

PSYCHOLOGICAL REALITIES IN IGBO THEOLOGICAL BELIEF IN DEATH AND
RE-INCARNATION

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Abstract

Theological beliefs about death and reincarnation can provide conceptual frameworks for understanding the world and our place in it. Abstract concepts like reincarnation can carry symbolic meanings, representing themes such as transformation, renewal, or spiritual evolution. Theological beliefs can help individuals grapple with existential questions about the nature of existence, purpose, and the human condition. The Aboh-speaking peoples of the Igbo family of one in Nigeria speak of *Inu-uwa* or "returning to life", as they believe death is an end to one life only and a gateway to another; man must be reborn. for re-incarnation is a spiritual necessity". The concept of re incarnation seems to offer one of the most attractive explanations of humanity's origin and destiny. It is accepted not only by adherents of Eastern religions or New Age spirituality, but also by many who do not share such esoteric interests and convictions. To know that you have lived many lives before this one, and that there are many more to come is a very attractive perspective from which to judge the meaning of life. On the one hand, re-incarnation is a source of great comfort, especially for those who seek liberation on the exclusive basis of their inner resources. It gives assurance for continuing one's existence in further lives, thus having a renewed chance to attain liberation. On the other hand, re-incarnation is a way of rejecting the monotheistic teaching of the final judgment by a holy God, with the possible result of being eternally condemned to suffer in hell or enjoy eternally in heaven.

Introduction

All over the world, one finds a firm belief in a spiritual reality behind the confusions of daily existence, though understanding of the exact nature of the relationship between the spheres of spirit and matter varies enormously. Most societies postulate a stream of consciousness connecting the two principles. In many religions and philosophies, this connecting stream has been expressed in terms of a constant ebb and flow of manifestation, "birth" in one world being "death" in the other with the principle of continuing eternally.

Marwinza (1975:68), stated the following, "This belief in periodic re-embodiment or re- incarnation is, of course, a central theme of many Eastern religions. In the temples of India and among the people it is accepted as one of nature's "eternal ways".

The Aboh-speaking peoples of the Igbo family of one in Nigeria speak of *Inu-uwa* or "returning to life", as they believe death is an end to one life only and a gateway to another; man must be reborn. for re-incarnation is a spiritual necessity".

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The Eastern concept of re-incarnation is that man depends on his deeds in his previous existence, hence can come back in any type of life form, including various animals, as well as human form. Re-incarnationists in the West, however, generally hold that men and women can be re-incarnated only as human beings. Western Re-

incarnationists often refer to the Eastern view as "transmigration" and to the Western view as "re-incarnation". Traditionally, the terms "transmigration", "re-incarnation" and "metempsychosis" have been used as synonyms. On the other hand, re-incarnation is to be distinguished from pre-existence of souls. While all those who believed in re-incarnation must believe that the reincarnated souls pre-existed, not all who adhere to pre-existence of soul incarnation.

It really should not matter whether or not a Christian believe in re-incarnation despite the uncompromising position of the unorthodox against traditional belief in "*Ino Uwa*" (Re-incarnation); the negative attitudes towards the phenomenon, as well as its rejection by Christians keeps the specter staring in the faces and psyches of Christians and other protesters. Names like Nnamdi (My Father is Alive), Nnenna (My Father's Mother), Nnanna (my Father's Father), Nnamani (My Ancestral Father) and so on, keep agitating the conscious minds of Christian bearers.

With regard to the subject of this work, *Ino Uwa* (re-incarnation), one may speculatively assume that Africans with their deep religious sense evolved and developed it in their various religious cultural contexts (Ekwunife2002:26). Drawing from the assertion above, it is also worthy to note that the concept of reincarnation has been traditionally observed. As one of the oldest men in NruNsukka, once submitted on this issue:

"anyiaputalauwa, kwadoya. O buomenaniani, kwelunaya (we were born into it. It is our customary belief, we firmly belief in it) (Odonwagbo, personal communication, 11th September 2013).

This traditional Igbo religious belief has persisted till this day, despite the incursion of Christianity, western education and modern technology. Our concern will be to unearth the nature and consequences of that belief in modern society and its environs.

Considering the ugly attitudes from some of the contemporary Christians, it could be summed as "unimaginable and biased". This is because it sometimes looked as religious discrimination without acclaiming that the belief practice was handed down from the forefathers down to the people. African belief systems have been dented with some irritating words such as idol, fetish, witches, etc which retard the quality of people's belief system. Indeed, re-incarnation in African/Igbo context has been in unconformity with the notion of Christians, Moslems, and Some Western philosophers. However, these uncompromising non-adherents of traditional religion should view the phenomenon (re-incarnation) from their perspective as committed insiders and never as biased outsiders. They have to be objectively converted to the traditionalists' view on the issue to make valid conclusions. How would this be a reality?

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- i. To identify the position of the Igbo ethnic group on re-incarnation as compared to how it affects the Igbo Christian
- ii. To identify the problem resulting from misconception of the phenomenon of re-incarnation.
- iii. To suggest methods of possible dialogue between traditionalists and their Christian counterpart some believe or non-believe in re-incarnation.

Psychology is concerned with a person's mind and thoughts, It's also pertaining to the mind or to mental phenomena as the subject matter of psychology: Pertaining to, dealing with, or affecting the mind, especially as a function of awareness, feeling, or motivation.

Reality

Metzger (2001) defined the Greek New Testament "Ontos" as reality or being; Reality is thus the sum or aggregate of all that is real or existent within a system, as opposed to that which is only imaginary. The term is also used to refer to the ontological status of things, indicating their existence. In physical terms, reality is the totality of a system, known and unknown. Philosophical questions about the nature of reality or existence or being are considered under the rubric of ontology, which is a major branch of metaphysics in the Western philosophical tradition. Ontological questions also feature in diverse branches of philosophy, including the philosophy of science, philosophy of religion, philosophy of mathematics, and philosophical logic. These include questions about whether only physical objects are real (i.e., Physicalism), whether reality is fundamentally immaterial (e.g., Idealism), whether hypothetical unobservable entities posited by scientific theories exist, whether God exists, whether numbers and other abstract objects exist, and whether possible worlds exist. (Okonji 1970)

Hence, reality is the state of things as they actually exist, as opposed to an idealistic or notional idea of them. A thing that exists in fact, having previously only existed in one's mind or place.

Igbo

The Igbo people (also spelled Ibo) and formerly also Iboe, Ebo, Eboe, Eboans, Heebo: etc are also natively NdiIgbo (In Nigeria), The Igbo are indigenous to various states. Igbo are majorly found in Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo State. A good population of Igbo are found in Delta and Rivers States while Igbo are a minority in Akwaibom, Benue, Cross River, Edo and Kogi states. Large ethnic Igbo populations are found in Cameroon, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea, as well as outside Africa. (Nwala 1985) There has been much speculation about the origins of the Igbo people, as it is unknown how exactly the group emerged. Geographically, the Igbo homeland is divided into two unequal sections by the Niger River - an eastern (which is the larger of the two) and a western section. The Igbo people are one of the largest ethnic groups in Africa (Metu 1981)

Theological

Mairietal (2007) state that Theological is the study of God from (Greek-Theos). Hence Theological is of, relating to, or based on theology. Theology is the systematic study of the nature of the divine and, more broadly, of religious belief. It is taught as an academic discipline, typically in Universities and Seminaries.[1] It occupies itself with the unique content of analyzing the supernatural, but also deals with religious epistemology, asks and seeks to answer the question of revelation. Revelation pertains to the acceptance of God, gods, or deities, as not only transcendent or above the natural world, but also willing and able to interact with the natural world and, in particular, to reveal themselves to humankind. While theology has turned into a secular field, religious adherents still consider theology to be a discipline that helps them live and understand concepts such as life and love and that helps them lead lives of obedience to the deities they follow or worship.

Belief

Belief is a mental attitude of acceptance or assent toward a proposition without the full intellectual knowledge required to guarantee its truth. Believing is either an intellectual judgment or, as the 18th-century Scottish Skeptic David Hume (1700s) maintained, a special sort of feeling with overtones that differ from those of disbelief. Beliefs have been distinguished according to their degree of certainty: a surmise or suspicion, an opinion, or a conviction. Belief becomes knowledge only when the truth of a proposition becomes evident to the believer. Belief in someone or something is basically different from belief that a proposition is true.

Re-incarnation

Re-incarnation, also known as rebirth or transmigration, is the philosophical or religious concept that the non-physical essence of a living being begins a new life in a different physical form or body after biological death. (Gale 2006) Resurrection is a similar process hypothesized by some religions, in which a soul comes back to life in the same body. In most beliefs involving re-incarnation, the soul is seen as immortal and the only thing that becomes perishable is the flesh for body.

Re-incarnation in African Context

The ancient theosophy underlying traditional African religions becomes even more apparent as one delves into the fascinating complexities of their interpretations of the doctrine of re-incarnation. Ascertaining from the logical point of view, Olupona (1976: 87) cited the Illa people of Southern Zambia, believe that a certain number of spirits were created and given bodies at the dawn of manifestation. When the bodies wear out during the course of a lifetime, the spirits live on in their own sphere of consciousness and then have other bodies prepared for them at the appropriate time. Linked with this is a belief in the inevitability of rebirth for the majority of humanity with only two exceptions cited by the Illa elders the mizhimo or "tribal gods," and those unfortunate individuals whose spiritual evolution has in some way been interrupted by sorcerers. The Illa also believe that the reincarnating spirit is sexless and may seek manifestation in either the body of a man or woman regardless of the individual's sex in a previous life. They say, in common with the esoteric teachings of many other religious traditions, that the incarnating spirit, the true Self of each individual, provides to the newly born child no memory of previous lives in the worlds of either spirit or matter. During life, the spirit animates the body but remains untainted by the vicissitudes of daily living.

One is reminded of the ancient Greek myths regarding the river of Lethe or Forgetfulness in the Underworld, from which those about to be reincarnated drank a certain portion which made them forget their former existence (Oossthuizen 1992:74). Locked deep within these traditions, one can discern the hidden mechanisms of nature and the eternal ebb and flow of manifestation as described in the traditions of people the world over.

Reflecting the evidence drawn from the "Secret Doctrine" shows that "the number of entities within any sphere of life at any given time is limited by karmic considerations" (Woogler 1972:27). For the vast majority of humanity struggling within the limbo world of material attractions in order to attain true self-consciousness of the inner

spiritual nature, re-incarnation is indeed a necessity. As bodies appropriate, different stages of evolution wear out, the eternal spiritual self of each individual continues from birth to birth, clothing itself in the appropriate vehicle through which it can express its potentialities as these are evolved through the experience of many lives.

As it was clarified in Blakely (1994: 30), the only exceptions to this "cycle of necessity" are entities who, by constant striving after the higher realities, have escaped the endless round of reincarnation and become as gods to us and, at the polar opposite, those who have consciously violated nature's law of spiritual evolution. As the Illalenders tell us in their own way, the spiritual Self seeks manifestation in a body of either sex at different times on its long journey, and very few entities are exempted from the constant round rebirths.

As found in other religious traditions, mystery enshrouds details of African doctrines concerning the embodiment of the spiritual Self. One does know, however, that many African peoples have beliefs in the composite nature of man remarkably similar to the more familiar religious teachings of the East and Near East. The ancient Egyptians held man to be a composite of nine parts ranging from the physical body to the habitation of the spiritual nature, the *sabu*. The ancient Jewish teachings of the Qabbalah speak of man as a tenfold entity, and the esoteric traditions of India, which provide much of the terminology of modern theosophy, teach variously of four, five, or seven aspects or parts. All of these traditions agree that it is only the deathless essence of man's nature which continues eternally, while the more material "bodies" fall apart at death, when the life force is withdrawn.

On the accompanying chart which compares the traditions of four African people with theosophical doctrine concerning the composite nature of man, remarkable parallels are immediately apparent. All envisage a spiritual body (a life essence or "vital breath") at one extreme, with gradations through heart-soul, mental body, or will, and life principle, to the shadow and physical body as the lower vehicles. It is obvious that "in all four examples the incarnating entity is held to be the spiritual essence which abides in its own spheres of existence after death, and animates the more material "bodies" during earth life" (Beiser 1966:

Re-incarnation in Eastern Christian Nigeria

Odinala (Igbo: *Odinala*), also *Odjnanj*, *Odjnlulj* or *Qdjlala*, comprises the traditional religious practices and cultural beliefs of the Igbo people of South East Nigeria. *Odjnlala* has monotheistic and pantheistic attributes, having a single God as the source of all things. Although a pantheon of spirits exists, these include *Ala*, *Amadiohn*, *Anyanwu*, *Ekwensu*, *Ikenga*, these are lesser spirits prevalent in *Odinala* expressly serving as elements of *Chinike* (or *Chukwu*), the supreme being or high God. *Chineke* is a compound word encompassing the concept of *chi* is the creator (*na*) is a verb meaning 'that' while *éké* means create. *Chineke* therefore means the Creator or the God that created all things.

Lesser spirits known as, *ágbarà* or *árúsi*, operate below the high God *Chineke* and are each a part of *Chineke* divided by gender in their mind. These spirits represent natural forces; *agbara* as a divine force manifests as separate *arusi* in the Igbo pantheon. A concept of 'the eye of sun or God' (*ányáánwa*) exists as a masculine and feminine solar deity which forms a part of the solar veneration among the *Nri-Igbo* in northern Igboland, *Arusi* are mediated by *Dibia* and other priests who do not contact the high god directly. Through *áfa*, 'divination', the laws and demands of the *arps* are communicated to the living. *Arusi* are venerated in community shrines around roadsides and forests while smaller shrines are located in the household for ancestral veneration. Deceased ancestors live in the spirit world where they can be contacted. Below the *arusi* are minor and more general spirits known as *mmúo* loosely defined by their perceived malevolent or benign natures. These minor spirits are not venerated and are sometimes considered the lost souls of the dead.

The Igbo traditional religion believe in re-incarnation, *ilo-uwa* (Ino-Uwa). People are believed to reincarnate into families that they were part of while alive. People can usually reincarnate seven times, giving seven opportunities to enter the spirit world successfully as an ancestor. The person's cycle number on earth is unknown to them. Unlike in Hinduism, humans can only be reincarnated as humans. Families hire fortune-tellers to reveal the ancestral identity of the child in their former life; the baby is sometimes named after this relative. The personality of the ancestor is not identical to the child's but rather the concept establishes a vital relationship with the child and characteristics of the ancestor. Before a relative dies, it is said that the soon to be deceased relative sometimes give clues of who they will be reincarnated as in the family.

Once a child is born, he or she is believed to give signs of who they are re-incarnations of. These signs can be certain behaviors, physical traits, and statements by the child. A diviner can help in detecting who the child has reincarnated from. It is considered an insult if a male is said to have been reincarnated as a female. An ancestor may be reincarnated as multiple people in which case the re-incarnations share a mortal bond; upon the death of one person, it is believed that the others may die a sudden death if they see the corpse.

Christian's Belief against Re-incarnation

Any discussion about the challenges of re-incarnation to Christian belief will be greatly clarified by a preliminary look at Origen's system.

Although it is of course impossible to do justice in a few pages to a thinker as subtle and profound as Origen, some of the distinctive aspects of his thought can be summarized.

Looking at the sequence of creation from its inception to its conclusion, one could summarize his system as follows: Originally all beings existed as pure mind on an ideational or thought level. Humans, Angels, and Heavenly Bodies lacked incarnate existence and had their only as ideas. This is a very natural view for anyone like Origen who was trained in both and Platonic thought. Since there is no account in the scriptures of what preceded written, it seemed perfectly natural to Origen to appeal to Plato for his answers,

God for the Platonist is pure intelligence and all things were reconciled with God before an assumption which scripture does not appear to contradict. Then as the process of all began, individual beings became weary of their union with God and chose to defect or grow in their divine ardor. As the mind became cool toward God, it made the first step down in its all and became soul. The soul, now already once removed from its original state, continued with its defection to the point of taking on a body.

This, as one could pinpoint from Platonism, is indeed degradation, for the highest type of manifestation is on the mental level and the lowest is on the physical.

Such an account of man's fall does not mean that Origen rejected Genesis. It only means that he was willing to allow for allegorical interpretation; Thus Eden is not necessarily spatially bested, but is a cosmic and metaphysical event wherein pure disincarnate idea became fettered to physical matter. What was essential for Christianity, as Origen perceived, is that the fall be voluntary and result in a degree of estrangement from God. Where there is a fall, there must follow the drama of reconciliation. (Wikipedia)

Love is one of God's qualities, as Origen himself acknowledged, and from this, it follows that God will take an interest in the redemption of his creatures. For Origen this means that after the drama of incarnation the soul assumes once again its identity as mind and recovers its love for God.

It was to hasten this evolution that in the fullness of time, God sent Christ. The Christ of Origen was the incarnate Word (he was the only being that did not grow cold toward God), and he came both as a mediator and as an incarnate image of God's goodness. By allowing the wisdom and light of God to shine in one's life through the inspiration of Jesus Christ, the individual soul could swiftly regain its ardor for God, leave behind the burden of the body, and regain complete reconciliation with God. In fact, said Origen, much to the outrage of his critics, the extent and power of God's love is so great that eventually all things will be restored to him, even Satan and his legions. Davis, S.T (1989).

Since the soul's tenancy of any given body is but one of many episodes in its journey, the doctrine of re-incarnation is implicit. As for the resurrection of the At Origen created a tempest of controversy by insisting that the physical body wastes away returns to dust, while the resurrection takes on a spiritual or transformed body. This is of we handy for the Re-incarnationists, for it means that the resurrected body either can be the nation and climax of all the physical bodies that came before or indeed may bear no resemblance at all to the many physical bodies. There will come a time when the great defection for God that initiated physical creation will come to an end. All things, both heavenly bodies of human souls, will be so pure and ardent in their love for God that physical existence will no longer be necessary. The entire cohesion of creation will come apart, for matter will be superfluous. Then, to cite one of Origen's favorite passages, all things will be made subject to God and God will be "all in all". (1 Cor. 15: 28) This restoration of all things proposed by Origen gave offense in later centuries. It seemed quite sensible to Origen that anything that defects from God must eventually be brought back to him. As he triumphantly affirmed at the end of his "On First Principle", men are the "blood" brothers" of God himself and cannot stay may forever.

Belief in Re-incarnation as a Threat to Christian Salvation

This objection was expressed very clearly by Theophilus (385-412 AD), patriarch of Alexandria:

"What is the point of preaching that souls are repeatedly confined in bodies, only to be released again, and that we experience many deaths? Does he [Origen] not know that Christ came, not in order to free souls from bodies after their resurrection or to clothe freed souls from bodies once again in bodies that they might come down from heavenly regions to be invested once again with flesh and blood? Rather, he came so that he might present our revived bodies with Incorruptibility and eternal life". (Jerome, Letters 98.11).

It is pertinent to note that the essential difference between Theophilus and Origen is quite obvious. For Origen, man, the creature of free choice, stands responsible before God for his refection. God uses all his love and persuasion to hasten man along his way, but man must

For Theophilus, however, part of the responsibility for man's defection is shouldered by the Son. Thus man is a completely a free and sovereign when he falls: when he rises, however, much of the travail is being borne by another. is what he can in single life and Christ will make good the rest.

Reincarnation should be understood, however, not as a statement on Christ. In a bid towards sieving the distinction between Origen and Theophilus,(67) opines that the latter is "in effect charging that man is so feeble that he must take him most of the way". The Re-incarnationists, however, is convinced of man's and hence of his innate ability to return to God's favor.

Belief in Re-incarnation as a Conflict with the Resurrection of the Body

Here are the words of Epiphanius of Salamis (310-403 AD): "First of all if, as the pistis say, another body succeeds this one, then the judgment of God is not just, for he will either be condemning the new body for the sins of the former one, or he will be ushering it into glorious and heavenly inheritance in recognition of the fasting, vigils, and persecution surfed Be the name of God by an earlier body" (Epiphanius, Ancoratus 378: 87).

For the Platonic philosopher, as for Origen, the entire goal of life is to disentangle the you from the pernicious influence of the body. This stands in strong contrast to the statement of Epiphanius that the body is itself a living principle and whatever it has endured, it will involve therefore in God for judgment.

For Origen, it is unthinkable that the body of flesh and blood should be resurrected into immortality. This body, after all, belongs to the transient world of matter and passes away as all matter must. Origen, the Christian and the Platonist, found it much more likely that a new spiritual body have nothing in common with the material elements of the "natural" body rather it should enjoy the resurrected life. Furthermore, he found ampler support for this in 1 Cor. 15: 44 (Against Celsus 5.19).

Re-incarnation in the Light of the Bible

The beliefs which form the context of both Eastern and Western re-incarnations are clearly incompatible with biblical Christianity. Thus, the case against re-incarnation being "Christian" goes far beyond its implications for the afterlife, and involves much more than from the Bible. Rather, the entire biblical revelation in its teaching about God, the man, sin, and salvation, stands as a whole against re-incarnationism.

Wireless, adherents of re-incarnation in the West invariably try to reconcile their belief with Christianity. The New Testament is said to have been written by unknown authors at a time to be reliable in their report of Jesus' teachings, and thus His teachings on re-incarnation hugely lost. (Many people reject the Bible; we have no real knowledge of Jesus' teachings). The New Testament text is said to be riddled with deletions and interpolations foisted on the west in the sixth century and later by anti-Re-insummationists, who even removed whole book, we is unreliable. Finally despite the alleged attempt in the with century tore-incarnation from the Bible certain "vestiges" of the doctrine are said to be detectable a scattering of texts. It is not possible within this space to give a through refutation of each of dese arguments. The issues of the date, authorship, and textual transmission of the New Testament documents have received definitive treatment by evangelical scholars. These scholars are shown that all of the New Testament was written in the first century, by apostles or their does associates, and that the text of the New Testament has been faithfully transmitted through the centuries. With regards to the canon (books accepted as inspired) of the New Testament, it was not the bias against re-incarnation that motivated the acceptance of certain writings and the section of apocryphal gospels and other writings which were excluded from the canon.

Rather, the New Testament Books were accepted because they were written by apostles or apostolic associates and were traceable to the first century. The books that were excluded were not apostolic, and written between the second and the ninth centuries. Furthermore, New Testament canon was developed in the second and third centuries and received final form in the fourth century, not in the sixth century, as the Re-incarnationists claim. Therefore, the Re- incarnationists' criticisms of the New Testament are invalid.

The argument that vestiges of Re-incarnationists belief can be found scattered through the New Testament it's basically incompatible with the other arguments already discussed. If the New Testament books were written by unknown authors too late to be historically reliable, and if sixth century scribes tampered with the text of the New Testament, of what value are these alleged "Vestiges"? In any case, the Re-incarnationists have no right to the bible in defense of their beliefs if at the same time they argue that the bible in activities.

A detailed examination of these alleged proof texts for re-incarnation is not possible. However, several helpful studies of the question have been published by Christians, warning that the Bible simply does not contain even a hint in favor of re-incarnation, while its central teachings contradict it.

Reincarnation and the Early Church Fathers

Re-incarnationists in the West today typically argue that the early church held to a belief in incarnation until the sixth century, when it was suppressed by the Roman emperor **through agency of which council** in order to refute this claim, one must first examine the records to see on the early which fathers taught re-incarnation will reveal that re-incarnation was not a subject of great concern to the early fathers, who held to the biblical hope of the resurrection, but sat down whenever they thoroughly condemned it,

Re-incarnationists have fabricated a false history of the early church based on

- i. A deliberate reconstruction of the evidence which ignores the vast majority of the fathers' testimony.
- ii. Partial quotations of the fathers, usually out of context.
- iii. Interpolations into the quotations from the father.
- iv. Fabricated quotations.

Justin Martyr (c. 100-165)

Justin martyr was one of the earliest of the church fathers. He is often claimed as an early Christian Re-incarnationist. Referring to chapter IV of Justin's Dialogue with Trypho, Re-incarnationists claim that "he taught that human souls inhabit more than one body in the course of their earthly pilgrimage. "What does Justin actually say? He does present a dialogue in which he discusses with Trypho the question of re-incarnation; at the end of this discussion, he concludes as follows (note that "I" is Justin and "he" is Trypho, the Jew with whom he Trypho speaks first)

Therefore souls neither see God nor transmigrate into other bodies; for they would know that they can perceive that God exist, and that righteousness and piety able, I also quite agree with you." Said he, "you are right," I replied Clement of Alexandria(55-220)

Another church father often alleged to have taught re-incarnation was Clement of Alexandria, on the basis of his statement in this first chapter of his Exhortation to the Heathen before the foundation of the world where we. "At most, this statement might be construed from context to teach pre-existence of souls. In fact, though, Clement's statement in text does not even go that far. Rather, he is simply asserting the preexistence of Jesus Christ the Word (Logos), and God's foreknowledge and purpose to create and love us before action:

But before the foundation of the world where we, who, because destined to be in Him, preexisted in the eye of God before, we the rational creatures of the word of God, on whose account we date from the beginning; for "in the beginning was the word".

Note that Clement carefully qualifies his statement that we existed in the beginning with the words "in the eye of God", meaning, of course, that our "pre-existence" was an idea in God's mind, not as substantial entities.

Origen (c. 185-254)

Origen was admittedly one of the most brilliant and innovative theologians of the early church. He was also, however, infamous for his theological speculations. He is the church father most often cited by Re-incarnationists as teaching their doctrine. One passage frequently cited is the following, from Origen's Against Celsus (1.32), exactly as cited by Re-incarnationists Head and Cranston:

Or is it not more in conformity with reason, that every soul, for certain mysterious reasons (I speak now according to the opinion of Pythagoras, to whom Celsus frequently names), is introduced into a body, and introduced according to its deserts and former actions? It is probable, therefore, that this soul also, which conferred more benefit by its (former) residence in the flesh than that of many men (to avoid prejudice. I do not say "all"), stood in need of a body not only superior to others, but invested with all excellent qualities.

Several comments regarding this passage need to be made. First, Origen qualifies his by saying. "I speak now according to the opinion of Pythagoras, and Plato, and whom Celsus frequently names". This qualification indicates that Origen is arguing basis of Celsus's beliefs, not Origen's own beliefs. One Re-incarnationist, Anthony J. Ia omitted this entire clause when quoting the passage.

Secondly, the insertion of the word "former" in brackets preceding the phrase "residence in the flesh" by Head and Cranston in the citation as produced above completely changes the meaning. Origen is not talking about a previous incarnation distinguished from a subsequent incarnation, but about a single incarnation.

Thirdly, the point that Origen is trying to make in the context has been completely missed. Origen is not talking about the natural birth of an ordinary human being, but about the miraculous conception of Jesus in a virgin's womb. In the first half of the chapter, Origen refutes legendary explanation of the virgin birth which was circulating among the

Jews (and had been piled up by Celsus) that Mary had committed adultery with a Roman soldier. He then puts forth the following questions;

Is it at all agreeable to reason, that he who dared to do so much for the human race ... would not have had a miraculous birth, but one the vilest and most disgraceful of all (i.e., and legitimate birth)? And I will ask of them as Greeks, and particularly of Celsus, who either holds or not the sentiments of Plato, and at any rate quotes them, whether He who sends souls down in the bodies of men, degraded him who was to dare such mighty acts, and to teach so many men, and to reform so many from the mass of wickedness in the world, to a birth more disgraceful than any other, and did not rather introduce Him into the world through a lawful marriage?

It follows immediately the original quotation produced above, appealing to the Greek philosophers so respected by Celsus, to prove that according to their teaching someone as noble seriously was could not have had so ignoble a birth as Celsus had claimed. With this in mind, it is evident that Origen is not here arguing for re-incarnation, nor does he simply it. He does argue on the basis of the pre-existence of souls, an opinion himself held, although even here he gives it as the source of Greek philosophy, not doctrine. Later in the same treatise. Origen made the following comment:

But on these subjects much, and that of a mystical kind, might be said: in keeping with which is the following: "it is good to keep close these secrets of a king," in order that the doctrine of the entrance of souls into bodies (not, however, that of the transmigration from one body into another), may not be thrown before the common understanding, nor what is holy given to the dogs, nor pearls be cast before swine.

This statement makes it clear that Origen did hold to the heretical doctrine that human pre-existed their physical bodies, but did not hold to re-incarnations. At about the same time he wrote *Against Celsus*, around the year 247AD (and therefore toward the end of his life Origen wrote a commentary on Matthew in which he discussed at length whether John the Baptist was the re-incarnation of Elijah. His answer to this question was unequivocal:

In this place, it does not appear to me that by Elijah the soul is spoken of, lest I should fall into the dogma of transmigration, which is foreign to the church of God, and not handed down by the Apostles, nor anywhere set forth in the scriptures...(Matt. 17.10-13)

Origen then launched into a lengthy discussion of transmigration, arguing that it is contrary to the biblical doctrine of a judgment at the end of the age, and that John had not the "soul but the "spirit and power" of Elijah (Luke 1:17). No clearer statement rejecting the entire of re-incarnation could be imagined.

However, Ten Dam, (65) unfolds the fact that it is true that Jerome, a leading church writer in the early fifth century, argued that Origen held to re-incarnation. Writing in a letter to Avitus about 409AD or 410AD, Jerome accused Origen of holding to the "transmigration of works," including the idea that both angelic and human spirits "may in punishment for great relapse or folly be transformed into brutes," that is, be reincarnated as animals. However, in this same letter Jerome admits that Origen qualified his statements on the subject:

Then, lest he should be held guilty of maintaining with Pythagoras the transmigration of souls, he winds up the wicked reasoning with which he has wounded his reader by saying: "Itaken to make dogmas of these things, they are only thrown out as conjecture to obey are not altogether overlooked.

Jerome's criticism of Origen is based on Origen's earlier writings (particularly *On the Resurrection of the Dead* written between 212 and 215), and in his later writings, Origen explicitly transmigration of souls, and since even Jerome admits that Origen wished to stop short meaning that doctrine, we may safely conclude that Origen did not teach re-incarnationist(345-419)

As we have just seen, Jerome condemned Origen as heretic partly on the basis of 'alleged leanings toward re-incarnation. It is therefore surprising to learn that several incarnationists claim that Jerome himself believed in re-incarnation! One Re-incarnationist cited Jerome's letter to Avitus as proof of the very letter in which Jerome condemned after teaching re-incarnation!

Other Re-incarnationists have attributed to Jerome the following statement from his letter to Avitus: "The doctrine of transmigration has been secretly taught from ancient times to the leaders of people, as a traditional through which was not to be divulged." A search of this however, reveals no such statement. Instead, we find Jerome once again condemning the re-incarnation as a "godless and wicked teaching" which "lurks secretly like a viper in its hole".

The Church Father's Rejection of Re-incarnation

Not only did none of the church fathers embrace re-incarnation not even Origen, who did pre-existence of souls but they explicitly rejected the notion as wholly contrary to the Christian faith. We have already seen this in the case of Justin Martyr, Origen, and Jerome. In the Nicene period alone (i.e.; before the Council of Nicea in 325AD), church fathers who re-incarnation besides Justin Martyr and Origen included Irenaeus, Minucius Felix, Lactantius, and Lactantius. Notable church fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries besides those who rejected re-incarnation

included Augustine Basil. Apologists for re-incarnation have cited that many of these church fathers did indeed oppose the doctrine of re-incarnations, in addition to this evidence, all of the church fathers taught dockings which was with Re-incarnationists belief. The father taught that salvation was a gill won for us and that at the end of the age the dies of believers would be raised in eternal like and the wicked to eternal judgment. The writings of the church fathers are thus just asanti-Re-incarnationists as the Bible.

The Second Council of Constantinople

To this point we have shown that name of the church fathers commonly recognized in do during the first five centuries of the church held to re-incarnation. Faced with thisRe-incarnationists have resorted to a last-ditch argument calculated in undermine documentary evidence from the bible and the church fathers against their doctrine. This claim that all or nearly all evidence of belief in re-incarnation was eliminated from able and the writings of the fathers by the Second Council of Constantinople (also called the Sumerical Council) in 553 AD. For example, Leslic (Christian elder) claimed that re- on "was accepted by the early church for the first five hundred years of its existence.

Only in 553AD did the Second Council of Constantinople reject it and only then by a majority". Many Re-incarnationists claim that this council was specifically called by the Bean emperor Justinian to condemn re-incarnation and delete all references to it from the able there are numerous objections which may be raised to this claim.

Firstly, the New Testament canon as we have it today was finalized, at the very latest, in century, as we have already explained. Indeed, we have numerous manuscripts of the Testament dating from between the second and fifth centuries, as well as manuscripts big much later. The texts of the New Testament manuscripts dating from before the sixth y do not differ appreciably from those dating from sixth century and later. This fact alone spoof that the councils in 553AD did not alter the Bible in order to suppress re-incarnation or another belief.

Secondly, the Second Council of Constantinople had nothing whatever to do with re- incarnation. The main item on the agenda was dealing with the Mono-physite heresy, which at that the incarnate Christ had only one nature (instead of the two natures of deity and Hannity as taught by the New Testament and the church). Either at that council or about thata list of "anathemas" or condemnations were issued against (among other things the prevalence of souls (as found in Origen and some of his followers), but there was no of re-incarnation, which was evidently not even a live issue. Indeed, other Re- I have even argued that because there is some doubt that the council in 553AD had relevant to re-incarnation, there is no reason to regard re-incarnation as officially church! Of course, what this argument overlooks is the fact that Christians reincarnation because it is antithetical to biblical Christianity, not because they not) that it was condemned in 553AD,In conclusion, re-incarnation was certainly not suppressed by the church in the sixth at any of her time. It has been explicitly rejected by church leaders since the middle of century, and never taken seriously as a belief that might be adopted by Christians. belief in preexistence of souls was treated as a novel aberration by the church fathers which came after him. Advocates of re-incarnation have had to invent nonexistent words into other texts, cited anti-Re-incarnationists passages as if they wereinterpolateof the doctrine, and in general present mythical reconstruction of early church history, or to claim that the early ever taught re-incarnation.

Belief in Re-incarnation and the Challenges to Christian Theology

Traditional Christian theology still does not make room for the concept of re-incarnation. e of the early church fathers accepted it, among them Origen who believed that the soul its before birth. That concept makes re-incarnation a natural consequence. The decision to stew the belief and persecute those who held to it was political, based not on knowledge of the but on a desire to secure the power of the hierarchy. Because, if we have unlimited opportunities to evolve spiritually, the church authorities cannot threaten with hellfire if we do fulfill their demands in this single life. As a result, Christians believe that we are created at reception and that when we die we become eternity cannot be eternal on one end and finite on the other. If something has a beginning, if must have an end. If we believe that we will live forever, it must follow that we have always existed, as Origen taught. According to Iloanusi (1973:33), he asserted that "if we have always existed, what have e been up to all this time"? We know that this present incarnation is important in our spiritual with. But how can a single life on earth be sufficient to prepare us to meet the transcendent to face? If one incarnation is helpful in our spiritual evolution, why wouldn't two be What is it that makes us resist the idea of multiple human lives when a majority world's religions include a belief in re-incarnation?

Sometimes, people who are afraid of the concept try to make it appear ridiculous by sting that if we are evil in this present life we will return as an ant or a skunk. This needs to be seen for what it is, an attempt to avoid a greeter truth: we are part of God. We have always existed. We will always exist. Our time in eternity is an

evolutionary process through which we are to become more like God. Jesus told us that if we followed him, we would do greater things than he did! When do we get the opportunity for this spiritual blossoming if not through an enormous series of positive and negative experiences? This result cannot be achieved in a single lifetime. If we are part of God, our present life is no more than a semester-long class to learn a certain skill. And there is more than one course in our spiritual curriculum.

The Christians continue to challenge the traditional practitioners by deploying several weird or questions not answered by our traditional theology. When do we get to correct our mistakes? If we can correct them in heaven, why did we come here in the first place? Why does God punish people eternally for temporal sins: do we punish our children for the next could fifty years for a kobo stolen in the first grade? What happens to mentally challenged people and those who cannot comprehend the laws of God? If God makes exceptions for them, what other exceptions does he make? How do we account for the vast discrepancies in the lives of people, living some in poverty, some in wealth? At what point does God even out these unfair distinctions?

We invite you to a larger view of your life which helps to answer these questions: the possibility that you have always existed and will always exist as an eternal part of God. This current life is one of many experiences which you have generated for yourself, as you design your own spiritual evolution.

It is necessary to observe the conscious and unconscious blockages of the traditional religious tenets are intermingled by the followers of Jesus timing the superiority of their religion. Some of the hindrances to dialogue between them. Some of the hindrances to dialogue between the two religious opponents are word below!

First in series is prejudice. In an area where Christians presume that they are always right at the traditionalists are ignorant of the truth, dialogue is impossible. This is because, each is forging ahead to protect the interest of its religion and the authenticity of the it in and the authenticity of the its religious practice.

Secondly, in the series of the bottle-neck is pride. There is pride in numbers. The Igbo which says "Igwebu Ike" (there is great strength in numbers) is appropriate here. The glocal strength of Igbo Christians with chunk of concentration on Catholicism is alarming. People shot is pride in numbers without sincere humility which is needed for honest dialogue.

The third blockage is the assumption of the attitude of monologue, instead of dialogue. regard to the topic under discussion, "Ino-Uwa" (re-incarnation), nearly all the studies so far was carried out by Christian scholars. Their findings depend largely on their period will and assumed methodology. Hence, dialogue with African traditionalist has been mono. Christians know what to make out of it and go for it, leaving the traditionalists' view. Christians do the talking; answer questions which the traditionalists should have pin, cut, join, and pass the final verdict and still claim to be dialoguing.

Finally, there is an imaginable ignorance among the Christians. Many Christians are rant of traditional values, customs, beliefs and practices. Yet, they claim to know much about them, since they claim to be African/Igbo. For the, being a native is tantamount to knowledge about the customs and practices of their society.

The Psychological Realities in Igbo Theological Belief in Death and Re-Incarnation

This topic attempts to find out if Re-incarnation is a physical reality or a theological construct embedded in a peoples accumulated customs and traditions etc.

Re-incarnation is the belief in the 'transmigration of souls the movement of soul body to another; Wikipedia (2000: 894) The soul movement in re-incarnation terminate; it may be from humans to animals, birds, plants or even insects. As a doctrine anback to life after death, re-incarnation has its o in Latin, rename, which moment, to incarnate into another body, to en-flesh, to enter into a new body, e.g (John 2000) in third edition of the "Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary" defines reincarnation as 'to begin in another body.' To take up another flesh is the very sense in which Eastern vas represent and understand re-incarnation. Re-incarnation is a generic term for the entireme of the soul migration. There are various other terminologies designating soul migration such as, metempsychosis, transmigration, metensomatosis, andpalingenesis. This last term, refers to the stoic doctrine of the cyclic recurrence of the world.

Re-incarnation belief goes back to some ancient Middle East religions. There are equally in re-incarnation by some modern day religions. The religious movement of theosophy is pod example. Theosophy comes from two Greek words, Theos(God) and Sophia (wisdom). It system of thought stressing clairvoyance and telepathy. Neo-Platonists literarily define the wept as meaning divine knowledge. Theosophy teaches that all religions are attempts by the Spiritual Hierarchy" to help humanity. Madame Blavatsky founded theosophical society in As much as re-incarnation belief is a native belief of the Asian religions, 20 to 25% of the Christian West, holds it as a fundamental doctrine of life after death. And while these Asian religions see it as karma the percentage of western Christianity talk of the retribution justice or de karma in sense of justice and one harvesting what one has

sworn. Nevertheless, the belief is one of human oldest religious doctrine. The doctrine expresses the immortality of the person.

Incarnation has its origin in the worldview, life, history and religious philosophical of prehistory ancient peoples. The idea of the universe by early members of the human was one in a round shape form. The shape of the world as spherical directed a lot of lives of prehistory humans. It equally determined a lot of their conclusion. The ancient experience of activities within the 'round shape' universe guided their notion to the cyclic nature of history. They realize that plants full on the soil, die and they noticed the cycles and seasons of the year. The dry season introduces the rainy winter welcomes the spring. The earth rotates on its orbit. The day begets the night, the day, the old gives way to the new, the new becomes old and passes on, one season after another and the movement continues. This continuous process and movement in nature did form all they believed about life and death, time and history.⁸⁹⁸ All this is about time. They are about regeneration and movement. For the ancient thinker, they are about time since they happen with nature and things, they definitely are history of humanity. It was evident that nature is inexplicably in a constant cyclic flux.

Heraclitus (c.535-475) alludes to the fluidity in nature in his philosophy of *Pantareheiprettying* is in flux). He analogically represents fluidity in nature in three stages comparable to the flowing of a stream. For Heraclitus, no one steps into the same river twice. This is in the fact that, ever fresh waters flow on those who step into a running stream (Heraclitus 525: 12). Secondly, all things move and nothing is permanent. One who steps into a flowing stream remains in the stream but not in the same water because one cannot step into the same water twice (Heraclitus 525: 49a). Third, everything is in the constant state of change and nothing remains thus, you cannot step twice into the same stream (Heraclitus 525:899) from this, it becomes clear that nothing is permanent except change. Movement and repetition remain the constant of existence. Having observed this the ancient naturally began associating events history in the mode of the change and potency. History and events became anticipatory and acquired a cyclic notion. In this shape of mind, ancient cultures saw history in a different way. They interpreted it as a cyclic movement and repetition of what happened before. Once an event happens, it may repeat itself. This way of appreciating history was also included in the Understanding of human life after death. Thus, the doctrine of re-incarnation was formulated in order to accommodate human history as repetitive.

The Igbo belief in Re-incarnation

The concept of Re-incarnation is imbedded in the idea of *ilo-uwa*. The concept of *ilo* or the case may be, stems from two Igbo words *ilo* or *ino* (welcome) and *uwa* (the kinship after this compound word will be something like 'welcome to the world,' the world. The Igbo people share in no small way the African sense of hospitality, the human person so much so that they easily incorporate them, be they relatives, visitors. Africans have amazing ways of expressing welcome. Various communities symbolic ways of expression of welcome. "There could be in forms of presentation traditional gin, palm wine, coconuts, smoke chalk, palm branch, pot of water, salt, best way to show welcome is by way of greetings. Passing a person on the street

A saying a word of greeting is a sign of disrespect and bad manners. In Igbo pleasantries and greetings with a guest is the first art of hospitality. It must be done the visitor is presented with kola nuts. In cases of assembly discussions kola nuts must be added before any meaningful interaction could be started. (Nwala 1985:74)

The Igbo words, *ilo*, *ilola*, *ino*, *nno*, are one of various dialectical ways of exchanging and saying welcome. When a visitor comes into the house, the first reaction of the host is to greet the visitor. Newborn babies are seen as visitors. Once a child is born into; everyone receives it as a visitor. Whoever that is present at the announcement of a new birth normally say; '*nwaloro m uwabirikwe*' or '*nwa m ilo*' (*ino*, *ilola* - my child you are *e*). The child in the meaning of this greeting is acknowledged as a visitor and a new member of the family from the great beyond. The family welcomes and incorporates the child among their members. Fundamentally, the Igbo know that this new visitor in the house is from *ake* or *Chukwu* (God). Some Igbo theophoric names parents give their children confirm the names show that the new child, the visitor came from God and is a new creation. Such names like *Osinachi* (God sent), *Chinwenwa* (God's child), *Onyinyechi* (God's). The Igbo people believe children are gifts from God. They know the foundation of the world. They know it comes from *Chinke* (God). Despite this knowledge, traditional consultation the birth of a child is a necessary aspect of the spirituality of the people. It is part of their *e*. The consultation is to determine who has returned.

The principle of 'coming back to life' in Igbo tradition called *ilo-uwa* is a phenomenon the belief in the continuation of life the way re-incarnation defines the Eastern of importantly. The crucial question at this point is whether these two concepts are alike or the two ideas share the same path or are they different. I would want to come to their relationship by defining their differences. Re-incarnation in the classical sense is a general way relating amendment for mistakes of previous life. It is an act of grace whereby the one is given the opportunity to make reparations and make spiritual advancement. In explanation of classical re-incarnation, life is full of huddles and

mistakes. As such, reparation and human weakness cannot be achieved in a single existence because life itself is too short. A process of birth cannot do the reparation. Invariably everyone is expected to reincarnate before this atonement could be made. The souls of adults and children alike are put to adults alone. Children are not known to come back after death in the form of except in the cases of the *ogbanje*. (Okonji 1970: 96)

The phenomenon will be treated subsequently. Re-incarnation in classical understanding rigorous process of automatic migration. In Igbo understanding, the concept of this punishment but in the Igbo concept, rebirth is the reward for life well live. Eastern avoid re-incarnation. Igbo religion welcomes rebirth. Classical re-incarnation informs independence of the soul. In the classical definition, the nature of the soul is distinct from the of the body. The body is material and remains a substance of decay. On the other hand, soul is indeterminate. It has the capability to leave for one body after another. It translates into a higher stage or into a lower state. It can become human or brute. As a dependent consciousness, the soul or spirit is sustained self-reflection capable of rediscovering in every intact essence. On the other hand, *ilo-uwa* or coming back after death in Igbo early is not determined by the autonomy of the person. The society and the families of the deceased mainly determine it. Not everyone is wanted back. Thieves, lawbreakers, wicked people, lazy individuals, the weakling and sickly people, people who died of abominable and indent diseases and those who committed taboos including suicide are never wanted back. The early and families prevent bad characters and unfortunate people from coming back even if through medicine and making of concoction. The rite of *inishiarishi* is one such performed to prevent social misfits and miscreant from reincarnating. The only people that are wanted back are the peacemakers, honorable men and women, wealthy and prosperous people. This form is invoked by way of elaborate sacrifices and rites of passage at one's death and expensive.

In burial ceremonies are majorly in anticipation for the coming back of there-incarnation, coming back to life after death in terms of *ilo-uwa* is not a Everyone desire to be born again but not everyone is allowed to be born again.

Recommendation and Conclusion

Re-incarnation has been given different interpretations by different scholars and religionists from different historical, cultural and ideological influences. Among the Igbo/African scholars, it has been pursued from two models: the traditional physico- cyclic model of interpretation presents re-incarnation as a cyclic return of a dead person into a new born child. This model was used by scholars such as Mbiti (1975: 69), Metuh (1981:187), Idowu (1973: 73), Asden (1966: 82), Onunwa (1979: 199). Onwubiko (1981:54) though their interpretations really differs.

Recently, Ekwunile (2000: 20) developed a mystic-psychic model which presents re-incarnation as the exercise of "a mystical influence of the spirit on the body which either diminishes the status of the dead in the spirit world nor does it destroy or supplant the unique personality and individuality of the new born child". This shift from the traditional position argues that the phenomenon under study should be viewed from the religion-cultural context of the people involved and not from its English transliteration. This research adopts the additional model.

Re-incarnation belief in the Igbo culture can be dated as far back as 1400 years ago (Nwala 1985), the belief is still being held in this present age. Even before and after the invasion of the white men that brought about the Christian religion and Western civilization, the belief of re-incarnation has been an important aspect of the Igbo culture. Honestly, I find Igbo belief of re- incarnation fascinating and very interesting, and I just couldn't help myself but to find out more about it. Here are some fundamental beliefs of the Igbos concerning re-incarnation. The Igbos believe that there is a place called "land of the dead" otherwise known as "discarnate realm". This realm is inhabited by the souls of the deceased who are eager to return back to the land of the living. This place is believed to be undesirable for these deceased souls and thus prompt their return to the land of the living by means of re-incarnation. The Igbo believe that a person can attain perfection by being reincarnated over and over again. Also, the belief in re-incarnation comforts a dying person who believes he is yet to attain perfection in the life that is ending. The dying person is never scared of dying, instead they believe they will be born anew by a member. This means they will continue to improve their status quo from incarnation to incarnation till they attain perfection.

The Igbo believe that how well you conduct yourself in your present life will determine how you'll be respected both in the land of the dead and in your next life. Consequently, if dies, no matter how rich and powerful they might be, they would be a subject of in the land of the dead. Also, things may go wrong with the person in their next life. also be reincarnated as wild animals, or trees, or anything that is non-human. The Igbo that someone who dies at a younger age will incarnate more quickly than someone who sold age. This means that someone who is yet to become what they are destined to be in but were terminated early in life, will be reincarnated quicker so as to resume their destinies. Some Igbo believe that those who lived worthless and ineffective lives, for example, who never got married or had no children or those that committed suicide, never get mated. Sometimes, when someone refuses to forgive a dead person who was wicked when he/she was alive which might prevent the dead person from being reincarnated. Also a dead person can be prevented from being reincarnated if they are denied of

their burial rites or are buried face by any other rituals. Though these are simply belief systems without physical proofs. Especially there are belief systems whereby one did not marry and had no children such quickly reincarnates to marry and produce children, etc. but, for what purpose?

To speak, and behavioral resemblances between the child and the deceased person is the presumed re-incarnation. Oracles are frequently consulted to make or confirm The Igbo believe that deceased persons inhabit a disparate realm, but they undesirable limbo from which discarnate souls are eager to return to a new life. The Igbo concept of re-incarnation includes belief in a group of souls called who are born, die in early life, and are reborn in the same family, often repeatedly.

This work delves into assessing the concept of re-incarnation among the Igbo society and action on contemporary Christian and its religions counterparts. As a result, is not interesting to say that people reincarnate after their death. Evidences in this study have possibilities irrespective of the pressures from modern changes around the world. On the other hand, arguments from the Christian perspective were been filtered looking at it as unlisted critique.

Recommendations

It is in the light of these finding that we briefly recommend the following strategies as a of arriving at a compromise between belief in re-incarnation among the Igbo society and contemporary Christians and other religious counterparts.

- i. Christians should hold up to their religious tenets so as to embrace the cordial relationship tween the traditional practitioners and the contemporary changes. Through this, the adherent's African traditional religion will be acquainted with lease of hope that they are not as stupid and immature in religious thinking as they have been hitherto regarded by Christians, especially in the Igbo land.
- ii. Socially, apprehending the concept of different culture will immensely help to understand the people's culture as they are not as we thought they are. As a result, it will reduce anarchy, social tensions, religious intolerance, and silence rebellion to a drastic level,
- iii. The issue of religion should not be attached to political system of the people. This will enable the people see the traditional wisdom in placing their social and political activities under the sacred sanctions of the supernatural. Thus, an important of any religious system is serve social regulator of man's mundane activities by not only providing the moral principles in the mundane world, but also spiritual leader to inspire and direct in human world, in re-incarnator serves this purpose.

Traditional norms and beliefs should be incorporated into the educational system. The ancient religionists should evolve portent way of socializing people into the relent customs, and practices in the society.

The concept of re-incarnations should be viewed as measure sanctifying the live of un in the society. It is also believed that traditional reincarnate inspire honest and hard work in a society like the Igbo culture area

It is certain that human knowledge is pan-cosmic, in the sense that there are certain Agitations in viewing a subject from one perspective. Amidst the various thought raised in this work, the researcher keeps maintaining one central observation which continues to filter the mind of the researcher and convinced that the subject "re-incarnation should not be left to lay bare only on the Igbo traditional belief, the researcher suggest that further research study be carried out in other traditional religious worldview and the Igbo traditional belief on re- incarnation for further clarification and understanding of re-incarnation amongst the Igbos and other tribe.

Conclusion

The belief in ilo-Uwa (re-incarnation) forms part of the religious, cultural and social aspects of Igbo life. It conveys the truth that salvation encompasses the total man, that personality survives after death, that the total human soul is neither obliterated nor wholly absorbed in the divine but rather remain individual personality capable of rebirths.

In this way, the fear of death which subjects man to lifelong bondage is allayed. On the other hand, the belief in ancestor hood is a fitting climax to the hope of everlasting life. The Igbo notion of the after world is not a place where the dead live a shadowy, strengthless, ghostly and impotent life. Rather, it is a place where the dead live in renewed vitality, active and influential in human affairs; from where they engage in a cycle of deaths and rebirths. Therefore, the point at issue is this. The symbolisms and the pictures which convey the issues of life after death in culture do not matter. What is important is the truth behind them which can be ongoing dialogue between Christianity and Igbo culture.

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