Spirit media: charismatics, traditionalists, and mediation practices in Ghana

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Citation for published version (APA):

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Chronology

Late 16th century
Ga people start urban settlement near Portuguese trading fort in what is now known as ‘Old Accra.’

17th century
The Dutch, Swedes and British built forts in present-day Accra (in 1605, 1657, and 1673 respectively).

18th century
Sizable towns emerge around the original Ga town as well as around the British, Danish and Dutch trading forts (James Town, Osu/Christiansborg and Ussher Town).

1874 The Gold Coast is officially proclaimed a British crown colony.

1877 The British move the colonial capital from Cape Coast to Accra.

1906 Birth of Pentecostalism on Azusa Street, Los Angeles.

1922 Establishment of the British Broadcasting Corporation in London.

1935 Introduction of radio to the Gold Coast by Colonial Governor Sir Arnold Hodson.

1954 Establishment of the Gold Coast Broadcasting System as separate from the Information services.

1957 Ghana Independence.

1960 Kwame Nkrumah is appointed the first president of the Republic of Ghana.


1966 National Liberation Council stages the first military coup and overthrows Nkrumah’s socialist government.
Introduction of commercial broadcasting.

1965 Introduction of television to Ghana.

1977 Nigerian charismatic preacher Benson Idahosa starts broadcast on Ghana Television.
SPIRIT MEDIA

1979 4th June Revolution by Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings. The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) takes power, but turns it over Dr. Hilla Limann after democratic elections. Duncan-Williams founds the first Ghanaian charismatic church, the Christian Action Faith Chapel International. American evangelist Oral Roberts starts broadcast on Ghana Television.

1981 31st December Revolution by Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings; the Provisional National Defence Council is established with Rawlings as chairman. Foreign Christian programmes are banned from the airwaves.


1984 Mensa Otabil founds the International Central Gospel Church.


1989 PNDC government passes Religious Bodies Registration Law (PNDC law 112).


1994 Radio Eye begins broadcasting as the first private radio station in Ghana, but is taken to High Court for illegal broadcasting. Beginning of the public controversy over trokosi.

1995 JoyFM begins broadcasting as the first legal private radio station in Ghana. Mensa Otabil starts weekly Believer’s Voice of Hope broadcast on JoyFM.

1996 Rawlings is re-elected as president. International Central Gospel Church completes and moves to Christ Temple at Abossey-Okay, Accra.

1997 TV3 begins broadcasting as the first private television station in Ghana. Mensa Otabil starts weekly Living Word broadcast on Ghana Television, later on TV3.
Chronology

Mensa Otabil established first private university in Ghana, Central University College.
Mission organizes first Convention of African Traditional Religion at Independence Square, Accra.

1998  Metro TV begins broadcasting as the second private television station in Ghana.
First clash between traditionalists and charismatic-Pentecostal churches over ‘ban on drumming and noisemaking.’

2000  John Kufuor wins presidential elections; New Patriotic Party takes over power from Rawlings’ National Democratic Congress.
Mensa Otabil starts weekly Living Word TV broadcast in Nairobi, Kenya.
Afrikania Mission moves to new headquarters at Sakaman, Accra.
Afrikania Mission starts Afrikania Priesthood Training School.

2001  Mensa Otabil starts daily broadcast on Radio Gold, Accra.

2003  Death of Afrikania leader Kofi Ameve; Atsu Kove is appointed the new leader of the Afrikania Mission.

2004  Mensa Otabil starts daily broadcast on Happy FM, Accra.