



13 | “...THE MISSION OF CHRIST ... IS A CALL TO DUTY”: TOWARDS ROSE MARY AMENGA-ETEGO’S THEOLOGY OF THE GREATER GOOD OF AFRICA

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Abstract

This chapter engages and analyses the African post-colonial framed theological writings of Rose Mary Amenga-Etego as one of the matriarchs of the *Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians*. The study aims at examining and celebrating the contributions of these African Women theologians to scholarship on African Liberation theologies. Examining her own words, as quoted in the title of this chapter (Amenga-Etego, 2006:42), the analysis sought to understand her constructive theological engagement with the questions and concerns rising in contemporary Africa, and the place of theology in responding to those questions for the greater good of Africa, specifically, in the Ghanaian context. The paper, therefore, sought to do this from three main methodological lenses; the sources/context, distinctiveness, and purpose of which she theologizes. These methodological lenses help to conceptualize her theological vision, which outlines her strategic theological contributions to scholarship. Therefore, this chapter depicts her thought on socio-cultural matters, drawing the attention of not only governmental and traditional institutions but also academia and the church.

Introduction

In a changing and transforming world, where diverse questions in need of answers keep rising, there has been an interest from both scientific and most thriving, and recent, religious, and cultural perspectives. Issues arising from gender, ecology, modernization, colonialization etc., have attracted a great number of contributions from scholars across all fields of study. Theologians over the decade have invaded the socio-cultural sciences to discuss matters, which they believe needs theological reflections also. In Africa specifically, there has been a rise of scholars, and for the interest of this study, theologians, who have tremendously produced theol-

gies that have inspired scholarly and theological advancement, for the enrichment of the scope of theological scholarship. Amenga-Etego is one of the empowered female African theologians whose scholarly work reflects a high degree of theological innovativeness and importance to society and the church. As a Ghanaian woman and *Nankani* by tribe, she wears and walks in a lens that views herself as the starting point of her theological endeavor (Amenga-Etego, 2008:188). She not only begins her investigation from herself, but she also situates herself within a familiar context which grants her a command in the issues arising from that context. This chapter is narrowed by a careful selection of eight scholarly writings of Amenga-Etego, and hence, it does its critical examination through these papers, together with some selected authors whose theological approaches supports Amenga-Etego's writings. Therefore, this chapter aims to introduce, dissect, and upraise her scholarly work as a golden and positive front for African women theologians and their contribution for the greater good of Africa. This paper will do this by first, briefly introducing the life and academic background of Amenga-Etego. Secondly, it will examine her methodology through these three main spheres: Sources and context of her theology, purpose of her theology, uniqueness of her theology. Lastly, her words as the title of this chapter indicates; ...*Towards the Greater Good of Africa*, will be examined.

Life/Academic Background

Born as a daughter of the *Nankani* tribe (Amenga-Etego, 2018) in the Upper East Region of Ghana, Amenga-Etego has grown to become one of the important and leading voices in women liberation and in the appraisal of African traditional religion. Living in a rural community and having an educational privilege that has taken her around different cities in Ghana and beyond, Amenga-Etego has gained rich insights in rural and urban communal life and development (Amenga-Etego, 2018:5-8). This has informed greatly and widely her theology, which would be discussed in the coming sections of this chapter. She is currently a senior lecturer in religious studies at the department for the study of Religions, University of Ghana, Legon. She is a research fellow for the Institute for theology and religion (RITR), University of South Africa, South Africa

(Amenga-Etego, 2020:10). Also, with her interest and drive for gender issues in religion and culture, she served as a development worker on *Gender and Development* from 1992 to 2002 in the Navrongo-Bolgatanga diocese of the Catholic Church of Ghana (Amenga-Etego, 2006:28). She is one of the strong pillars and members of the *Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians* (Amenga-Etego, 2006:28). She has authored several articles, and is well known for her book, *Mending the Broken Pieces*. The coming sections of this chapter reviews some of her works and reveals her theological wisdom, its contributions to scholarship, and its practicalities in both societal and church life.

Rose Mary Amenga-Etego's Methodology/ Theology

This section discusses the methodological lenses used in Rose Mary Amenga-Etego's scholarly works. It examines the sources/context, purpose, and uniqueness of her theological reflection. This will help in interpreting her theological formation and approach in academic scholarship.

Sources and Context

Amenga-Etego's academic interest in religion and culture and how they influence human living, both for good and ill, has been one of the main conversational themes in her research. As a woman who hails from a small village that upholds indigenous religious beliefs, and culture, she has acquired the necessary understanding in African spirituality (Amenga-Etego, 2016:16). Hence, in her writings, she engages the experiences in the daily lives of rural people, especially, among the tribes in the Upper East Region of Ghana. She does this engagement by listening to, understanding, and interpreting the stories of native people, as a methodological lens. An example is in the case of the *Phenomenon of Nankani Spirit Children*, who for many years have been ritually removed or expelled¹ from the Nankani community. This is due to the believe that

¹ The Nankani perform a ritual of transformation that enables the *spirit child* to return to their normal abode and lifestyle. This ritual is done through divination, and most paramount, through the ritual of *nyusigo*. *Nyusigo* is an act of

they are misplaced spirits whose presence in the community is destructive and can cause disharmony in the socio-cultural reality of the Nankani (Amenga-Etego, 2008:190). Amenga-Etego uses this story as an entry point to examine and discuss this religio-cultural practice, asking *what* and *who* questions, to understand the root meaning of this religious experience (Amenga-Etego, 2008:185). These stories do not only help her conceptualizations, but they have also become a steppingstone for analyzing the positivity's and negativities of such a practice. Hence, she leverages on the result of the research to discuss from an academic standpoint the religious destiny of *chinchirisi/chinchirigo*², who have not developed the capacity to speak for themselves, and as well their mothers who have been conditioned to accept such a fate for their freshly born babies (Amenga-Etego, 2008:190-191). It is academically insightful to note how she challenges and problematizes the interpretations and introductions of local and international human rights laws which have not taken into consideration the religio-cultural roots of the phenomenon (Amenga-Etego, 2008:198). She believes that a contextual understanding (cultural and socio-economic conditions) of this practice could be a good step to negotiate the best approaches to handling this matter from the grassroots (Amenga-Etego:199-209).

We find this conceptual form of analysis in her discussion on the *Tindana*³ (Amenga-Etego, 2012:121-124) of the Upper East Region of Ghana, which questions colonial Western interpretations of good governance in their contact with indigenous people. She queries their labels of the indigenous system of governance as *stateless* and dissects how such a view of indigenous administration, and the introduction of a decentralized form of governance has hindered the freedom of indigenous people's de-

force feeding a child with liquid substances. This particular substance is specially prepared by those who have spiritual resources to determine and remove the *spirit child* known traditionally as *chinchirigo* (plural)/*chinchirisi* (Singular). This ritual which causes the death of these babies, which in modern terms is known as *murder*, they are not traditionally seen as such. According to the tradition of the Nankani, it is an act of *sending off* those children to the spirit world where they belong. *See:* (Amenga-Etego, 2008:191-192).

² Spirit Children.

³ They are the owners of land and see to its protection and use.

velopment (Amenga-Etego, 2012:119). She discusses deeply how a misplaced view of the socio-cultural beliefs and practices of indigenous people could be harmful to growth and conflicting to rural governance. She also, suggests that a duplication of the already existing indigenous governance is a catalyst to inter-power struggles, and a detriment to rural expansion (Amenga-Etego, 2012:131). Amenga-Etego's 2012 paper on *Tribes without rulers?* addresses these disturbing issues. In the paper, she acknowledges the *Tindanaship* together with its winged indigenous chieftaincy as a good post-colonial and modern example of indigenous decentralized governance. She argues that this indigenous decentralized governance is a twin to western decentralized system and could be used to achieve sustainable development (Amenga-Etego, 2012:131). She raises this argument from the stance that "the *tindana's* special relationship with the environment as a spiritual entity enable them to seek ways of living that promotes sustainability, which is a key concept in modern developmental discourses since the 1980's" (Amenga-Etego, 2012:130).

In the story of the reinterpreted oral text for the all-female hall in the university of Ghana, Amenga-Etego deliberates on the foundational and fundamental reasons behind this reinterpretation. For the emancipation of African women, especially Ghanaian women, the moto, *Akokɔbere nso nim adekyee* which literally means *the hen indeed knows it is dawn*, has gained dominance in the hearts and minds of the female occupants of the hall for several years (Ross & Amenga-Etego, 2015:4). Emanating from the Akan saying, *Akokɔbere nim adekyee nso ohwe onini ano* (*the hen knows it is dawn but looks up to the cock to crow*), Amenga-Etego analyzes the impact of this indigenous traditional saying together with other sayings. She measures them from their contribution to violence and at the same time, women's empowerment (Amenga-Etego, 2015:3). Therefore, she draws from these indigenous oral texts to consolidate the deeply rooted violence which has been clothed in words for many years. She reflects on these oral texts to expose its danger to female advancement and protection. As an outsider (a Nankani) who examines what she terms a political constructed oral text of the Akan,⁴ she positions herself as an insider, that is, a Ghanaian woman and a member of the *Volta Hall*

⁴ One of the dominant tribes in Ghana.

(Ross & Amenga-Etego, 2015:5). She makes use of cultural interpretations as an academic gate for reinterpretations. She as well, uses indigenous oral traditions as a source of traditional terror and as well empowerment when reinterpreted. Her observations, interrogations, and encounter with the Akan culture and its oral texts aids her to examine the “variety of other sayings that downgrade women to enable them to visibly project, empower, uplift, honor and dignify men and boys” (Ross & Amenga-Etego, 2015:8). To strengthen her argumentation, she scrutinizes traditional proverbs and myths to reveal the patriarchal structures, constructed in words and stories that “dehumanizes, humiliate, disempower, and terrify women and girls, violating their dignity and personhood” (Ross & Amenga-Etego, 2015:7-8). I will leave this for the discussion on the aims and purposes of Amenga-Etego’s works, but I would conclude this section by introducing her collaborative research on *Language, Prayer, and Music Repertoires as sources of African Christian Spirituality*.

In this article, *Language, Prayer and Music Repertoires as sources of African Christian Spirituality*, Emenga-Etego in collaborative research, evaluates the impact of “African metaphors and values and how they influence African spirituality, values, and Christian theology” (Amenga-Etego *et al.*, 2020:2). Her personal place of interest in this study was the unexplored displacement of African Christianity from its African traditional ethos such as African spirituality and values (Amenga-Etego *et al.*, 2020:2). African spirituality has been argued by several African scholars as the continuum where African Christianity finds expression. According to the late renowned African Theologian, Kwame Bediako, African Christianity reflects a high degree African primal spirituality (Bediako, 2013:89). By this assertion he meant that imbibed in African Christianity is the primal imagination that comes from their cultural worldview. Hence, in Christian worship, God is interacted through the breath of their cultural perceptions of life. We find this expressed in songs, prayers, affirmations, prophecies etc. The worship of Afua Kuma, a Ghanaian Christian, who engaged God from the lenses of her Akan worldview, serves as a strong paradigm for this investigation (Amenga-Etego *et al.*, 2020:6). Amenga-Etego’s interest in the songs of *Suzzy and Matt*, the two Ghanaian female gospel stars from the early 90’s, brings light to the indigenization and inculturation of the gospel through Ghanaian music.

(Amenga-Etego *et al.*, 2020:5) thus, believes that "some aspects of the indigenization and inculturation of the gospel were actually at variance with the indigenous religio-cultural worldview, thereby transforming the latter within contemporary Ghanaian society." Accordingly, she and her colleagues see the absence of oral indigenous African human cultural experiences in the academic scene as an impediment to academic scholarship on African Christianity. Amenga-Etego *et al.*, (2020:4) rather opine that 'much work remains to be done to preserve and analyze oral theologies in order to better grasp the complexities of contemporary African Christian spirituality and values.' These field ethnographical observation and oral literary method shows Amenga-Etego's interest in using cultural forms as a means of engaging her theological reflections. Nonetheless, the purpose of her theologizing could help in understanding these basics that informs her drive for religious academic scholarship.

Purpose

Amenga-Etego's research objective which will be briefly discussed in the coming sections, suggests an appraisal of the greater good of Africa from a womanist and indigenous religious perspective. Borrowing from her own words, "the task of the church is to spread its wings beyond the borders of its confinement, to impact the world positively." As a female Ghanaian religious scholar, who has experienced Ghanaian culture in both society and the church, she uses her experiences, knowledge, and concerns to reflect on the woes of women, indigenous traditions, and rural development. This, she sees as a task of the religious scholar. Therefore, her scholarly work mirrors this vision and encapsulates her desire for positive change and expansion, not only in Ghana, but Africa as a whole. Consequently, on Amenga-Etego's theological works on tribes in the Northern region of Ghana, we see her vision as explained briefly, fleshed out on how she engages issues concerning women and indigenous traditions. Her theological thinking is fueled by her interest in women liberation, empowerment, and the evaluation of indigenous cultural belief systems.

Starting this discourse from the latter, she believes that the religio-cultural environment of a given people is the highest form of human freedom and expression of their conceptual beliefs of the universe. She

submits that that human dignity can be earned through the liberty to uphold what a community hold dear in their religious worldview. Therefore, her research focuses on understanding these beliefs through careful examinations and analysis. In the light of the most sensitive and inhuman practices as most contemporary outsiders would term it, she is careful not to make quick judgements; she rather seeks for an understanding of meanings behind the cultural forms of those practices. For example, in the case of the *Nankani chinchirigo*; the practice which has received massive attention from both international and local human right activists and governmental agencies, she advises that a thorough study of the religio-cultural forms in the practicing communities be done before any measures or interventions are put in place (Amenga-Etego, 2008:209-210). She also, suggest that implementations done in consultation with community leaders and members, could help bring about a smooth and less conflicting approach to problem solving (Amenga-Etego, 2008:203-204). This communal-inclusion approach in Amenga-Etego's observation, could help stakeholders and researchers to appreciate, collaborate and corporate with the culture and tradition which they have stepped into (Amenga-Etego, 2008:198-200). Alison Howell, an Australian theologian, who lived amongst the Kasena of northern Ghana acknowledges this approach. In her article, *Avoiding Mislabeled and Misnaming*, she admits to the difficulties outsiders face when they encounter aspects of cultural beliefs and practices that is new to them. According to her, the immediate thought of bemusement as an outsider in a traditional environment usually leads to quick judgements and mislabeling (Howell, 2014:5). She therefore, cautions researchers not to be too quick to conclude on what they see, rather, they must endeavor to understand the meanings behind the cultural forms they encounter. In that way, one could have a clearer vision to ask the right questions and to suggest interventions when the need arise (Howell, 2014:5-7).

In the *Journal for the Study of the Religions of Africa and its Diaspora*, we find a similar but varying approach to the aims of Amenga-Etego's theology. She discusses the complexities in the role of indigenous researchers in academia, in her paper on *Crossing Research Boundaries 'Our Nankani Daughter in Academia'*. In this write-up, she shows the internal

difficulties on "how a religio-cultural insider could negotiate the boundaries of the sacred and the secular in relation to the Western academic demands of empirical referencing" (Amenga-Etego, 2018:5). She challenges academic standardized requirement for research as it limits indigenous researchers in their quest to include the translation of rich undocumented indigenous data in their western framed scholarly written texts (Amenga-Etego, 2018:7). Hence, she asserts that Western academic research could find its feet and hands if it could make room for indigenous researchers to feel at home in their academic engagements (Amenga-Etego, 2018:8-9). The purpose for this is to credit the importance of indigenous researchers and their unique role in academia and to sound an alarm on the limitations of crossing research boundaries from the traditional viewpoint to academia (Amenga-Etego, 2018:7). She divulges to the struggle of researcher's positionalities; thus, the conflicting communal bond researchers share between themselves in academia and their respective indigenous communities (Amenga-Etego, 2018:8). By implication, there is always a bone to contend with when the indigenous insider-researcher, crosses boundaries into academia to reflect on traditional discourses. Therefore, by exposing this internal and external concern, she reflects on the complex research endeavor that indigenous researcher like herself would have to wrestle with in academic scholarship (Amenga-Etego, 2018:12).

Also, Amenga-Etego's respond to her drive for the emancipation of women by showing keen interest in gender-based discourses on violence against women, as well as, espousing the importance of women in communal development as discussed in the earlier sections of this chapter. As a Ghanaian woman, she understands the dangers patriarchal structures impose on women in Ghana. Therefore, she challenges these structures through the interpretations and reinterpretations of oral texts, in addition to, challenging traditional systems that put women in direct or indirect bondage. We see this in her paper on oral proverbs and myths' translation in *Women's Interpretation of Indigenous Oral Texts*. As discussed earlier, she is of the opinion that certain aspects of indigenous oral texts has been politically constructed to suppress women and the girl-child (Amenga-Etego, 2015:3). She calls these texts, *Tests of Terror*, which has the tendency to inflict different forms of violence on women

(Amenga-Etego, 2015:3). This violence come disguised in the form of suppression that demean the value of females. However, she admits to the importance of traditional proverbs and sayings, which are repositories of wisdom and knowledge from communal ancestors and forefathers. Amenga-Etego (2015:8-10) is also aware of the damages they could cause when they are taken and spoken literally, without deciphering the multiple meanings behind them. For instance, that of the Akan myth of an old woman whose nuisance in her cooking duty expelled God from humanity and causing the death of men at the obedience to her word (Amenga-Etego, 2015:11-12), raises disturbing questions in Amenga-Etego's reflection. She examines this myth as one that justifies women as the cause for God's withdrawal from humanity and view women as murderers and unwise (Amenga-Etego, 2015:11-13). This understanding clearly, portray women, especially old women as the evil ones in society, which questions the intent of this myth. Therefore, she cautions women to "question and perhaps, reconstruct this myth in ways that are gender sensitive and humanly dignifying to both gender" (Amenga-Etego, 2015:11). Viewing from a more visible or physical perspective, Amenga-Etego recalls the massacre of women from 1998 to 2002 in Ghana which aroused women across the nation to rise unto prayer, and to protest the unseen killers (Amenga-Etego, 2006:23-24). The strange and inhuman act that happened in the public permeated in different forms and acts in the daily lives of the people in Ghana. Men became violent on women verbally and physically. Hence, many women across the nation went through physical assault and emotional and psychological trauma. Today, Ghana is still faced with these injustices against women, which in Amenga-Etego's postulation is destructive and causes fear and panic amongst women in the Ghanaian society (Amenga-Etego, 2006:33-34). She, therefore, questions the governmental structures that have been put in place since the 1998 and 2002 serial killing of women, and challenges them to play effective roles in eradicating the continued violence against women in the Ghanaian society (Amenga-Etego, 2006:36). These units include, the Women and Juvenile Unit (WAJU), the Ministry of Women and Children affairs, the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), the Girl-Child Education Unit, and many others.

She raises the concern for "one-side, single-handed interventions to issues of violence against women" which has been a serious detriment to gender-based violence annihilation, and "calls for a collaborative approach from civil society, gender activists, government and the religious bodies to strive to overcome it" (Amenga-Etego, 2006:27). Further, she calls the church to leverage on their Christian principles to address issues of this sort in their sermons, and to join hands with the civil society to fight against the sin of violence (Amenga-Etego, 2006:36). She also, concludes that the church needs to be a safe house where women who have been abused can find solace, and not a place where they are mocked and marginalized (Amenga-Etego, 2006:36-38).

Moving further from the discourse on violence, another liberative theological approach for women is Amenga-Etego's vision to uphold the Nankani rural women with regards to their role in ecological protection. This is made evident in her article, *Nankani Women's Spirituality and Ecology*. She narrates how the spiritual universe of the Nankani culture encompasses respect and honor for *Wine's (God)* creation, and hence set taboos to prohibit a dishonor to his property" (Amenga-Etego, 2016:15-25). In other words, the Nankani out of respect for their God and his created universe, strive to protect his creation by exercising a sustainable use of their environment. This has been a practice that according to Amenga-Etego, has been directly and indirectly enforced by Nankani women. In her description of their household duty as mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters to the Nankani tribe, Nankani women control how traditional customs are observed through her control of food provision and how she manages the extraction of environmental produce (Amenga-Etego, 2016:25). These she reviews as vital roles that enforces sustenance of the environment, and that of their families and indigenous spirituality (Amenga-Etego, 2016:28). Therefore, it is Amenga-Etego's aim to promote the sacrifices of these rural women, challenging the patriarchal system in that community and the rest of society to see the value of women in society and their role in sustainable development. These and the above points give a clear picture of Amenga-Etego's Christian and religious intent to produce a theology that informs a duty of change, thus, towards the greater good of African communities, specifically, Ghana.

Uniqueness

Amenga-Etego's unique theological voice is made audible in how she engages theology from a religio-cultural and socio-cultural perspective, examining the daily lives of people through their lived religions and cultural worldviews. She expresses concerns for the marginalized and vulnerable and discusses possible solutions for the upliftment of people in those unfortunate positions. As a Nankani woman, she does not see herself as far removed from her tribal lineage as an academician, she rather seizes that as an advantage to understand and reflect on her own cultural experiences together with the community in which she grew up in (Amenga-Etego, 2016:16-17). By 'togetherness' I mean the shared bond of feelings, struggles, and concerns. She does this with a solemn sincerity and constructive academic discipline to produce theological reflections that is both locally and academically acceptable and useful. As a woman who has experienced patriarchal structures from both her rural community and surrounding national environment, she is well grounded in matters that silence women, and objectifies their value. Therefore, in her writings, she crosses the boundaries of social structural defaults from both local and national levels and throws a challenge to rural communities, national political agenda, and international agencies to ease up from prejudices, misconceptions, academic standardized pressures, and dormancy. She is of the view that theology should have a sound place on the streets where there are real and existential issues, and the church must play a role in it as pioneers to the call of God (Amenga-Etego, 2006).

Amenga-Etego is however, quite unique in her conceptual approach to theology because, she begins her research and theological reflection from firstly, herself as a Nankani woman and secondly, a religious studies scholar. This starting point from herself, leads her into deeper and richer theologizing, because she can critically engage her biases, limitations, and strengths both on the field and academic scholarship. The intersection between women liberation, cultural and academic discourses give her a complex but innovative room to explore. As a woman, hailing from one of the poorest regions in Ghana (Amenga-Etego, 2008:204), and having the privilege of quality education has earned her a resourceful academic authority to punch into the right holes and to provide reliable justification to matters she discusses in the field. I view Amenga-Etego's

ability to balance her individuality as an insider with that of the "other" as an outsider, is an outstanding trait of a researcher (Amenga-Etego, 2015:5-6). Also, her ability to embrace the difficulty of a female Nankani researcher in a male dominated and politically constructed system both in her native community and surrounding local and national communities is remarkable (Amenga-Etego, 2008:12). Therefore, it is of necessary importance to acknowledge the unique scholarly work of this important female matriarch in the *Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians*. The next section of this chapter briefly but thoroughly discusses her theology, *Towards the Greater Good of Africa*.

Towards the Greater Good of Africa: Engaging the Words and Work of Rose Mary Amenga-Etego

In her article, *Violence against Women in Contemporary Ghanaian Society*, Amenga-Etego resounds that "the call to the mission of Christ is not a call to peace, comfort, safety, or rest; It is a call to duty" (Amenga-Etego, 2006:42). In other words, the Christian call goes beyond the privileges it brings, it is rather one which is of sacrifice and selflessness. By sacrifice, it means, looking beyond the comfort of oneself and reaching out to the suffocating, oppressed, and marginalized. And by so doing, the mission of Christ would be accomplished here on earth. These words are not just strong and thought-provoking, they are a call to Christians in every sphere of life to deeper Christian living. Thus, irrespective of one's occupation, they have been commissioned to leverage on their expertise and knowledge to contribute to a change or make a difference in an ever-changing world just like Christ would (Goheen, 2014:59). As a devout Catholic and a religious scholar, who has traveled across academic borders, Amenga-Etego stretches her arm within and beyond the confines of the church and academic world, using her voice to defend the voiceless, and to respond to pressing issues that needs close and keen attention. We see this vision play out well in the discussion above on her academic writings among many others. This has been discovered in her interpretations on indigenous Ghanaian culture, gender issues in religion and African tradition, raising methodological concerns of indigenous African

scholars and highlighting the importance of indigenous system of governance. These positive explorations are what this paper term as *towards the Greater Good of Africa*.

Amenga-Etego, has demonstrated through her research in Ghana that African's do have the capacity to speak in their own terms on issues that confronts them daily. These issues, as discussed above, could be rooted out if the church and society are staged to converse on a mutual ground, towards a change they all envision to see. These include, women liberation and empowerment, towards a sustainable development for both national and rural communities, bridging the gap between academia, church, and society, for a holistic contribution towards Ghana's socio-cultural and economic development. This unique theologizing of Amenga-Etego, therefore, is a positive front and paradigm for Africa's post-colonial liberation, that serves as a catalyst to destroy the inequalities of class, race, gender, and inspires awareness, critical dialogue, and the integration of ideas from both African and western perspectives. This will, hence, serve as an opening for western scholars to carefully, engage African cultures and traditions in scholarship. That is to respectfully create a space for African scholars and church to dive deeper into indigenous untapped realities for the good of Africa. Therefore, the above analysis of Amenga-Etego's theological spectrum proves that Africa do have the innate ability to rise into a continent that is confident to engage and to work towards a positive change.

Personal Reflection

As a Ghanaian ecotheologian, who has roots in the Northern region of Ghana, but born and raised in Southern Ghana, I am left in great wonder and dilemma at the same time as I read the works of Amenga-Etego. Her works amongst the Nankani and that of its neighboring environs strikes in me the complexities in insider-indigenous research. As an insider-outsider myself, I might face communal challenges, as I may be viewed as foreign to my traditional community. Hence, I may experience internal and external struggles in academic scholarship due to difficulties and ambiguities in data collection and analysis. Therefore, the work of Amenga-Etego, which echo's the reality of insider-outsider struggles and vice

versa, has hinted me on the complexities in the positionalities of researchers in academic research. This awareness, therefore, leaves me with the quest to understand the varying viewpoints in indigenous research. It also, raises questions on how insider-outsiders who have interest to explore research in their detached indigenous local communities could conduct research appropriately.

From an ecological standpoint, Amenga-Etego's findings on Nankani women and their role in environmental protection, contributes greatly to African ecotheological discourses on creation care from indigenous African cultural practices. Therefore, based on its rich ecofeminist input, this ecological research from Nankani women needs to be further engaged and explored to contribute to the ongoing conversation on feminist approaches to ecotheology.

CONCLUSION

This paper has endeavored to examine the scholarly work of Rose Mary Amenga-Etego. It has explored the theological layers found in her own words as the title of this paper has indicated. This has been done through a thorough discussion of her theology that suggest a change for *the greater good of Africa*, with special reference to Ghana. The paper has demonstrated this *greater good* by examining her post-colonial theological interest in women and African liberation and engaging her keen interest to repudiate oppressive Ghanaian cultures for the good of the Ghanaian society. As a Christian herself, she has exhibited her Christian *call to duty*, by continually engaging pressing matters in the society as discussed above and invites the church to do same. Finally, on a personal ground, Amenga-Etego's positionality as a Nankani researcher amongst the Nankani of northern Ghana and her contribution to ecofeminism has enlightened the writer of this chapter. Thus, it has given her room to reflect deeply on her positionality in academic research.

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