick Sokari Braide (may be his delegation) visited Obeakpu in 1915 from Obunku Okwankwu. Many shrines in Obeakpu were torched but Ogu shrine became stubborn. However, after the "college" (a prayer arm of the church) engaged in one week fervent prayer of faith and fasting, Ogudeity was routed into "ehereehi" (great river) in Obeakpu. The movement healed the sick through use of camwood obtained from "mini Ogbu" (a special spring source of water). The church planted basic school in Obeakpu with teacher Dauton as the first teacher while the church was manned by teacher Ukata, an Ngwa man. Furthermore, Obete community received the wave of Garrick Braide movement from Obeakpu. One Mgbokwo Sokari George of Obeakpu, a prophetess opened a prayer band for Sunday Onyeamuma the heir apparent of Obete. And out of religious zeal Sunday took the fire of evangelism to Asa Ugbobekee in Asa [13].

Besides, through the instrumentality of Philip Halliday a Bonny oil trader resident in Ohaobu the Garrick Braide movement visited the village. Prior to the advent of this movement in 1915 Ohaobu had shrines called Nkukwa, Nworu, Ajamaja, Ihuala, Neneobu, Tututurutu etc. At a junction located at the center of the village

known as "Mbuba" (Assembly ground) evil spirit raked havoc from 6pm that no one dare cross the spot. But with the coming of Garrick Sokari Braide Movement the evil forest was dis-virgined and Christ Army Church was later built on the spot. After an evangelistic crusade led by the Movement Christ Army Church was founded at Polo Odum house from where it moved to the extreme part of the community, Okpikoro. In November 1919 Moses Hart (later Bishop) led an evangelistic campaign that saw the destruction of evil deities at "Mbuba". The natives surrendered their private charms, amulets and shrines for destruction. The first batch of converts in Ohaobu to embrace Christianity through the auspices of Garrick Sokari Braide movement include: Jacob Nwankwo Onyeuku Obasi, Jeremiah Nnah Udoo, Egege Igbo, Mbunta, Mary Egeolu, Nwaikpeghi Jim Owo, Philip Halliday and Stephen Okere Anyato. From among the early converts the following persons were baptized by Moses Hart in 1921. They include: Jacob Nwankwo Onyeuku Obasi, Jeremiah Nnah Udoo, Egege Igbo, Mbunta, Mary Egeolu, Nwaikpeghi Jim Owo, Mbunta of Akpala. The first set of converts to receive confirmation in 1925 were Jacob Nwankwo Onyeuku Obasi, Jeremiah Nnah Udoo, Egege Igbo, Mbunta, Mary Egeolu, Nwaikpeghi Jim Owo, Stephen Okere, Philip Halliday and Rhoda Halliday. The pioneer Sunday school teacher was Jeremiah Nnah Udoo. It is noteworthy that Christian religion was properly contextualized to the early converts in Ohaobu through the use of songs composed and tuned in the people's thought pattern, local idioms and minstrel.

Olu oma Elijah-Elijah's good work

O wu ihe m nuru gbara biawa-that is my reason for hasty arrival

Elijah gbuele opi-Elijah has blown the trumpet

Ndi elu uwa kwerecha-the whole world has come to faith

Oruole mgbe oruru-at some point

Akana akpo anyi ndi amuma-we are now known as prophets

The theology of the church was solid and sound following Biblical teaching as contained in Proverbs 23:26 - "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways"; Composed thus:

Na mgbe, mgbe na mgbe o wula-from time to time

Olu m hu nanya nasi-a lovely voice beckons

Si nwam furu uzo nyem obi gi-saying my child give me your heart

Enyele obi gi na ekwensu ozo-do not give your heart to Satan again

Na mgbe, mgbe na mgbe owula-from time, to time

Converts faith was so consolidated to the extent that no back slider was ever recorded. One teacher Anyanwu took up catechetical responsibility very seriously. Every night he assembled children in

his private residence and taught them the Catechism, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments. This exercise readily paid off as many illiterate children whose parents could not afford formal education availed themselves the opportunity to learn rudiments of the Christian faith. Garrick Braide Movement produced indigenous prophets including Long John Nnanna Okoro, Jeremiah Nwosu, Rhoda Halliday, and Agnes Nwafor Nwulu. These indigenous prophets displayed exceptional and powerful gift of faith healing and foretelling prophecy in their ministries. In 1948 the Ark Faith Healing School was planted in Ohaobu - Ndoki by Bishop Inyambi Hart.

Garrick Braide Movement was introduced in Obeaku by one J. Gordon a fisherman, resident at a commercial spot named Mkprikpo water side. He established Christ Army Church in Obeaku and assigned the station oversight to a prophetess called (Mammy) a native of Oboama in Opobo. The church grew in leaps and bounds with pioneer members which include Moses Nwagbara Nnah Aka, Jonah Nnah Aka, Michael Philip etc. Moses Nnah Aka became the Sunday school teacher and Michael Philip was the lay reader. Incidentally, Emmanuel Nnanna (Philip's son) boosted the image of the church from 1974 and later became a Revd. Canon.

A story is told of one of the devotees in the person of Mr. David Obomanu in 1943 who absconded Friday prayer to attend to his farm work. While at work he perceived severe migraine that forced him back to join the prayer. As soon as he arrived the church his headache disappeared and he became completely relieved. Consequently, he became a voluntary sexton in the church all his life. The church produced indigenous prophetesses who were gifted in faith healing through prayers and foretelling the future through vision and trance. They were Felicia Dickson, Elizabeth Nnah and Salome Nnanna.

Conclusion

Our survey in this research revealed a number of issues to be considered by the contemporary church as touching the Garrick Sokari Braide Movement. The honest truth remains that Garrick Sokari Braide was a precious gift to the Niger Delta Pastorate [NDP]. The movement was a divine given to complement the mission mandate of the Anglican Church in the Niger Delta by way of evangelistic outreach and Christianization of Southern Nigeria. However, the movement's weakness lies in the fact that it failed to fashion monitoring mechanisms for the control of its teaming converts and evangelical bands. Therefore, the converts abused the privilege and free hands given to them out of religious zeal and brought Garrick Braide into strained relationship with the NDP Church. And the Colonial government who had the responsibility of maintaining peace in its domain could not fold its hands and watch the church that preaches peace engulfed by crises.

On the other hand, the NDP threw caution to the wind and over reacted at the slightest provocation by the new converts and had no sympathy for Garrick Sokari Braide who remained a humble member of the church till his death. Bishop James Johnson could have in principle recognized Garrick Sokari Braide as an evangelist and create the "office of prophet and evangelist for him" as a doctrine of convenience and a tool for evangelism, at least within the NDP only. This could have assuaged the agitating Niger Delta Christians and gave the church a pass mark. The Garrick Braide Movement is commended for its excellent work in the Delta Church and beyond. Although, it could not provide social amenities such as hospitals, road, remand homes, higher institutions etc. therefore, in order to repair the age long strained relationship which arose as a result of the Anglican church mistake this paper recommends as follows:

A. Christ Army Church founded through Garrick Braide Ministry, after a century needs to close rank and return to its founder's original vision and mission in the NDP; rediscover his principles and methods of evangelism for the good of the society and the universal church.

B. Anglican Church need to learn from its past mistake and be sensitive to new innovations for God does not do things in stereotype manner instead he is dynamic in his activities. The Church should therefore have a discerning spirit and know the direction to which the Holy Spirit is pointing her.

C. Christ Army and Anglican Churches should learn contextualization method of doing theology from Garrick Sokari Braide. This has been the brain behind the success story of the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria. According to Alain Mayama "the basic elements of African traditional religion can be used as raw material for the construction of African theology". Fortunately Garrick Braide developed this method earlier, but the Anglican Church rejected it at her detriment. The time is ripe for the church to re-discover this method.

D. Anglican Church should render an unreserved apology to the memory and family of a good and faithful servant of God in the person of Garrick Sokari Braide who was persecuted

unjustly, and also confess its sins of omissions to God. In addition, the Anglican Church is urged to initiate a reconciliatory service with the Christ Army Church for the unfair treatment meted to her progenitors, cooperate and work with the denomination. The ecumenical organization, which is the umbrella body that unites the whole churches in Nigeria- Christian Council of Churches (CCN) and the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) should admit and allow Christ army to head the bodies for ten (10) years, in order to cushion the effect of the injustice they have suffered over the years. This done; the spirit of Garrick Soraki Braide after a century, will rest in peace.

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