EVANGELISM BY FIRE – EINE KRITISCHE UNTERSUCHUNG DER
EVANGELISATIONSARBEIT VON REINHARD BONNKE IN AFRIKA (EVANGELISM BY FIRE – A
CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE EVANGELISM OF REINHARD BONNKE IN AFRICA)

by

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Einleitende Bemerkungen


1. Interviewleitfaden

Grundsatzfragen

a) Which denomination do you belong to?
   - Which organisation within the denomination?

b) What is your general attitude toward the evangelistic ministry of Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke in Nigeria?
   - Positive?
   - Neutral?
   - Negative?

1. Der Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke

1.1 Does Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s appearance do justice to the qualities demanded by him of an evangelist?

1.1.1 In your opinion, what are some of the distinctive characteristic traits of Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke?
   - Humility?
   - Did Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke willingly submit to the local leaders in Ile-Ife?

1.1.2 It is not known that Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke has been involved in any affair of misappropriating finances. How do you evaluate Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s handling of finances?

1.1.3 Critics imply that Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke pronounces false prophecies. What were your experiences with Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s prophecies in Ile-Ife?
   - Did Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s spoken prophecies come true, e.g. predicted revivals?

1.1.4 Have people been killed or hurt during the Ile-Ife gospel crusade? How does Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke deal with it personally?

1.1.5 How do you evaluate Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s friendship with president Olusegun Obasanjo?
   - How does it affect Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s evangelistic work?
   - Does Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke take influence on politics in Nigeria?

1.2 Are there exaggerations in the publicity/ advertisement before a gospel crusade or in the reports afterwards?
1.2.1 Much publicity is done prior to a gospel crusade with Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke. Did, what happened at the gospel crusade in Ile-Ife, correspond with the announcements of the advertisement?
- Were there exaggerations?

1.2.2 What was the focus of the advertisement in Ile-Ife?
- Healing?
- Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke?
- Other?

1.2.3 Have you noticed differences between what took place at the gospel crusade in Ile-Ife and what was reported later?
- Are the publicised numbers correct?
- Exaggerations?

- Is there anything else, you would like to mention at this point? –

2. Das Evangelisieren Reinhard Bonnkes

2.1 Do people at Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s gospel crusades “turn to Christ” because he preaches a gospel that is adapted to the main thematic focuses of African culture?

2.1.1 Do you think that the content of Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching was a reason for masses of people „turning to Christ“ in Ile-Ife?

2.1.2 Which thematic focuses did Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching have?
- Blood of Jesus, Satan, demons, warfare, healing

2.1.3 To what extent, do these thematic focuses agree with the focuses of African culture?
- Do you believe, the adaptation of the preaching contents contributed to the big number of people „turning to Christ“?
- How do you evaluate such an adaptation?
- In your opinion, was the adaptation of the preaching contents so strong that it became an alteration of the biblical gospel?

2.1.4 Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke has been accused of speaking more about sings and wonders than about Golgotha. What do you say to that, speaking about Ile-Ife?

2.2 Do healing miracles during a gospel crusade draw people’s attention to Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke instead God?

2.2.1 From reports on the resurrection of Daniel Ekechukwu in Onitsha it becomes clear, that his wife insisted to bring her husband into the presence of Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, in order to experience a resurrection miracle. Many people came to the gospel crusade in Ile-Ife, in order to be healed through Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke.
2.2.2 In your opinion, which function did Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke exercise from the perspective of the person in need of healing?
- Was he the healer?

2.2.3 In your opinion, did the healing miracles during the gospel crusade in Ile-Ife draw attention to Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke?
- If YES: Did it divert attention from God and his work? Why? Why not?

2.2.4 Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke confesses, that signs and wonders come from God, and therefore, man should not draw attention to himself.
- What did Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke do to point away from himself to God?
- Does that also apply to the advertisement before a gospel crusade?

2.2.5 Critics suggest that healing miracles performed through Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke are not genuine, or at least not lasting. What have your experiences been in Ile-Ife?

2.3 Does Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke measurably contribute to the solution of social problems?

2.3.1 In your opinion, did Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s proclamation of the gospel, directly or indirectly, contribute to the solution of social problems in Ile-Ife? How? Why not?

2.3.2 Can it be proven, that as a result of the gospel crusade of Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke the crime rate sank or social improvements happened in Ile-Ife?

2.3.3 Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke argues that the reason for the problems in African countries lies with Satan, and he does not criticise the governments.
- How do you feel about that?
  • Is it helpful?
  • Counterproductive?

2.3.4 Is Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry socially involved in Nigeria? In Ile-Ife?
- To what extent?
- Just before and after a gospel crusade?
- Are social problems solved through that?

2.4 Are the decisions made in connection with a gospel crusade of Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, made on his or the team’s own authority?

2.4.1 What was the collaboration between CfaN and the local churches like?
- Was Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke invited by the churches in Ile-Ife, or did he initiate the contacts with the churches?
- At what point in the process of organising the gospel crusade in Ile-Ife, were the churches informed and involved? Were the churches contacted after the decision was made to hold a crusade in Ile-Ife?

2.4.2 To which extent did local churches in Ile-Ife have a chance to propose changes for the gospel crusade?
- Time and locality of the crusade
- Programme

2.4.3 How did Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s gospel crusade fit into the ongoing evangelistic activities of the churches in Ile-Ife? Or was it rather a project in which the churches could participate?

2.4.4 Did Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke leave the impression of making decisions on his own authority?

– Is there anything else, you would like to mention at this point? –

3. Die von Reinhard Bonnke Evangelisierten

3.1 Are masses of people drawn to Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s gospel crusades because the event has show character (is entertaining)?

3.1.1 There are many evangelists in Nigeria. Why are many people drawn especially to the gospel crusades of Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke?
- What are the major differences?
- White man?

3.1.2 In your opinion, did Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s style of preaching and his unique and dramatic appearance on the platform draw the masses?
- Would you categorise Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching as entertaining?

3.1.3 Could it be that masses were drawn to Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s gospel crusades in Ile-Ife because they were being offered high class Christian entertainment for free?
- Music concert in the prelude?

3.1.4 Would you say that the use of spiritual gifts, e. g. gifts of healing, contributed to the attraction of masses to the gospel crusade in Ile-Ife?
- Which spiritual gifts, other than the gifts of healing manifested during Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry in Ile-Ife?
- In your opinion, did the use of spiritual gifts contribute to the willingness of people to „turn to Christ“?

3.2 Do the great numbers of people “turning to Christ” at Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s gospel crusades have an effect on church growth?
3.2.1 Did Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s gospel crusade contribute measurably to the growth of local churches in Ile-Ife?

- YES: How much? Statistics available?
- NO: Why not?

3.2.2 In your opinion, how big was the portion of visitors at the gospel crusade in Ile-Ife who were church members at that time, and had already „turned to Christ“ before? (true believers)

- Did those people „turn to Christ“ again?

3.2.3 What were the criteria for counting people who had „turned to Christ“?

- Were only first time decisions counted?
- How were the data processed? – Computer?
- Were the data synchronised in order to avoid counting decisions multiple times, e. g. one person making a decision on three days.

3.2.4 Were there factors other than Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching, which motivated people to „turn to Christ“?

- Perhaps to receive a blessing from Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke?
- Perhaps the chance to receive a book for free?
- Perhaps an enthusiastic atmosphere?
- Considering these factors, could the decisions people made to „turn to Christ“ be regarded genuine?

- Is there anything else, you would like to mention at this point?
2. Experteninterviews

2.1 Interview mit Rev. T. A. Babawale

2.1.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: T. A. Babawale
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 13.10.05
Denomination: Pentecostal
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Member of the prayer team, counsellor
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/ Werk: Area pastor

Bemerkungen:

2.1.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: I'm interviewing Rev. …

Dr. Aluko: T. A.

DS: T. A.

Dr. Aluko: Babawale.

DS: T. A. Babawale. Is this right?

TB: Yes.

DS: Alright. Now, thank you for your time. Let me just start with the first question. Which denomination do you belong to?

TB: I belong to the Latter Glory Evangelical Ministry, Latter Glory Church incorporated in Nigeria.

DS: Which is part of the PFN, is it?

TB: Is a member of Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria.
DS: Now, before I ask the question about Reinhard Bonnke and his ministry, let me ask you your general attitude towards this person and his ministry. Is it positive, neutral, or rather negative?

TB: I might say is positive.


TB: Quite positive.

DS: Now, I’ll be asking a few questions concerning Reinhard Bonnke. There have been some allegations, and I’ll be happy to disprove them. So, let’s just start the first one. In your opinion, what are some of the distinctive characteristics of Reinhard Bonnke, I mean, as a person? Which do you see?

TB: Reinhard Bonnke is anointed man of God who is humble and …

DS: Humble, thank you.

TB: … who is really committed to the ministry God has given to him, and is doing everything possible to fulfil that mission …

DS: Now …

TB: … and he is fulfilling it. He is creating impression in this generation.

DS: Well, so far Reinhard Bonnke has never been involved in any affair of misappropriating funds; we never heard about it. And now, how do you evaluate Reinhard Bonnke’s handling of finances? You’ve been working with him.

TB: Yes. Well, no ramifications. Evangelist Bonnke was not in any way involved in the operation or organisation of financing, of the orga... He is separate. He has a separate organisation. Somebody, like the director of his organisation, he is the one in charge, who has many other functionaries that handle all these things.

DS: So, he is not involved in that one.

TB: He is not involved in it …

DS: Very good.

TB: … at all. He is not involved.

DS: Now, critics have been saying that Reinhard Bonnke is pronouncing false prophecies. What is your take on that one?
TB: That is mischievous because he has never. I attended his crusade at Oshogbo. I attended that of Ilesa. I attended – I was involved in that of Ife. Rev. Bonnke does not make any – he does not make prophecy. He just tell you the true gospel, pure gospel, simple gospel.

DS: So, he is not involved in prophecy.

TB: No, no, no, no, no, no, no he doesn’t.

DS: Alright. Now, have there been people killed at the crusade in Ile-Ife?

TB: No.

DS: No. Not one killed?

TB: Nobody.

DS: There were no instances.

TB: No, they are …

DS: Okay.

TB: They are – only in Oshogbo, before the crusade that there was just incident like that, when the opposing religious group rules against it, and only one person died then.

DS: But not in Ile-Ife?

TB: But in Ife, there was nothing like that.

DS: Now, how does Reinhard Bonnke deal with that personally?

TB: Dealing?

DS: Yeah, I mean, if the one that happened somewhere else.

TB: By – because of the nature of his ministry, he doesn’t have personal contact with people. He always deal with people in congregational form.

DS: Now, next question is – let me stop [?].

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Alright. Now, I know that Evangelist Bonnke is a personal friend to president Obasanjo.

TB: Of course, yes.
DS: Now, you as a Nigerian, how do you evaluate this friendship? Is it beneficial for the gospel, or rather counterproductive?

TB: It is not only beneficial to the gospel; it’s beneficial to humankind because Rev. Evangelist Bonnke preaches righteousness. He proclaim righteousness, and as a result the country is now in crusade of anti-corruption crusade, which I would say that Rev. Bonnke has been part of.

DS: Okay. So, you believe his ministry has an impact on the politics.

TB: Of course.

DS: In a good way.

TB: In a good way, in a positive way.

DS: Thank you. And that has to do with the friendship probably, with the president?

TB: Yes, it has to do because you have influence on people.

DS: There was a short interruption; somebody came in. Now, we are continuing.

TB: Yes.

DS: The question is – there is much publicity done before Reinhard Bonnke comes for a crusade.

TB: Yes.

DS: Now, since you are the, you were the chairman of the publicity committee of that crusade.

TB: Yes.

DS: Let me ask you …

TB: In Ile-Ife, here.


TB: Yes.

DS: Now, let me ask you directly. Now, the publicity done prior to the crusade …

TB: Yes.
DS: … did it meet the expectations of the people? I mean, what they’ve publicised and what has happened, did it?

TB: In fact, one will have learned the situation if this interview could be conducted up to the point of the grass roots. People were touched. In fact, by the time we were publicizing the crusade, it was just like, [?] as if we were boasting. But when the crusades – during the crusade it was beyond reasonable doubt.

DS: Okay. So …

TB: Every life was touched.

DS: So, would you say that the advertise [korr. „advertisement”], the crusade superseded? I mean, was the crusade more than there was promised?

TB: The crusade is more than what the publicity carries.

DS: Now, the focus of the advertisement, was it healing, was it Reinhard Bonnke, or was it any other topic? – I mean the focus of the advertisement.

TB: The focus of the advertisement was that the crusade will touch the life of people, and change their lives for better. That Christ will come to their life and transform. Even, not only to the [?], to the land because this is an idolatrous land.

DS: Yes.

TB: And by the special grace of God, that crusade has changed this land for better.

DS: Okay. That is very good.

TB: Yes.

DS: We’ll come back to that later. Is very good.

TB: Okay.

DS: Now, after the crusade there’re reports, and now is – did, do the reports say what there would happen, or is there exaggeration? How would you evaluate that one?

TB: There was no bad report in Ife, because the chairman of the planning committee, to the best of my knowledge and with my association with me, was a man of God to the core and an upright man.

DS: So, there …

TB: So, there …

DS: … exaggeration.
TB: … was no accusation of – the only accusation even was that many people were saying that they couldn’t get enough funds …

DS: No, no, I mean …

TB: … because of the management, strict management of the funds.

DS: I was asking if there was exaggeration in the reports later, after the crusade. Or was it – was the report exactly what happened?

TB: The reports were positive, and they were not exaggeration. The law is, the lawyer will say, “Res ipsa loquitur” – that the fact speak for itself. And what you can see – people could see it.

DS: So, its – and then – now, that is the first part. I was talking about Reinhard Bonnke and his personality – about his person also. Now, is there anything you want to add to this, maybe from your own. We will still be speaking on the way the crusade took place, and also we’ll be speaking about the people who have been touched.

TB: Yes.

DS: Is there anything you want to add, so far, at this point?

TB: What I want to add is that when Reinhard Bonnke came here. Before Reinhard Bonnke was here – in Nigeria we are too doctrinal in teaching, and as a result of that, there are a lot disunity in Christendom. Once your own doctrine is different from my own, I believe that you are not holy. You are not righteous. You are not of God. What’s to me, Evangelist Bonnke brought something, simple gospel, simplicity of gospel: accept Jesus Christ. He doesn’t attack. Even, he doesn’t attack any religion. He is very fair to all, and he brought a new dimension to the preaching gospel. Even to us, most of us who are ministers, that even you can preach to the fundamentalists in other religion, and they will embrace you, they will love you – without attacking them – that you just preach Christ. Christ is for peace, is for progress, for salvation, for healing, for deliverance. And that was, were – those were all, everything – were demonstrated by Rev. Bonnke.

DS: Thank you. Okay. And now, let’s move on to the next part. We’ll be talking about the crusade itself now.

TB: Yes.

DS: Now, do you think that the content – you just touched on it – that the content of Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching was the reason for the masses of people turning to Christ, in Ile-Ife? Was it the content of preaching? Now, I’m trying to find why Reinhard Bonnke is so effective.

TB: Yes.

DS: So, you know, I’m trying to investigate whether the content of the preaching has a part in it.
TB: Yes …

DS: What is your take on that?

TB: … of course, of course, especially in the area of unifying Christendom. Unity.

DS: Oh, unity. Thank you, we come back to that later. Very good. Next question is – what are the thematic focuses of Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching? What is he focusing on, when he came to Ile-Ife? – Now, talking about Ile-Ife.

TB: Yes.


TB: His focus was to the effect that it – the sin is the one, it is the thing that cause problem. Sin brings poverty. Sin brings backwardness. Sin brings the devil to destroy someone. But once you [?] him, you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and saviour; your sin will be forgiven. And once your sin will be forgiven, you will be at liberty. You’ll be free from the devil, the devil – the evil in conscience.

DS: Now, to which extend do you think, the contents Reinhard Bonnke is preaching, are the same with the contents of African culture? Like, now he – is he adapting the gospel to the African culture in Nigeria?

TB: Is gospel to the – to Africa because in Africa we are backward because of our idolatrous belief and many other cultural attitudes, like polygamous live, this and that, you know. If a man has – where, there was a day, they say that a man had seventy-two children. And this man was poor. How would you think that a man with seventy-two children will not be poor? And he had about eleven wives. As a result of that, there are a lot of poverty in the land. So, the message now, bringing people to Christ – once you are brought to Christ, your polygamous life will leave. You live a holy life. You live a holy life. You’ll be manage to – you’ll be able to manage your affairs. God will intervene in your life, and then you have victory over poverty and sinfulness, as a result of the gospel of liberty – gospel of liberation.

DS: Now, do you believe that this adaption [korr. „adaptation“] of his gospel to the special context, here in Ile-Ife, was one of the reasons, why so many people turned their lives over to Christ?

TB: Of course, because they saw it happen in their life. Immediately Rev. Bonnke finished the preaching, he will go into ministration. By the time he calls the name of Jesus, you will see Holy Spirit move, and you will see the Holy Spirit moving like a wave. And you’ll just be seeing – people will be shouting, shouting, “Hey, my leg! My thigh! My ear!” Miracle will be, just be happening, even when – see people like, they are like sea, like ocean. And people will just be shouting “Hallelujah” here and there.

DS: Now, some critics have been saying that Reinhard Bonnke is preaching more about signs and wonders than about Golgotha, about Calvary. What is your answer to that?
TB: About Calvary?

DS: Yeah, and he is speaking more about – people say he is speaking more about miracles …

TB: Yes.

DS: … than about Calvary.

TB: Yes.

DS: Now, what is your take on that one?

TB: You see, Rev. Evangelist Bonnke ministry is a liberating ministry, and the only way you can liberate people is to tell them the power, to liberate them in Christ. And he is showing them who this Christ is. Is not showing them religion. He is not showing them any doctrine of any church. But he is showing them the gospel of liberty, that Christ liberates; Christ delivers. That is what he’s telling them, and that is his major something. He is not organising a church. He is not teaching marriage, or teaching anything. He’s – the only thing he’s teaching is that, people should accept Christ. And only Christ can deliver Africa.

DS: Next question. Now, I remember the case of Daniel Ekechukwu. He was raised from the dead.

TB: Yes.

DS: Now, his wife believed that he, she – if she would bring her husband into the faith presence …

TB: Yes.

DS: … of Reinhard Bonnke.

TB: Yes.

DS: He would be raised from the dead.

TB: Yes.

DS: Now, I’m trying to understand the theology of the people here of Nigeria.

TB: Yes.

DS: Is this thinking there in their lives? So, is that the reason why people come to crusades of Reinhard Bonnke, instead of just going to their pastor for the healing?

TB: Yes.

DS: Is that drawing the people? That’s what I’m saying.
TB: In fact, during the Ife crusade they brought corpses there. But Rev. Bonnke let them know then that he was not the one who has risen the corpse. It is God.

DS: Yes.

TB: And miracles are the prerogative of God. Is not his own making.

DS: Right, yeah.

TB: That the one that happened at Onitsha, was not that he did not plan it – that he was not aware.

Dr. Aluko: And the people brought the dead body [?]

TB: That people brought these deads [korr. „dead bodies”] quickly. And God wants to use that as a landmark, and is not that is embarking on pursuit of raising the corpse, but he told them frankly.

DS: I’m just trying to find the mind behind the people. Why? They may think he is the – I mean, I’m not talking of Reinhard Bonnke now – about the people. Do you think, they come to the crusade because they believe that there will be healing? And why they don’t go to their pastor? I mean that dynamic.

TB: Okay. Thank you. By the nature of Reinhard Bonnke crusade, he doesn’t – as I said earlier – he doesn’t deal with people one to one. He deals with you in congregational form, and that has formed …

Dr. Aluko: Mass evangelism.

TB: … is a mass evangelism. And in the crusade people came. You must know that Africa, in Africa we are backward totally: poverty, disease, sickness, ignorance. And the Bonnke crusade is embarking on this liberation. That when people embark Christ, they will see the light. And when they see the light, they will be liberated. And by the time they come to the crusade, they turn purposely to the crusade and [?] for that, and bring numerous problem. When you will be – if you are there listening to the testimony, you will see most of the cases, and listen to the testimony. Even people from high places here and there, even then – I want to tell you something. The deputy, the then deputy governor of Osun State was about to be impeached. He came to that crusade ground, and he prayed fervently, and even after that, when he was in prison because he was later charged for murder. Later, then the Holy Spirit told me that I should write him that he will be free. It was this morning, I was telling my wife that I made a mistake then. That he will be freed – oh, based on the prayer he had on Bonnke crusade. That boy, he should not forget God when he left the prison. But I was unable to communicate to him, though due to my [?], like that. But I may later say he was freed. Because that day I saw the man praying at the [?]. That I know, that his mind was that – God please get me out of my trouble because he was in deep trouble then. So many people came like that, people who are highly placed, and God delivers them.
DS: Now, in the eyes of the people now – I’m trying to understand the culture. In the eyes of the people, is Reinhard Bonnke the healer? I mean, I’m not talking about Bonnke. I’m talking about the people. Do they see the healer in him, or why do they come to the crusade?

TB: Okay.

DS: But – because God is the one who heals.

TB: The point is that we have about three group of the Reinhard Bonnke crowds. The – those who really know Christ well, that Christ is everything, that Christ can know you – then who doesn’t know Christ at all, and those who had little knowledge of Christ. For the first group, when you look at, they know that is Christ that does all these things, through Reinhard Bonnke. But for somebody who has not known Christ, he will believe the person is it, especially when Africa has the idolatrous believe. In fact, they idolize you, when you are doing something that is so fantastic to them because of idolatry background. They can see Bonnke as one who is doing it, and that is why his crusade has attracted more crowd than any other ministers’ in the land.

DS: Now, I know that Reinhard Bonnke believes that he is not the one healing. It’s God who is healing.

TB: So he always say it.

DS: But how is he dealing with it? Because it seems like the attention is on him, how is he bringing the attention back to God? Is he mentioning it? What is he doing to do that?

TB: He always mention it, and those who really understand it, the – who has the spiritual knowledge, really understand what he is saying. He will – even will tell you his history, how he started the ministry with one hundred people. How he started? Then, how he – the ministry was going on, and he even will tell you the story of somebody who share his vision, and God used – that is not only Bonnke that God is using. And in fact, in his preaching even, he will tell you that when he was in schooling, he was very poor in the school, that it was God that raised him up. So, he always give glory to God, and attribute everything to God. Very simple and humble, a man of God.

DS: Okay. Now, critics suggest that healing miracles, performed through Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, are not genuine or at least not lasting. What have your experiences been, here in Ile-Ife?

TB: Well, what we know is that those who are saying that, they may be unbelievers, or they don’t have knowledge about Christ. Because preaching is just like sowing seeds. When you sow seed, the seed has to grow, germinate, and bear fruit. But if you don’t nourish it, if you don’t till the ground. So, when people comes to crusade ground, you are told that – to refrain from your sin. And immediately after the crusade, you go back to your sins; definitely the sin, the thing that sin cause in your life will come back. But if they continue in Christ, they maintain the miracle. But the condition for maintaining any miracle is for you to continue in Christ and grow in Christ.
DS: Now, in your opinion – I’m coming back to the question we touched before – in your opinion, did Reinhard Bonnke’s proclamation of the gospel, here in Ile-Ife, directly or indirectly, contribute to the solution of the social problems of Ile-Ife?

TB: As I told you the – earlier, Ife is an idolatrous society, where they worship over 364 deities. And nearly every day – and a deity is worshipped in Ife, except one day, that nobody knew in this town. In fact, one is coming. Two – Ife is a violence town. You must have heard the crisis, where many people died, the communal crisis. Even politically, when there is political disagreement, is always clashes. But since the gospel of Bonnke, they have been in search of happiness, peace in the land.

DS: And that was – now, this is about three years ago. And it’s still here?

TB: Yes. In fact, it was last week that I was saying that, in fact, the atmosphere of Ife has changed.

DS: Now, is there any, you know, sociological proof, like is there statistics that the, like let’s say the crime is coming down? Is there something like here?

TB: Well, maybe I will say Dr. Aluko shall embark for that research because he is a sociologist, and so he’ll be able – say, maybe is a challenge to him. He may be able to take it up to see the impact of that movement …

DS: But …

TB: … on the life of people of Ife.

DS: But from, just from your personal point of view, would you say that the crime has come down? That violence has come down? All those things. That poverty has come down?

TB: To the best of my knowledge, poverty in Ife has come down. Crime has come – if you are in Ife before, you will know that Ife is not save to live, at all. For here, let me tell you, recently they are talking of ritual killings all over the places. We don’t experience it in Ife. On Sunday, I hope that you will be here on Sunday. Try, nearly every home has turned to church in Ife. Ministry here and there – you will see, you can see that if – in fact, the impact is so high.

DS: Now, Reinhard Bonnke, he is arguing that the problem of the society of Nigeria, of Africa, is with Satan because he is trying to destroy people.

TB: Of course.

DS: Now, how do you feel like? Is it – is this productive or counterproductive? Because some people say, since he is not blaming the government, but Satan, it is counterproductive.

TB: Seems, we have to blame Satan because there are many things people are doing that is very unreasonable. For instance, look at the situation, where an head of state stole over one hundred billion dollars. What is he going to do even with it? Look at the situation, where people can not – their per capita is not up to fifty Naira, and in that state the governor is
buying aircrafts. What – about two hundred and something million? What will you say to that? You see, the act of man is controlled by God or by Satan, and your heart dictate what you do.

DS: So, you agree on that one.

TB: I agree on it.

DS: Now, let me ask you another question now. Is Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry socially involved in Nigeria? Or has it been involved before the crusade, in Ile-Ife, or during the crusade, socially? – I mean helping people, humanitarian aid, something like that.

TB: Well, that crusade here has not been expanded to that humanitarian or social something because the focus of the fund, of the crusade, is to propagate the gospel.

DS: Now, would you believe that, if they would have been involved in social, solving social problems, it would make the ministry more effective or less effective? Or would it remain the same? What is your take on that, as a Nigerian?

TB: Well, it may help the ministry in the social aspect, but it may not help their spiritual development. Because it will – just so that Bonnke is the one who is helping them and not God. But Bonnke is linking them to God, and for them to know God, and God to lift them up.

DS: Now, coming back to the question we touched before, that is, how Bonnke and the organisation of Bonnke are working together with churches here. Now, I read some very positive report, on the way the churches worked together here. Now, let me ask you a question. At which point, in the whole process of organising the crusade, were the churches involved? Now, did the church invite Reinhard Bonnke, or did Reinhard Bonnke come and offer the church to have a crusade? Now, how did that work?

TB: Thank you. In Ife – because of the peculiar nature Ife found himself in that year – I told you that the, Ife was in a protracted communal clashes – …

DS: That was 2002?

TB: … where there was no peace. It was Ife people …

DS: In which year was that?

TB: … who said that they want Bonnke.

DS: Okay. Yeah, but I mean, which year did they have those clashes? Was it the same year?

TB: The year was between 1996 …


DS: Okay, and – yeah. So, the Ile-Ife churches or one particular church, invited Reinhard Bonnke to come?

TB: No, it was the entire Christian group. I can say it was Christian Association of Nigeria [?] that was interested in him coming here.

DS: Now, to which extend did the local, I mean, did the pastors, the churches here have had a chance to influence that crusade? Now, let’s say the date, the time, the kind of programme. I mean, is there an interaction?

TB: Unfortunately, the crusade organisation of Bonnke is planned ahead in a year, and it be put in internet. So, you can hardly influence the date and the time of – the only thing is that we are able to tell him where we want the crusade to be held.

DS: The place.

TB: The place.

DS: What about the programme, the style, the music? Does the church have influence on that? You know what I’m trying to get at? Is the church having an input, in the way the crusade was held?

TB: Of course.

DS: They [?]

TB: Every church donated members, where they will form members of the ushers committee, security committee, publicity committee, music committee. And music committee was led by Rev. Adedeji, and it had many members.

DS: And they work in their own cultural context? They just work the way they want to work, right?

TB: Of course.

DS: Okay, that …

TB: Of course, mixture of both classical and the other music – my pastor [?]

DS: Okay. Yeah, almost through. Let me see. Yeah. Now, just let’s put the crusade in a bigger picture.

TB: Okay.

DS: Now, this crusade happened in 2002.

TB: Yes.
DS: Now, how did this crusade fit into the ongoing evangelistic activities of the churches around here?

TB: Thank you very much. As a result of the crusade, I can tell you that in Ife, there is always, every month that we have in Ife now – in fact, one is coming up soon – that all the ministers of God, they are going to organise – in fact, since then they have been organising joined crusade.

DS: But before Bonnke came – now, how was it then? I mean, was it a new thing to have a crusade here?

TB: Joined crusade was not so much known. It is individual ministry that normally hold crusade. But now, in fact, nearly – if everybody want to organise, and he want every person to cooperate.

DS: Okay. So, would you say that Reinhard Bonnke contributed to the unity of the churches in Ile-Ife?

TB: In fact, when you get to the women leader – there is a group now, they have formed as Deborah Group, that emerged from Bonnke women’s group – yes.

DS: Okay.

TB: It has.

DS: Now, a more critical questions – did Evangelist Bonnke or his ministry leave the impression to make decisions on his own or on their own? Or did they really involve you as the churches, here in Ile-Ife.

TB: We were involved as the church. In fact, the crusade is organised by the churches. They only give you materials. And you are the one who will organise everything because you are the people on ground, and they gave recognition to that.

DS: Okay. So, they respect your culture.

TB: Your culture, your structure, your this, even they don’t discriminate.

DS: Okay. Let’s – that was the second part. Let’s move to the third part. We are about trough. Now, we will be focusing on the people who were attending the crusade.

TB: Yes.

DS: From your point of view, of course.

TB: Yes.

DS: Now, of course there are many evangelists in Nigeria. I mean, there are so many ministries here, especially in the south.
TB: Of course.

DS: Now, let me just understand the people of Nigeria. Now, why are so many people drawn, especially to the gospel crusade of Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke? Because there is so many preachers here, but why do people like to go to his crusades?

TB: Because he is preaching gospel of liberation. He’s not so doctrinal. He’s preaching gospel liberation, and you see people are caught in the ways of poverty, backwardness, ignorance, disease …

DS: Now …

TB: … of many kinds. People want to be delivered, and they see his gospel, as gospel of liberation.

DS: So, you’d say that the gospel of liberation is one of the main points, which draws people?

TB: In fact, is the one. In fact, if you don’t preach gospel of liberation in Nigeria, you won’t see anybody.

DS: What about him being a white person, from Europe? Does that affect people? Do people just come because they want to see the white man? Now.

TB: Well, generally in Africa, when they see a white man, they give you special recognition because in Africa they loves to see strangers. So …

DS: So, would you say that is a good thing? So people, like myself, when we come, is that an advantage for us? Will we draw a bigger crowd?

TB: Of course.

DS: Okay.

TB: They love to see white people.

Dr. Aluko: And what a white man will say.

DS: Okay.

TB: And what white man will say.

DS: Thank you.

TB: You see?

DS: Now, Evangelist Bonnke’s preaching is unique: it’s dramatic.

TB: Yes.
DS: Of course, the Nigerians, they are also preaching very powerfully …

TB: Of course.

DS: … dramatic.

TB: Yes.

DS: Now, would you say that, that factor draws people, the way he preaches? I mean not the content – we talked about the content – now, the way he preaches.

TB: He treats people, for instance, I will say “Eyi! Eyi!” You know? People, even [?] say “Eyi!” People will say “Eyi!” They know at the point [?] So, he carried the people along …

DS: So …

TB: … and they so loved him.

DS: So, would you say his preaching is entertaining?

TB: Is entertaining. Even the whole crusade is entertaining – music, everything. Even the artists and musicians are brought, that drew people. There are many, the things …

DS: So he …

TB: … so is entertaining.

DS: People would come, just to be entertained – also.

TB: Is part of life.

DS: Okay. So that …

TB: It doesn’t make life to be boring.

DS: … that draws people to the crusade?

TB: Of course.

DS: Okay, that means the music, the way he preaches?

TB: Yes.

DS: And what else is drawing people? I mean, why do people – I’m still asking the same question – why do people come to his crusades, much more than to the other crusades?

TB: People went to the crusade because he had the fame. He had the fame. They heard about him.
Dr. Aluko: The good will.

TB: The good will is there.

DS: The good will?

TB: Yes. They have been hearing, and the publicity is so impressive.

DS: Now, let’s move on. Now, Reinhard Bonnke is practicing spiritual gifts …

TB: Yes.

DS: … in his ministry.

TB: Yes.

DS: Now, which of the spirituals gifts, you know, apart from healing – we know that the healing is strong – apart from healing, is manifested during his ministration?

TB: He manifest fire. He hold Fire Conference for ministers.

DS: So […] …

TB: And Reinhard Bonnke will tell you that only in a cold stove that flies will stay.

DS: So …

TB: That if you have fire, the devil cannot has place in you. He’s attacking the devil directly.

DS: So, you think the fire he has, is one of those elements?

TB: Of course, and that is what ministers love most.

DS: Now, do you believe that the use of spiritual gifts – now, you know Billy Graham?

TB: Yes.

DS: For example. And he – it’s a very different type of evangelism.

TB: No, yes.

DS: Now, do you believe that the use of spiritual gifts – now, here in Africa – makes evangelism more effective, or did make the crusade in Ile-Ife more effective?

TB: Yes. That’s – for instance the “Fire Evangelism” makes it more effective. Because every minister want to be effective, and they believe that having anointing from somebody who has acknowledged anointing, will improve your own anointing. Because everybody wants to make it in the ministry, and they know that in the ministry you can not make it unless you approve, you can prove yourself. And you can only prove […], prove by having anointing on
you, and that one is making it meaningful. And in fact, what is really helping the crusade most is that the crusade is not doctrinal, is not denominational, is not partial – is general gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

DS: Now, let’s move on. This is one of the last questions here. Now, there are great numbers of people coming to Christ, receiving Christ as their Lord an saviour.

TB: Yes.

DS: Now, did the churches of Ile-Ife, after the crusade, experience church growth?

TB: Well, which – I can say that we experienced church revival. Because we have one problem, which is a “but” for the crusade – is that when the crusade is being organised, all Christian, whether Pentecostal or non-Pentecostal, born-again or not born-again, are mobilized together. And after the crusade, when you want to do follow-up, you want to do follow-ups – though it may be a sinner – but another church will not allow you to follow his own member. Or, so that you will not draw him to your own church. But the aim of the gospeller is that – even if you are in a church, you are not born-again – they want to win you to Christ. That one have faced the church. But I know that the crusade add revival of the church.


TB: It helped the unity of the church and in fact, had trapped people from opposite. So, and then because for instance, an opposition to Christianity in this area is lessened because they see the reality in the gospel.

DS: Now, in your opinion – now, how big was the portion of visitors at the crusade in Ile-Ife, of people who were at that time, already were born-again, were members of a church, were saved? How – I mean, if you see the crowd, if – just a guess, an estimate. How many of these people, when they came to the crusade, were already saved?

TB: Well – can …

DS: Just...

TB: … because at the crusade in Ife, we had average attendance of seven hundred thousand people, for the five days. I can say you categorically that I don’t think we can have less than ten thousand people saved under that crusade.

DS: But, but …

TB: Even more than that because there are many people that you can see, that they are only Christian today. They are preaching “Christ” – they are Christian.

DS: So, there is a part of people who come, who are Christians.

TB: Of course.
DS: And you said, that’s about ten thousand …

TB: Yes, that I can …

DS: … out of seven hundred.

TB: … will have been born-again in that crusade.

DS: Out of seven hundred, or?

TB: Out of seven hundred thousand.

DS: That's …

TB: So just...

DS: ... surprising.

TB: ... let me take it like that. I just want – I don’t want to …

DS: Yeah, that’s. Yes.

TB: … exaggerate. I just want to …

Dr. Aluko: [?]

TB: Yes.

DS: No, no. I – don’t get me wrong. I’m talking about people who have been saved already, when they came, when they came to the crusade.

TB: People who have been saved already?

DS: Yes.

TB: There are many. Out of all those seven hundred thousand we see, over fifty thousand people have been saved already.

DS: Over fifty?

TB: Yes.

DS: Okay.

TB: Yes.

DS: Now, when people fill out their cards, accepting Christ – now, how are these cards processed? I mean, are those cards filled out, all first time decisions, or?
TB: This card is processed through the follow-up committee. Please, we have Pastor Ezebudey, of Redeemed, as a follow-up committee chairman.

DS: Alright.

TB: This committee – we have some members who will follow-up all theses things, and they distribute it zone by zone. So, they give those in your own zone to the people, the churches in the zone. And those people will visit them, and bring them to their church.

DS: Now, let’s just – my question now is – could it be that some people come one day; they fill out the card. They come the next day, fill out the card, and the next day, and fill out the card? Is there a computer system just, you know, would just – processing the data, synchronizing the data. So, let’s – if a person was saved once, he is not counted three or four times. That’s what I’m saying.

TB: What happened is that the counsellors were trained. They will ask you, “Have you completed this thing before?”

DS: Okay, they will ask that one.

TB: They will ask them. There is counsellors, a lot of counsellors who are trained to seek, to reach people personally. And once you told them that you have completed it, then they know you; they go to other person.

DS: Okay. So, that person will no more be counted?

TB: May not be counted.

DS: Okay, that was my question. Now, what are the factors, some other factors, you know, like when people are called to come – what are some other factors that make people come? Of course, there will be people who come to receive Christ.

TB: Yes.

DS: But you know, there is human nature. Some people might just come, maybe to receive a book, or a blessing, or whatever.

TB: What I know is that there are three factors, that bring people to that place. One, is the prayer. Before the crusade starts at all, four or five months before, there will have been intercessory prayers …

DS: Now, let me …

TB: … for power of God to draw them.

DS: Let me …

TB: Then, the publicity and media publicity is always stimulating.
DS: Now, let me clarify my question. Now, I want to [?] I'm now talking about people who are called to receive Christ, who come forward.

TB: Okay.

DS: I'm talking about those people, not the whole crowd, but just the ones who are receiving Christ.

TB: Okay. When they receiving …

DS: What are the factors? Why do they come?

TB: The factors – one, is the message. The content of the message will be so [?] that even an ordinary, simple man will understand. That is – Reinhard Bonnke says that he preaches the ABC of gospel because he will be so simple that he will analyse for you, that you understand Christ well. Secondly, is what people saw on the ground: when they see people shouting “Hallelujah”; when you see the lame, that is walking; you see the blind man, somebody who was since blind, seeing.

DS: So, you would say that people come with a genuine motive because they have seen God working.

TB: Of course. They will have seen God practically working, not rhetorics [korr. „rhetoric”] or in theory.

DS: So, you would say that the revival brought – the crusade brought revival to the churches.

TB: Great revival, great joy, great happiness, great unity.

DS: Is there any statistics on church growth? Can you say that the church, that they really growing fast, since then? Or have been …

TB: Am I right? Is what I’m saying, that we need the sociologist and others to conduct research in that area, to let us know the impact of the revival.

DS: Okay. From your own experience, in your church – after the crusade, did people join the church? Was there church growth in your own church?

TB: Well, I can say that. Well, to say that question – now, permitted that, I will tell you that – because most people who attend the crusade were Christian already. So, it is very difficult for them to move from their church to others. But what I know is that it has improved the spiritual quality of every church.

DS: Now, you said, many of those who have been attending were Christians. Are you talking about your own church, or generally?

TB: Yes.

DS: Your own church?
TB: In every church.

DS: Okay. So, they've been attending the crusade.

TB: Yes.

DS: And they come back. But did new people come? Not too many, or did it …

TB: Many people, I learned that in some area – because my church is not in the main, the core of Ife. Those churches, in the core Ife, witnessed people coming to them.

DS: Alright. That – if you want to add anything, you know, maybe some good advice for a preacher for Nigeria.

TB: Yes.

DS: From Europe now.

TB: Yes, the good advice for Europe is that Europe should continue to finance gospel because only gospel will liberate Africa. You see NGO, these and there. The problem of Africa is spiritual. Africa has a lot of resources that they can manage. Because of ungodliness in them and sinfulness, they can not manage the resources well. But if they accept Christ, they will be able. Africa has enough resources, material resources that can develop them. But because of the Satanic influence and ungodliness, we have been unable to manage them. So, only gospel can liberate. For instance, I'm a minister of God. I cannot steal now. I cannot embezzle money. I cannot just steal the money of my colleague to go to Africa. I'll be sympathetic. I'll be able to help the neediest. I'll be able to help the people because the gospel in me, is telling me that one day, I will account for whatever I do. But unbelievers, somebody who is ungodly doesn’t care. He doesn’t bother about any all these spirituals will leave our land if we are able to accept Christ. You will know that Christianity influenced Europe, and that is why you are, where you are today. So, if the same gospel could be intensified.

DS: Here.

TB: Rather than religion, the – we will see that Africa will be liberated soon.


TB: Yes.

DS: Did I say it right?

TB: Yes.

DS: Babawale.

TB: Yes.
DS: Thank you. God bless.

TB: God bless.
2.2 Interview mit Rev. E. Ezebudey

2.2.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: E. Ezebudey
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 13.10.05
Denomination: Redeem Christian Church of God
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Chairman of the counselling and follow-up committee
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/ Werk: Head pastor, field representative of the Full Gospel Business Men Fellowship, Ile-Ife

Bemerkungen:

2.2.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: We are starting the interview with Pastor Ezebudey.

EE: Ezebudey!

DS: Ezebudey. I’m sorry. Ezebudey. Alright. Thank you for your time. Let me just start with a general question. Which denomination do you belong to?

EE: I belong to the Redeem Christian Church of God.

DS: And a general question – your attitude toward the ministry and the person of Reinhard Bonnke, is it positive, neutral, or negative?

EE: Is very positive.

DS: Thank you. Now, I will be asking questions about three things. One – the first will be about the person of Reinhard Bonnke. Then the second will be about the crusade in Ile-Ife, and the third one will be about the people who had been reached in Ile-Ife, and so on. Let me start with the first question. If you think of – now, let me explain to you. What I’m after is, I’m trying to find the dynamics which make Reinhard Bonnke successful in Nigeria. And any time if you have to add something just speak up. I will be glad to learn. So, in your opinion, what are some of the distinctive characteristics of Reinhard Bonnke, I mean, of his character, of his personality? If you would say it in one word, what would it be – to describe Reinhard Bonnke?
EE: Bonnke, by my own perception, is an open person, and at the same time I could see a burning desire to win souls.

DS: Okay.

EE: You see. Because I observed when he went to the Oba's Palace, when he met with – at the campus committee. I could see a burning desire to preach the gospel, to get souls won, and that really touched me.

DS: So, the person we just spoke to, he mentioned humility.

EE: Yes.

DS: Would you say he is a humble man?

EE: He is a humble man. He is a humble man. He is a humble man.

DS: Now, so far it has not been known that Reinhard Bonnke has ever been involved in any affair of misappropriating funds.

EE: Not at all. Not at all.

DS: Now, how do you evaluate that?

EE: No, I have not heard of that, and you know, I have no reason to suspect that at all.

DS: Okay – now, some critics they say – they imply, that Reinhard Bonnke is pronouncing false prophecies. Now, what is your take on that in Ile-Ife?

EE: No, nothing like that. To my knowledge, nobody has spoken evil about Reinhard Bonnke, at all.

DS: Okay. Now, how did you evaluate Reinhard Bonnke’s friendship with president Obasanjo. Is it helpful to the gospel or is it counterproductive?

EE: Oh, I believe it is helpful to the gospel. You see, because the issue by my understanding is not – is a privilege to meet with the president of the nation. You see, because it gives asset. There are some people who may be there, but you might find it difficult to get to them. So, we are happy about that.

DS: Let me just stop here.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: We are continuing the questions now. Now, prior to the crusade in Ile-Ife, in 2002, there was lot of publicity going on here.
EE: Yes.

DS: Now, did what was advertised, correspond with what actually happened, or was it more than was advertised?

EE: I would say that what we saw, was more than what was advertised.

DS: What was?

EE: Yes, more than that.

DS: Yes, uh-huh.

EE: Yes, more than that.

DS: And now, the focus of those advertisements, was it on healing? Was it on Reinhard Bonnke? Or were there any other topic? What was the focus of the advertisement?

EE: Well, it focused on salvation.

DS: Uh-huh.

EE: The focus was healing.

DS: Uh-huh.

EE: These are the major areas, that the focus was.

DS: Uh-huh. And now, after the crusade is over, there are always reports about the crusade.

EE: Yes.

DS: Do you believe that those reports were correct?

EE: Yes, the reports were correct, yes.

DS: Thank you so much. Is there anything you want to add, at this point? Because we have finished with the first part now.

EE: You see, I want to say that, here in Ile-Ife, we are still looking forward for him to come back.

DS: Amen

EE: There is something about, when people want for him to come back, you know. And we believe, there will be a better and a greater harvest by the time he comes back. Because once – people, those who have been in the field with him, I would say, have got some experience to do it better – or, you know, at other time.
DS: Okay. Let’s move on to the second part of the interview. It’s about the – doing the crusade itself. During the crusade, what happened? I will be asking a few questions. Now, do you believe that the content of Reinhard – I’m still looking for the dynamics – do you believe that the content of Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching, the content, was a reason for the masses of people turning to Christ, in Ile-Ife?

EE: I want to believe so because there is a way Bonnke, you know, preaches the gospel. Sometimes, he will bring a very simple, practical story, when he is preaching the gospel. And I believe that touches people.

DS: So, the simplicity is part of it?

EE: Yes, I believe that. I believe that.

DS: Now, which thematic focus did he have in Ile-Ife, at that time? I mean, what did he focus on? Was it healing? Was it the blood of Jesus?

EE: Well, the focus was on the blood of Jesus, on healing, to tighten up salvation message, you see. It touches what the blood of Jesus can do.

DS: Okay. Now, you have heard those messages. How would you say, do they – to which extent do they fit into the African Culture? Do they fit right into the African culture? Did he adapt the gospel in that regard?

EE: Yes, yes, I believe so. Like I told you that those simple, simple stories he brings in, which sometimes carries within, what we obtain in Africa.

DS: So, in your opinion, that adaptation …

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Short interruption. We are continuing now. Okay. So, the contents, the adaptation contributed to the people turning to Christ.

EE: Yes.

DS: Now, would you say that the adaptation was good, or was it so much that the gospel was watered down?

EE: Can you come again?

DS: I mean, was the adaptation positive, or would you say it was too much adapted.

EE: It was okay.

DS: Okay.
EE: Okay.

DS: Now, critics, they say that Reinhard Bonnke is preaching more about signs and wonders than about Calvary, about the cross.

EE: Not at all. Not at all. Not at all.

DS: Okay, thank you.

EE: I mean, he will talk about the blood of Jesus, what the blood can do. I know of that.

DS: Okay. That, you are speaking for Ile-Ife 2002?

EE: Yes, yes.

DS: Thank you. Next question – now, in your opinion, did the miracles, during the crusades in Ile-Ife – the miracles, did they draw the people to come, I mean, the masses?

EE: Yes, yes, yes, yes.

DS: And now, help me understand the culture of the people in Ile-Ife here. Why did they come? I mean, there are many healers, and there are many pastors out here. Why did they come to be healed at this crusade? Is it because they had faith in Reinhard Bonnke? I mean, the unbelievers, let’s say.

EE: Well, I want to believe, it is based on the testimonies they have heard about Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry – is one of the reasons why they come. They come with faith, believing that God will touch them.

DS: Now, I know Reinhard Bonnkes says that he can not do any miracle. It’s God doing it.

EE: That is, that is.

DS: Yes, yes, yes, yes. Now, but how does – how does he divert that attention he gets, back to God?

EE: Oh, he will tell the people.

DS: He will tell them?

EE: He will tell them that is – who did this [?] is Jesus.

DS: And that was in Ile-Ife?

EE: Yes, was that.
DS: Okay. Now, critics suggest that the healing miracles, performed through Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, are not genuine or at last not lasting – at least not lasting. What are your experiences in Ile-Ife?

EE: Well, I – well, the critics will always say what they like to say – what suits them. But we know that these things are genuine.

DS: Okay. Thank you.

EE: I mean, I mean, I mean, the issue is that Bonnke is not living in Ile-Ife to have go and coerce people to come, and say what, that didn’t happen to them.

DS: Okay. Now, next question – would you say, in your opinion now, that the proclamation of Reinhard Bonnke, here in Ile-Ife, contributed, directly or indirectly, to the solution of the social problems, here in Ile-Ife?

EE: Yes, we believe it helped in so many ways to do reduce some certain evil practices.

DS: Now, for example?

EE: For example, people became a bit apprehensive, those who had worked in sacrifices, rituals, and things like that. You know. You know. They became apprehensive, not to do such things again, and don’t, don’t – I want to tell you that Reinhard Bonnke’s visit to Ile-Ife, you know, touched the king of this town.

DS: The king?

EE: Yes. [?]

DS: Now, what about the crime rate? Did it go down? Is there any statistics, or is it just – or your own experience?

EE: Well, I believe that crime rate went down. I believe that.

DS: Uh-huh, but there is not statistic available? Probably not?

EE: No.

DS: Okay. Reinhard Bonnke says that the problems in Africa are caused by Satan.

EE: Yes.

DS: Yes. Now, how do you feel about this? I mean, he is not blaming the government.

EE: Yes.

DS: Right? So, how do you think about that? Is it helpful to say that it is the devil who is causing the problems? Or is it rather counterproductive to say that, you know?
EE: No, I believe, is not counterproductive to say that the devil is the one that causes it. Because we believe that it is clear that when Christ has transformed somebody. If he is in government, he will do what is right.

DS: Yes.

EE: That is it.

DS: Now, is Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry involved socially in Ile-Ife, or has it been involved before? Like, humanitarian aid? Any social projects – here in Ile-Ife?

EE: By?

DS: By Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry.

EE: I cannot say that.

DS: And – but now, in your opinion, if they will be involved in that …

EE: Yes.

DS: … during the crusade, and if they would also do social projects – would that help the gospel, or would that be counterproductive?

EE: Yes, I believe it would help. I believe it would help.

DS: So, it would do – make it even more effective?

EE: Yes, of course.

DS: Okay.

EE: Of course.

DS: Genau [deutsch].

EE: Of course.

DS: Okay. Now, let me ask you one question about the collaboration between the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke and the churches.

EE: Yes.

DS: During that time – at what time did, did the people – now, at what time did the church come into the crusade organisation? I mean, into preparing the crusade. Did the church invite Reinhard Bonnke, or did Reinhard Bonnke offer to come? Or how did it?

EE: Well, I understand there was time, the church wanted Bonnke to come. But Bonnke came, as we were told – the time he came, was God that directed him to come to Ile-Ife. He
was not planning to come to Ile-Ife at that time. But prior, before that, the church has decided that he should come.

DS: Uh-huh, they have been inviting him?

EE: Yes.

DS: Okay, uh-huh. [?] he came. Now, to which extent did the local churches here have an input on the crusade? Let’s say the location, the time, the way the programme is – was the church, you know, involved in that?

EE: Yes, the church was really involved in almost everything. You know, the church was involved, you know, they meet, plan towards it.

DS: And they could do it their own way, I mean, or was it just the way the ministry wanted it? Or was it your way, here in Ile-Ife?

EE: Well, I wouldn’t – what happens is that they tell us what they want, the way they think it will go. Then, we move ahead. Like they said, they wanted a land, expanse of land, and we had to be – start scenting for where to get such a place. Then, they said they want – if we can get suitable number counsellors. Then, we start advertising to get people for that. You know, so we did those things that [?] locally here, was done by churches.

DS: But within those frames, which have been given to you – within those frames – you were free to make decisions on your own.

EE: Exactly.

DS: Okay.

EE: Exactly, exactly.

DS: That is good. Now, did Reinhard Bonnke or the ministry leave the impression of making decisions on their own?

EE: Yeah.

DS: Or, no wait. Did they leave the impression that they were making imposing decisions?

EE: No.

DS: It was your and the churches decisions?

EE: Yes, yes, yes.

DS: Okay, very good.

EE: Many a time when we meet there, he is not there. We believe he is not there, but we meet, you know.
DS: Okay, just the churches?

EE: Yes.

DS: Okay. Thanks. And then – now, we are moving into the next part. If you want to add anything at this point, feel free – about the crusade, if there is something that is important.

EE: Now, I do want to say that I have not seen churches cooperate together, to work in Ile-Ife, like when Bonnke came to Ile-Ife.

DS: Yeah. Thank you, that is very valuable. Okay. Now, we are – I am going to talk about the masses of people. Okay? Now, just give me your take on that. Now, there are many preachers here in Nigeria.

EE: Yes.

DS: So many preachers. And they are spirit filled preachers, on fire, preaching the gospel. And now, why are people drawn especially to Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade? What is the dynamics behind that? Why are they coming in bigger numbers, and more people, to his crusades than to the crusades organised by, by, by like local people or local evangelists?

EE: Well, I want to believe that, like I said before, it is because of the testimonies of what has happened in his ministry.

DS: So he has a big name here, yes.

EE: Yes. And because these things are advertised, people that already have experiences testified with that. There is a very good advertisement here and there. So, I know that contributed in a way.

DS: Now, him being a white man, did it also help?

EE: Yes, I believe so. I believe so. I believe so.

DS: Now, in your opinion, did Reinhard Bonnke’s style of preaching, the way he preaches – he is very, he has a very unique style; he preaches very dramatic – did, does that also draw the crowds, his way of preaching?

EE: Oh, oh yes. I believe so. I believe so.

DS: Now, you think his preaching is entertaining?

EE: Both, yes. What I mean, he tells simple practical stories.

DS: And people like to listen to him.

EE: Yes.
DS: Okay. So, that would be one of the aspects to pay attention to be effective in Nigeria.

EE: Yes, yes, yes.

DS: Okay, could it be that people are also drawn because the music, which is offered? Like, there are bands. Does that draw people? – The music, the programme, the prelude programme.

EE: Well, I cannot say. I know, people like music, but I can’t say whether it has contributed.

DS: Okay, then next question. Would you say that the use of the spiritual gifts of Reinhard Bonnke, in the crusade, does contribute – does attract the masses of people?

EE: Yes.

DS: Okay.

EE: Yes.

DS: Now, which gifts would that be?

EE: Well, the way he ministers, especially when it comes to the time of healing.

DS: Healing, healing is he?

EE: You can see that he has had an insight of what is happening right on the spot there, in people's lives.

DS: There is, like a word of knowledge?

EE: Yes.

DS: Okay. So, apart from healing, there is – he is walking in, he is ministering in the word of knowledge?

EE: Yes.

DS: And you believe that is also essential for evangelism?

EE: Of course, of course.

DS: Any other gift you think he is, he is – he was in Ile-Ife, I mean?

EE: I cannot say quite right.

DS: So, so, it’s healing – is one of his gifts he was practicing in Ile-Ife.

EE: Yes, yes – word of knowledge.
DS: And word of knowledge. Any others? Any other gifts, he was practicing in Ile-Ife?

EE: Well, we could see, he has the faith. The faith is there.

DS: He had faith. That is also, yeah. Okay. And that also contributes, you believe, to people to come?

EE: Yes.

DS: That draws people. Okay, thank you. Now, the last set of questions here, and that is really a question for you because you are the pastor of a big church. Let me just ask you, did – did Reinhard Bonnke’s gospel crusade contribute measurably to the growth of the local churches, here in Ile-Ife?

EE: I believe because in my own church, the week after the crusade, there was increase in attendance in our churches.

DS: What about, about today, I mean – three years after? Has it been growing since?

EE: I know that the growth is in the church, and I believe that has a contribution.

DS: Okay.

EE: We are not where we were when Bonnke, Reinhard Bonnke came to Ile-Ife.

DS: Okay.

EE: And I am using my own church as an asset.

DS: So, you would say that was an essential part of church growth.

EE: Yes.

DS: Okay. Now, in your opinion, those masses which came – of course, there were Christians, unbelievers, and so on – now, how big was the part of the believers, you think? How many believers – out of the let’s say seven hundred thousand average – how many of them were already born-again Christians, when they came for the crusade?

EE: Born-again?

DS: Yes, who were already born-again, when they came.

EE: I.

DS: Who just came to listen to Reinhard Bonnke, without having the need to get saved.

EE: I can’t, I can’t give you a number.

DS: Just a guess. No numbers. Just.
EE: I can’t give.

DS: Okay.

EE: Well, it depends. I don’t have figure of the people attending this crusade. But as far as I know, over five hundred thousand people gave their life at the crusade.

DS: Okay.

EE: So, if you can go by that. Whatever the attendance, you can minus it.

DS: Okay.

EE: So that at least over five hundred thousand people gave their lives.

DS: Now, when the people give their lives to Christ, they are filling out those card.

EE: Yes.

DS: Now, what are the criteria of counting those cards? Because my question would be like, could it be that somebody would be there, and he fills out one card today, he comes tomorrow, fills out another one, and comes the next day, and another one?

EE: What, by – I want to say this, is possible some did that.

DS: So, they don’t be – I mean, does that mean those are also counted again?

EE: Yes.

DS: Okay. But they are also counted. So, there is no procedure you could say, like a computer, which will synchronise those data.

EE: No, no, no, no computer. No, no.

DS: Now, the professor that I was interviewing before, he said that the counsellors are told to ask the person, if he has filled out a card before.

EE: Yes. Yes, you are told to do that.

DS: Okay, okay. Alright. Last question now, are there any other aspects which motivate people to receive Christ? What I’m after is, you know, when people are invited to come to receive Christ, then there might be some unbelievers that come for reasons other than receiving Christ – maybe to receive a book, or a blessing, or prayer, whatever. Now, you – what are those factors, you think? I mean.

EE: Well.
DS: Why do people just come without receiving Christ if they come? You know, what I mean is, there might be people who just come, but they are not genuine. They just come to fill out the card.

EE: Yes.

DS: What are the factors for them to come?

EE: It could be because of the book they want to receive.

DS: The book. Anything else?

EE: I think that is it.

DS: That is it. Yes. Okay. Okay. Well, thank you. Is there anything you want to add maybe, at the close of the interview? Some, some.

EE: Well, like I said, is like some of them have been attracted because of the books, right, which even are – those books preach a simple gospel. And I know that even those books – those who do not make a genuine commitment – you can’t say what may happen some years after. Go and listen to the spirit, and they will go where they put the book and pick it, and begin to, you know, follow what is there – turn their life to Christ and begin to do, you know, what is there. So, I believe, in one way, it is still part of preaching the gospel. And secondly, I want to say also that people gave their life to Christ because they saw the crowd. They saw the people.

DS: So, that means.

EE: They felt, they felt that if this person is there [?], there must be a right place for me to be.

DS: So, that is also the dynamics.

EE: Yes, yes. And they give their life to Christ.

DS: Thank you. Now, maybe more on a private note, is there any, any advice you would give to me, as a preacher of the gospel in Nigeria? – Just a general advice to be effective here.

EE: Yeah. Well, I want to thank God for the life of Reinhard Bonnke because to the best of my knowledge, all the money spent was brought by his ministry. You know, we are not asked to do anything, whatever. But I want to say things, especially in the area of finances, that they should be as much open as possible. Because people felt that anybody work [korr. „who works”] in Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade has a mass money. And if you happen to do anything, they say yes, that is why he has mass of their money; that’s why he got it. Is that kind of thing. So, I believe if they were a bit open in the area of finances, then at least most of the people – this would be eliminated. Those doubts – or they are trying to create – would be eliminated. You see. So, that would have [?] you know – even up to today, they beg that some of the preaches have collected large sums of money from Reinhard Bonnke, and put into their pockets. You see, so and …
DS: There is corruption on this side?

EE: Yes. Yes.

DS: The Nigerian official side?

EE: Yes.

DS: I see.

EE: That kind of thing.

DS: Okay. Well, thank you so much for your time, for your valuable answers. It was – thank you. God bless.
2.3 Interview mit Rev. Olujide Gbadegesin

2.3.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: Olujide Gbadegesin
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 13.10.05
Denomination: Pentecostal Church
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Member of the prayer team, counsellor
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/Werk: Area pastor

Bemerkungen:

2.3.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: Okay. Now, we are interviewing Mr. Gba...?

OG: Gbadegesin.

Dr. Aluko: Gbadegesin.

DS: Gbadegesin.

OG: Yeah, Olujide.

DS: Who is, who is?

OG: A lecturer.

DS: A lecturer at the Department of Religious Studies at the University in Ile-Ife. Alright. Now, as I said – now, some general questions to begin with – which denomination do you belong to?

OG: Christ Way Ministry.

DS: Christ Way, okay. This is a ministry name. Does it have a roof, roof – under an umbrella? I mean, the church, is it under a denomination, or is it just a?

OG: No.
Dr. Aluko: Is a Pentecostal Church.

OG: Is a Pentecostal.

DS: Pentecostal Church. Okay. Now, your general attitude toward the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke, is it positive, neutral, or negative?

OG: Positive.

DS: Positive. Okay. Now, I will be asking some questions, first of Reinhard Bonnke – about Reinhard Bonnke. Now, in your opinion, what are the – some of the distinctive characteristic traits of Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke? I mean, if you would just phrase is in one sentence or one word, what is the main characteristic trait of his personality?

OG: I know that he is an evangelist, and he preaches the word. I mean, he preaches the real word, and I think he has come down to our own level, in Africa here.

DS: Okay.

OG: Because he made his message clearer …

DS: Okay.

OG: … and suits the point. And he was able to identify with African culture. I think …

DS: We will talk about that later. That is very good. Okay, so, so, I mean, would you say he is, he is a humble person, or would you say he is, he is, he is?

OG: Yes, he is a very humble person.

DS: Okay, you would say so?

OG: Well, I – as far as I know. That is my opinion.

DS: It's fine, I am asking you. Yes, it’s fine.

OG: He is a very humble person, and I think he, he was able to – when he was here, he was able to identify even with the poor people. Now, if there be any miracle or anything, he was able to identify with the …

DS: Yes. Okay.

OG: … person who was healed, or. And he was able to even touch them.

DS: Yes, okay now.

OG: He carried them. He carried some children, that had been healed. I think is, is one of the sign of humility.
DS: Humility, okay – that he is mingling with the people. Yes, and then the other thing is – now, Reinhard Bonnke has never been – we have not heard of him being involved in any financial, you know, misappropriation. So, for the crusade in Ile-Ife, you don’t think there was any?

OG: Well, one thing I know is this; all the thing that he did, was sponsored by his group.

DS: Okay.

OG: So, there wasn’t any confusion from the local area. I think if there be any confusion at all, I think it would be in form of the offering, the collection during the crusade.

DS: Okay.

OG: And I wouldn’t think the collection was – I don’t know. Don’t let me.

DS: Yeah.

OG: I don’t think it, the collection was given to him.

DS: To him. Okay. I see.

OG: I’m not part of the – I wasn’t part of the organising committee.

DS: I understand, yeah, yeah. Okay, now, now, now, critics say that Reinhard Bonnke at times pronounces false prophecies. Now, what was your experience with Reinhard Bonnke, here in Ile-Ife? Did he prophecy? If he did, what kind of prophecies, or?

OG: Well, I know even the preaching itself, because I’m in Religious Study, preaching itself is prophecy.

DS: Okay.

OG: Yeah. Preaching itself is prophecy.

DS: Yes, you are right. Yes.

OG: You foretell, you speak forth the word of God. It’s prophecy. But I have not been able to see any negative prophecy, he gave.

DS: Okay.

OG: To say that the land will be peaceful, and that the land will be rid of adultery, I don’t think that is negative prophecy.

DS: Okay.

OG: It’s a positive prophecy.
DS: So, but have those prophecies so far come true? Or are they still waiting to come true?

OG: Well, the prophecy should be immediate or future. Now, we are still – we are waiting because we know that a lot of thing has happened ...

DS: Okay.

OG: ... since he had left. Because the same place, where we used for the crusade, has become a habitable places now, I mean, habitable places now. People have been building there.

DS: Okay.

OG: In the past it was a bush, that nobody could – it was, it was a terrible bush.

Dr. Aluko: Jungle, jungle area.

OG: Jungle area. It was a jungle area. But now, people have been building there.

DS: Okay.

OG: So, at least he has – he has succeeded in making that place habitable.

DS: Okay now. I know that Reinhard Bonnke is a friend, a personal friend to president Obasanjo – he is.

OG: Well, I don’t even know.

DS: Oh, you didn’t know. Okay. That’s fine. Never mind then. Yes, because I would think now, if – now, how do you feel? Is that a good thing? Or is that helping the gospel?

OG: Well, I think in means of the gospel – the standard things of the gospel – he has to be the friend of people. Apart from that, he is the father of everybody.

DS: Okay.

OG: And people must come to him.

DS: You mean, you mean the president?

OG: No, I mean, I mean in means of the gospel.

DS: Okay.

OG: Yeah, people must come to him. If you look into the Bible, you will know those old prophets. They came.

DS: They came.
OG: All the people came to them, to know the mind of God.

DS: I’m hearing you.

OG: So, if the president makes Reinhard Bonnke his friend, I don’t think there is anything bad in it, because, of course, the only way he could know the mind of God, is coming closer to the men of God, so that he can know the ...

DS: So, you would say it’s a good thing?

OG: It’s a good thing.

DS: Okay. Now, the next question would be like – there is lots of publicity done before the crusade, lot’s of publicity, advertisement. Now, did what was advertised take place? Did the advertisement correspond with what took place? I mean, or was it – did it promise too much? Or did it promise less than happened? Or was it just the way it was promised?

OG: Well, well, well, one thing I know is that we advertised, [?] sent handbills, posters, and the rest of them, and we advertised. And I wasn’t disappointed with what I saw. As my own personal opinion, I wasn’t disappointed.

DS: That’s fine. I’m just asking for your opinion. Yes, that is fine.

OG: He preached very well, and there were miracles here and there. I think …

DS: Now, the focus of the advertisement, what was it? Was it on healing? Was it on Reinhard Bonnke? Was it on salvation? What was the focus of it?

OG: I think the focus was more on salvation than – of course, there is no way you can come to a crusade, where you are going to be saved, and you are not going to be healed because the issue of salvation is holistic. It has to carry along with it, healing and deliverance aspect of life. [?] Now, he will be teaching salvation, just the way he was teaching about salvation. He also healed people. He also cured people. He also performed miracles. So, I think is not out of place, when you are saying – well, let’s call for salvation, and salvation is all, is all the person. Salvation has to do with healing. It has to do with deliverance. It has to do with healing of poverty, healing of everything. I think is, is a part of it.

DS: Now, and then, after the crusade was over, there were reports about the crusade. Now, were those reports correct, or were they exaggerated? Or how did you feel about the reports?

OG: Well.

DS: And who – and depending on who wrote these reports – I mean, if it was a local press, or if it was the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke, or the churches, I mean.

OG: Personally, I have not – since the crusade have ended – I have not heard Bonnke himself to be advertising something. I knew that the local press, they carried it. And not only the press, what I saw myself is a good thing to write whom about.
DS: Okay. So, it was truthful.

OG: I knew that people were many. Apart from that, things happened because I saw it.

DS: Yes.

OG: I was one of the counsellors.

DS: Okay.

OG: In fact, I remember now. I was one of the counsellors, one of the counsellors.

DS: We will add this to your profile.

OG: I was one of the counsellors, so.

DS: Okay. Alright, that sounds good. Now, that’s the first part. We are already done with the first part. If you want to add anything for the first part talking about Reinhard Bonnke, as a person; if you want to add anything now, you feel free. Is there anything, you think is important – you should add? If not, we will just move on. Is no problem.

OG: Yes. Reinhard Bonnke – I like his person.

DS: You like him as a person.

OG: I like his person, and then I like his attitude to the less privileged societies. He could come down all the way from Germany, to come and preach the gospel here.

DS: So, you would say he has a heart for the poor?

OG: He has a heart for the poor, a heart for the – but even not for the poor alone – for the unsaved. And that should be the attitude for – of every Christian.

DS: That’s right.

OG: Every Christian, every minister of God must have the hearts for the poor, for the unsaved, so that the whole world [?], of our Lord Jesus Christ.

DS: Okay. Let me put it off.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Alright. Now, we are on part two, talking about the crusade itself, and what took place. Now, do you think that the content of Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching – now, about the content of his preaching – was the reason, for the masses of people to come? Or was it a different element, that drew the people?
OG: Well, a lot of things can draw anybody. Well, I may be interested in the preaching itself. Some people will be interested in his [?], in his personality.

DS: In his personality. Yes, yes.

OG: Some people could be interested in going to see the white man preach.

DS: Okay.

OG: Maybe. Then, some may be interested in, let me see what happens, what has been happening in other places. Let me see what is going to happen here. Some people have just come to criticize him.

DS: Because they have heard of Reinhard Bonnke before?

OG: Yeah, they have.

DS: Now, his preaching – what was the focus of his preaching? Which topic, I mean in those days in Ile-Ife?

OG: I think in Ife, his preaching focus is on salvation alone.

DS: Salvation alone, okay.

OG: That’s what I’d liked because for the – you know, he made the gospel to be too simple. It wasn’t complicated – it wasn’t. In fact, if you see the way he was preaching, it was understandable for everybody.

DS: Okay. Very good. Okay. Now, to which extend do you believe, did Reinhard Bonnke adapt his preaching to the culture, here in Ile-Ife? Did he at all?

OG: Well, he adapted his preaching to the culture here. One ...

DS: In which way?

OG: One – I think something happened. His voice, I think he has taken African voice.

DS: Okay.

OG: He has taken African voice.

DS: African voice.

OG: Again, the noisy nature of Africa is now part of him because he can shout. He can shout. I know, is not part of the culture of where he [?].

DS: That’s right. That’s right. Yeah.
OG: Now, he started shouting. I think he has, that one has – now again, at times he, at times he may just wear a native dress. And that one will make people to know that this person has – is identified with us.

DS: But now, back to the preaching, the content of preaching – did he touch topics, that were really adapted to the people? I mean the topic.

OG: Yeah, I think his preaching was relevant to people’s situation.

DS: So, it touched real people’s lives?

OG: Yeah, it touches people’s lives.

DS: Now, okay.

OG: And that is why, when he was making his altar call, they came out – they came out.

DS: And do you believe, that is part of the reason for the success – why he is successful?

OG: Sure, sure.

DS: Because he is preaching a gospel, that really talks to the every day issues, of Ife here. So he adapted.

OG: Yeah.

DS: Okay. Now, some people – some critics accuse Reinhard Bonnke of talking more about signs and wonders than about Calvary. Now, what do you say to that?

OG: I bought some cassettes. It’s a pity they are not here. Most of the cassettes, I have him preach – he preach about: power of Holy Spirit; life of a believer; how Holy Spirit can help you to preach the gospel to people. Then he preached in the evening rally. He preached – he preached, I think he – that was the last day. He preached about the woman who was taken in adultery. That is a raw message of salvation.

DS: Okay, yeah. I’m hearing you.

OG: It was only [?], in fact.

DS: So you disagree?

OG: If there are miracle and signs at all, it was only – its always, always the last thing.

DS: Okay, thank you.

OG: He would have preached about salvation, before he started to preach about – yeah.

DS: Okay. Now, another thing is – do healing miracles at the gospel crusade, do they draw the attention of the people to Reinhard Bonnke, instead of God? Do you think so? I’m not saying
that he is doing it. Don’t get me wrong. I’m just saying, is it happening? Do people, do people, you know – meaning unbelievers or even believers?

OG: Well, we cannot detach that. Many people when, you know – is now left for the miracle performer to now tell people that, well, I’m directing your attention to God, not me. And that’s exactly what he has been saying, every day.

DS: Okay, so he.

OG: He would say, “Who is doing this?” People will say, “Jesus.”

DS: Okay. So he ...


DS: ... so he was directing to God.

OG: Yeah, he was able to let people know that it wasn’t Reinhard Bonnke doing the thing.

DS: But in the people’s perception, it seemed like he was the healer, to some at least?

OG: Well, you cannot remove that far.

DS: Yes, I understand.

OG: Some people will have, some critics.

DS: But he insisted on God, being the miracle worker?

OG: Yes.

DS: Okay.

OG: He has been saying that.

DS: And he made it very clear?

OG: Let me tell you one testimony he gave, about a man who woke up from the dead.

DS: Yeah, Daniel Ekechukwu.

OG: Yeah, if there was any miracle that he has, he was embarrassed of, it was that miracle, that he has not seen it happen in his ministry. That thing took him by surprise. That is to show that it was God, that did it, and he has been saying that regularly. He has been saying that regularly and every time.

DS: Okay, right. Now, some critics suggest that the miracles performed through Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke are not genuine, or at least not long lasting. What do you – what did you experience in Ile-Ife?
OG: Well, the ones that were performed in Ife – I know, all those people they are still living with their miracle. Yeah, they are still living with their miracle.

DS: Okay.

OG: Uh-huh, they are really living with their miracle. It’s long lasting. I don’t know what the opinion – I don’t know what it means, but I know some of the miracle that have happened in Ife. They are still there.

DS: Now, next question – in your opinion now, does the ministry of the proclamation of the gospel of Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, directly or indirectly, contribute to the social – solution of social problems, in Ile-Ife, in 2002? Did it contribute in some way?

OG: In a way it did. Well, I remember, I wrote a paper. Any time there is a crusade, there is a temporary relief for business people. It’s a time to display their wares, and it’s a time to – for example people, that selling food stuff – it’s a time to make good money.

DS: [?] Crowd is coming?

OG: Yeah, crowd is coming, and there is no way the crowd will not be – the crowd of people who are coming, those people who are coming will buy things from people, from the people that are selling theses things. Some people, if the crusade is going to start by four, some people have been there from twelve o’clock – but people are sleeping there.

DS: They buy food and everything.

OG: They have to buy food. Then again, I know that if pray [korr. „if he prayed“] for the land, is part of – is that, what he can put in social progress of the town.

DS: Now, is there any proof, I mean, is there statistics being done on that? Can it be proven statistically? Let’s say the crime rate was going down, or the poverty level is – was changed?

OG: Well, I know that day by day, as result of preaching – I know that there have been many youths, or many people, who have had a change of heart. And they will now be looking for something, a means of, instead of depending on – instead of going to other people’s houses, breaking into other people’s houses to steal, or to make people, or to kill people [?]. I know, it has not been totally eradicated. I know, certain number of people would have been changed.

DS: Okay, personally?

OG: The attitude of heart, for heart. So, that one would have.

DS: So, in that sense, it would be an indirect change of society?

OG: Yeah, yeah, of society, of society.

DS: Now.
OG: Like, for instance now, before Reinhard Bonnke, the okada – sorry, by okada I mean bicycle riders, motorbike riders.

DS: Yeah, yeah, okay. I heard you, yeah.

OG: Now, the rate at which they are good Christians is more, since 2002. Before, people will want to prefer to go to people’s houses, break into their houses, and steal. But now, people are looking for money to buy okada. Or they look for somebody, like my big man here, to get money and buy okada, and they will be giving him back money in the night.

DS: So now, Reinhard Bonnke is saying that the real cause of all these social problems in Africa is Satan himself. Now, you think to say that, is that counterproductive? Or is it good to say that? How does it fit, you know?

OG: Well.

DS: You understand?

OG: Not many people will agree with that. Well, but for some of us, we know that Satan is everywhere. Satan works everywhere. But, I don’t know, I think it is part of the privilege of man, that makes things to be. But I know in Africa is worse. They believe in demons. Practice of demons has caused a lot of hardship, poverty, and a lot of backwardness.

DS: So, you would say he is right on? [?]

OG: I think he is right. I think he is right.

DS: Alright. Now, but you see, if that is right, would that mean that people would not be working hard? I mean, since he is saying, it is Satan doing it – you know, it seems it is counterproductive, but it is not. You are saying, it is not?

OG: Well, I don’t think it’s counterproductive. Where people are backward, is because of the culture they are still holding on to. I think so.

DS: Okay.

OG: Where, for instance, you don’t, you don’t – you think that everything is cursed. And that what you are now, is what you have been destined to be. So [?]. The gospel is meant to change that orientation.

DS: Yeah, yeah. Now, is Reinhard Bonnke – was Reinhard Bonnke involved socially somehow, during the time of Ile-Ife crusade, before or after? I mean, did he have like social programmes, like humanitarian aid, or something like that?

OG: Aid?

DS: Yes.

OG: He?
DS: Yes.
OG: I don’t know anything about that.
DS: I'm not asking. Okay. Now, in your opinion.
OG: If he had aid? Sending money to him, or?
DS: No, any way, helping the society, you know, to whatever.
OG: Oh well, I – I don’t know. But I knew, during the crusade he prayed for HIV [?], or prayed for sick people.
DS: That’s a way of helping them, yes.
OG: Yeah, this is the way.
DS: Now, do you believe that if he would add this aspect – humanitarian aid – to his crusade programme, would that make the ministry more effective? Do you believe? Or would it be the same? You know what I mean?
OG: It will.
DS: It will make it more effective. So, you would say that if a ministry comes into Nigeria, and is preaching the gospel, and is also contributing to the, to like – also doing humanitarian aid.
OG: Yeah, I think so.
DS: It will be more effective, you believe?
OG: Is more effective. Is more effective. Is more effective.
DS: Now, we are talking about the decisions made, made for the crusade, during the time of organising the crusade. Now, let me ask you how – at what time did, was the church involved in organising the crusade? I mean, did Reinhard Bonnke contact you, or did the church contact Reinhard Bonnke – invited him to come? How did this work?
OG: I don’t think he was invited. Is a crusade, that he has been doing. He had a vision that he must come to Ife. He had a vision that he must go to Ibadan. And that is how he agreed to ...
DS: So, basically?
OG: ... but, but because he has had that vision, the Christian organisation also agreed that he should.
DS: Okay, so.
OG: It’s a privilege.

DS: Okay, I’m understanding. Yeah, yeah.


DS: So, since that was decided now – and he offered you to come – now, how much were the churches allowed to be involved, I mean, to change things or to have influence on the programme? Was it, was it – could you say it was your project, or was it just the project of Reinhard Bonnke?

OG: Well, I know, for the first time, first time in Ile-Ife, all Christian body were united. The Christian body was united, was united because even some churches, that would never come out to join you in anything, they were there. So, we were together. For the first time – well, as far as I know – for the first time Christian body was united.

DS: Okay, and now, this Christian body, did they have influence? Like, let’s say okay, Reinhard Bonnke came and said, “Let’s have a crusade.” Now, could you decide which place – which, you know, what kind of music? Are you getting me? I mean, could – did you have a chance to influence the way the crusade was held?

OG: Of course, apart from his preaching. I don’t know. He didn’t bring any other department. I think we organised the music, organised the prayer.

DS: And that was local music? The local way it was done?

OG: No. No, I think everything was done in local way.

DS: Okay, that is what I was asking. Okay.

OG: Apart from his preaching.

DS: Okay.

OG: I think everything. He didn’t influence it any way. He didn’t dictate, this how it should be.

DS: Yes, that is what I was asking after.

OG: But everything was done in the way we wanted.

DS: Okay, apart from the preaching?

OG: Apart from preaching.

DS: But you liked it anyway. Okay.

OG: Apart, yeah. Why – that is why I said, he adapted to our local situation.
DS: So, Reinhard Bonnke did not leave the impression that he was imposing something on you?

OG: No, nothing. He didn’t impose anything.

DS: And then …

OG: He didn’t impose anything. Is like we were the one organising, and he was just being invited to preach. That is how he behaved.

DS: So now, you also had a Fire Conference going. The Fire Conference was there – Fire Conference.

OG: It was okay. Except that I discovered, there were lot of things. Well, is not Reinhard Bonnke. I think it was local organising body, you know – the issue of distributing things. Well, thank God, in Ile-Ife, it wasn’t much of a problem. But I know in some places, they fight on Bible, fight on …

DS: I talk about Ile-Ife now.

OG: The Fire Conference was okay, but I’m afraid, people have – people having to stay in the sun. That is my concern.

DS: So, the – now you.

OG: Stay in the sun.

DS: Yes.

OG: I mean.

DS: Oh, the sun!

OG: Sun, stay in the sun …

DS: Okay, the sun.

OG: … for three hours. The conference almost, I mean, is from eight o’clock to …

DS: Twelve.

OG: … to twelve.

DS: Okay, I see.

OG: Staying in the sun for four hours.

DS: But now, the purpose was to equip people, right? To equip them?
OG: Sure.

DS: For evangelism?

OG: Yeah.

DS: Now, do you think that purpose has been achieved? Are there now more evangelists moving, here in Ile-Ife?

OG: Well, I know that is one thing that has been use to complement, what leaders have been doing here before. For example, in my church we teach each of evangelism and soul winning. We do it quarterly.

DS: But I mean, from his Fire Conference, could you feel an impact that something really changed in …

OG: Well, I think the impact was felt for some months.

DS: For some months.

OG: Later it died down, I must confess. It died down.

DS: Alright, then the third part. Now, talking about the people now, who are attending the meeting now. That is the question about that one. Now, there are so many preachers in Nigeria who boldly preach the gospel. But now, I want to know why people are drawn more to the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke? Now, you mentioned before that people like to see a white man. I understand that one. But what else? What is the difference of the crusade of Reinhard Bonnke? Why people prefer to come to his crusade, and why don’t so many people show up in the other crusades? What is the dynamic behind it? I’m trying to understand the people now, you know?

OG: Well, I think one of the factors is that he must have – I guess he must have prayed very well. Because prayer is one of the factors that attract people. And the anointing upon the man, it draws the crowd.

DS: So, it was prayer.

OG: So, I think again because people are well mobilized. They are well mobilized. If he is coming, with his whole aim of, “I want to do this thing alone; I don’t want anybody; I just invite you to come and” – but because he got the local people involved, that’s why many people are …

DS: They came?

OG: They came!

DS: Okay, I’m hearing you.
OG: And people believe in their leaders anyway. Like my friend now, is a pastor. Now, if he tells his members, “Please come! I want you to come for this programme.”

DS: They will …

OG: They will come! Because people believe in their leaders. So, I think is part of – because he got people involved. He got local people, local leaders involved, that’s why.

DS: Now.

OG: Other ministers who have been coming, if they are in the name of their ministry, of course, they may not – people may not support.

DS: So, it is the fame, fame factor here – fame, he has?

OG: Well?

DS: I mean, the fame people give him. That’s what I’m saying.

OG: Well, the fame, as a sort of the involvement, he gave to people. Because he, I beg – because he involved people.

DS: Okay.

OG: Yeah. He recognized people, too. He recognized the local leaders.

DS: Yeah. Okay. Now, would you also say that his unique style of preaching, and he preaches dramatically …

OG: He preaches dramatically.

DS: Yes, is that also drawing people? Would you say it is one of the factors?

OG: Well, one of the factors.

DS: Okay.

OG: One of the factors is that the …

DS: And, would you …

OG: He, he …

DS: Go ahead.

OG: … he is a [?] evangelist. He doesn’t lean on the pulpit. He walk up and down. He demonstrated his preaching. I think is one of the factors, people want to see. Then, you know, people can never forget “Eyi!”
DS: “Eyi!”

OG: They can never forget it.

DS: Okay. Now, would you say his preaching is entertaining?

OG: Well, it depends on people that are – well, for me oh, is not entertaining. I know, is a serious, urgent message of salvation, and anybody thinking that he is only trying to entertain …

DS: No, I’m not saying only, but – it’s a serious message of salvation, but it is still entertaining people; I mean, people come and like to hear him.

OG: Well, well, people will like to hear because one – he makes the message interesting. He doesn’t make it boring.

DS: That’s what I’m saying.

OG: Of course, of course, as long as he is able to demonstrate what he is saying, people will be interested.

DS: Could it be that one of the reasons is – apart now from his preaching, and all the other things – that maybe the good programme, like the good music and all kinds of things, are also drawing people?

OG: Sure.

DS: Is sure. Okay.

OG: Sure.

DS: Would you also say that the use of spiritual gifts, like healing, word of knowledge and maybe other – others, is one of the reasons why people come?

OG: Sure.

DS: Okay.


DS: Bread, that's it.

OG: That happened now. Yeah, people come because of miracle, most of the time.

DS: Okay, they come – now, that's the second …
OG: And let me tell you something, in a church where people don’t emphasize miracle, the church will be empty. [?]

DS: Let me go a step further now. Now, people are drawn by the miracles. Now, would you say that people also turn to Christ because of the manifestation of the spiritual gifts?

OG: Sure.

DS: Okay, its also a reason for them turning to Christ.

OG: Yeah, yeah, I know many people. I know a Muslim who have been converted now because they could see. They could see, you know, miracle – performance of a miracle.

DS: Now, the last set of questions here. Now, did the crusade in 2002 measurably contribute to the growth to the churches, here in Ile-Ife? Or should we rather speak of a church revival instead of church growth? What do you say?

OG: I think, like I said, for some months it contributed to church revival. I wouldn’t say church growth, because many churches didn’t see the impact of the outcome of the crusade.

DS: What …

OG: Like, these are the converts. These are the people that were converted. It actually caused a revival awareness.

DS: Okay. Now, why is there no church growth? What do you think? – Your opinion. Why is there, you know, why is the church growth missing in Ile-Ife?

OG: Well, it might be as result of our own problem, not Bonnke’s problem.

DS: No, I’m not saying that. I’m just asking for, for …

OG: No, no.

DS: … to understand. Yes, yes.

OG: I say it might be one of our problems …

DS: Which is?

OG: … not Bonnke’s problem.

DS: Which would be?

OG: Because if there was proper follow-up for the converts – everybody was a guest. Every church was hampering for …

DS: … the cards. Yes.
OG: They want members to come to their church. And in the process, of course, if I know that this thing will not – if I know that according to your, you are not going to be my member at the end of the day – so I may, I may drop.

DS: Okay.

OG: I think that are – those are the things that are [?] lack of church growth.

DS: So, you would say that the job Reinhard Bonnke did …

OG: But the awareness had been created. The awareness that was created, helped in no small measure in the future growth.

DS: Yes, I’m hearing you.

OG: Because the churches are getting expanded now.

DS: So, you would say that the job he did was fine, but the follow-up done by the local churches …

OG: … was poor.

DS: … was poor, and that’s the reason why the church didn’t grow.

OG: … was poor.

DS: Okay, thank you. Now, in your opinion, the visitors which came …

[Unterbrechung durch Gespräche in lokaler Sprache.]

DS: Okay. Now, we are almost ready now. The people who came, the masses, how many – now just a guess – how many of them were born-again already, when they came? They just visited. They didn’t make, didn’t need to make decision. They just came to visit, to attend the crusade, out of the hundreds of thousands that were there.

OG: Let me just say – I know at least 40 percent of the crowd would have been born-again.

DS: 40 percent were born-again, you think?

OG: I’m very sure of that.

DS: Okay.

OG: 40 percent of people that came were born-again.

DS: So, that means that the rest were probably unbelievers.

OG: Mm.
DS: Okay.

[Stimme aus dem Hintergrund]: Or non-Christians.

OG: Or …

DS: Non-Christians.

OG: Or non-Christians.

DS: I’m hearing you. Now, what are the criteria in counting? You were a counsellor, you said – you were a counsellor.

OG: I were, I were a counsellor.

DS: Now, as a counsellor, could it be that, like today a person comes. There are huge masses. The person comes, and you fill out the decision card, and next day the same person goes to another counsellor …

OG: Sure.

DS: … and fills the second decision card…

OG: Sure.

DS: … and next day to the third one.

OG: Sure.

DS: That can happen?

OG: Yeah, it happened.

DS: Okay.

OG: That one happened, very well.

DS: So, that means, the numbers are much higher …

OG: Many people are coming. In fact, the same set of people are coming every day.

DS: For counselling?

OG: For counselling.

DS: Okay. It means …

OG: It may not be – it may not be to you.
DS: Yeah, but somebody else?

OG: Somebody else.

DS: Is there a system? They have to synchronise. I mean, let’s say they came to you. Now, tomorrow they come to a brother.

OG: Okay.

DS: Is there a system to find it out to sort those things out?

OG: Except, by the time they sit down to sort out the cards.

DS: Okay, but they don’t?

OG: No, they did it.

DS: Okay.

OG: But the only thing is that, one – the good aspect of it – if I counsel somebody, Pastor Aluko counsels another person and Rev. [?] now. If you counsel the same person, is for the sake for evangelism.

DS: Yeah, I'm seeing it.

OG: That means three of us, if we are serious, three of us should follow-up that person.

DS: Yes, but the question now is – since, I mean …

OG: But, what that thing has done is that, it has escalated the number.

DS: Okay, that’s what I’m saying. So, that's it.

OG: Where we should have hundred people, we will have had about three hundred people.

DS: That’s what I’m saying, yes.

OG: Because the same person would …

DS: Come three times or four times.

[Unterbrechung in lokaler Sprache. Dr. Aluko verlässt das Zimmer.]

DS: Okay. So, and you said, by the time the pastors sit down to sort out those cards, that is after the crusade – sometime later, is it?

OG: Yeah, mm.
DS: But the counting is taking place the same day?

OG: The same day.

DS: So, that means, the numbers which are counted, may be higher than …

OG: Is likely.

DS: … than the number of people saved.

OG: Is likely. Is likely.

DS: Okay, okay now. Alright. Now, last question now. Now, there are so many factors for a person to come and to turn to Christ. And of course, there are genuine people, but there are some people coming for different – for reasons other than turning to Christ.

OG: Yeah.

DS: Which could be, maybe to receive a book or whatever. Are there those cases? I mean, are people just coming forward to have something other than salvation?

OG: Some people came because they wanted to receive books. Some other people came because they wanted to receive literature books. Some people came because – I beg – some people came because they wanted to receive Bible. Some people came because they wanted to receive literature books. Some people came because they want to just be part of the crowd.

DS: Okay, and those people all filled out those cards, decision cards? I mean, the people who wanted the booklet, say.

OG: Sure.

DS: They still filled out a decision card?

OG: Yeah, yeah.

DS: Okay, just to get a book?

OG: To get a book.

DS: I see, I see. Okay. Okay. That means, so – of course nobody knows who is saved. God alone knows..

OG: Only God knows that, yeah, yeah.

DS: But what I’m saying is that the numbers are much higher, than the real number of salvation.

OG: The number of, yes. I know that. I’m very sure of that.
DS: So, and then also I could say, some of the decision are not genuine, because they are made out of other interests.

OG: Mm-hm.

DS: Yes.

OG: Lot of interests.

DS: Alright. Yes. That’s about it. If there is anything you want to add, anything you think is important – I should really know. Or maybe, give me some advice for an European evangelist, here in Nigeria.

OG: Okay.

DS: Because I have been ministering here last year. I will be ministering in Lagos.

OG: You?

DS: Yes, myself. I'm an evangelist. In Lagos, in the first week of November – and I will be speaking at the conference of PFN in Kano, in October 20th.

OG: Okay, this year, this month?

DS: Yes, this month. So, give me an advice, or give me some last, final word.

OG: Okay, I think – well, the problem we are facing in Africa is that in Nigeria – is that late ministers. He is a witness. Most of the time in the Bible, the people you are pastoring should be able to take care of you. But the problem we have is that you are the one taking care of them. In fact, you are taking the full of – full shepherd because after preaching to them, counselling them, you have to give them money, too. So, I think that’s why. I think the other reason, why people came to Bonké’s crusade more, is because he has provided for all that he needed for the crusade.

DS: Okay. That means, he paid all the workers …

OG: He paid for the workers.

DS: … for all the food and everything.

OG: Yes. So, I think that was it. And that is exactly what – the part of the problem we have in Africa, is the problem of poverty. And because of that poverty, they look for a way whereby their problem can be solved …

DS: So …

OG: … financially, or where they can be employed – even if its temporary – where they can be employed to get some means of livelihood.
DS: And, and, yes.

OG: And then they – and I promise you if they can get means of life, even for just a month, they will do the work very well because people are looking for money. That’s number two, coming down to the level of people, identifying with people, not being too far from people. Now, you are there. People are here. And not talking above the knowledge of people. Let – now, come down to their own language – come down to everything [?] Then again, again make yourself available, and …

DS: That means personal ministration, touching people …

OG: Yes.

DS: … doing, praying for people.

OG: Touching people. That might be tedious, but at least …

DS: It’s good.

OG: It is good.

DS: You think that’s very important for Nigeria, to do that here?

OG: Yeah, because let me tell you, a Nigerian – he is a reverend of a church. People will like to see him personally.

DS: Yes, yes.

OG: Am I correct, Sir?

OG: Apart from the preaching, apart from counselling them on the pulpit, counselling generally and preaching them, they want to, they want to, they want to, they want to move closer.

DS: Yes, yes.

OG: They want to feel – they want to feel your hand. They want to feel your hand of touch. They want to feel your touch. So, I think those are the things, I want to say.

DS: Okay.

OG: Yeah.

DS: Well, thank you so much. It has been very helpful. Let me just add again – this was the interview with, with, Mr. Gba…

[Stimmen aus dem Hintergrund korrigieren die Aussprache des Namens.]

DS: Pastor Gbadegesin.
OG: Gbadegesin.

DS: Okay. Thank you so much.

OG: God bless you.

DS: God bless you.
2.4 Interview mit Rev. Kayode Opadeji

2.4.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: Kayode Opadeji
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 13.10.05
Denomination: Baptist
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Vice chairman of the central working committee
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/ Werk: Pastor
Bemerkungen:

2.4.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: Now, we are interviewing Pastor Opadeji.

[Korrektur des Namens, evtl. durch CO]

DS: Opadeji.

KO: Yes, Sir.

DS: Okay, in Ile-Ife, the First Baptist Church of Ile-Ife. He is the – he was the vice chairman of the central working committee, at the gospel crusade of Reinhard Bonnke in Ile-Ife, in December 2002. Okay. Pastor Opadeji.

KO: Yes, Sir.

DS: Just let me ask you a general question to begin with. Which denomination you belong to?

KO: Well, I belong to Baptist …

DS: Baptist.

KO: … denomination.

DS: Okay. Now.
[Klopfen an der Tür]

DS: Is okay, you open it up. No problem.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: There was just an interruption here. Now, what is your general attitude toward the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke? Is it positive, or neutral, or negative? – In Nigeria, I mean.

KO: It was so positive.

DS: Positive, okay. Very good. Then I will be asking questions about three aspects. One aspect will be the person of Reinhard Bonnke.

KO: What you say?

DS: The person of Reinhard Bonnke. The person – my voice – the Person – my voice is going down.

KO: Yeah, yeah.

DS: The second will be, the way the crusade went, the crusade itself.

KO: Okay.

DS: And the third part will be, the people which were reached.

KO: Okay.

DS: That’s some information about that.

KO: Okay.

DS: So, let me stop right here.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Okay. Now, in your opinion, if you just – if you would use just one word to describe the character of Reinhard Bonnke, what would that be? Just one word or one sentence – the character of Reinhard Bonnke, the essence.

KO: Well, a man with vision.

DS: Man with vision. What about, like personal characteristics?
KO: Well, I thinks he keeps to his, to Christian integrity.

DS: Okay, and integrity. Okay. Now, it has not been known that Reinhard Bonnke has ever been involved in any misappropriation of funds. Now, what is your take on that, here in Ile-Ife?

KO: Well, the misappropriation of fund, as far as I’m concerned, I was not really, I was not involved in the financial aspect of it.

DS: But the committees you were supervising?

KO: Yeah, the committee I was supervising was not introduced to funds.

DS: But you did not hear anything about, you know, I mean from Bonnke’s side?

KO: I under… from Bonnke’s side?

DS: That’s what I’m saying, yes.

KO: No, no, no, no, no, no,

DS: That’s what I’m saying. There is nothing. Yeah, yeah.

KO: Because he supplied for the crusade.

DS: But of course, from the side of the, of some of the, maybe the Nigerian institutions, or governmental, or maybe there were some problems. But from Reinhard Bonnke’s side, there was nothing?

KO: Nothing of such.

DS: Okay. Some critics say that Reinhard Bonnke is pronouncing false prophecies. Now, what was your experience with Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching or prophecies, here in Ile-Ife?

KO: Well, the man of God came at the time, I think, we needed much of him. He came, and he prophesied concerning the land because there have been a bloodshed in the land. And as by the time the man of God came, we were all blessed because, you know, there was this communal crisis in the land, which has just ended by the time the man of God …

DS: It just ended.

KO: Yeah. About the time, it was just about one year.

DS: Before that?

KO: Yeah, before that.

DS: So, the crisis went on since when?
KO: Well, I was not here, by the time the crisis was on. I came here about five years ago. But as at the time, there will be this communal crisis in the land, which was so turbulent, that claimed so many lives. And when the man of God came, he prayed for the land, prayed for the people on the land, and since then we were enjoying peace in the land.

DS: So, would you say the pro…

KO: He’s a positive prophet.

DS: So, you would say the prophecies have come true, at least to some extend?

KO: Yes.

DS: Okay.

KO: Yes.

DS: And okay, that’s good. And then – and the next question – how do you, as a Nigerian citizen, evaluate Reinhard Bonnke’s personal friendship to president Obasanjo? Is it helping the gospel, or is it a disadvantage for the gospel?

KO: Well, I don’t know. Since I told, you know, I told you the other time that the man was a visionary man. He had a vision, and he is pursuing it. And coming to this land in Nigeria – definitely when you get to a land that is, that looks, I mean, you look like a visitor – you must get a kind of rapport with the government of that land, and I think with wisdom. I want to underline that.

DS: With wisdom.

KO: With wisdom, the man of God interacted with the government. And I don’t know much about his relationship to Obasanjo, the president of the country. But I know that if the man had not put necessary machineries into place, he would not have been allowed to come to this land.

DS: Thank you. Now, let me talk about the publicity, before the crusade.

KO: Okay.

DS: There is lot of publicity going on, advertising for people to come to the crusade. Now, did the advertisement correspond with what happened?

KO: Exactly.

DS: Or is it – was it even more than you expected? Or was it less? Or was it just?

KO: No, no, no, no, no. I was involved in this issue of media publicity. I even went – I was one of those people that went to the screen, to the television – our local television here, OSBC, that is Osun State Broadcasting Corporation – and I featured there. And one of the things that we encouraged people to come and participate in the programme, eventually came
to pass. And we saw the manifestation of the power of God. God manifested himself. There are lot of miracles …

DS: Took place.

KO: … which are very obvious. I personally got involved. I felt the touch of God in my life. And apart from that, there are still some other people in our neighbour – in our immediate environment here, that were touched. There was a crippled man that got up walking.

DS: Is he still healed?

KO: Yeah, he got healed.

DS: And he is still healed? I mean, is not ...

KO: Yeah, he is still healed. He is still healed.

DS: Because I will be asking that later. Very good. Now, the advertisement – what was the focus of the advertisement?

KO: Yeah. It has to do with salvation.

DS: Salvation, okay.

KO: Salvation.

DS: Now, later on, after the crusade was over, there are usually reports. There are ministry reports. There are reports of the local press. How were the reports? Were they truthful? I mean, or was there exaggeration?

KO: It was, no, no, no, no, no, no exaggeration. It was truthful.

DS: Okay.

KO: And we saw it. It was obvious.

DS: So, speaking about the person of Reinhard Bonnke, is there anything you want to add, just from your own?

KO: Yes, honestly, the man is a Bible teacher.

DS: He is a teacher, you say?

KO: Yeah.

DS: Okay.

KO: A Bible teacher.
DS: A Bible teacher.

KO: Because what happened at the Fire Conference really showed that.

DS: Okay, we will speak about that later, about the Fire Conference. Yes.

KO: Yes, I was there, too.

DS: Okay, okay.

KO: He’s a Bible teacher. And he is – one other thing that I discovers in his preaching – and being a pastor – is that the man uses illustrations a lot. He uses illustrations a lot. And all the illustrations are [?] I mean, are relevant illustrations.

DS: Okay, for the people in Ile-Ife?

KO: Yeah.

DS: Okay, we will speak about that later. Very good. Okay, lets move to the second part, which will be talking about the way Reinhard Bonnke is doing evangelism, you know, here in Ile-Ife, in 2002 – the way he was doing it.

KO: Okay.

DS: Now, do you believe that people were, the masses were attracted also because the way he – because of the content of his preaching? Like the things he is preaching, does it attract the masses? Is it part of it? That’s it.

KO: Well, let me hope that. You know, the Bible says, we are not moved by what we see, but by the word of God. And the man will not preach any other thing than the word of God.

DS: Okay, so.

KO: And I think, that one attracted people.

DS: People, okay.

KO: People want to hear the word of God, unpolluted word of God.

DS: Okay. Now, what was his focus of preaching in those days? Was it the blood of Jesus? Was it the Satan, the demons, healing, salvation? What was the focus of the preaching of Reinhard Bonnke …

KO: Of Reinhard Bonnke?

DS: … of those days in Ile-Ife? If you remember, if you remember.

KO: I didn’t get that question very well.
DS: I’m saying, what was the focus of, the topical focus of the preachings – of the preaching content?

KO: In Ile-Ife?

DS: In Ile-Ife.

KO: Before the man came?

DS: No, no, what he was preaching.

KO: What he was preaching?

DS: Yes, was he preaching like – was he preaching on the blood of Jesus? Was he preaching on Satan? Was he preaching on salvation? What was his topics?

KO: Well, I cannot really recall the topics.

DS: But what was the main, the main ...

KO: But the man was preaching about salvation, like I told you the other time.

DS: Salvation, okay.

KO: And apart from that, he spoke against wicked forces.

DS: Okay. Well, to take that one, the wicked forces – that does fit the African culture, doesn’t it?

KO: Whether it’s?

DS: It fits the African culture.

KO: Yeah, really, really.

DS: So, do you believe that Reinhard Bonnke has adapted his message to the culture?

KO: Honestly. Since he himself said, he has spent a lot of time even in Africa.

DS: And that is positive, you think?

KO: Is very, very positive.

DS: So, it’s adaptation. Okay. Thank you. And then, okay – now, some people say like – critics say that Reinhard Bonnke is preaching more about signs and miracles than he is preaching about the Calvary. What is your answer to that?

KO: That he is preaching about?
DS: Calvary. The cross of Golgotha.

KO: Yeah, since the centre theme of our salvation has to do with Jesus, and we cannot detach cross from Jesus.

DS: Yeah, but people are accusing him of preaching about other topics, other than!

KO: No, no, no, no, no, no.

DS: Okay. You think he is Christocentric in his preaching?

KO: No, he is very, very. He is very Christocentric in his preaching.

DS: Okay. Now, going to the next question – my voice is really – I’m loosing it. In – now, when Reinhard Bonnke is preaching, people come to be healed. Now, I’m not saying Reinhard Bonnke is claiming to be the healer.

KO: No, no, no, he has never even claimed it.

DS: That’s what I’m saying. I’m saying, in the eyes of the people; I’m trying to understand the people. In the eyes of the people, is he the healer?

KO: Yes, that, you know, that is our mentality in this land.

DS: That’s what I’m saying. The culture, yeah, yeah, yeah.

KO: Yeah. People feel that it is the man.

DS: The man, okay.

KO: That even if another preaching, another crusade is coming up, if it is not Bonnke …

DS: They won’t go.

KO: … crusade, you find out that people will not go, as they would have gone if it was Reinhard Bonnke.

DS: Yes.

KO: And like something happened, they brought a dead person to the crusade ground.

DS: Here in Ile-Ife?

KO: Yeah.

DS: Okay. That was in 2002?

KO: That was in 2002.
DS: Okay, go ahead, yeah.

KO: And the ushers, the ushering team were preventing the people from bringing the dead person. They brought the dead person. Some of them were thinking that Bonnke should come and lay his hand on it, and they couldn’t see him doing that. And honestly, the man of God said one thing that really impressed me. He said, the other man that was healed, I mean, the other dead man that was raised, somewhere in the east.

DS: Daniel Ekechukwu.

KO: Yeah. That, that man – that God only honoured the faith of the woman.

DS: Yes.

KO: And that he is not the healer. It is Jesus Christ.

DS: So, so …

KO: He is always pointing to Jesus.

DS: That was my question. Next question – what is he doing to point the glory, to bring the glory back to God? What is he doing practically?

KO: Well …

DS: At the crusades, what did he do?

KO: The preaching, the preaching …

DS: So, so, so.

KO: Testimonies, you know. By the time people give testimony, he makes them to know that what has happened to them, has happened not through …

DS: Okay.

KO: I mean, not by Bonnke but by Jesus himself.

DS: So, he is making it very clear.

KO: Yeah, really.

DS: Okay. Now, you have answered this question partially already. Some critics, they say that – they suggest that the healings are either not – either fake or not long lasting. But you just mentioned somebody in your neighbourhood who is still healed.

KO: Yeah, I have just mentioned it.
DS: So, in your experience in Ile-Ife, overall experience, those miracles were they genuine or, or?

KO: Well, as far as I’m concerned, I will not dispute that – genuine.

DS: Okay. Then the next question is – in your opinion, did the gospel crusade in – of Reinhard Bonnke, in 2002, contribute, directly or indirectly, to the improvement of social problems, here in Ile-Ife, directly or indirectly?

KO: Well, it has really contributed immensely to the development of social economics of this country, of this land.

DS: But, yeah.

KO: During the time, before the time, during the time, and even after. And in fact, I have a testimony. I have a proof to show for it. The ground, that was used for the crusade was full of – was a thick forest. This time around, the entire place has turned – has been turned to a life community.

DS: Okay.

KO: You understand?

DS: I understand. Now, now …

KO: And even the spots, where he was staying, has been demarcated for holy land, where people can go and pray to their god.

DS: Now, in – is there any statistical proof, lets say that the crime rate sank, or that socially there was improvement? Is there statistics done about it in the?

KO: Well, if I would say – I don’t have a proof to show for that. But if I mention a particular figure now, I may be wrong.

DS: I understand.

KO: I didn’t do any study on that.

DS: So, there is no governmental institution doing that? Probably not.

KO: I only heard there was a case in Ilorin. There he was to lead a crusade, that is in Kwara State.

DS: [?] 

KO: And he was denied of doing that.

DS: Anyway so – but from your personal experience, you know people who have improved socially?
KO: Yeah.

DS: Okay.

KO: Yeah, people have really improved socially.

DS: Now, Reinhard Bonnke is arguing that the real cause of all the problems here in Africa, in Nigeria, is not the government, but is Satan. Now, what do you believe? Is that counterproductive, to say that?

KO: Well, I – one definitely will attribute it to Satan because he is the hard-core, the arch-enemy of human race. So, we will – I will not dispute that.

DS: Yes.

KO: I will agree.

DS: You will agree. But saying that, isn’t that leaving the impression that people can’t do anything about it, anyway, since Satan is the fault?

KO: If we – if one has really given his life to Jesus Christ, devil will not be able to rule over him anymore.

DS: So, you believe, once a person receives Christ, he will change, and society will change step by step.

KO: Yeah.

DS: Okay. Now, is Reinhard Bonnke, or his ministry involved – was it involved locally here, in doing some humanitarian aid or some social projects?

KO: Yeah?

DS: During that time.

KO: During that time, some people were into small scaled industry.

DS: But I mean, that was just business. I mean, just – the ministry just poured in finances, or poured in, let’s say, humanitarian aid. Did that happen?

KO: I’m not aware of one.

DS: Now, do you believe that if it would, if it would have happened, would that increase the efficiency?

KO: Definitely!

DS: You think so?
KO: Yeah!

DS: So, you would advise young ministers, like myself, that if we do crusades in Nigeria to also have some social involvement?

KO: Oh yes.

DS: To help the people.

KO: Oh yes.

DS: Okay. That …

KO: I will encourage that.

DS: Okay. Now, let me ask about – and I heard many good things about this one – about the collaboration of Reinhard Bonnke and his team, and the local churches here. And now, let me ask you, at what point did the churches get involved? Did they invite Reinhard Bonnke to come, or did he offer himself to come? At what point did the church get involved?

KO: I would like to give you the picture of what happened.

DS: Okay, yeah.

KO: What happened was that the Ile-Ife people would have loved that Bonnke had come earlier.

DS: Earlier? Okay.

KO: Especially, when the crisis was booming – was really going on.

DS: Yes.

KO: But they went to him; but he turned down the offer. Not too long, we were told from a reliable source, at least the CAN president of Ife, that it was Bonnke himself, and I think through the western director, that is one John Darko …

DS: Darko, yeah, yeah.

KO: … yeah that it was Bonnke himself that felt lead, that he should come to Ile-Ife.

DS: In 2002, later?

KO: Yes. So, nobody even went to him. Even the chief and the traditional people, where traditional leaders would have loved that they had come earlier than that.

DS: Yes. Now, once they came …
KO: So, when they invited him, he is like – he rejected the …

DS: … first time, the first time?

KO: Yeah, the first time. But it was himself …

DS: … who offered it.

KO: Who offered himself.

DS: Now, let – once he or his team came, and the whole process started, organising the crusade and so on – now, how much were the local churches allowed to change the …

KO: Yes, since John Darko gave us the impression that the churches are to come up alive, and definitely participate in the programme.

DS: Yes.

KO: So, the church – there are local churches, including my own assembly here, got involved. And we were asked to enlist some members who can also serve in one committee or the other.

DS: What I’m asking is, how much? I mean, was it your project? Could you do according to your culture?

KO: Yeah, yeah.

DS: It was not imposed on you?

KO: No, no, no, no, no.

DS: Okay, Okay. So, they just brought the idea, the resources, but you are the one on the ground, doing it …

KO: Exactly.

DS: … your way.

KO: Exactly.

DS: Okay, that’s it.

KO: Exactly.

DS: That’s what I was after.

KO: Exactly.

DS: Okay, now …
KO: Some other time, when we feel that we are going too far, Darko will call us …

DS: And you would talk?

KO: Yeah.

DS: How did Reinhard Bonnkes crusade fit in the ongoing evangelistic activities, here in Ile-Ife? I mean, the churches that have been doing something before.

KO: Yeah.

DS: Now, how did it fit in? Was it common to hold a crusade? Was it a new thing?

KO: It wasn’t so a new thing, except that the man that came was a new man. He has never come to the land before. But it was not so strange to us.

DS: So, then one more question, and we will be through with this one.

KO: Oh, no problem.

DS: Is about the Fire Conference. Now, as I understand the purpose of the Fire Conference is to equip Christians.

KO: Yeah. Especially workers.

DS: Workers, yes. Now …

KO: I mean church workers.

DS: Church workers. Do you believe that the Fire Conference, held in Ile-Ife, was effective? Did it have an impact on Ile-Ife? Was it a lasting impact? Can you still sense it, or is it gone now? It was a lasting impact? Or was it just for a short time?

KO: No, it was a lasting impact.

DS: Okay.

KO: Yeah, and most of the Christian groups, that have been coming, have also been following the same pattern. Like tomorrow now, there will be a fire – there will be a kind of ministers’ conference in Ife. There is a crusade that is going on, and …

DS: Where is that?

KO: I cannot really mention the …

DS: That’s alright.

KO: … the one who is organising it, but it has started since Monday. And it’s been very effective.
DS: Okay, let me move on. Okay, that was about the crusade. Is there anything you want to add so far, at this point? – May be something I did not touch, or something.

KO: Well, we had problem with unbelievers in the land, especially the traditionalists, when we wanted to …

DS: Opposition.

KO: The opposition – and that eventually lead the church, all the churches, to come together. Because when we were to use a particular land, the opposition came from the owners of the land, that the land is a shrine – is made for a particular god. And that, that god will not be happy that people should come to that land, and conduct such thing.

DS: Now, finally who …

KO: That made us to have to go to another place, spending money to cultivate another land. But the king of the land, that is the king of, of the land – that is the Oni of Ile-Ife, Oba Okunade Sijuwade the Olubushe, the second – came in, into the matter, and along the way God intervened.

DS: So, it was resolved within the community?

KO: It was resolved.

DS: Without anybody coming?

KO: Without anyone to come, yeah.

DS: Very good. Okay, thank you. Now, lets move on to the last part, focusing on the people which came.

KO: Okay.

DS: Alright? So, I mean, there are many evangelists in Nigeria, all over, preaching gospel. They’re on fire. Why are so many people drawn, especially to the crusade of Reinhard Bonnke? I know, you answered part of it already, but once again. What is – what are the major difference, between a local [?].

KO: You know, he spends his money.

DS: Okay.

KO: So, he spent his personal money.

DS: So, it’s a higher quality of a crusade.

KO: Yeah. He spends his masses of money, and he is not going to enforce anything on any local church.
DS: And then also, the fact that he is a white man, is that also …

KO: Not really.

DS: But I think Africans like to just come and see what the white man says.

KO: Definitely.

DS: Yeah, I think so.

KO: Definitely.

DS: Is not a bad think. I’m just asking, asking.

KO: But I don’t see that – I don’t see that as a major thing.

DS: Okay, but …

KO: A major factor.

DS: So, you would say it’s that high quality of a crusade?

KO: Yeah.

DS: Okay.

KO: Yeah.

DS: And now, his preaching is, I mean, it’s unique – it’s very dramatic.

KO: Yeah.

DS: And now, is that the reason for drawing so many people? Could it be one of the reasons?

KO: Is one the reasons.

DS: So, people like to hear the way he preaches?

KO: Yeah.

DS: And is his preaching, would you say – is it entertaining?

KO: How will I use that word?

DS: I mean, in a good sense.

KO: Well, because I see – I see it as worshipping, and when you worship God, you don’t bring in entertainment. You get focussed with God.
DS: But what I mean, when he is sharing stories, people enjoy them, don’t they?

KO: Yeah

DS: That’s what I’m saying.

KO: People enjoy it.

DS: So, people like to listen to Reinhard Bonnke, don’t they?

KO: Honestly, since we know that illustration is one of the powers, that can draw the attention of the members, of the listeners. So, like I told you, he used illustrations a lot.

DS: Could – is it also a factor, that there is music?

KO: Yeah, the music is indigenous.

DS: Okay.

KO: Because the people in the land produced music.

DS: Now, I mean, that’s one of the factors which draws people, right?

KO: Yeah.

DS: Is it, yeah?

KO: Yeah.

DS: Okay, so people would come …

KO: And the instrument, the engine, the …

DS: Because they have better instruments.

KO: All the powerful ones – powerful!

DS: People love to hear them?

KO: Yeah.

DS: They come. Okay.

KO: Yeah.

DS: And now …

KO: And you enjoy the environment.
DS: Atmosphere.

KO: The atmosphere is so powerful.

DS: So …

KO: The electronics, the way the place is illuminated in the night, you enjoy it. All the instruments, that were brought to the place, they are powerful ones.

DS: And then, one more factor – could it be that people are drawn to the crusades, also because of the manifestations of the spiritual gifts of Reinhard Bonnke, which is healing, which might be word of knowledge? Is it also one factor?

KO: Yeah.

DS: Is that the case?

KO: Yeah.

DS: Okay. Now, let me go a step further. Do you believe that those – the working in those gifts …

KO: Yes, Sir.

DS: … contributes to the willingness of people to receive Christ?

KO: What’s this?

DS: Contributes to the willingness, the readiness …

KO: Willingness.

DS: … to receive Christ.

KO: I think so.

DS: So, you would say that the spiritual gift, they play an essential role in the evangelistic work of Reinhard Bonnke?

KO: Oh yes.

DS: Yes, okay.

KO: Alright.

[Ein Telefon klingelt.]

DS: Let’s just stop for a moment. There is an interruption.
DS: There was a short interruption. We continue – last set of questions, now. Now, there are great numbers turning to Christ, filling out decision cards, in Reinhard Bonnke’s crusades. Now, did the crusade in Ile-Ife, in 2002, measurably contribute to the church growth in Ile-Ife?

KO: Yeah.

DS: In Ile-Ife.

KO: It did.

DS: About your church – how about your church?

KO: It has only boost our vision because the vision of planting churches, the vision of making disciples …

DS: So, it was rather a revival?

KO: It was a revival.

DS: But not so much a church growth? In your case.

KO: In our case – what I understand by church growth is that both, the parishioners and the leaders in the church are getting new visions, in order to launch ahead, to win more souls and expand. You know, we may not say, or we may not really measure the numerical growth of the church.

DS: I understand. There is a spiritual impact. I agree. But I mean, in terms of numbers – has there been a growth? – I mean.

KO: More churches are springing up.

DS: So it’s – there is church, church planting.

KO: Planting, yeah.

DS: Okay, alright. Alright. Now, in your opinion, those people who came to the crusade, the masses – how many of them have been saved when they came? I mean, they were born-again, church members, and they just came to listen to the message. How many of them, let’s say? Just a guess.

KO: That I know?

KO: Or at …

DS: A guess.

KO: At a …

CO: Say …

KO: … crusade night?

CO: … give a percentage.

DS: Yeah, percentage.

KO: Well, if I would give a percentage …

DS: It’s still an estimate.

KO: … on the lives of people, that are saved.

DS: No, no, who were saved before the …

CO: Before coming to the crusade.

KO: Before coming to the …

DS: Yes, yes, yes.

KO: In Ife land, let me see – because I’m no more a stranger here. I think for that kind of crusade, let’s hope that we have about 30 percent.

DS: 30 percent who were saved before they came?

KO: Yes.

DS: Okay. Now, what were the criteria …

CO: Excluding nominal …

KO: Yeah.

DS: Okay, yeah. What were the criteria. Like when people fill out a decision card, and let’s say a person comes and fills out the decision card. And then, the next day, the same person fills out another one, and the third day another. I mean – I believe – I have heard that has happened. Now, was there anything they have done to get those numbers right? I mean.

KO: Well, I was not – I didn’t have the opportunity to know the right answer to that question.
DS: But I mean, the numbers, the people are counted. The decision cards are counted right there.

KO: Because those people who were in charge of that, were not really under me.

DS: I see.

KO: So, when we were doing the reviewing, I was not really getting that …

DS: … the feedback.

KO: … that, that figure. But all I know is that there was this counselling team, that really worked towards that aspect.

DS: So, they are aware of that problem?

KO: Yeah.

DS: Okay. Now, are there other factors, I mean – of course, many people come to receive Christ.

KO: Yes, Sir.

DS: But I assume, there are people who come for reasons other than receiving Christ [?] to receive a book, whatever.

KO: That one was real.

DS: That’s what I’m saying. So, those people also fill out decision cards, just to get a book? Is it? Yes.

KO: I think we can’t rule that one out.

DS: Yes, I – yes.

KO: Because there was not really much consistency in the filling of the decision cards. Some of them – but actually the intention was that at the Fire Conference, that people will be given out, I mean, given books or Bibles. But it was not so eventually. People deliberately, deliberately registered for. – Some people, and let me say a large number of people, deliberately register for Fire Conference because they thought that books or Bibles will be distributed.

DS: Now, the Fire Conference – is it for the new believers, or is it for the church …

KO: No, no, no church, for church workers.

DS: … church. Okay, you are talking about a different topic now. Yeah, yeah.

KO: Yeah.
DS: Yeah, I’m hearing you. Yes, so some, some – yeah, I’m hearing you. So, that means that it is possible for a person to, I mean, to fill out the card three times.

KO: Yeah.

DS: It is? Okay.

KO: Is possible.

DS: But now, the …

KO: Because the crowd was so big.

DS: You cannot, you cannot …

KO: You can’t. It was not so easy. In fact, we should – I think we had about fifty thousand people.

DS: Getting saved?

KO: Yeah. No! I’m not saying getting saved, but attending all the crusade.

DS: But filling out – attended, okay. Fifty?

KO: Fifty, almost fifty thousand.

DS: Okay. Alright. Okay, then that’s about it. I think I’m almost through.

KO: There is – almost every house was empty during that time.

DS: So now, if you would make a guess, and just from, you know, the Nigerian people now, here in Ile-Ife. A guess – from those people who filled out the decision cards – how many of them just did it for other reasons than receiving Christ? – Just a guess.

KO: Yeah, well, out of ten – let’s hope that some of them just filled it without any cause. I think about 4 or 5 percent.

DS: Four or five people out of ten?

KO: Four or five people out of ten.

DS: So, about a half who just did it for other reasons than receiving Christ.

KO: Yeah.

DS: Okay. Alright. Now, I’m going to close. I’m just – if you have an advice for me personally, or for any evangelist coming to Nigeria. Maybe a final word, an overall advice, a suggestion, something you didn’t hear in this interview.
KO: Daniel, what I would just say is that if you are coming here – if the Lord is leading you to come here – I would pray that you take time to pray for a heart, and also to get some people who appreciate your vision. You sell the vision to them, and possibly take much time to sell the vision to them, so that …

DS: Before even coming?

KO: Before even coming. And another thing is that the leaders in this land are important to be carried along.

DS: Okay.

KO: Yeah.

DS: But that is happening with Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade?

KO: Yeah.

DS: Yes, that’s what I’m saying.

KO: Yes, that really has.

DS: Yes, yes, yes.

KO: And I think another important thing is that there should not be this kind of father Christmas cake. That if you come, you will get this. If you come, you will get this. Let the coming be only to evangelise.

DS: Yes, but, but …

KO: And then eventually, along the way, the Lord is leading you to [?], I mean, give out some things to them. There is nothing bad in that.

DS: So, you would say it is good to give out things, but not to make it a priority?

KO: Not to make it a priority.

DS: Well, great. Alright then, thank you Pastor Opadeji for giving your time, and this was very helpful.

KO: Thank you very much.

DS: Okay.
2.5 Interview mit Mrs. Esther Oyewopo

2.5.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name der Interviewten: Esther Oyewopo
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 13.10.05
Denomination: Baptist
Funktion der Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Member and treasurer of the music committee
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/ Werk: Music minister, pastor’s wife
Bemerkungen: Das Interview wurde zu Hause durchgeführt. Es kam zu einigen Unterbrechungen aufgrund eines kranken Kindes und Besuch.

2.5.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: Anyway, let me see. We are now at Mrs. Esther Oyeno …

CO: Oyewopo.

DS: Oyewopo. Oyewopo. Oyewopo in – from the United English Baptist Church. She is a music minister and the pastor’s wife in the church, and she was a member of the music committee and treasurer of the committee, of the Ile-Ife crusade of Reinhard Bonnke, in December 2002.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Okay. Now, first of all, let me ask you a question. You have answered it already, but just let me ask you for the purpose of it. Which denomination you belong to?

OE: The Baptist.

DS: Baptist, the Baptist denomination. Now, what is your general attitude toward the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke? Is it, is it – general attitude – is it positive, negative, or is it neutral, or somehow in between?
OE: Well, I have a positive attitude towards it. And at the same time, I have my own reservations.

DS: Okay, we can talk about these during the interview. Now, first of all – now, if you think of Reinhard Bonnke, which distinctive characteristic trade of his person comes to your mind? If you just think of Reinhard Bonnke.

OE: He is a simple man.

DS: A simple man.

OE: He preached just a simple gospel.

DS: So, so.

OE: Nothing complicated.

DS: Okay. So, would “humble” be the right term? Humble man? Would humble – “he is a humble man” – would that be a right term to put it?

OE: Yes, he is humble.

DS: Okay. Now, it has not been heard of that Reinhard Bonnke was ever involved in any misappropriation of funds. Now, for your area of ministry, did you experience on his side any misappropriation of funds, or anything like that?

OE: On his side?

DS: Yeah. No.

OE: No.

DS: But probably locally, there were problems here, yes?

OE: Yes.

DS: But those are not to blame on him, are they?

OE: No, no, no, no.

DS: Now, some critics say that Reinhard Bonnke is pronouncing false prophecies. Now, what was your experience, here in Ile-Ife? Some critics, they say he is pronouncing wrong prophecies. But you – what’s your take on that?

OE: No.

DS: No.

OE: I never heard one.
DS: So, you think he is fine. And now, the things he was prophesying over Ile-Ife, are they coming true? Or part of it at least?

OE: Yes, he, he prayed seriously for Ile-Ife, and we have been – since then we have, at least we have peace in this land.

DS: So, that means, some of it is coming true already?

OE: Yes.

DS: Okay. And now, how do you, as a – is no problem, go ahead.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Now, Reinhard Bonnke is a personal friend to president Obasanjo. He is a personal friend. I didn’t know if you know that one. You didn’t know?

OE: I don’t know.

DS: Okay.

OE: I don’t know.

DS: Okay. Now, in your opinion – it is true, he is a friend – but in your opinion, you think that’s a good thing for the gospel? Is it an advantage, or?

OE: Is an advantage.

DS: You think so?

OE: Because that is – I think that could be part of, I mean, how and why he has the opportunity of ministering in rural places, in Nigeria.

DS: It’s an advantage?

OE: Yes. He has been allowed in, several times.

DS: Since Obasanjo came to power, yes. Now, the next question is about the publicity. Now, I know, you were a member of the music committee, but still you may know some things about this. Now, it – there is much publicity done, before Reinhard Bonnke comes, lot of advertisement.

OE: Yes.
DS: Right. Now, those advertisements, did they keep, I mean, did the crusade keep which is advertised? Oder [deutsch] was it more than you expected – the advertisement, and then the crusade? Are you getting me?

OE: Yes, I get it. Yes, I think what was advertised, we got.

DS: Okay. It was not exaggerated?

OE: No, no.

DS: Now, what was the focus of the advertisement?

OE: Many, many miracles took – happened.

DS: Happened, yeah. Now, what was the focus of the advertisement? Was it on miracles, on salvation, on Reinhard Bonnke? What was the focus of the – or anything else.

OE: Well, what do they call them here? Advertising agents, here they tend to look for things, you know, that is part of what they do. They look for things that are catchy, that will trace, that will motivate them to come. So, and those were the things they were mentioning most.

DS: And what were they mentioning?

OE: Salvation was part of it. Oh, that was lots …

DS: The main?

OE: … emphasized.

DS: Ach so. [deutsch]

OE: The healings, the miracles, are cripples walking. The blind see. The deaf hear. All those things.

DS: So, it was strong on miracles, the advertisement?

OE: Any revival meetings, say – they will do like that. If they are trying to advertise something through the media, they will have – they will mention the power.

DS: Now, let me ask you a question. Now, the advertisement is done by the local churches, right? Is not done by Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry, is it? I mean, the design or the slogans, or I mean – you know what I mean? The topics – if you know – are the topics provided by Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry?

OE: For case of the messages?

DS: No, no, of the advertisement. Like, the …

OE: No, he would – I don’t think so.
DS: Yes. Do you believe it’s done locally? Yes.

OE: Yes. I think he had men with whom he worked.

DS: And they did it here.

OE: He was not on ground here …

DS: Okay, that’s what I’m saying. Yes, thank you.

OE: … but he sent his agents.

DS: Now, after the crusade was over, and you – maybe you have seen some reports, or heard some reports. Maybe there was something in the newspaper, or maybe from a ministry. Those reports, did they exaggerate, or were they okay? The reports – were they exaggerating, or were they just the way it was?

OE: The reports that I heard verbally, was about the bad side of it, about the finance, that people were – people tried to embezzle, or something – ministers.

DS: Ministers. But that was the local churches here – Ministers here?

OE: Yes.

DS: Okay, okay.

OE: Yes. And then they were even trying to fight.

DS: Over money matters.

OE: Yes, and even the books, the fire books.

DS: Yes. I know those. Okay.

OE: And Bibles.

DS: But, I mean now, like in newspapers, or if you have read anything, was …

OE: I don’t think I read anything.

DS: Okay, alright. Let’s move on then. That was the first part, talking about Reinhard Bonnke, more or less. Now, I move on to talking about the way the crusade is conducted. This is the second part now. And let me ask you the first question. Now, do you believe that the content of Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching, the content of it, is one of the reasons to attract the masses of the people and also to – for people to turn to Christ?

OE: The content of his message?
DS: Yes, the content, what he is preaching. Is that the one, which is – what is drawing people to his crusade, or is it part of it?

OE: Well, part of what draws people to his crusade is his personality.

DS: Okay, personality.

OE: He has made – at least his personality has been registered here in Nigeria, and people already know of Reinhard Bonnke. I got to know him first at Ibadan. He was brought down by late Bishop Idahosa.

DS: Yes, I know, I know …

OE: That was his first time of coming. That day his voice broke.

DS: Okay, so…

OE: That was my, that was my first time of …

DS: [?] So, so you think it’s …

[Unterbrechung]

OE: So, maybe you switch off.

DS: Yes, yes, is fine.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: We just talked about the preaching and the content, and that the preaching – and my question was – the preaching content, did it also, you think – does it, did it also draw the masses to come, the people to come? The content of his preaching, or let me ask …

OE: Well …

DS: … let me ask …

OE: Because we have different kind – different people that came. Some did not really come to hear.

DS: The message?

OE: They want to see what will happen. They say the lame will walk; the blind will see; and things like that. So, they came to see. Some, they just came round. Some had problems that they wanted God to touch. So, like Jesus told the disciples, “These people, they are not looking for me because of the word that I speak …
DS: But, yeah.

OE: … but because of what – the food, that I give them.” So, I know many, many.

DS: So, there are many aspects, many reasons, why people would come – not just to hear the message.

OE: Yeah, because we have different kinds of people. We have people who really came for the word …

DS: Word, yes, yes, yes …

OE: … that are really thirsty, but those group of people may not be many.

DS: Now, the topical focus of Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching, was it on what? Was it on the blood of Jesus? Was it on salvation? On …

OE: Salvation!

DS: Salvation was the main.

OE: Every message have salvation …

DS: Okay. Now, to which extend can you say that he adapted his message to the culture of Ile-Ife here, of Nigeria? Is it an adapted message? Did he really – you know what I mean?

OE: Yes, culturalisation.

DS: So, has he?

OE: Yes, some stories, he used to back up his messages, for his messages, for illustration.

DS: And they, they are local stories?

OE: Yes.

DS: Or, they were understood by local people?

OE: Yes, local stories. Local stories, that one could understand.

DS: And this adaptation is – you think is positive? Is not going too far, is it?

OE: No, is not going too far.

DS: So, the gospel is still the clear gospel.

OE: Yes.

DS: … but he just uses some aspects to, to …
OE: … to illustrate.

DS: Okay, I’m hearing you. Okay. Some people say that Reinhard Bonnke is preaching more about miracles than about Calvary. What is your take on that one?

OE: I have never heard that criticism. But as far as I know, he was not preaching miracles, it …

DS: Okay, so it was salvation.

OE: … but miracles came …

DS: Of course. Yeah, yeah …

OE: … along the way. As people heard the word, God revealed himself. So, he would – if he is lifted, will draw men – and because he was, God was always lifted in, at every meeting.

DS: So, the miracles happened.

OE: He did several of those miracles.

DS: That’s the next topic, about the miracles. Good, we are talking about it. Now, I’m not talking of Reinhard Bonnke now. I’m talking about the people of Ile-Ife. Now, do the people of Ile-Ife – did they see Reinhard Bonnke as the healer? I'm not …

OE: You mean?

DS: Did the people of Ile-Ife, the masses which came, see him as the healer? I’m not saying, he is claiming it – I’m just saying, the people.

OE: Okay, as a healer.

DS: Did people say that he is the one who heals?

OE: Well, he made them to know that he was not the one healing, and was doing anything they see happen.

DS: Now, how …

OE: … miraculously, but God.

DS: How did he do that?

OE: But he was just an agent. He spoke.

DS: He said that it, okay …

OE: He was always saying it.
DS: So, he was giving all the glory back to God?

OE: Yes.

DS: Okay. But the people, you think, they still thought that he might be the healer – the people. I mean, he was saying, he is not the one.

OE: Well, ignorant ones may still think so. They may still think so.

DS: Now, might that be one reason, why people still coming, come? Because they think he is the healer? I mean.

OE: Yeah. Maybe, some people who will not ordinarily go to the church.

DS: The church? Some people, unbelievers.

OE: They think, maybe this man, he may have a special power that can do, so they came.

DS: So, you wouldn’t say that the healings took away the glory from God, because Reinhard Bonnke gave it back to God, right?

OE: Yeah.

DS: Okay.

OE: He never shared it. In fact, if he had done it anywhere, the ministry would have crumbled. But he always give the glory to God.

DS: Now, some critics, they say – they suggest that the healings performed by Reinhard Bonnke, are either not lasting or not genuine. What is your take on that one, thinking about Ile-Ife?

OE: People say anything. But one thing I know, according to the scripture, is that if an evil spirit is cast out of a person, and that person does not allow the word of God to soak into his skin, evil spirit will come …

DS: … back.

OE: … back and in fact, more than what was cast out.

DS: But, but …

OE: And the end of that person will be worse.

DS: But the healings, to begin with, they were genuine, you believe?

OE: Yes.
DS: Yes.

OE: Genuine, genuine.

DS: So, it is the responsibility of the person healed to stay healed. Is that what you are saying?

OE: There is a possibility for a …

DS: There is a …

OE: … person to remain healed, and there is the possibility for a person healed, not to have it lasting.

DS: Even though the healing originally was genuine?

OE: Yes.

DS: But, yeah.

OE: Yes, yes.

DS: Yes, yes. Thank you. Very good. And then, the next set of questions here. Now, in your opinion, did Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade in Ile-Ife, did it directly or even indirectly solve social problems in Ile-Ife – directly or indirectly? Is there social improvement, like for example, crime down, or economy booming – any of those things?

OE: Well, somehow, somehow I feel so. At that time, in fact, it was the year we came into this place, and this place was still – we still saw, very clearly, the effects of the wars that have been fought in this place. And so, the town was virtually empty somehow. People were not many, shops were …

DS: When was that? Which year was that?


OE: Yes.

DS: So, it was the same year he came?

OE: Yes, he came in, in April.

DS: The crusade was in December?

OE: And it was in December.

DS: Okay.
OE: So, I joined the committee to work. And shops, you know, many shops now have sprung up. Many people who have left the city, are now back.

[Im Hintergrund wird in lokaler Sprache gesprochen. OE antwortet.]

DS: Did Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade also cause that, that the people came back, and – or did it just happen?

OE: Well, I know he prayed, and things don’t just happen. I know things don’t just happen. And I know, he prayed against, you know, strongholds and powers, principalities and powers, holding this place down.

DS: So, it means his prayer contributed to the social improvement of Ile-Ife?

OE: Yes.

DS: Can you say that?

OE: Yes.

DS: Okay.

OE: I can say that.

DS: Then – now, Reinhard Bonnke is saying that the cause of the problems in Africa, in Nigeria, really is Satan.

OE: The cause of?

DS: The problems – of the social problems, here in Africa, you know, poverty and all kinds of things …

OE: Okay.

DS: … is Satan. Now, my question would be, how do you feel about it? Is it helpful to say that, or is it counterproductive to say that?

OE: Well, what – one thing I know is, is not only caused by Satan. In fact, a lot is caused by us. For instance, many people bring to the world children. They brought to the world children, but they don’t really teach them the way of the Lord. They themselves don’t even know the way of the Lord, and many so called Christians, too. The poverty here made people now to shift their attention from God. They tend to try to solve the problem by themselves. Like for instance, in Lagos, they wake up as early – they leave the house as early as, say five, so that they get to work early. Children will be taken to day-care, and things like that, and it’s – before they come back is night. And things like that don’t help …

DS: Yes.
OE. … the nation. And even here, that is not Lagos, you will still see how people, you know, from one into another …

DS: So, so.

OE: … so busy. Children now go from one lesson to another. Even church meetings, you don’t see young ones again …

DS: They are busy.

OE: … as many as it used to be in our own time, when we were schooling. I used to tell my children. So, is part of it.

DS: So, you think, the people are also involved? They are also causing the problems, not just the devil, yes?

OE: Yes.

DS: So, so.

OE: Many parents will see children go and stay. They will not – they say it’s part of civilisation, and they just close their eyes to it. We can likely say now …

DS: So, would you say it would be better to also mention that its not only Satan, that it’s also the people?

OE: Yes.

DS: And …

OE: Satan has his own blame and the people, too.

DS: But Reinhard Bonnke mentioning it, is that helping the country, or you think not? If Reinhard Bonnke is saying that the cause is Satan, is that helping the country? Or should he rather say, “It is you people. You have to change.” Would that be help – more helpful?

OE: Yes, because if we don’t – the Bible says, “Resist the devil and he will flee.” If you don’t allow the devil, he wouldn’t have a hold on you. So, if they are.

DS: Now, if you can remember, in – during those days of the crusade, or before the crusade – was, was still even – was the ministry of Reinhard involved here in Ile-Ife, socially? I mean, like providing humanitarian aid, providing food, or money support, to – for social projects. I’m not saying for the crusade. Is not?

OE: I don’t think so. I don’t think he did.

DS: So, is purely the gospel.

OE: Yes, yes.
DS: But my question would be, if Reinhard Bonnke and his ministry would start doing that?

OE: It’s only, it’s only, I don’t know whether he contributed. He did the Mokoro Road, something. One – they bought it.

CO: Okay.

OE: I don’t know, maybe he gave the money, with which they did that.

[CO ist im Hintergrund zu hören.]

DS: I don’t know.

OE: That is a new side, and is.

CO: Going to the crusade ground?

OE: [Antwort in lokaler Sprache] Not, the third roads, the one that …

CO: Okay, he made the whole land. Yes.

DS: That's at the …

CO: He contributed a lot.

DS: Yeah.

[CO im Hintergrund zu hören.]

OE: I know he [?].

DS: But that was for the crusade to – the road to the crusade ground, you say.

CO: Not only road to the crusade.

OE: The whole …

CO: The whole …

OE: … crusade ground.

CO: … crusade ground.

DS: Okay.

OE: And some parts, some roads to that place because …

[CO im Hintergrund zu hören.]
OE: … far into the bush.

DS: Yes.

OE: Thick forest.

DS: And …

CO: Even, if you can’t enter.

DS: Yes, still. Yes.

CO: We stay outside it, and looking at it.

DS: Now, in your opinion, if a minister comes in, an evangelist, and preaches the gospel, but also provides humanitarian aid, you know, helping people – would that make the gospel more effective? Would more people come and get saved, or not? What is your take on that?

OE: Well, it is obvious that they really need it because our people, anything that comes free, they rush for it, whether they need it or not, and …

DS: So, that will just help to draw the crowd?

OE: Yes, some will just come for the gifts. Then they go back. They say, “He has a lot. His cup is overflowing, is running over, and lets go and help him empty it.”

DS: Okay, when Reinhard Bonnke came to Ile-Ife, at which point did the church – was the church involved? I mean, did Reinhard Bonnke – was he invited, or did he came [korr. „come“] on his own? Did he come on his own? You know what I’m trying to ask? Did the churches of Ile-Ife invite him?

OE: No, not the churches of Ife.

DS: So, he came himself.

OE: I think, but I don’t know. When we were preparing, in one of the meetings we had, one of his agents, one eastern man – I have forgotten his name now – he came to say that …

[Der anwesende Sohn versucht den Namen zu nennen. OE fragt nach.]

OE: He came to a place. So, some people from there, some maybe chief things people were asking, “Won’t he come also?” Okay, when they came to Ilesa, now decided to ask, “Well, we also like him to come to our place.” – and things like that. So I don’t, I think …

DS: They don’t know exactly, the [?]

OE: … but I’m not very sure. But I think he said something about that.
DS: Now, once he came.

OE: And then he prayed about it, and I think he had a “go ahead” to come.

DS: And once he came and involved the churches, were the churches allowed to put their input, I mean, to organise the way they wanted it? To put the music they wanted? To put the counsellors they wanted? Was it given to the local churches? Or was all centralized, organised from above?

OE: Some was given to us. For instance, they say – they wanted a choir of about two hundred or two thousand capacity, or something. Very large.

DS: Yes.

OE: Or even more.

DS: But the music, you were free to chose, right? The music and …

OE: We – yes, we screened some people. Especially, the artists that came to sing, we screened them, and then those that sung in the choir, too. But that one, they were so many.

DS: Yes.

OE: They were so many, and anybody would listen to. When we had the singing practical, we tried to train, and if you can cope – and some left.

DS: Okay. Now, how do you think did this crusade fit in the ongoing church work, here in Ile-Ife? I mean, in the ongoing evangelistic efforts …


DS: … Was it common to hold a crusade here, or was it a news thing?

OE: Yeah.

DS: Once he came.

OE: They had the crusades in this town.

DS: Before?

OE: Yeah, and the churches do have crusades, but not as large, and not as bogus …

DS: Yes.

OE: … is a way to put it …

DS: But he was.
OE: … as Reinhard Bonnke’s.

DS: Sorry, but he was fitting in well, wasn’t he? I mean, the way it came – the way it was done was fine for the, for Ile-Ife, wasn’t it?

OE: Yes, yes, of course. Of course.

DS: Now, did you have the impression, and in any of your area of responsibility, that the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke did impose something on you, or that it was – the decision were made by him or by the ministry, and not by you? You know what I mean?

OE: No.

DS: So it was your local, your own …

OE: Yeah, our own will.

DS: You had lot of freedom to do your own thing?

OE: Yes.

DS: Okay.

OE: Like the uniform, we discussed it. And we suggested that at least it will be good for us to have one, and one or two. And people contributed to it.

DS: I see.

OE: And we did.

DS: So it was …

CO: [?].

OE: Yes, we contributed. We contributed. I don’t know whether he gave, because I heard that maybe in his previous meetings, he used to give the money for the uniforms, or something. Maybe they abused it, or something; he know decided …

DS: Okay, not to…

OE: … to withdraw that.

DS: Now, let me ask you concerning the Fire Conferences. The Fire Conference, from what I learned is to equip the church workers – the Fire Conference.

OE: Yes.

DS: So, how do you feel? Was it useful? Did it have an impact on the church workers? And could that impact be felt in the churches – in your church for example?
OE: Well, I didn’t know, whoever belongs to that group. I don’t know, but one thing I know is, it was sort of – it was a form of revival, for the people that belong to that group. At least, they were together many times, prayed together, and like that.

DS: And can you see a long term effect of that, or was it rather a short term effect? Are there still people preaching out there who have been …

OE: Still meeting

DS: … who have been taught in that meeting, or?

OE: Well, I will not be able to say …

DS: Okay, that’s alright.

OE: … anything about that.

DS: Okay. Alright then, then lets move on to the last section. I will be speaking now about the people who came, the participants, I mean, the masses of people. And just give me your ideas, your impressions. Now, in Nigeria there are so many preachers here, evangelists – I mean, all over Nigeria. And they also preach a gospel of fire. Now, why is it that people prefer to go to Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade? What is the difference? Why are the people saying, “I’m going to this crusade. I’m not going to the crusade of this Ibo man?”

OE: I think. Well, what Jesus said is that a prophet is not honourable …

DS: Okay, in Ife.

OE: … in his own, right.

DS: Now, could it be that people are also coming because he is a white man?

OE: Yes, that could be part of it.

DS: Alright. Okay. Now, in your opinion – I mean, Reinhard Bonnke, he has a very dramatic style of preaching, a very unique style. And do you believe that his performance on the platform, you know, the way he preaches, does draw the crowd to come and listen to him? Is that part of it?

OE: I don’t think. I don’t think. I think that is done by the Holy Spirit. The power of God draws the people.

DS: And …

OE: I know he is a man of prayers. He has a lot of people praying.

DS: Praying?
OE: Mm.

DS: And …

OE: Apart from the work done here on ground, they are also working there. So, I know those prayers, put together, worked things out.

DS: It drew the crowd, yeah. Now, you have been listening to his preaching. You find it entertaining? I mean the preaching, you like it?

OE: Yes.

DS: Yes. So, could it be that people come, which is not necessary bad …

OE: For, really, I said he is a simple man; even his ministrations were simple.

DS: Okay, and people, they like it.

OE: Simple. In fact, the first day I was thinking in me, I said “oh, so.” I was coming with a larger, with a mind of hearing words …

DS: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

OE: … message maybe that I’ve never heard before. Still the simple gospel, it’s the same Bible that we read, and simple word of God.

DS: But do you believe people like that here? They enjoy that here – that kind of preaching?

OE: Yes.

DS: So, could it be that people come …

OE: Part of, part of his gestures.

DS: Gestures, the right gestures.

OE: “Eyi!”

[OE versucht den Laut nachzumachen, den Reinhard Bonnke während der Großevangelisation wiederholt macht.]

CO: “Eyi!”

[CO versucht den Laut nachzumachen, den Reinhard Bonnke während der Großevangelisation wiederholt macht.]

OE: People are still doing it. Well, I’ve – I will love that [?]

DS: Okay, okay.
OE: Some, even in churches if you are there.

DS: Like you said …

CO: People they call it “Eyi! Eyi!”

DS: [?]

OE: Ile-Ife! – The way he called Ife.

DS: So, they liked that one. So, I think that might be something that people enjoy and just come to [?]

OE: Yes, he is – he was following the people in trying to speak, at least speak the language. [Wiederholung der von Bonnke gesprochenen Worte in lokaler Sprache] In fact, he …

DS: Okay, he tried?

OE: … he used the word. Yes, he used to try. They told him some words.

DS: Now, now …

OE: That tickled the people. It made them to be more interested.

DS: Now, now there is a good music programme, and you said you were part of the committee.

OE: Committee.

DS: And now, do you think that people are also drawn by the music, the performance of the music, and the choir, and maybe other singers?

OE: What I know, that could be part of it because some of the artists are already known artists, that people loved.

DS: Local artists?

OE: Local artists, yes and …

DS: Nigerians?

OE: … around. Yes, people enjoyed the music.

DS: So, that draws the people. Now, we are almost through. Some more questions – now, do you believe that Reinhard Bonnke – because he is working in this gifts of the Holy Spirit, for example healing, or word of knowledge, or any other gift – do you believe that, that is also attracting the people? You know? His …
OE: That could be part of it.

DS: Okay, that is …

OE: Could be.

DS: I'm looking for pieces.

OE: Could be.

DS: Yes, is fine, is fine.

OE: Could be, it could be.

DS: Okay, and now let me go a step further. Do you believe that his using of the spiritual gifts like healing, or word of knowledge, or any other gift, is also helping people to turn to Christ? Do you think so?

OE: The gifts are suppose to make the church grow. So, when they are put into use, so I think …

DS: Okay …

OE: … part of it.

DS: … now, concerning now the outcome – now, so many people have filled out those decision cards at the crusade. And can you say that the church, churches in Ile-Ife have experienced church growth in numbers because of that crusade?

OE: That I may not be able to say because I did not see that here, in our own church.

DS: So, lets speak about your church. So, you would say your church did not have any church growth, out of that Ile-Ife crusade?

OE: Yes, because – one, our church is English speaking. And in this part of the city, we are close to the students. So, we have students coming and leaving.

DS: But, so it didn’t really result in church growth?

OE: At that time – the students were not around at that time.

DS: Okay. Now, in your opinion – just your opinion, just give me a guess – of those people who came to the crusade, how many of them have already been born-again Christians, church members, before they came to the crusade? Give me a percentage, just a guess. Because I know, before Reinhard Bonnke started to preach, they were all shouting “Hallelujah” …

OE: Yes.

DS: … the whole crowd. So, many of them must have been Christians already.
OE: Many of them …

DS: So, so …

OE: … might have, have been church people, church man, church women. Let’s put it that way.

DS: Yes.

OE: Because many times you see people [?] these fights on moneys, scrambling for Bibles, and fight for things. If people are really born-again, will they …

DS: No.

OE: … will they go into things like that?

DS: No.

OE: Fight on another person’s money, money that is given for evangelism, for the work God? They should – is not their money.

DS: Now.

OE: So, that’s why I say many have been church people, church goers.

DS: So, if you estimate, was it half of it, one third? Just give me a guess. You don’t have to be specific. If you can. What do you think? If you have seen the crowd, how it behaved, you know?

OE: The crowd? I would say 60 percent.

DS: Were believers?

OE: Or even more than.

DS: Than 60 percent. Okay.

OE: Were church people. That is just the church people …

DS: Church people.

OE: … because …

DS: You don’t know. You never know, yes.

OE: … maybe not believers.
DS: Okay, I’m hearing you. Yes. Now, do you know what were the criteria of those counting the decision cards? I mean, for example, like if somebody comes today and fills out a decision card, could …

OE: He comes tomorrow.

DS: … it be possible that he comes tomorrow and fills a second one?

OE: Yes, yes, some did that.

DS: And then, the next day a third one.

OE: Some did that.

DS: Some did that.

OE: Some did that.

DS: Now, is there any, anything they have been doing to prevent that?

OE: They …

DS: Are you aware of it?

OE: … they tried to educate them that if they came out in – on any of the meeting days before, they needed not to come out again.

DS: Okay, but …

OE: But that may not stop some people, like children. They were always coming. At least they want to be get closer to the white man.

DS: Okay, that is my next question. Now, there are people who are coming to fill out a decision card, for reasons other than receiving Christ. For example, to receive a book, to come close to the white man. Now, name some more.

OE: To receive his own prayer, to have his hands laid on them.

DS: Okay. So, and those people still fill out a decision card, don’t they?

OE: Yes.

DS: Okay. So, that means, they have not come for salvation, but they …

OE: That is why I said, some people …

DS: Some.

OE: … wouldn’t have come for salvation. And is not a surprise because even Jesus said it.
DS: And now, could you give me a guess. How many of those people who have come, who come at one night, are just coming for reasons other than salvation? Just give me a guess, if you can. If not, is okay. I’m just asking.

OE: Okay.

DS: Out of ten, how many would come?

OE: I would say about half would come for other things, apart from salvation.

DS: From salvation – and still there are others. I mean, those same people, they might come two or three times, right?

OE: Yes.

DS: That’s what I’m saying, yeah. Okay. That was good. Is there anything else you want to add? Maybe some things we didn’t touch in this – I’m ready so far. I’m done. But is there anything you want to just add to this discussion, to this interview? Some things you have in your heart, you want to add about the crusade in Ile-Ife, in 2002?

OE: I just say, we really need prayers, and we really need God’s help to be faithful in the little he committed to our hands. Because men of God, as I said, we don’t know the kind of salvation some people claim to have. And maybe that will be responsible for why some people behaved the way they behaved.

DS: So, you would say it’s – it would be important to really follow up.

OE: The church, the church. No, I’m saying that the church, there is a mix-up in the church, that’s – it’s now becoming difficult to really, to really know who are genuinely Christians.

DS: And who – yes.

OE: Because all of us speak the church language. We say “Hallelujah,” “Praise the Lord”. All of us know songs. We sing choruses, Christian songs; we pray. People, some people when they pray, you feel this is a …

DS: A Christian.

OE: … real children of God. But when it comes to character, behaving, reacting to situations and issues, then you see the true persons, yes, who those people are.

DS: Is there any personal note you have? Like, you want to give me an advice. If I want to minister in Nigeria sometime – any personal advice you want to give me. We’ve spoken so much now. Just one short sentence for a German minister, for a European minister to come to Nigeria, to minister. What would you say? What should we do? What could we learn from Reinhard Bonnke? Or what could we do better than he did? What should – you know? What would you advise [?]?
OE: Another area that I want to look at is the – ministering to the needs to the people, you know. So shall it call somehow.

DS: So, you mean which needs, like?

OE: Like people who are in the hospital, some of them, in fact, many of them, they cannot pay. They cannot pay for the treatment they need. Many people will have to withdraw their patients home because they can no longer pay …

DS: Pay.

OE: … the fee.

DS: Yes.

OE: And the reason for that person’s death, so.

DS: Now, would it be a possibility to bring those people to the crusade? Would that help?

OE: Even if they will not be able to come to the crusade, they will be minister[ed] to. And such – at that they have a dear need, and is a crucial time of their life that they can really decide for Christ.

DS: So, you would expect the minister, or maybe some other ministers, during that time to also minister in hospitals?

OE: Yes.

DS: For example.

OE: Yes, [?].

DS: Okay, it’s a good advice. Okay, sister Oyewopo.

OE: Yes.

DS: Is it right? Or Esther Oyewopo?

OE: Oyewopo!

DS: Oyewopo! Oyewopo! Thank you so much for your time …

OE: Thank you.

DS: … and may God bless you.

OE: Amen, and you too.

DS: Thank you.
OE: You are welcome.
2.6 Interview mit Rev. Ayo Banmosun

2.6.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: Ayo Banmosun
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 14.10.05
Denomination: Cherubim and Seraphim Church
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Chairman of the advisory board
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/ Werk: General overseer

Bemerkungen:

2.6.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: So, we are here at Pastor Banmo, Banmosun.

Dr. Aluko: Venerable …

VB: Venerable Ayo Banmosun.

DS: Venerable Ayo Banmosun. Okay. And he is the pastor of the C and S church in Ile-Ife. Now, I will be asking questions about Reinhard Bonnke. There will be three parts. The first part will be about Reinhard Bonnke as a person. Then, the second part will be about the crusade in Ile-Ife, and the third part will be about the people that came to the crusade. And all the questions will be about the Ile-Ife crusade, in 2002. Alright, thank you. Now, very – the first question – which denomination do you belong to?

VB: I belong to the C and S church.

DS: C and S church. And what is your general attitude toward the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke? Is it positive, neutral, or negative?

VB: Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry in Nigeria, in general, is a successful ministry. Why do I say is a successful ministry? Because as a not Nigerian, from far, far Germany, he came to Nigeria, and still with very loud ovation and the congregation. He has got not church in Nigeria, no representative in Nigeria. But when we talk of evangelist, I have never seen any evangelist that pull crowd like Reinhard Bonnke.
DS: Okay, thank you. Now, if you think of Reinhard Bonnke, of if his character, what is the first things, thing that comes to your mind? What kind of character does he have?

VB: Reinhard Bonnke – as the Lord has made him very powerful, but still he is a low headed somebody.

DS: Okay, so he is humble.

VB: I can see in him that low headed. One – the day we welcomed him at the toll gate, he have to come down, walk with us, hug everybody. And on getting to his imperial majesty, imperial majesty intent to give him a lunch, a powerful lunch. And imperial majesty would like him alone, and want Rev. Darko to come in with him, and dine with him. But Reinhard Bonnke refused that. I will want my chairman, the chairman of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, the chairman of CAN, clergymen to come in …

DS: Yes.

VB: … with him.

DS: Okay, okay.

VB: During the crusade again, I cannot say another thing. Reinhard Bonnke asked people, “Please, touch my head.” Most of our larger people will never allow that, but to him, he – we can see with him, that he copied Jesus Christ.

DS: Now, we have never heard that Reinhard Bonnke was involved in misappropriating funds – never heard of it. Now, the crusade in Ile-Ife – have you experienced something like that?

VB: During the crusade – one, the venue of the crusade – we have controversy. The idol worshipper says, we should not hold that revival there. It was a talk of war between the Christian community and the – these idol worshippers. But at last, his imperial majesty …

Dr. Aluko: … overruled.

VB: … come in, and after a lot of dialogue, dialogue that lead to – what will I say – dethroning the head of that …

Dr. Aluko: … idol group.

VB: … idol group. I mean, the Obalale of Ife, he was dethroned because of that crusade.

DS: But how you experienced the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke? There was no misappropriation of fund, was there?

[Dr. Aluko erklärt etwas in lokaler Sprache.]

VB: Now, to Reinhard Bonnke – Reinhard Bonnke is ministering in town, and we can see naturally that he didn’t involve himself in any financial mess.
DS: That’s what I’m saying, yes. So …

VB: But because I am telling you the fact, what really happened at that time. Reinhard Bonnke, permanently he stay with his ministry, the ministry of Jesus Christ – telling the world what Jesus Christ want. And during the crusade, miracle, wonders, sings are backing the crusade every day. But there are some administrative lapses within his Nigerian representative.

DS: Okay, local people?

VB: Yes.

DS: Yes, I’m hearing you.

VB: His administrative staff. Now, this administrative staff, I will say probably it is the land that pollute them, or – because we even informed Reinhard Bonnke himself that this your people; they are not doing fine. And he said, “I am going to heaven. They know where they are going.” My major problem is – the crusade should take place, and I am very happy; the crusade is on.

DS: Amen.

VB: And is very alright.

DS: Now, let’s move one. Some critics, they say Reinhard Bonnke is just pronouncing false prophecies. What was your experience in Ile-Ife?

VB: Those who say that – there are some language in the Catholic world – religious heresy. And they are committing sin, to say that Reinhard Bonnke is professing a false prophecy. No, Reinhard Bonnke, to us in Ile-Ife, is professing a true prophecy of Jesus Christ.

DS: Okay. Now, are the prophecies coming true?

VB: Yes.

DS: Okay.

VB: Yes.

DS: Now, how do you, as a Nigeria citizen and a pastor of a church – how do you evaluate Reinhard Bonnke’s personal friendship to president Obasanjo? Is it positive? Is it helping the gospel, or is it counterproductive?

VB: President Obasanjo …

[DS hustet.]

VB: Sorry.
DS: Is okay.

VB: … is a Christian. And there is no Christian who will not admire the work of God in the life of Reinhard Bonnke.

DS: So, you think it’s positive?

VB: Yes, is positive.

DS: Okay, now …

VB: They said now, to our imperial majesty here, if Reinhard Bonnke is very close – if Germany is not too far, Reinhard Bonnke would have been a close friend of his imperial majesty, royal majesty.

DS: Yes. Okay. Now, before the crusade, there was lot of publicity being done, through the crusades. Now, what would you say? What you’ve seen in the publicity and the advertisement, did it come true in the crusade, or was it even beyond the expectation?

VB: It’s beyond expectation. Because when we were planning for the crusade, our – as the chairman of the advisory board will have it in mind that – well, we have about twelve hundred thousand. But there was not a day that the congregation is below one million. It’s always above one million, every day.

DS: Okay, that’s interesting because the information I have, was giving me much lower numbers. I have like – let me check. I had – the first day, Wednesday it was 122,000 only. This is numbers that …

VB: I cannot understand that.

DS: This is the numbers, that the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke is giving. The ministry of Reinhard Bonnke is giving these numbers. And they said, the first day there was 122,000 attendance.

VB: That’s a lie. That is, that is …

DS: But this is the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke, saying this.

VB: Is a lie.

Dr. Aluko: You have, you need to go. We can visit the site.

VB: Is a lie.

Dr. Aluko: Since we brought the car, we will go to the site.

DS: That's right. No …

Dr. Aluko: And when you see the site, and will see the number of people that can stand.
VB: People were standing.

DS: Please, listen – I hear you. I’m just saying, this is a report from Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry – is not my numbers.

VB: Probably …

DS: This is the report of Reinhard Bonnke’s ministries, and the report says, the attendance on Wednesday was 122,000. The total, the total of all days was 1,562,000.

VB: There was not a day that the number is below one million.

DS: Okay.

VB: Now …

Dr. Aluko: A lot of people will be coming from outside Ile-Ife.

VB: … all over the country, people who are coming. Now, why the crusade of Ife is very significant, is that the whole world know Ile-Ife as the headquarters of the idol worshipper. As such, they have been surprised that a crusade would be coming up in Ile-Ife. I will go there to watch; I will go. White men, from other African countries, they've been trooping.

DS: Yes, yes, yes, now …

VB: All the churches were filled up. All Christian schools were filled up for – to put their head in the evening.

DS: Okay. Now …

VB: [Ausspruch in lokaler Sprache]

DS: … the advertisement of the ministry. What was it focussing on, the advertisement? Was it on healing? Was it on salvation? Was it on Reinhard Bonnke? What was the focus of the advertisement?

VB: Salvation, healing.

DS: Okay, salvation and healing. Okay. Now, after the crusade was over – I have been interviewing people. I’ve been getting different numbers. Some just say fifty thousand. You say up to a million?

VB: I’m an insider.

DS: Yeah, that’s what I’m saying. Yes.

VB: And I have genuine report, on the crusade of Reinhard Bonnke.
DS: I’m talking about insiders, insiders. And Reinhard Bonnke, Christ for all Nations ministries says in the first day, 122,000. So, what I’m trying to say is, you see differences. So, my question is, after the crusade was over, in the reports you – do you believe the reports were correct? Or were there exaggerations? Or did people say less than there was? What is your opinion?

VB: After the crusade, people were still expecting Reinhard Bonnke to come back to Nigeria, to come back to Ile-Ife. Right! Because after the crusade, many Muslim families – Muslim families now declare for Jesus Christ because of what happened to – in their family.

DS: But you, would you say the media, for example, did they exaggerated the numbers or vice versa?

VB: The media, they don’t exaggerate.

DS: Okay, so it was true what they said?

VB: It was a true, real statement.

DS: Okay, let’s move to the second part. Now, we’ll be talking about the crusade itself, how it took place. I’m sorry for my voice. Yes. Now, do you believe that the content of Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching, the content, was one reason to draw the masses of people? You know what I mean? Was it one reason to draw the masses, the masses?

VB: What he is trying to do, is to draw the masses to Jesus Christ.

DS: Yes, I know.

VB: And Jesus Christ alone.

DS: I understand.

VB: Not to himself.

DS: I understand.

VB: Because he always declare that, “I have got no church here, nor in Germany.”

DS: Yes, yes. Now, what was the focus of his preaching? Let’s start this way. What was the focus? What was he preaching on?

VB: The preaching was like that of apostle Paul in the Bible, drawing everybody to Jesus Christ alone, and not to himself.

DS: Yes, I – yes. Now, do you believe that people came to the crusade, just to hear what he was preaching? Was that one of the reasons, why they came?

VB: They came to hear the word of salvation.
DS: Alright.

VB: Sorry for the disruption.

DS: No problem. So, do you believe that people came to just hear what he had to say, or what were the reasons?

VB: People came to that crusade, one – to hear the word of salvation. Let me tell you; let me bring out a word from his words. Reinhard Bonnke make us to realise that human being are nothing, except Jesus come into your life. It is then, you become something. That is where, as we’re here in millions – we’re all zero, zero, zero, zero, zero, and we mean nothing. But when that one is added – that one is Jesus Christ – and when is added, it become one million, one thousand, ten, and so on and so forth. Two! People came for healing. That is the true area he focused.

DS: So, they came for healing and the other one was?

VB: Salvation.

DS: Healing and salvation, okay. And now, you’ve heard Reinhard Bonnke preaching. Do you believe that he has adapted his gospel to the African culture? I mean, is he speaking to people?

VB: Because he too, learned English language, it is very easy for us to understand him. When some other Europeans came, many have difficulty now to understand.

DS: But I mean …

VB: But when he spoke [korr. „speaks”], you understand him.

DS: I mean the message content now, the things he was speaking about.

VB: He cannot illustrate with the African mentality. He illustrates in his own way, and quite understandable.

DS: So, he has adapted to – some way, you would say? He has adapted, or just is trying to adapt.

VB: What we really recognize in him is that the pronunciation of words is very clear to us. He didn’t analyse in the African way.

DS: Okay. Is not the African way?

VB: Yes. Let me use this thing to make myself clearer [?] in his own book. An African would like to read, read, read, read, read. But other writers, they don’t write in the African way.

DS: Yes.
VB: The same thing happened to Reinhard Bonnke, but the power of God in him makes everybody to understand.

DS: Now, do you believe that also the people come because they’ve heard of Reinhard Bonnke before? Do people come to the crusade because they’ve heard previously of Reinhard Bonnke?

VB: Oh, yes, that really helped.

DS: Yes, because he has some fame here in Nigeria, right?

VB: Yes.

DS: Yes. Okay. Now, some critics accuse Reinhard Bonnke of preaching more about signs and wonders than about Calvary. What is your take on that?

VB: As a preacher, you want anybody to believe the gospel. You must talk about the Calvary.

DS: Now, what about Reinhard Bonnke?

VB: He really did. Now, he wants us to believe that Jesus Christ is your helper, is your saviour, is your everything. How, if you don’t talk about the Calvary, you cannot understand it.

DS: So, you would say that those critics are not right.

VB: They’re not right. They’re not right.

DS: Now …

VB: They are envy. They are not, they are not criticize him.

DS: Now, let’s talk about the healing ministry. Now, I’m not talking about Reinhard Bonnke now. I’m talking about the people, the people who came to the crusade. Do you believe that those people perceive Reinhard Bonnke as the healer? I’m not saying, he is saying that. I’m saying, the people are perceiving him as the healer.

VB: They don’t, because he didn’t present himself as a healer.

DS: I understand. No, this is a different story. I’m saying, the people.

VB: People could see that it is Jesus Christ that heals them, and not Reinhard Bonnke.

DS: Even the unbelievers? That’s what I’m saying. I’m trying to put hands on the culture.

VB: Reinhard Bonnke is just a projector.

DS: Yes.
VB: And the man that did the healing, is Jesus Christ.

DS: Yes.

VB: And he will always tell you to make you beli... – that is why he said, how – a new, a person, that lost his sight. He will look at Bonnke as a heavenly being, not a man like you. But Bonnke will say, “Please, you can see me; this is my head, touch it. You can see me, touch me. I am like you. I am this.” Then that fellow will realise that is not this man that is doing it. Only Jesus Christ …

DS: That’s what I’m saying.

VB: That he is just the person being used by God.

DS: That’s what I’m saying. So, some people perceive him as the healer. But Reinhard Bonnke, he said, “It’s not me, it is God doing it.”

VB: Yes.

DS: That’s what I’m saying.

VB: Correct.

DS: Yes, I understand.

VB: They all believe that.

DS: So, Reinhard Bonnke makes it very clear that it’s not him, it’s God.

VB: Yes.

DS: Okay. Now, some critics, they say, “Reinhard Bonnke’s miracles are not genuine – they don’t last.” What is your take on that?

VB: Adoto of Analadji, a Muslim leader, during the crusade they will carry him to the crusade ground. After the crusade, they will carry him to their house. But the day the crusade were rounded up, Bonnke was preaching, and this young man jump up. And you can – if not that he has travelled to Lagos, I would have take you to him now. This is one of the …

Dr. Aluko: … person who received their …

VB: … person who received their healing, during the Bonnke crusade.

DS: Okay. Now, in your opinion now, the crusade of Reinhard Bonnke, in 2002, did it contribute to the solution of social problems in Ile-Ife? Did it help the society?
VB: It helped the society to know God more. Because if you know God, your country will be peaceful. It helped in that way. But it increase the jealousy of the idol worshipper against the Christians – more …

DS: More.

VB: … than before.

DS: But other than that, there has been improvement?

VB: Yes, a lot of improvement. In the churches, there are lot of improvement. There are some churches who didn’t believe in miracle before, but after the Bonnke crusade, they too can do something.

DS: Now, now …

VB: If they move very close to God, God will do wonders in their lives.

DS: Now, now …

VB: And is happening now.

DS: Yes. Could we say that the crime is down, crime rate. Is it, or if not?

VB: What is, what I will say – make crime – the crusade will reduce crime.

DS: Okay, and …

VB: Why? Why? Because it is poverty, that increased crime in Nigeria.

DS: Now, let’s talk about poverty. Since that crusade, did the poverty here go away to some extend?

VB: The poverty goes down a little bit. But Nigeria, as a country, we’re under bondage, bondage of the world powers.

DS: Now …

VB: That’s, we are debtors. As such, the poverty rate, it is not all that reducing.

DS: But …

VB: It was at a stand still. And I know, probably this year we’ve been witnessing very little changes in our economy.

DS: But …

VB: You see, the gospel – because we have leaders who are non-Christian. And if they are all Christians, probably the poverty rate might have reduced drastically.
DS: Now, let me ask about this one because Reinhard Bonnke is saying, the real cause of the problems in Africa, in Nigeria, is Satan.

VB: Yes.

DS: But do you think to say that, is that helpful?

VB: It is Satan. I am telling you now that many of our leaders are non-Christian, and they are being directed by certain force.

DS: But wouldn’t it be better to say that the fault is not just with Satan – it’s also with the people. They need to change.

VB: The fault is on Satan.

DS: Okay.

VB: If we are able to drive Satan out of Nigeria, I know Nigeria would be very good. Because we have land; we’ve every resources to make Nigeria good.

DS: Now …

VB: But because of the [?], now today in Ile-Ife now, they are going to worship …

Dr. Aluko: Olojo. [Einer der lokal angebeteten Götzen.]

VB: Olojo now. And this morning, as I was going along Ibadan road now …

Dr. Aluko: … young boys, with their faces dressed …

VB: … but [?] accident has occurred now. As I was coming, about four were there beside the road, and that is a sign; they are doing good in Ile-Ife. And they are worshipping the god of …

Dr. Aluko: Ogun.

VB: Ogun.

Dr. Aluko: Who is suppose to protect …

VB: Who is suppose to protect them against accident.

DS: So, so …

VB: That is where our problems comes in. Now, in Ile-Ife now – Ile-Ife is the source. Whatever happen here, will manifest all over Nigeria.

DS: Okay. Is like a centre.
VB: Now, and Ile-Ife has not been properly governed by Jesus Christ. I will say half for Satan, or three quarter for Satan, a quarter for Christ. We are just managing.

DS: Now, when Reinhard Bonnke and his ministry came in, did they also have social projects, like helping people with food, or with cloth, humanitarian aid, or was it just gospel?

VB: There’s nothing like that.

DS: Okay. Now, let me ask you, as a minister of the gospel myself – would it be advisable – would it be helpful, if somebody comes to preach the gospel in Nigeria to also provide humanitarian aid? Would it increase the efficiency?

VB: If he provide humanitarian needs, it will help to some extend. But after that project, the problem will come again. But if he can do this as a Christian – if I have money now, I build small-scale factory. Those people working there – I will speak to them. They’ll be member of my church, and knowing Christ will not be hard for them, because they have a means of living. But now, if I give them a bag of rice, after two months they exhaust the bag of rice, and they’re hungry again. An hungry man is an angry man.

DS: But doing it your way, to have the companies, that would help – you think – the gospel? Long term social projects will help the gospel, okay. Now, let’s talk about the Reinhard Bonnke team and the churches here locally. At which point did the church become involved? Did Reinhard Bonnke contact the church, or did the church invite Reinhard Bonnke to come? You all did?

VB: Reinhard Bonnke come; we didn’t invite him. He came to Nigeria. I was the person that received the message of Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry. Now, he intents to come to Nigeria, to Ile-Ife. I called some ministers; this is the message I got from that world acclaimed evangelist. He intends to come to Nigeria. We have had our meeting. We telephoned him to talk, so that people will hear him. We make the phone …

DS: … loud.

VB: … loud, that everybody continue to hear him, that he would be coming to Ife to carry out his crusade.

DS: Now, once he came, and the team came.

VB: When the team came, he involved the local churches, the choir of the local churches, men and women of the local churches, those ushers, security, hospitality, counselling …

DS: And were you free to do it your way, at the – the local way here?

VB: Yes, yes.

DS: Yes. Now, you as a pastor, you know other pastors. How did the crusade fit in the ongoing evangelistic activities, here in Ile-Ife?
VB: Immediately we – Immediately I got message, I called head of churches, “Please come, suspend your programme. This man is coming.” And they all agreed with me that they should suspend their normal programme. So, all did this because we know it is helping us. He will not carry these people to his country, but to our churches. And if the church was well built, the church will produce more.

DS: But there was no pression [korr. „pressure”] of the team of Reinhard Bonnke imposing something on you?

VB: No, no, no.

DS: Now, let’s talk briefly …

VB: Let me talk. Let me say something.

DS: Yes.

VB: As I was saying to you that we were told, that wherever he performs a crusade, he will not allow traditional ruler to sit by his side. But here, because we want his imperial majesty to be involved, so that other traditional ruler will see that he is sitting by the side of the Bonnke – that this idol worshipping probably is over now. Now, we just informed him, “Have a seat with [?], and the royal mother will be by your site, the other seat.” Nothing! “If you want it like that.”

DS: Okay, so he submitted.

VB: He submitted immediately.

DS: Now, let’s talk about the Fire Conference. I believe the Fire Conference has the purpose of equipping church workers.

VB: Yes.

DS: Now, was it effective? Did it leave a lasting impact?

VB: That is the best part of the crusade. Because training trainers is very, very good – is the best part of the crusade. We even want the day of the Fire Crusade to increase, but he said, he cannot increase it.

DS: So, so …

VB: Because he has other assignment.

DS: So, you would say that the Fire Conference is more important than the …

VB: Very, very sound. Is more important.

DS: Than the crusade.
VB: Because – why? As a preacher, many are who have worked through the formal theology, but with his own new brand, every worker have the spirit to work again …

DS: Now, now …

VB: … than what they are doing before.

DS: Yes, but, but …

VB: New methods!

DS: Did they really work afterwards? Is there a lasting impact? Are they still working now?

VB: They still working. They still working.

DS: Is okay. Okay, that was the second part. Now, let’s move to the third part. We’ll be talking about the masses of people now, the crowds. Now, Nigeria has so many preachers, so many evangelists, and pastors. They are preaching the gospel all over Nigeria, the Nigerians. Now, why do people prefer to attend the Reinhard Bonnke crusade? Why not going to the local?

VB: You know, variation is very important.

DS: The what?

VB: Variation.

DS: Variation. Okay.

VB: Is part of our life, and is very good. You’ve been talking to me now. If my daughter is talking to me, I will say, “I will see you tomorrow.” But now, I put every other thing aside …

DS: Yes.

VB: … to see you now.

DS: Thank you. Yes.

VB: Is another strategy.

DS: So you think [?] white man also?

VB: If we too, we come to your country.

DS: Yes.

VB: I know, your people will recognize us there.

DS: Yes, that’s right. Yeah. True.
VB: And that is what happened here, too.

DS: So, so …

VB: They've been hearing you before, but they've never seen a black man like myself.

DS: So.

VB: Let me hear what this black man will say, and if the Spirit help me, they'll be convinced.

DS: That’s right. And now, also because he is a white man, is it?

VB: It is part of it.

DS: Now, I’m just thinking for reasons why people come. So, one reason is, he is a white – one reason. So, another reason – could it be that people also come because they like the style he preaches? – Very dramatic. Because they like it.

VB: I pray that the Spirit will help me now. Why? If even you are an artist – you even add acrobatic display to your preaching – but if the Spirit doesn’t help you, they will not admire you. But we admire the work of God in the life of Reinhard Bonnke.

DS: Now, now, which is …

VB: The Spirit of the Lord in him. One – he is a white man. Two – we agree that he is Spirit filled.

DS: And now, the style of preaching, yes – you think it is not entertaining? Do people like it? Is it? – Not in a bad sense.

VB: He didn’t entertain, oh.

DS: Okay, but people still loved to listen to him?

VB: Yes.

DS: Yes.

VB: If, at the Fire Conference, if he started to preach, you will not want him to stop.

DS: Well, why, why?

VB: And at what, what I know make that possible, is not his own personal making.

DS: Okay. I understand, yes.
VB: Is not his own personal making. Now, I’ve been talking to men and women, in churches, crusades – I will say for the past thirty-two years now – and I can still have something to gain from Reinhard Bonnke.

DS: Okay. So, could it also …

VB: Is not the dramatic area.

DS: Yes. Could it also be …

VB: We have men on stage.

DS: Yes, that’s what I’m saying, yeah. Could it also be that the music offered – people like the music and that is the reason why they come?

VB: We are the one who produce that music.

DS: Yes, I understand it. Yes.

VB: Is not from Bonnke.

DS: I understand, yes. I’m not saying that. I’m just trying to understand why the big crowds are coming.

[Dr. Aluko erklärt etwas in lokaler Sprache und VB antwortet.]

VB: The Spirit of God in Reinhard Bonnke, we recognize that Spirit in him.

DS: But let’s say an unbeliever.

VB: Those who have been – those who have produced music, they are from Ife here.

DS: Yes.

VB: They are not from elsewhere.

DS: I understand. But let’s say unbelievers who never heard of Reinhard Bonnke – would they be drawn? Now, the unbelievers will not see the Holy Spirit in Reinhard Bonnke. But would they be drawn by the music, for example? They just come because they want to listen to the music, or not?

VB: Well, because spirit is part of ministry; music is part of ministry; and if we are singing now, people will come to embrace us. They will come to …

Dr. Aluko: Certainly, a typical African man is drawn to Christ by music.

DS: By music?
Dr. Aluko: Let me come in. There was time in Akiti, they were all idol worshippers, and so when the missionaries got there, they said, there is something they do. Everyday they dance before the idol, and if you are bringing any religion, that religion must also bring music because these people will never like to draw transit. So, when Christianity came, they said, you must bring drums. The dancing must continue – if it is for another god. So, an African is drawn to God through music.

DS: This was one comment of Dr. Aluko. Yes. Thank you. Thank you. So, music is part of it.

VB: It is part of it.

DS: Okay. Now, the last – now, I’m coming to your opinion, which is fine. I agree on that one. Would you say that the use of spiritual gifts, like the gift of healing …

VB: Healing.

DS: … the gift of word of knowledge, other spiritual gifts, contribute to the attraction of the masses?

VB: Please, repeat it.

DS: I mean, because Reinhard Bonnke is living like, in the Spirit. And he is healing – he has the spiritual gift of healing and of the word of knowledge, and maybe other gifts, which manifest during the crusade. Would you say those manifestations draw the masses?

VB: It is that gift, that draw masses to come. Because I open say it, that Reinhard Bonnke is gifted, is low headed, and everybody recognized that the infilling of Spirit in him – everybody recognizes.

DS: You see, and that …

VB: And this draw …

DS: … people.

VB: … many of us to him, to have the feeling that we want to hear from him again.

DS: Now, we are coming to the last set of questions here. Now, did Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade in Ile-Ife, in 2002, contribute measurably to the church growth in Ile-Ife? Did churches grow?

VB: It afforded us, one – to have a spirit of unity. Through his crusade we have a landed property now, that unites every Christian here. Through his crusade we now have a permanent crusade committee, so that whenever – there is one going on in the stadium now, Rev. Austin Adishola. We don’t need to start …

Dr. Aluko: There is permanent structures on ground.

DS: Yes, yes.
VB: Permanent structures.

DS: So, it helped the church to unite.

VB: Oh yes.

DS: But my question is, did the churches grow? The numbers, did they increase?

VB: Definitely we are increasing.

DS: Okay.

VB: Every day we are increasing.

DS: Yeah, but I mean …

VB: Since that day.

DS: That’s it, that’s what my question was.

VB: Because the idol worshipper are reducing. Only the arch rebels – but now, with the idol worshippers.

DS: Do you have any statistics about church growth, here in Ile-Ife? Is there any statistics? But lets talk about your church. Did your church grow, as a result of that crusade?

VB: As a result of that crusade, workers in my own church increased, and with that increase …

DS: Yes, the churches …

VB: … – which will be third – we have more to offer.

DS: So, so …

VB: And as we are offering more, more men, more women are coming in.

DS: Yes, so you would …

VB: Before that crusade, we don’t have that prayer centre …

DS: So …

VB: … along Ibadan road. But after the crusade, I met with my workers and said, “This man, Reinhard Bonnke, we could see that is a prayer worrier. Can’t we organise …

Dr. Aluko: … the prayer centre.
VB: … the prayer centre, so that we too, will have some prayer worriers concentrate there always?"

DS: So, you would say that the church growth …

VB: Yes.

DS: … was not so much by the crusade, but rather by the Fire Conference?

VB: By the Fire Conference.

DS: That’s what I’m saying. So that the church growth was indirectly. I mean, did you not receive people who got saved in the crusade? But your people were equipped at the Fire Conference, and they reached …

Dr. Aluko: … more vibrant.

DS: Okay.

Dr. Aluko: The Christians became more vibrant.

DS: I see, so we could say it was a revival in the church?

VB: Yes.

DS: Okay. Now, you’ve been at the crusade. Now, in your estimation, your guess – how many of the people attending the crusades have been Christians, born-again church members, before they came to the crusade ground? Just give me a guess.

[Dr. Aluko erklärt VB etwas in lokaler Sprache.]

Dr. Aluko: You said one million, and that – how many of them …

DS: Percentage wise.

Dr. Aluko: … were born-again before the crusade?

VB: Before, the crusade?

Dr. Aluko: Who are real Christians.

DS: Yes, Christians who came to the crusade.

VB: Who are real Christians?

DS: Yes, before the crusade …

VB: Before the crusade?
DS: Yes.

VB: Yeah.

DS: … who came to attend.

Dr. Aluko: May 40 percent, maybe 50.

VB: 25 percent.

DS: Thirty-five?

Dr. Aluko: Who were born-again.

VB: Yes!

DS: Okay, three – five? It’s a guess.

VB: Yes.

DS: Now, let me ask you a question. If those people who have been called to come forward – could it be that some people came the first day, and they filled a decision card? And they came the next day again, filled another decision card. Now, how can we make sure it doesn’t happen?

VB: During the three crusade we talk with the counsellors, as we be doing this thing. Make sure that anybody that fills the decision card today – please don’t allow him tomorrow. And that is why we had like school captain, for each …

Dr. Aluko: … unit.

VB: … unit.

DS: You mean a unit [?] ?

VB: … of counsellors.

DS: Yes. In the city?

VB: You see as – lets say we are fifty here now. There were breaks into units of ten, with somebody who can see what they are doing. And that fellow has a long list of those that came to revival yesterday, that come for the altar call yesterday. Now, as they are …

Dr. Aluko: … recording it.

VB: … recording it, they will strike out names of those who are already in the long list. That’s why we are able to say that they don’t repeat it.

DS: Yeah, but the decision cards are still being filled out. Are they counted?
VB: Now, when the decision sheets were filled out, this captain of each unit will have a long list …

DS: I understand, yes, yes.

VB: … of those decision cards. And that long list, he may check that of yesterday with today. Though because of anxiety, some will come in today; tomorrow they will come out again …

DS: Yes.

VB: … but to make sure that, that doesn’t happen, the captain will come in with his own long list to strike out names of those who have already …

DS: Yes, but that must be huge because there are like – lets say there are about fifty thousand people coming.

VB: Yes.

DS: That might be that big a list. [Aussage begleitet durch Demonstration with Händen.]

VB: We break those counsellors into units.

DS: I agree with that, but …

VB: And each unit has its own leader.

DS: I understand, but …

VB: Now, with that, the list will not be too long.

DS: I understand very well.

VB: They check.

DS: Yes, please. But see, lets say today I come to this unit, as a person who wants to receive Christ. Tomorrow I go to another unit.

VB: If you go to another unit. Every night, these unit leader will meet again, to compare names, notes, here at – St. Peter is here, were used for them. All the night around we will sit down. What is your own? What is your own? When we compare lists, if in your own unit I have somebody who has registered with me, so you can see it.

DS: Now, how many units are there, lets say?

VB: We have about one thousand units.
DS: Oh that’s what I’m saying. It’s impossible. Let’s say I come to unit one today and I come to unit 950 tomorrow, and to unit 345 the other day. How can they – in such a short time – get figured it all out?

VB: But it can be minimised.

DS: Okay, that’s what I’m saying.

VB: You cannot overrule it.

DS: That’s what I’m saying. You can’t overrule it. It’s still happening, but you are trying to minimise it.

VB: Yes.

DS: That’s what I’m saying.

VB: You can’t even imagine.

DS: Because people in previous …

VB: We work around the clock in the evening, in the night, to see that it doesn’t happen. Because we realise …

DS: Yes, that’s what I’m saying.

VB: We have been doing this crusade. People have been coming, but that of Reinhard Bonnke.

DS: No, I’m not saying. Yes, I know. I’m just saying that you are aware of the problem.

VB: Yes.

DS: Yes, and you are doing something, at least.

VB: To minimise it.

DS: But it is not possible to really [?]

VB: We cannot rule that out. We cannot.

DS: Because people in previous interviews were saying, it is possible that a person can come three, four times and be counted. That’s what people were saying in other interviews.

VB: Okay.

DS: Because he said, he could – three or four times they can be counted.

VB: We are finding it …
DS: You are trying, yes. Okay, last question now – now, people are – of course, people are human, and when the altar call is made to people to come and receive Christ, some come for reasons other than receiving Christ. They want books. They want books. They want a blessing, whatever. Is that so? Do people come for other reasons than receiving Christ?

VB: Because we are no god.

DS: I mean, I’m not blaming Reinhard Bonnke. Don’t get me wrong. I’m not blaming him. I’m just saying – and then the people of Nigeria.

VB: I’m all but young. I can understand you.

DS: Oh yes.

VB: We are no god.

DS: Yes.

VB: It is only God that knows everything.

DS: Yes.

[Nicht identifizierte Stimme]: The heart of man.

DS: Yes.

VB: But people who are coming for the altar, one – so that this man will lay hand on them, and they receive more blessing from him. Two – they come out so that probably, there is an ailment in their life that they want healed – healing. And three – there are some ministers, want God to bless them with the spirit of Reinhard Bonnke. So they come.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Bishop, there was a disturbance here. I got a phone call. Lets continue. Now, I was asking a question, whether it should – it is in your understanding – it is the responsibility of an evangelist to do the follow-up? Or is it rather the responsibility of the local pastors?

VB: Now, I would say the local pastor should be responsible for that, but the protocol of the church may not allow a local pastor to do it effectively. But if the evangelist has some, a team of dedicated men that will do the follow-up …

DS: Now, now …

VB: … it would be very good.
DS: Now, for how long would you expect that team to stay? You know what I mean? The resources are limited because Reinhard Bonnke is doing crusades everywhere, I mean, all over Africa. I mean, he cannot just leave people everywhere, so …

VB: I believe after a year, those teams will come and stay for lets say one week.

DS: But see, the problem now is, that team will have to, you know – the thing is, the team is coming from abroad. Is not Reinhard Bonnke, is somebody else.

VB: Yes.

DS: You know what I mean? And they don’t know the culture. And there is so many cultures in Africa. There is one Nigerian culture. There is a Kenyan culture. There are so many cultures.

VB: The local church will support them.

Dr. Aluko: They have to use the local facilities and people.

DS: Okay.

VB: The local church will support them.

DS: But still, you think it will be good to have a follow-up team?

VB: After the crusade, Reinhard Bonnke should have a team to carry out a follow-up.

DS: Yes …

VB: And this follow-up they do, will be supported by the local churches. And for that one week that we do, they will spread all over the town …

DS: Now, what about …

VB: … talk to them. Worship with them in their church. How do you do this? Is very necessary.

DS: Okay. Now, what about, instead of bringing a team – what about just providing the financial resources for the local people to do it?

VB: They shall be able to.

DS: To set them free, to do it. Because the local people know their whereabouts, their …

VB: They know their whereabouts, yes. But he should have some of his men.

DS: Still here?

VB: Still here.
DS: Maybe, I mean, I’m just listening. I’m just learning.

VB: Yes.

DS: Maybe it would be good to just put some few people in charge of follow-up, and let the local pastors do the follow-up. You know what I mean? I’m just learning.

VB: Is very good, but what matters very most that some of his team …

DS: … is here.

VB: … should be here.

DS: Okay, pastor. Thank you so much for your time and for all those valuable informations. This is very good. Thank you.

VB: Bless you.

DS: God bless you.

VB: Amen.

DS: Amen.
2.7 Interview mit Rev. Abel Afon

2.7.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: Abel Afon
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 14.10.05
Denomination: Baptist
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Member of the counselling committee
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/Werk: Pastor
Bemerkungen:

2.7.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: Alright. Now, we are at the office of Pastor Afon.

AA: Yeah.

DS: Is it? Yes, and in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning.

AA: Yeah.

DS: And he was a member of the counselling committee of the crusade in Ile-Ife, in 2002, in December. Thank you for your time pastor. Let’s start with the first question. Well, actually, first of all I will be asking questions about Reinhard Bonnke’s person, then about the crusade itself, how he was preaching and so on. And then, lastly, about the masses who came to – the people who came. So, first question – which denomination do you belong to?

AA: Baptist.

DS: You are Baptist. Now, what is your general attitude toward the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke? Is it positive, negative, or neutral? Just general, or somewhere in between?

AA: It is definitely positive.

DS: Now, in your opinion, if you think about Reinhard Bonnke, which characteristic traits of his character come to your mind, when you think of Reinhard Bonnke?
AA: Yes.

DS: Phrase it in one word. If you think of Reinhard Bonnke, what does come to your mind? What kind of person is he? Just one sentence.

AA: He is agile in the Holy Spirit.


AA: Moving from one place to the other – I’ve never seen him, where he will be preaching and he just stays in one particular position.

DS: Because he is agile.

AA: Very agile.

DS: What of his character, character …

AA: He is forceful.

DS: Would you regard him a humble man?

AA: Definitely.

DS: Okay. Now, so far we’ve never heard that Reinhard Bonnke was involved in any misappropriation of funds, and you think Ile-Ife was the same? Was there any, I mean – and from Bonnke’s side – any misappropriation of funds, from Bonnke’s side?

AA: From Bonnke’s side?

DS: Yes.

AA: Among his team?

DS: Yes.

AA: No, I’ve never heard of it.

DS: It’s okay. I understand there were local problems. I mean that one.

AA: Yeah.

DS: But from his side was …

AA: No, I have never.

DS: Okay. Now, critics say that Reinhard Bonnke is pronouncing false prophecies. What is your take on that one?
AA: He has never anytime, I – because all his prophecies could be verified from the Bible.

DS: Right, and, and …

AA: And I believe that there is only prophets, that you cannot be verified from the Bible, and that’s not biblical [?] in that.

DS: And the ones he pronounced in Ile-Ife, are they coming true?

AA: Yes.

DS: I mean, is it happening?

AA: Yes.

DS: Okay. And now, you as pastor, as a Nigerian pastor, a citizen of Nigeria – how do you evaluate Reinhard Bonnke’s personal friendship to the president Obasanjo? Is it helping the gospel? Is it a good thing that he is a personal friend to the president?

AA: Is good.

DS: Is good.

AA: It will help the gospel.

DS: Now, before the crusade there was much publicity going on …

AA: Yes.

DS: … and advertising. Now, what was the focus of the advertisement? The topical focus, was it Reinhard Bonnke …

AA: Salvation first.

DS: Salvation first, okay.

AA: Then healings and other things, but salvation first.

DS: And then, were there any – now, before the crusade they were advertising, and then they were promising things. Did those things happen or were you surprised? Did even more happen? Were you disappointed? – You know, the advertisement and then the realisation of it.

AA: Well, you – I as a pastor, I will expect, as when in the middle in the crusade of such nature, salvation, miracle and everything. So, and everything were according to expectation. This is the result of the Holy Spirit.

DS: And the advertisement was not promising more than there was?

AA: No, definitely no.
DS: And then, after the crusade was over there were reports, maybe in the local press, maybe from the ministries, from the churches. Those reports, do you believe – the ones you’ve read or heard about – are they genuine? Or are they exaggerated? – The ones you know about.

AA: Depends on – I don’t want to say whether they are genuine or they are exaggerated. Some are genuine, some you know. When you are having a crusade of such nature, you should know that the devil – on the devil’s side, they will exaggerate, especially the negative aspects. Some people say, “Oh those people that were healed,” some of them say, “the second day some people went back,” and so on. But I have never seen any one that really was genuinely healed, that really went back.

DS: Went back, okay.

AA: So, from my own personal something, I know it cannot be either both, but I know surely that Reinhard Bonnke is of Christ.

DS: Okay, that was the first part of – is there anything you want to add so far? It’s for the first part about the interview.

AA: No, I [?].

DS: Okay, let me stop here for a while.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Now, the second part will be about the crusade itself. And I was trying to find out what were the reasons to – which brought, bring the masses of people to the crusade. And would you say that the content of Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching – the content was part of the reason for the masses of people to come, to listen to him? – The content of the preaching.

AA: Well, I will say yes. The reason that people have heard Reinhard Bonnke preaching in several other Nigerian cities. Many people have read his books before. So, meeting him for the first time then makes people to come – troop outs in large number, to meet him. And you know, those of us who – I listened to him at Ogbomosho and here. The message were almost the same.

DS: The same, okay.

AA: At least the first message [?] on salvation.

DS: Now, what about the topics? You are talking about the topics of the messages. What was the direction?

AA: Salvation first.

DS: Salvation first.
AA: The first three or four times, I think was …

DS: … salvation.

AA: … were on salvation. And that is the most important thing.

DS: Yes, that’s right. Yes, I agree. Now, does Reinhard Bonnke adapt his preaching to the culture in Ile-Ife? How did he adapt?

AA: Since he has lived almost all his life in Africa, in African something, he knew our culture very well. So that’s why he could come down.

DS: And you think that it’s positive that he adapted the …

AA: Very well.

DS: … his message.

AA: Very well.

DS: Okay. Now, some critics they say that – or one critic is saying that Reinhard Bonnke is talking more about miracles, and signs, and wonders than about Calvary. But you just answered the question before. You said the first three nights were just on salvation.

AA: Yeah. Though after, he will pray for you generally if you believe – afterward. The first thing before he prays for miracle and everything is that he wants to know those people who are accepting Jesus Christ for the first time. And then you see people trooping out. Then after that, he will now pray.

DS: Okay. So, you would not say that he is preaching more about miracle than about salvation?

AA: No, no, no. Salvation is the main thing on focus.

DS: Now, lets talk about the people coming to the crusade, and about the healings now.

AA: Yes.

DS: Reinhard Bonnke is saying that, you know, he is not the healer. God is healing.

AA: Yes.

DS: Yes, and I agree on that one. And now, but the people, here in Ile-Ife, how do they perceive him? Did they perceive him as the healer? I’m not saying, he is saying that. I’m just saying that people are – the people.
AA: Well, you know, when you talk about the people, they, you know, the people can be categorised into probably one or two or three. People like me now are there. With the Lord’s grace I’m saved.

DS: Yes.

AA: I know whatever he does is by the power of Christ and the Holy Spirit. There’re others that are going there just because Reinhard Bonnke is there. If I can get there, I will be healed.

DS: And they think he is the healer.

AA: He is the healer, so is just, you know – and some of them do, to receive their healings.

DS: Now, and Reinhard Bonnke is giving the glory back to God.

AA: Yeah, normally.

DS: How is he doing that? In which ways?

AA: He – the enthusiasm, he showed after a particular miracle, and said “Praise the Lord,” and you will see him kneel down. That is everything. You are convinced. I’m convinced from my, all my mind that all glory is send back to God …

DS: Goes back to God.

AA: … is send back to God.

DS: Well, again you mentioned that before. There are some people who say, well, that the miracles are fake. Some people say they are not long lasting. Now, in your experience for Ile-Ife, what can you say about that? – The ones you know about.

AA: Definitely I – is expected. There is nowhere, even when – even in some churches, if there is a miracle, they say is fake. Talk less of Muslims – are there who doesn’t want to see any good in their life. So it’s expected. But we know surely, and I know surely that the miracles, they are realistic.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Now, in your opinion, did the crusade of Reinhard Bonnke in 2002 contribute to the solution of social problems of Ile-Ife, be it directly or indirectly?

AA: Yes, the first thing I noticed – my church is very close to the side that was used for the crusade.

DS: The camp ground.
AA: Yes. On Sunday morning you will see all the youths, but weeks after the crusade is – very early in the morning, people now first of all go to the church. So, you know, the streets were now maybe deserted, at least for the first twelve weeks. Secondly, some people who had been in one bondage or the other, could not walk, not see, then – there were some people that had been, one body just sickness together – having received their healings, they could go back and work, and those sort of things.

DS: Now, those effects, are they still there? Can you still see them or is it dying down now?

AA: Yes, many are still there. Many are still there. It is very – the issue of spiritual revival is …

DS: Is there …

AA: … is still marching on.

DS: Now …

AA: Though is dying down, because partly we are not – there was not enough money to …

DS: Now, Reinhard Bonnke is saying that the cause, the reason, for all these social problems in Africa, in Nigeria, is with Satan. Now, you think that is helpful to say that? Is that helpful or is it counterproductive? Or should he rather say, “You people must change.”

AA: Well, I think is still – it doesn’t makes people not to change. So, if they can change and set aside the devil – so, I think Reinhard Bonnke is saying the truth. The devil is responsible, so they are – is responsible for so many of their social, economic problems, and the social things we are to come against.

DS: Now, is the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke involved socially to help, like humanitarian aid or some social programmes, or small skill businesses? Do they – have they been involved in helping people, socially?

AA: I don’t know that.

DS: Okay.

AA: Because I’m not close to that ministry as such.

DS: But you don’t know of any, so far. I mean, you’ve been living on. I mean, even after the crusade was over, you have not heard about such thing?

AA: I don’t know.

DS: Now …

AA: I don’t know.
DS: Yeah. Let’s say if a minister comes from Europe to Nigeria for ministration, would it be – would it make the ministry more effective, if you would also engage in social projects to help people?

AA: Well, because if “social” means to you, is as, is provision of social – certain things are attached to maybe accepting Christ Jesus. It may be counterproductive. People will just pretend as if they believe Christ, but really they are attracted to what they want to get. So, I still believe that you first of all preach salvation. Whatever follows, another thing shall be added.

DS: Now, let’s talk for a moment about the churches of Ile-Ife working with Christ for all Nations, with Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry.

AA: Yes.

DS: At which point did Reinhard Bonnke involve the churches? Or let me ask it differently. Did the church invite Reinhard Bonnke to come, or did he come, and wanted the churches to help him?

AA: Maybe that question may not be easy for me to answer, because I know there are some, maybe organising committee members in Ile-Ife here, that have been working in several [?] committees.

DS: Of before?

AA: In Ilesa or Oshugbu before. So, I don’t know whether – how they …

DS: … yeah, brought him here.

AA: … invited him down here.

DS: Now, once they came, once they are – were here, and they provide the structure, right? – For the crusade, the structure, I mean, the committees and so on. They told you which committees to organise, I assume. Now, within the committees, were you free to do according to your will, according to your culture, according to your environment?

AA: Well, in [?] you cannot do, you know, according to your own will. You can only suggest what you think. And then you now be verified, and then we reach a consention [korr. „consent”].

DS: But there were – you were suggesting that there was feedback. You were working on that one.

AA: Yes, in some of the committees.

DS: So it wasn’t just imposed on you, it was …

AA: No, no, it wasn’t.
DS: Okay, that’s what I was asking.

AA: It wasn’t.

DS: Okay, thank you.

AA: It wasn’t.

DS: So, how did Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade fit into the ongoing evangelistic efforts of the churches here? Was it a new thing? Was it just the right time, the right thing to do, or?

AA: Sincerely, it is the right thing. But I will, I – is the right thing, but any other crusade that will be held in Ile-Ife, I want it to focus more on leadership retreat, rather than …

DS: Than …

AA: … bringing the whole something together.

DS: So, you would say that the Fire Conference would be more effective, more good?

AA: More relevant – because if the leaders have visions, than really the church of God in Ile-Ife will be different.

DS: So, you did not have the impression that Reinhard Bonnke and his ministry were making the decisions on their own? They involved you.

AA: Normally.

DS: Okay. And then – now, let’s get back to the Fire Conference now – the Fire Conference. Now, the purpose is to equip the churches, the church workers, right?

AA: Right.

DS: Now, was it effective?

AA: Yes …

DS: And …

AA: … effective, and these were just three days.

DS: And then – now, the results of it. The people who were equipped there, were they effective in churches, or did they go out and preach, or how did it affect the churches, the church growth?

AA: It is effective. But whether they go out to preach or not, I don’t know. But I think, you know, the main things learned there, then the fact that they are equipped, at least they’re exposed to the word of God. But I think – and the message there is quite different from the one we are hearing at the crusade.
DS: And you would say it would be more important to have more of the Fire Conference?

AA: Yes, because …

DS: And cut down the crusade shorter?

AA: Yeah. You know, I think I was [?] many other places. I lived in Ogbomosho for some time. This leadership retreat by brother [?] have worked perfectly well.

DS: Okay. So, you …

AA: But on a yearly basis.

CO: If one can get that, that one would be better.

DS: Let me ask you a question. If those Fire Conferences – let’s say they’re on a yearly basis or …

AA: Yes.

DS: … or whatever. Do you believe that they would contribute to church growth?

AA: Better.

DS: Better than the crusade?

AA: Yes.

DS: Okay. Interesting, interesting. Okay, that was the second part. Let’s move to part three.

AA: Yes.

DS: We are talking about the masses of people that came, and I’m trying to find the dynamics, why they came. So, I’ll be asking questions. I’ll be asking questions. Now, there are so many preachers all over Nigeria, I mean, spirit-filled, on fire preachers.

AA: Correct.

DS: Why do people prefer to come to Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade, instead of going to those? Let me – Reinhard Bonnke is, he draws the biggest crowds.

AA: Correct.

DS: Why is that so? Why is it not a Nigerian doing that?

AA: Spiritually, I believe the anointing is there.

DS: Okay.
AA: Secondly, people have read much about him.

DS: So.

AA: So, they want to see him physically. And thirdly, he is going to – is a new man that you have never met.

DS: Okay. Is a white man.

AA: A white – not only so. There are so many – many whites have been coming to Nigeria, but they have not been pulling crowd like that. So, that one boils down to the anointing, in the first place.

DS: So, you say anointing is, you think is the most important part?

AA: I – personally the most important, I think should be, is the anointing.

DS: Okay. Now, Reinhard Bonnke’s style of preaching is very unique, is very dramatic. And would you say it draws the masses, the way he preaches? Does that help to bring the people in?

AA: Yes, he carried them along. He said, “If you hear me, shout ‘Hallelujah’, then.”

DS: So, it’s entertaining, is it?

AA: Huh …

DS: In a good sense, in a good sense. Not in a bad sense. I mean, is not just entertaining but it is entertaining also.

AA: Normally, because if you can follow – if to say you can follow the preacher as he goes, without being lost is, if is, if you mean, if is the one that what you mean by being entertained – then is entertaining as well.

DS: But I heard that he is using illustrations.

AA: Yes, normally from African perspectives.

DS: That’s what I’m saying. So, so …

AA: Alright, yes.

DS: … they are usually African illustrations.

AA: Yes, yeah.

DS: So, he adapts his illustration to the African context.
AA: Yes.

DS: Okay, and people love – so, you think people come just to hear him preach? Not only, but this is one of the reasons why people come to hear him preach.

AA: Yes, one of the reasons.

DS: Okay – the way he preached. Okay. Now, could it also be that people come also because there is a good music programme, I mean, local music – that people are drawn by that?

AA: Well, I think that everything is part of the worship service. So, all those you are mentioning there …

DS: … they are part of it.

AA: They are part of it, but there’re others who can bring even better musicians than Bonnke, and they will not pull as much …

DS: Oh, I see.

AA: … crowds. That’s all. That’s all.

DS: Now, the last aspect I want to check about the reasons for drawing crowds is the – we touched it – the use of spiritual gifts. Now, Reinhard Bonnke is using the gift of healings, and word of knowledge, and maybe other manifestations of the spiritual gifts. Now, will you think that the use of those spiritual gifts attracts the masses also? Is it part of it?

AA: It’s part of it.

DS: Alright. Now, the last set of questions. Now, do you, I mean, in your opinion, or as far as you know – you are a pastor – did the crusade in Ile-Ife 2002 contribute measurable to church growth in Ile-Ife? – In numbers, in numbers, I mean.

AA: Numbers. Spiritually and even numerically.

DS: Okay. Now, your church as well? In your church?

AA: In my church, I think is spiritual. Numerical is not as …

DS: … is not, is not as, okay. Now, why not? What is the reason? What do you think? Why not numerically?

AA: Ile-Ife here, you know, Baptist church is not – majority of those people that are, that considered Baptists in Ile-Ife – majority of them are non-indigenous of Ile-Ife.

DS: Okay, so.

AA: That is it.
DS: People will not join them.

AA: They will not join them. But if it’s – I know in a place like Ogbomosho, the church would have swollen, would have swollen.

DS: Okay. Now, just give me an estimate, a guess. How many of those people who came to the crusade were Christians, born-again Christians, church members before the crusade?

AA: Before the crusade?

DS: Yes, how many of them were? Percentage – just a guess, and estimate – half of it, 30 percent, 20 percent, 60 percent?

AA: Not more than probably 15 percent.

DS: Fifteen.

AA: Fifteen.

DS: Okay. Now …

CO: Is that nominal or not nominal Christians?

AA: Genuinely born-again Christians.

DS: The born-again, yes. The born-again, yes, yes.

AA: Genuinely born-again, they are not up to 10 percent.

DS: Oh, yes. Okay. Now, could it be that, do – you have been at the crusade – could it be that some people, when they come and fill out a decision card, they are counted once. And next day they come again, again fill out the decision card. They’ve been counted twice, and trice, and four times. Could that happen?

AA: It may happen. Especially, if you raised up your hand today, and you could not get that book: “Now that you are a child of God”…

DS: Yes.

AA: … rather “born-again”. Everybody is, was eager to get that book. Even among those that are not, are not born – that are genuinely convinced of their salvation before.

DS: They come again.

AA: Some people still, they most likely raise their hands if they cannot lay their hands on those books.

DS: Oh, I see. I see.
AA: Because I experienced that one.

DS: So.

AA: I heard advise some people that, “But he has to reserve that book because I was not given that book yesterday.”

DS: Now, what are the measures take, I mean, taken to not make that happen again. I mean, is there anything?

AA: I don’t think anybody can prevent that, because the crowd is so much.

DS: Now, that means people are counted more than once. Some people are counted more than once.

AA: There is every – the tendency for that to occur is very high.

DS: Now, you just mentioned, some people they just came for a book, for example.

AA: Yeah.

DS: So, there might be reason – other reasons they came for, like to receive a blessing, to receive healing, and without receiving salvation. Now, how many of those people, of the people who came forward – a percentage – how many of them did not come to receive Christ? They just came for reasons other than salvation. How many of those people who came forward?

AA: I – it should not be more than probably maximum of 15, 20 percent.

DS: 20 percent. [?] Okay.

AA: Of those people coming out for – that indicating that they want to accept Christ.

DS: But they are came [korr. „they came”] for other reasons.

AA: For other reasons.

DS: Yes, yes, yes.

AA: Like healing, probably they have a kid who is sick, and they’ve been going from one place to the other. They now believe that by saying that, he may even move closer to Bonnke.

DS: And then – oh, I see. Now, how do you think? The work of follow-up, is it the job of an evangelist, of Reinhard Bonnke, or is it the job of the local churches? – The follow-up.

AA: Is definitely that of the local churches.
DS: Of the churches, okay. Now, would you say Reinhard Bonnke should continue preaching the gospel in the south-west of Nigeria? Or should he rather move north, where the unreached are?

AA: Yes, I believe he should move to the north.

DS: North.

AA: Even, I want to ask the question, why – what is he thinking about going back to Ilorin?

DS: And then, and then – that is interesting. So, you think there is no use of going back to Ilorin?

AA: I think he should go back.

DS: Is it? He should. Okay.

AA: He should try as much as possible to go back to Ilorin.

DS: Now, Ilorin is where?

AA: In Kwara State, up north. Yes.

DS: It is north? Okay, I’m hearing. Okay, yes.

AA: There, were the north starts.

DS: Yes, that’s it. Okay. Now, is there any advice you can give me, like as a young minister coming from Europe to minister here in Nigeria? Just in a few sentences now – we have talked so much now – just some personal advice for Europeans, European evangelists who come here.

AA: Number one – you must read and know about the sociology of the communities, in which you want to stay, their cultural beliefs.

DS: You mean the local …

AA: Yes.

DS: Okay.

AA: If the Yorubas, you have to read about their sociology, cultural beliefs, religious practices, their belief on demonic activities, etc., etc. If you know that, you should be able to …

DS: … relate.

AA: … minister better. Then you shouldn’t also be weary of their poverty level, because that is another big problem in Nigerian context here. Poverty is here, very serious issue. For some
is making them – is making it difficult for them to accept Christ. For some is making them to appear that as if they accept Christ if they can get something.

DS: Okay. Well, thank you. Thank you. That’s good. Well, I think that’s about it. That is the end of the interview with Pastor Afon.

AA: Yes.

DS: Thank you so much …

AA: God bless you.

DS: … for your time and for the valuable information.

AA: Thank you.

DS: God bless.
2.8 Interview mit Rev. Bukola Oyedeji

2.8.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: Bukola Oyedeji
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 14.10.05
Denomination: African Church of Nigeria
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Secretary to the board of advisers
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/ Werk: Priest of the *African Church of Nigeria*, executive of *CAN*

Bemerkungen:

2.8.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: Alright. Now, we are here in Ile-Ife, still at Rev. Oyedeji’s house. He is the priest of African Church of Nigeria, here in Ile-Ife. And he is the secretary – he was the secretary of the board of advisors at the crusade in Ile-Ife, in 2002. Now, I will be asking questions concerning the crusade. – I’m sorry for my low voice …

OB: You’re alright.

DS: … and the questions will be, first of all concerning the person of Reinhard Bonnke. Then the second will be, the way he conducted the crusade. And number three will be about the people who came – the masses of people, and now I want to start with the first question. You’ve answered it already, but still – which denomination do you belong to?

OB: Thank you very much. I belong to the African Church, Nigeria, the African Church, Nigeria.

DS: Thank you.

OB: With headquarters at fifty-nine [?] street, Lagos.

DS: Lagos. Now, what is your general attitude toward the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke? Is it positive, negative, or neutral, or you have some reservations, or is it just fine?
OB: Well, it has a very broad attitude. You see, one – we thank God for the crusade. It was a successful crusade that led to the massive turnout of people from all over, not only in this town but even beyond. The man, through his ministry was a good, mobilized people very well to attend the crusade. We thank God for the Holy Spirit, you know, in him, that is working in him.

DS: Yes.

OB: Yeah, and that – and really assisted so much. Thank you very much.

DS: Okay. Let’s start with the first question. If you now, if you think about Reinhard Bonnke, what is the first thing that comes to your mind about his character? What is his unique character?

OB: Yeah, is a powerful preacher. And that really captures the attention of, you know, his audience.

DS: And his characteristic traits? I mean, what kind of person is he?

OB: He’s a religious man. He’s a highly religious man, and he seemed to be very holistic in nature. And with that, people wants to listen to him, you see.

DS: Would you say he is a man of humility?

OB: Yes, is an humble man. I had opportunity to interact with him. Well, I’ve been …

DS: Personal.

OB: Yes, personally. I’ve been a member of the coordinating committee, I mean, for the crusade.

DS: Yes, crusade.

OB: I see him to be a very humane, very humble, you know, respectful man. He is not arrogant, despite, you know, the height God has taken him to, in the ministry. Yeah. I love him. I love him.

DS: Okay. Now, he is a humble man you said. Now, I’ve never heard anybody say that Reinhard Bonnke misappropriated funds. And now, as far as you know – from his side, not from what happened here, but from his side – has there been any wrongs in dealing with funds from his side?

OB: From Reinhard Bonnke’s side, I see him as a spender, not somebody looking towards catching money from anybody. So he, I’ve not seen him or heard him misappropriating money, except when few people, you know, will want to cheat on his hopefulness, you know? That cannot be avoided. But he, you know, is a faithful and honest man.
DS: Now, some critics, they would say that he is pronouncing false prophecies. Now, what was your experience in Ile-Ife? The prophecies he spoke, are they coming true, or were there false prophecies?

OB: He’s a – as he’s a good preacher, let me call him a prophet of the most high God, you see, because God speaks through him, you know? A prophet speaks what God directs him to say to the people. A prophet is the link between God and man …

DS: Now, now …

OB: … so, he – most of his prophetic statement comes to pass.

DS: Okay, are there any you can mention, any of the things that he prophesied, which are coming to pass?

OB: Yes, yes. When he came, he spoke of the glory of this city coming back, you know, are coming upon him. And shortly after, you know, we are – I’m glad to say that it was shortly after his crusade that so many, you know, good things comes, you know, to happen in this city. Like, we have the Nigerian Television Authority, you know, coming to be, you know …

CO [evtl.]: Stationed here.

OB: … stationed at Ife here.

DS: NTA?

OB: NTA …

DS: Oh yes, yeah.

OB: … yes.

DS: Now, you as a priest and also as a Nigerian citizen – now, how do you evaluate the personal relationship of Reinhard Bonnke with president Obasanjo? Is it helping the gospel? Is it a good thing?

OB: Yes, is actually helping, you know, the spread of the gospel. You see, I know one other thing is that – you know – he preaches the truth – you know – without any delusion and this changes – you know – the minds of the people towards – you know – committing evil. And when people stop committing evil, they become more committed, more devoted, and more patriotic. And this helps the administration of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, the president of this country because he needs credible and honest people to run the government.

DS: So, you think that, that relationship is helping the gospel.

OB: Yes, is helping the gospel.
DS: Now, during – before the crusades in Ile-Ife, there were a lot of – was a lot of advertisement being done on television and on boards, I believe. Now, what was the focus of those advertisements, the topics?

OB: Yeah, thank you very much. For the first time we had a very aggressive, you know, advertising strategy. The logistic was so much planned that it actually, you know, gets, you know, the heart of the people to attend, you know, the crusade.

DS: What was the topics, I mean the, how they …

OB: It hammers on people coming to hear the words of God, the undiluted words of God. In fact, it – and it’s, prepares the mind of the people for signs and wonders – miracles. So, and people were expecting miracles.

DS: So, could we say it was about salvation and about miracles?

OB: Yes, he preaches salvation. The advert tells people, with Christ they can receive salvation of their soul. And after that, there are a lot more things you gain, you know, if they have their soul saved.

DS: Now, things …

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Alright. There was a short interruption and now we continue. Now, the advertisement, the things that were promised there, did they come to pass? Or were the expectations met at the crusade, or were they beyond even, or less?

OB: Yeah. In fact, the expectation and what people actually received at the end of the crusade, was even more than …

DS: … than …

OB: … what they bargained for, what they expected.

DS: Now, after the crusade there’re usually reports, from the local news, from ministries, and so on. Now, those reports – maybe you have heard of or seen – were they truthful, or were there exaggerations? Or did they downplay things?

OB: I’ve not seen anything being exaggerated. I can factually say about a soul won, you know, from a Muslim family, you know. And, you know, that soul remains a very strange thing happening. You know, in this part of the world – for now that’s, an hardened Muslim got converted – to become a Christian, and he also work on his family. And in fact, this changed the whole family to becoming Christians today, in this city.

OB: I would …

DS: Something that comes up, which we didn’t touch.

OB: Yeah, thank you very much. You see, I wish Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke to keep up, you know, the spirit of God in him. He has a – many miles to cover, to go in preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. And the only warning I want to send is – people surrounds him, you see – he has to be very careful and more meticulous. Particularly, it seems his director, you know, John Darko particularly …

DS: [?] Lagos, Lagos.

OB: … from Lagos.

DS: Yeah.

OB: He needs to be more meticulous about …

DS: … choosing the people.

OB: … choosing the people.

DS: I agree.

OB: Yes.

DS: I agree, okay.

OB: He has to.

DS: Well, that’s some valuable advice. Now, let’s move on to the second part of the interview, which is concerning the way the crusade was held, the crusade itself.

OB: Yes.

DS: Now, I am looking for the dynamics, also to find out why the people came – the masses of people came. Why they turned to Christ? So, my question would be – the preaching of Reinhard Bonnke, the content of the preaching, does it contribute, did it contribute to – for the masses to come? Did the content of the preaching draw people to come?

OB: Yes. Truly, the content of the preaching actually captures people’s interest and attention. In fact, if you listen to him today, you want to hear more because he uses, you know, words that would be enough to make people believe the true word of God, you know, while preaching.

DS: Now, let me go a step further. Do you believe also that the content of the preaching draws people to turn to Christ?

DS: Okay. Now, what was the topical focuses of his preachings during those days?

OB: He preaches about the Holy Ghost fire. Yes, and he made people to understand that with the Holy Ghost, you know, power in you, you can go, you know, miles, you know, in the Lord. And that there is no power of the devil that can conquer you or overcome you with that strength.

DS: Now, would you say that his message is adapted, was adapted to the culture of Ile-Ife?

OB: Yes. Yeah, exactly. That’s exactly what I was trying to say, when I said that all his analogies, you know, were in line with, you know, the culture and tradition of the people here, and mixed them, you know – belief.

DS: So, they could relate easily?

OB: Exactly.

DS: I’m hearing you.

OB: They could relate this to their personal lives.

DS: Now, Reinhard Bonnke has been accused of [korr. „by”] critics or from a critic, I mean. He was saying that, you know, Reinhard Bonnke preaches more about signs and miracles than he preaches about Calvary. What is your take on that one?

OB: No, he actually preaches – in fact, he preached about Jesus on the Calvary. And in fact, I was at a message where he actually talked about that situation when Jesus was on the Calvary, and he was able to save the thieves [korr. „thief”] on the right hand.

DS: I see.

OB: And you know, that moved people that even at the point of death, people still got saved.

DS: Now, since he adapted the message to the culture, you think it was good to adapt it, right?

OB: Yes, yes.

DS: And is not …

OB: … it was rightly.

DS: … too much? Is not?

OB: No!

DS: Is still the pure gospel.
OB: Is, is, you know – is still preaching the …

DS: … gospel.

OB: … gospel. Yes.

DS: Okay. Now, let’s talk about the healings. That’s a big issue, the healings. Now, in your opinion – now, let me correct that and – I know Reinhard Bonnke is saying, he is not the one doing the miracles. God is the one doing them. He is saying that. But there are people who come to the crusade. Now, in your opinion, how do people perceive him? Did they perceive him as the healer? I’m not saying, he is saying he is, but how people perceive him? Now, what is your take?

OB: Thank you very much. The – you see, there are a lot of miracles that happened during the crusade, which I witnessed myself. For example, there was one chief justice – the former chief justice of this state, he said he was having arthritis. But during the crusade, while Reinhard Bonnke was praying, he touched the leg and the whole thing were moved.

DS: It was genuine.

OB: It was – it was a genuine miracle.

DS: And is still lasting?

OB: And yes, yes, is lasting. I still see the man. He worshipped in my church last Sunday. And the man is still able to walk very well.

DS: Now, did you hear of any fake miracles?

OB: No, no. I’ve never heard about that.

DS: Okay, but how do people perceive him? Is he the healer?

OB: They see him as a man of the great God, an instrument in the hands of God that actually, you know, is a tool for God to use him.

DS: Now, I know Reinhard Bonnke is – he is giving God the glory. How does he do it? In which ways?

OB: The …

DS: How did he do it in Ile-Ife?

OB: Every time he preaches, prays, and miracles happens, he says, “Ho, glory be to God, in the highest. Hallelujah somebody.” And people will shout “Hallelujah.”

DS: So, the people know that he is giving God the glory?

OB: Exactly, exactly. All glories are returned to God.
DS: Okay. Now, let’s move on. In your opinion, did the crusade 2002 contribute to solve problems, social problems, in Ile-Ife, be it directly or indirectly?

OB: Yes, thank you for going to that direction. In fact, it helps a lot to boost the economy of this community. So it, it’s – was able solve certain, some, you know, a lot of social problems.

DS: I understand. I mean, that was just during the time of the crusade.

OB: Exact, even thereafter.

DS: Thereafter also?

OB: So many people were not in starting business, you know. Through the preaching he encouraged them, and they keep, you know, kept, you know, keep it up, and they are still in the business now. And they can adduce their success to Bonnke’s crusade.

DS: Now, is there any statistics being done about crime, or that the crime rate went down, that the poverty level changed? Is there – are you aware of any statistics?

OB: Here? No, no, no.

DS: Yeah, but in your personal experience, in your environment here – or you know people, relatives – have they experienced an improvement?

OB: Definitely there has been an improvement in the style of living of people. There are so many people who, you know, used to be maybe thieves, armed robbers, but through the preaching they got converted and changed completely.

DS: Okay. Now, Reinhard Bonnke is saying that the reason – that the cause of all these problems in Africa, and then Nigeria, and of course in Ile-Ife is Satan himself. Now, how do you think, is that statement helpful for Nigeria? Or should we rather say, “Well, you people must change. It’s your fault.” What is your take on that? Is it Satan’s fault or is it the people’s fault?

OB: Yes, really the devil is the author of confusion. And when things are not going smoothly, we adduce it to the fault of the devil. And he actually said it. You see, once you do not allow for the devil in your heart, you will think positively. And the moment you start, you know, becoming a positive thinker, things starts to change positively for you. So, actually his ministry has really hammered on that.

DS: So, you would say it is no problem to say that Satan is the …

OB: No, no, no, no. Satan is. Yes. Yes, I agree with him.

DS: Now, was the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke socially involved before, prior to the crusade, or afterward, like providing humanitarian aid or starting small skill businesses [korr. „small-scale businesses”] for people, just to help them socially? Or was it just a pure gospel preaching?
OB: It is purely a gospel preaching because he never established any business for people. But he encourages in his preaching that people can go miles if they accept Christ, and are determined to be honest, and be hard working. So, but he never established any business venture, but …

DS: Now, if you would give an advice, like even to me, you know, coming from Europe, being an evangelist, preaching here. Would it be, would it make the evangelism more effective if you add this element to evangelism, providing, you know, some social relief, some, you know …

OB: Yeah, definitely. It will make, you know, in this part of the country – of the world rather, poverty is a thing that we can not put aside. And by the time this kind of social benefits are introduced, definitely more people will want to, you know, believe in God. Yes, it will help the ministry.

DS: Now, let’s move to a different topic now. It’s about the churches, here in Ile-Ife, working with Reinhard Bonnke and with his team. Now, at what point did the church get involved? Did the church invite him? Or did he just come and the church supported? How did it work? I mean, how did it come about?

OB: The church here would be hearing about him preaching in some towns and countries. So, what I heard was that – well, with all these news – people wanted him here. Yes, you know. And he was written and – but in fact, he hoped to have been here before 2002. But he sent that uncle[ss] – that he will come only when the Holy Spirit …

DS: Okay, got it.

[CO im Hintergrund zu hören.]

OB: … has directed, and when, you know, he sensed that he will be coming, it was agreed that it was when the Spirit actually permit. And people have accepted him to come.

DS: Now, once the team came – and he came later also – and they brought their own structure, right? I mean, for organising the crusade, is it so?

OB: Yes.

DS: Now, within that structure – given by Christ for all Nations or by Reinhard Bonnke – within that structure, were the local churches allowed to move freely, to make decisions freely?

OB: Yes. The structure has no effect on the local churches.

DS: I know, I understand. I mean concerning the crusade. I mean, could you, like say, “Well, let’s take that type of music. Let’s” – you know – “let’s use those people …

OB: Yes.
DS: … or these people.”

OB: Yes. Actually he gave us free hand …


OB: … to operate. He gave us free hand to operate …

DS: Within?

OB: … to organise the music committee. We introduced our local music, you know, that will help, you know, to convince the people, you know. I know old and traditional songs, you know, we were allowed, and there was no objection to …

DS: So, it worked out fine?

OB: Na, no.

DS: Yes, yes.

OB: There was a free hand to operate.

DS: Now, there were of course – I believe there was, before he came, there was ongoing evangelistic activity, activities, you know?

OB: Yes.

DS: Churches doing things here and there. Now, how did his crusade fit into that? Was it fitting well? Was it a new thing, or did the people know about crusade evangelism before those days?

OB: You know, because it’s been an – a programme, people have been expecting for so long. When it comes – in fact, almost all the churches had to suspend their programmes.

DS: And they willingly did?

OB: At all.

DS: Okay.

OB: There were – everybody wanted the success of this programme. Because there is this believe that with this crusade more souls should be won, even into the churches. So, people wholeheartedly supported him.

DS: Now, you would not say that the decisions were made only up there somewhere, but you were involved in making decisions?

OB: Exactly.
DS: And you would not say that something was imposed on you?

OB: No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

DS: Now, let’s shortly, just …

OB: There were occasions of objections to what, you know, was in the original plan, and they still reasoned with us. And we go the way, we believe will work out well for the ministry.

DS: Now, let’s talk about the Fire Conference. I know the Fire Conference is geared toward equipping the church workers, right?

OB: Exactly.

DS: Now, did it have an effect on the churches, here in Ile-Ife?

OB: Yes, thank you. That’s another very important aspect. The Fire Conference has helped tremendously to increase the ability of church workers to actually perform in their post, you know, duty stations. And is very, is a helpful programme …

DS: Now, would …

OB: … to recharge the ministers and their workers.

DS: … would you say Reinhard Bonnke should rather put more emphasis on the Fire Conference, and do less crusade?

OB: Oh no. I will prefer the two going together.

DS: Together.

OB: I will prefer the two going together.

DS: And …

OB: It is because by doing that, he will charge the congregation and the workers.

DS: Now, the – is the impact still felt? I mean, it is three years after now, almost three years after now.

OB: Yes.

DS: Is still?

OB: The impact is still there.

DS: Okay now. Anything you want to add at this point concerning the crusade, before we move on?
OB: Well, thank you very much. You see, I just see that Reinhard Bonnke crusade is something that should be encouraged. He’s a man of God who should be supported, and except for few areas, you know, in terms of logistics, where he needs to bring in maybe new ideas, you know, especially in terms of finances. You see, he actually put down the money. His ministry put down the money to finance this. There should not be too much thrown to people, so that they will not see it as a gold mine. So that it will not count against some people. You know the idea of some people, you know. Some people thinking that Bonnke coming is a way of making …

CO: Money.

OB: … money.

DS: Yeah, I understand.

OB: That is just what I have.

DS: That’s good. Very good, thank you. Now, would you – I’ll still continuing on your topic – would you say that crusade evangelism is appropriate in Nigeria?

OB: Yes, yes.

DS: It’s a good way to reach the people.

OB: Exactly.

DS: Okay.

OB: Exactly.

DS: Now, let’s continue now with the third part. We are almost through. The third part is about the people who came, the masses of people. Now, first of all, I mean, there are so many preachers in Nigeria, I mean, evangelists all over.

OB: Yes.

DS: And they preach a, you know, a fiery gospel. Now, why do people prefer to attend the gospel crusades of Reinhard Bonnke? Why is he drawing the biggest crowds here, although he is from Europe? What is the – what are the differences between those two?

OB: You see. I want to see that as a confirmation of a word in the Bible, which says, prophets are really not being honoured in their country.

CO: … country.

OB: You know, Bonnke is a German and, you know, being a white man in the first instance, would have appealed to the conscience of people to want to see more of him than – you know, even Jesus was not really honoured in Nazareth …
DS: Yeah, I’m hearing you.

OB: … his place of birth. I think that is what actually helped. Is not that there is no powerful preacher of the gospel in this country.

DS: That’s what I’m saying. Yeah.

OB: In fact, we have …

DS: Of course.

OB: … very many, like Pastor Adeboye, Pastor Kumuyi, Pastor Bishop Wale Oke, Austin Adeshola, and many more, Pastor Prophet Obadare, Abiara, and many more like that, Bishop [?] Nonuga. But because these people, you see them every day. They live within, you know, we live within the same environment. But people want to see new things from new people.

DS: Could it be that it’s also part of it, that he is white – because he is a white man?

OB: That is …

DS: Does that attract people?

OB: That cannot be ruled out. You see, there this what I can call “white-furiae” here. You see, you see, people – you see, because of the economic situation in this part of this, the world – people believe white people, you know, are more embraced than blacks.

DS: Okay. Now, I’m still looking for some more elements, some more reasons why people are drawn more to Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade. Now, one question would be now, you know – now, in your opinion, did the style of preaching, Reinhard Bonnke’s style – he has a unique style; he preaches dramatically …

OB: Yes.

DS: … does that also draw people, to the crowd?

OB: Yes, that is very, very important. In fact, in any preacher – your disposition to the discharge of the gospel matters. Bonnke preaches with all might and energy, with all his body. In fact, demonstrating on the stage, he will be – in fact, that alone captures the interest of many people. So, I think that adds more colour to his style of preaching.

DS: And also entertains the people.

OB: Exactly, exactly.

DS: And it draws people.

OB: It draws people. People want to see more of it.
DS: Could it also be that some people are drawn by the music performance in the prelude, I mean, the nice music played?

OB: Yes, yes.

DS: You know its entertaining.

OB: You know, music is the soul of religion. People here, especially in this part of the world, we love music. And anything that can give us very good reason, we want to hear more of such a thing.

DS: One last aspect, I want to just touch here, is – do you also believe that his use of the gifts of the spirit contribute to the drawing [of] the crowd? Like he is functioning in the gift of healing, and also word of knowledge, and maybe other gifts. You may know even better than I do. But do you believe that aspect is also drawing people?

OB: Yes. You see, thank God you mentioned some other gifts, beside the gift of healing. In fact, to be evangelistic in nature is a gift.

DS: Yes.

OB: In fact, that I want to say is what endears people more to Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke. You know, there is a difference between an evangelist and a pastor.

DS: Yes.

OB: You see? So, an evangelist – you know, to be an evangelist is a good gift. I think he has that gift that really helps, you know, even beside healing and other aspects.

DS: Now, let me move a bit further. Would you also say that the use of these gifts, not only draws the crowds, but also leads people to turn to Christ?

OB: Yes, that’s exactly what I mean. That’s exactly what I mean. He uses the gift of, you know, evangelist very well. That is enough to draw people to Christ.

DS: Now, I’m coming to the last set of questions now, and I will talk about people who turn to Christ, you know, made a commitment to follow Christ. Now, can you say that the crusade in 2002 contributed measurably to the church growth in numbers, here in Ile-Ife?

OB: Yes, you are correct. It actually contributed to the church growth in this ancient Ife city.

DS: So.

OB: Actually, because the lives of the people were never the same again, after the crusade. People have not been attending their churches; they now have a change of heart. They started to attend, and some of the souls that were won, you know, during the crusade – in fact, they were returned back to their churches. And because – since, you know, the end of that crusade, I have never heard that Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s church is at somewhere. So he’s doing that to help the church growth.
DS: Now, did your church also grow?

OB: Yeah. Exactly, it actually – yes.

DS: In numbers.

OB: It has, it has affect on my church, yes.

DS: Okay. Now, in your opinion – just give a guess, an estimate – in your opinion, how many of those people who attended the crusades, how many of them were born-again Christians, I mean, church members, faithful church members before the crusade?

OB: There is no gain saying that, in the fact that not less than about eight hundred thousand will have been born-again before the crusade.

DS: Give a percentage. How much would it be about?

OB: That will be about, say 24 percent.

DS: Okay, about 24 percent.

OB: Yes.

DS: Who were already born-again or …

OB: … before the crusade.

DS: Before the crusade. Okay, interesting.

OB: Right – now.

DS: Now, now, you’ve been involved, I mean, in the committees and so. Now, could it happen that, let’s say one person comes to make a decision, to fill out a decision card. It comes today, that person, and fills out the decision card – is counted. Now, tomorrow the same person comes again, fills out a second decision card. Next day again. So, that person might be counted three or four times. Could that happen?

OB: No, that was not actually allowed.

DS: I understand. But, I mean, could it happen?

OB: Well, it will happen, you know people – human beings are unpredictable, you know. You can’t stop, you know – you can, but still some people will play a kind of pranks. But is not common during that …

DS: But, I mean – now, were there any measures taken to prevent that?
OB: Yes, there was. Because there was a part, you know, of a book that you will fill, you know, if you are giving your life to Christ for the first time. The counsellors will have books, given to the counsellors. This book was printed by the Reinhard Bonnke team. So, you fill your name, address, and some other important information through which people can reach out to you for follow-up, you know. This – the area where I will want to speak again. The shortcoming of Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade was, there was no serious follow-up …

DS: I’m hearing you.

OB: … after the crusade. And they should be taking care of …

DS: But isn’t that the task of the churches, I mean, local churches?

OB: It should usually – normally it should be the task of the churches.

DS: Yes.

OB: Maybe there was no perfection at that end, before the start of the crusade.

DS: Now, let me get back to the numbers again. Let’s say the person comes, and I know that the counsellors were – they had divisions. There were about a thousand divisions …

OB: Yes.

DS: … groups. Now, let’s say I come to one division and I fill out a decision card. He puts it in the book. Next day I go to decision [korr. „division“] 345 somewhere and fill out another decision card. How will they know?

OB: You see.

DS: Nobody will know.

OB: There is usually frequent announcement that if you are giving life, your life to Christ, you know. Now, okay, those who have given their lives to Christ yesterday, you know, this call is not for you again. We are looking for, you know, fresh people.

DS: Fresh people.

OB: Yes, who are giving their lives. And through that, I think, such a anomaly was been coped.

DS: To some extend.

OB: To some extend.

DS: Yes, yes, yes.

OB: To some extend.
DS: Now, as I understood from other interviews and so on, there is — people come, when the altar call is being made, people come also for reasons other than salvation.

OB: Yes, yes.

DS: For some to receive their books or their healing, and so on.

OB: Yeah.

DS: Now, what would your — just estimate, your guess be — of those people who come, how many of them are coming for reasons other than receiving Christ? — Just a guess.

OB: Because, you know, some people, after the altar call, will come for maybe healing, maybe a change in their life style.

DS: And they still fill out the card.

OB: That will be. Yes, they still have the card.

DS: That’s what I’m saying.

OB: And that percentage will be, maybe about — that cannot be more than about, say 12 percent of the congregation.

DS: Who have come for reasons other than receiving Christ?

OB: Yes, other reasons, other reasons.

DS: So, that means some of the people who come, they fill out decision cards.

OB: Exactly.

DS: And they never really accept Christ. They really want something else.

OB: Something else, yes.

DS: Okay. Now, we never know, right — never know who did what. Okay, so the follow-up was one thing. You would say that the Reinhard Bonnke crusade would — should be stronger on follow-up?

OB: Exactly, exactly, on follow-up, on follow-up.

DS: Okay, thank you.

OB: For the saved souls.

DS: Saved souls. Is there anything you want to just add for a young minister, like myself — ministers from Europe, let’s say coming over to Nigeria, maybe even to Ile-Ife? Some things
we should consider, you say we should know. Maybe some good advice from your side because you are one from …

OB: Yes.

DS: … you are a native person here.

OB: Yes. Thank you very much. You see, the unity of the body of Christ is one thing that should be taking concrescence of. That – like we have the Christian Association of Nigeria here. Any ministry that is coming here to organise any crusade should take that body …

DS: The CAN.

OB: Yes. CAN, you know. He should carry them along because they are the megaphone for all Christian bodies.

DS: Now, I mean, I understand if Reinhard Bonnke comes, he was working with the NAC, but – CAN – NAC.

OB: CAN.

DS: CAN.

OB: Is the CAN.

DS: CAN.

OB: Or PFN.

DS: Or PFN, right. But I mean, let’s say there is some ministry somewhere coming to Nigeria – he is not going to contact the CAN – but some advice for the small minister.

OB: Well, the small ministries coming, we still accept. I do not know their logistics, but if they are coming to organise open air crusade …

DS: Yes.

OB: … it would be better for them to carry along the CAN.

DS: Still, even small …

OB: So that it will be able – because it is this people that will bring out their church members from, you know. So that they might not – because you can’t force people to join churches, but by the time you carry them along, you will evangelise these people. But it will bring people …

DS: … people to the …
OB: … from outside. It is this same people that will bring those people, who are yet to be saved.

DS: Yes, yes. Well, that sounds – it was very helpful, yes. CAN, you have to.

OB: Yes, yes.

DS: Now, just before I finish, is there any press release, any newspaper saved from that time, with some references to the crusade? You have any of them? I’m just asking, just …

OB: Yes, there are.

DS: There are, okay.

OB: There are. There are releases, intermittently, you know. Before the crusade, we sent releases to radio stations, to television stations, and then so, so, so. There are – yes, I can still …

DS: Who would be the person I should contact to do that, to get the releases or maybe reports that …

OB: You know, we – before the crusade there was what we called the publicity committee.

DS: Oh that’s the one we – the man we interviewed first, I think, was it. Yes, I'll ask him.

OB: Publicity committee.

DS: Yes, we interviewed him. He was the head of – the chairman, I think, of that committee. Okay, that’s the one to ask. Yeah.

OB: So the …

DS: Thank you.

OB: Yeah.

DS: That’s right. Okay then, that was about it. That’s it, yes. Thank you so much for your time Rev. …

OB: Oyedeji.

DS: Oyedeji.

OB: Yeah.

DS: And may God bless you and your ministry.

CO: Before we conclude …

OB: I’m happy to have you here.

DS: Thank you.

CO: Rev. Oyedeji, you were telling him that Bonnke doesn’t look out for money from anybody.

OB: At all.

CO: He finances the …

OB: He finances it all.

CO: But where did the offering, gathered during the …

OB: Yes, the offerings, gathered during the crusade, was returned back to the CAN.

CO: CAN.

OB: CAN.

[CO sagt leise etwas.]

DS: Thank you.

OB: CAN.

DS: And they did distribute it to the churches?

OB: Yeah. No, you see, CAN is an umbrella body for all the Christians. They have – we have other things we use money for. Thank God I’m an executive of that CAN. So, we use it to support some other crusades and some – you know, like we have now, what we call the Holy Land, where the Bonnke crusade was held. We have just acquired that place for future crusades. So, the maintenance of that Holy Land, we use such money for it.

DS: Okay, we just – there was a question by Pastor Ogunniyi here, and Rev. just answered. The question was, where the money goes, which was collected during the crusade …

CO: During the crusade.

DS: … and the priest has just. I’m sorry, Rev. …

OB: Oyedeji.

DS: Oyedeji. I’m sorry for that. But he has just answered that it went back to the CAN. The Christian, no Christian …
OB: Christian Association …

DS: Association …

CO: Association …

OB: … of Nigeria.

DS: … of Nigeria.

CO: … of Nigeria.

DS: Okay. Thank you.

OB: You have my pleasure. Is – is nice to have you here.

DS: Yes.
2.9 Interview mit Rev. Moses Adebolu Adetunmbi

2.9.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: Moses Adebolu Adetunmbi
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 15.10.05
Denomination: Anglican Church
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Member of the board of trustees
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/ Werk: Provost of the Cathedral Church of Saint Philip Ayetoro

Bemerkungen:

2.9.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: Now, we are here at – in Ile-Ife, at Saint Philip’s. No, at Cathedral Church of Saint Philip, and I’m interviewing the provost Adetunmbi. Okay. Thank you. Well, thank you for the time, and I’ll be talking about Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade in Ile-Ife. And I’ll be asking questions about his person, then about the way he conducted the crusade, and about the people that came to the crusade in Ile-Ife, in 2002. Now, before we start, you’ve answered that question, but still – which denomination do you belong to?

MA: I belong to the Anglican Church.

DS: Anglican Church. Now, what is your general attitude toward the evangelistic ministry of Reinhard Bonnke in Nigeria? Is it positive, neutral, negative, or something in between?

MA: It is positive.

DS: It is positive. Now, I want to ask you a few questions about Reinhard Bonnke now. When you think of Reinhard Bonnke, what is the first thing that comes to your mind about his characteristic traits, as a person? What would you say, just …

MA: Well, I believe he’s – from my own point of view, he’s called by God, and he doesn’t want to be selfish. He wants to make sure that gospel gets to the grass root.

DS: Would it be the right term to say he is a humble man?
MA: Very, very humble. And we – because he is endowed, but he does not allow that to enter into his head. So very, very humble, unlike other ministers who will look down on people.

DS: Now, there are – there has never been, you know, any, any – we never heard about Reinhard Bonnke misappropriating any funds. So, I’m just saying, does that also count for Ile-Ife?

MA: Well, why should anybody think he misappropriate funds, when the man was using his money to propagate the gospel? So, he was out, he was out just to win souls. He was not out for material gains. If he was out for material gain, he wouldn’t have spent his money.

DS: So he is an …

MA: For the crusade in Ife, millions were spent by him.

DS: So, you would say he’s an honest man.

MA: Is very honest.

DS: Now, some critics they say, “Well, Reinhard Bonnke is just pronouncing false prophecies.” What has your experience been in Ile-Ife?

MA: Well, that is to them. Because the little I knew of Bonnke, I could access him to be a man of God.

DS: Now …

MA: A true servant of God.

DS: Now, the prophecies he made, are they coming true in Ile-Ife?

MA: Seriously.

DS: Which ones would you mean, for example?

MA: You see, many people were healed during the crusade, and he even prophesied healing on our land, and we are seeing that.

DS: You are seeing that, here in Ile-Ife?

MA: Yes, yes.

DS: Thank you. And now, you as a provost and also as a Nigerian citizenship – no, citizen, how do you evaluate the friendship of Reinhard Bonnke to president Obasanjo? Is it helpful to the gospel, and in which ways, if it is?

MA: Well, well, well, well, I wouldn’t be able to say much on that. But I believe as an international crusader, wherever he goes, he has to pay a courtesy call of who ever is the head of state. And it is their duty also to make sure they pray for the nation, which I believe he did.
And when you are praying for the nation, you have to pray for those at the aim of affairs, which he did. So, I wouldn’t say maybe his, I mean, his friendship with Obasanjo was cordial or not cordial, but he was acceptable to everyone in Nigeria.

DS: Now, let’s talk a little bit about the advertisement. Now, can you remember what was the focus of the advertisement, for the crusade in Ile-Ife? On what was the focus, I mean, which topic? Which theme?

MA: No, they didn’t give us any.

DS: I mean, was it on healing? Was it on salvation? Was it Reinhard Bonnke? Was it on miracles?

MA: It was not on miracles, but it was on healing.

DS: On healing?

MA: Healing.

DS: Okay.

MA: So, that is why many people, even from all walks of life, came to Ife.

DS: For the healing.

MA: Yes.

DS: Now, the things, which were advertised and promised to the people, were they kept? Or did the crusade even – was the crusade even more than expected? – I mean.

MA: It was more than expected, more than expected. And from Reinhard Bonnke’s statement also, at the crusade ground, he even confirmed that he has been going on crusade – that of Ife was exceptional.

DS: Now, after the crusade was over, I mean, there were reports about the crusade.

MA: Yes.

DS: You may have heard some or read some. In those reports, did you find exaggerations, or was it truthful?

MA: No, I cannot say there were exaggerations, because these were things that people saw physically – people who saw it physically. Those who were healed, there wasn’t any camouflage for their healing. They received the healing. So, it was not an exaggeration.

DS: Now, we are about to finish the first part. Is there anything you want to add about the person of Reinhard Bonnke, which we didn’t touch? – Anything you want to just say.

MA: Well, is just an advise that he should not tarry in doing good things.
DS: Thank you.

MA: The God, I mean, the Lord has committed that assignment for him, in this end time. He should continue in that motive.

DS: Thank you. Let me stop here.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Okay, we are continuing with part two. Now, I’m trying to find out the dynamics behind the success of Reinhard Bonnke. Of course, the Holy Spirit is involved in that, but, I mean, there are some other dynamics which make his crusade successful. Now, do you think that the content of Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching …

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: So, we are continuing now. Now, do you believe that the content of his preaching helped to draw the masses, and also helped for people to turn to Christ? – I mean, the content of the message.

MA: Yes, it did.

DS: It did. In which ways?

MA: Because he preached salvation gospel.

DS: So, that is the reason.

MA: And people were touched that they have to give their lives to Christ. Because he even narrated that he, as a German, was not accepted. His gospel was not accepted, but the Lord has ordered him to go to Africa.

DS: That’s right, yes.

MA: So, he challenged us that we should give our lives to Christ. With that – a live without Christ will be full of crises. And many people were turned to Christ.

DS: So, you believe that the content of the message is also what really draws people to come, and also to receive Christ?

MA: Yes, yes.

DS: Now, can you remember the focus of his messages? What was he focusing on, in those days?
MA: On those days it was focused on gospel and on salvation.

DS: Salvation.

MA: And apart from salvation, it bordered on leaving idolism [korr. „idolatry”].

DS: Leaving what?

MA: Leaving, leaving idolism [korr. „idolatry”]. You know, in this area of the Third World we believe so much in fetishes.

DS: Okay, yeah.

MA: So, and many people, even idolaters, they turned to Christ forsaking their idol worshipping. Yeah.

DS: So, to what extend did Reinhard Bonnke adapt to the culture her in Ile-Ife? Was it adapted?

MA: He adapted it, and he spoke to the needs of the people …

DS: And you think …

MA: … touching on their lives.

DS: And you think that contributed to the fact that so many people turned to Christ?

MA: Yes.

DS: Now, that adaptation that he did, you think it was good, wasn’t it?

MA: It was.

DS: And he did not go too far? It was still the pure gospel, wasn’t it?

MA: He was saying the truth, the true gospel.

DS: But in an adapted way.

MA: Yes.

DS: Now, some critics, they accuse Reinhard Bonnke of preaching more about signs and wonders than about Calvary.

MA: Yeah.

DS: What is your take on that one, for Ile-Ife?
MA: For signs and wonders?

DS: That he is preaching more on signs and wonders than on Calvary.

MA: Well, I don’t see anything bad in that. I don’t see anything bad in that, because when we are talking about signs and wonders, we discover that people are having problems internally, that they have no solution to. And the only solution lies in Christ Jesus.

DS: So, you would say that …

MA: When somebody, when somebody is healed, you know, definitely he will give his life to Christ. If he is a Muslim or idol worshipper, by the time that, I mean, Christ addressed his problem, you know, he will surrender all to him.

DS: So, you would say …

MA: It is a way [?] winning souls for Christ.

DS: So, you would say to preach a message about miracles and wonders, can also be an evangelistic message – a gospel message?

MA: Yes, yes.

DS: Because it ties in?

MA: It's a “ties in”, and it will lead them to Christ.

DS: Now, lets talk a little bit about the healings.

MA: Yeah.

DS: Now, I’m asking – I know that Reinhard Bonnke is saying, he is not the one doing the miracles – is God doing them.

MA: Is God.

DS: Yes.

MA: Yes.

DS: But in the eyes of the people, here in Ile-Ife – help me understand the people – was he the healer? – In the eyes of the people, I’m not saying that he …

MA: Yeah.

DS: … he is saying that.

MA: You know, when God has commissioned somebody to do a work, and is faithful to that work, the Lord will multiply the work in his hands. That is the case with Reinhard Bonnke.
And people don’t see him as the one doing the miracle, but the person that sent him. That is so [?]

DS: Okay. So, you believe people understood that it was not …

MA: Yes, yeah.

DS: … Reinhard Bonnke.

MA: No. They don’t.

DS: Now, how did Reinhard Bonnke divert the glory back to God? How did he, you know?

MA: No, he always say it. That has always been his stand. He doesn’t attribute, he doesn’t attribute anything, any glory to himself, but to Christ who answered.

DS: And he was saying that in the crusade?

MA: Yes, [?]

DS: Very clear?

MA: Yes, very clear.

DS: Now, some critics again, they say, “Well, his miracles are not genuine; they are not lasting.”

MA: Well …

DS: What is your experience?

MA: … that is their own assessment. It depends, it depends.

DS: Now, but what was your …

MA: The way it is – the way I look at him may be different from the way other people will look at him.

DS: No, I understand. But I mean in your opinion, those miracles, were they genuine?

MA: They were.

DS: And lasting.

MA: They were.

DS: Okay, the next set of question. In your opinion, since you are a provost of a parish.

MA: Yeah.
DS: In your opinion, did the gospel crusade in 2002 contribute to the solution of social problems in Ile-Ife, be it directly or indirectly?

MA: Yes …

DS: And in which ways?

MA: … it contributed. It contributed because at least many people were turned to Christ. And that – first they give their lives to Christ – that will reflect on the social life of the people. The way they lived their lives before was different from the way they’re now living their lives.

DS: So, you would say there is an indirect …

MA: It was …

DS: … solution.

MA: … direct solution.

DS: Direct solution.

MA: Yes, not indirect.

DS: Now, is there any statistics, if you know about, that is saying that the crime rate went down, or that the poverty was lessened?

MA: Well, that cannot be once and for all affairs, you understand? It is not every human race, that was present at that crusade. So – but those who were there gave their lives totally and wholly to Christ. But we still had some people that did not come, I mean, attend the thing. So, those people will still continue in their evil ways.

DS: But, in your …

MA: But at least – at least overwhelming percentage were present. And that has caused a positive effect on the social life of these people.

DS: Okay. Let’s move on now. Reinhard Bonnke is saying that the cause of those social problems in Africa, Nigeria, let’s say Ile-Ife – the cause really is Satan. But to say that, you think that is helpful? Or is it counterproductive? Should he rather say, “Well, you people, it is – you must change.” What is your take on that one?

MA: A guest – no, he has to. That is his gospel. We have been preaching things, but this now coming from a European missionary, they will take it because we just see him as a symbol of Christ.

DS: But you think it is helping the country?

MA: It is.
DS: To say that it is Satan’s fault, he is not doing any …

MA: Satan’s fault?

DS: Yes, for all the crises here.

MA: Well, that is African way of thinking.

DS: That’s what I’m saying. Yeah.

MA: Yes.

DS: Yes.

MA: That is African way of thinking.

DS: So, that statement fits right into …

MA: … that statement

DS: … your understanding.

MA: Yes. Because they believe that anything evil is associated with devil.

DS: But does it help the country? Or should he rather say, “Well, people you must change.”

MA: Well, if – let me tell you for instance, if somebody went to somewhere and stole some things, and is caught, and is charged to court. When he gets to court, they will ask him, “Are you guilty or not?” He will say, “I am guilty, but it is devil’s fault.”

DS: Yes, that’s what I’m saying. But …

MA: But the gospel has made us to realise that you must change from being devil to being Christ.

DS: True.

MA: So that we have – as second Corinthians five, seventeen says – that those who are in Christ should become a new creature.

DS: That’s it.

MA: So, you have to say bye-bye to all things.

DS: Okay. Now, before the crusade or even after the crusade, was Reinhard Bonnke and his ministry involved in any social projects, here in Ile-Ife? I mean, like humanitarian aid, starting small skill businesses [korr. „small-scale businesses”] for people, or anything like that.
DS: Now, let's say a young minister comes from Europe.

MA: Yeah.

DS: And is intending to holding gospel crusades, and he would add this aspect to his ministry. Let’s say he would do also social, you know – solving social problems.

MA: It will be welcomed.

DS: Yes. Would …

MA: Because it will address the social needs of the people.

DS: Would you say it would make evangelism more effective?

MA: Very, very, because through that you will be – you are speaking to their needs. If somebody is not having a job, and you come – please come, we provide you a job. They will not forget you. If somebody is in needs – doesn’t think of how to get something to eat a day – and you are able to provide for him or her, they will not forget. So, is part of evangelism.

DS: Part of it, yeah. So, it would be good to add that into his programme.

MA: Yes, yes.

DS: Now, since you are a provost, I’m asking the right person now. I want to talk about how the collaboration worked here, between the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke and the churches in Ile-Ife – how they worked together.

MA: Well …

DS: Now …

MA: Yeah?

DS: Let me ask the first question. Number one – at what point did Reinhard Bonnke contact the churches? Or let me ask if differently. Did the church invite him? Or did he say, “I’m coming – would you like to join?” – You know.

MA: Well, we did not. Because at the initial stage we were eager to have him. But then we were told, Reinhard Bonnke will not go to any city, besides state capitals. So, by the time he came to Oshogbo, we all rushed to Oshogbo. And it was later, we now discovered, he was going to cities outside the state capitals. So, he came to Ilesa and we now said, "Well, one day he will come to Ife." So, as the Lord would have it, we were just communicated that Bonnke
will be visiting Ife. And we thank God for it. So, it was a collaboration between the CfaN members and our own chapter here, too.

DS: Now, once …

MA: And we worked hand in hand.

DS: Once the ministry came now, the CfaN members – the CfaN team came, and they provided a certain structure, I mean.

MA: Yeah.

DS: They ordered you to start committees and stuff.

MA: Yes.

DS: Now, within those committees, were you free to make your own decisions?

MA: Why not? Why not? Because we were holding our own meetings, only feeded [korr. „fed“] them back. This is our decision. This is what we think you should do, and all the rest. In fact, it was we that decided on where to hold the crusade.

DS: The location.

MA: Yes, the location.

DS: So, you would say it was not just Reinhard Bonnke’s project. It was as well your project as …

MA: Yes.

DS: … churches, here in Ile-Ife?

MA: Yes, yes.

DS: Now, considering that the churches had ongoing evangelistic activities before Reinhard Bonnke came.

MA: Yeah.

DS: Now, let me ask you, how did his crusade fit into that ongoing evangelistic …

MA: Well, before Reinhard Bonnke came, we have been having so many crusades.

DS: You have not been having?

MA: We have been having.

DS: You have been having it. Okay.
MA: Even of – but not of international, like that one. But we have been having. And even after Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade, we have been having, too.

DS: So …

MA: We just finished one yesterday. We are having another one in November, and in fact, this year we’ve had about four.

DS: So, crusades. The – I mean, doing evangelism through crusade evangelism is – was common. It’s common here?

MA: Well, it has to be common because we still have those who are yet to believe in Christ.

DS: But, I mean, the way of doing it, has it been common before Reinhard Bonnke came?

MA: It was common. But the way we had that of Bonnke was quite different.

DS: Different.

MA: It was super.

DS: We talk about that later. Very good. Okay. Did Reinhard Bonnke or his ministry in any way leave the impression on you that they were imposing something on you?

MA: No.

DS: Okay. So it was your project, and you felt like it is your crusade as well. Let’s talk briefly about the Fire Conference. Now, I understand that the Fire Conference is geared toward equipping church workers.

MA: Yes.

DS: Now, in your experience, did it – was it effective?

MA: It was effective, highly effective.

DS: In which ways? – I mean.

MA: Because it was able to challenge us, as ministers of God, to stay in our calling.

DS: So, is there a lasting impact?

MA: Yes, it was a lasting impact because even today, we still make reference to it, and the theme has become permanent in the life of every minister of God.

DS: Now, would you say that the Fire Conference should be extended?

MA: To what?
DS: I mean, to a longer period. I mean, would you prefer to have less crusade and more Fire Conference, or vice versa?

MA: No, I wouldn’t say we should have less crusade, because we even advocate for more days of the crusade.

DS: Crusade.

MA: Like extending it to maybe about seven days. So that it will be a good crusade, and out of which we can have five days ministers’ Fire Conference.

DS: Okay, yeah. I’m hearing you. Okay, that was part two. Now, let’s move on to part three. We are going to talk about the people now, who came to the crusade.

MA: Yeah.

DS: Yes. We’re almost done. Now, here in Nigeria – here, there are so many preachers here, I mean, evangelists who are preaching, you know, with fire. Now, why are people coming especially to Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade? What is so special about him that he is drawing the biggest masses? What is the dynamics behind that? Help me understand.

MA: One can not precisely say. But one thing I believe is, even when Jesus Christ was alive, people were trooping out to him. I can say maybe because of the signs and wonders – because people were looking for signs and wonders, and they were seeing it.

DS: So, could we say that signs and wonders – or let me put it differently – that working the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, like using the gift of healing, word of knowledge, does that draw the people? Did that draw the people?

MA: It did.

DS: It did. So, its one of the dynamics drawing people to a crusade.

MA: Yes, is signs and wonders. And secondly, some people were registering for the Fire Conference because they learned, there will be free distribution of Bibles.

DS: Of Bibles, okay.

MA: And Books.

DS: So, did it also drew people?

MA: Yeah.

DS: Now, could it be that the fact, that he is a white man is also drawing people?

MA: No, we have got many white man, you know. But the – his whole strategy differs from other men.
DS: Now, I’m still looking for the dynamics. You mentioned a few – the books. You mentioned the miracles. Now, what about his style of preaching? He preaches uniquely.

MA: His style of preaching is unique.

DS: And do you think …

MA: And people …

DS: … that draws people?

MA: … and people. Yes, and people could hear him very well.

DS: Do you mean the pronunciation?

MA: Yes, the pronunciation and even the message was.

DS: So, would you say he is entertaining people? People …

MA: Yes.

DS: … liking it.

MA: Yes, people loved him. Even when he comes every year, we will welcome him.

DS: Okay. Now, could it also be that one of the dynamics is that the Christian music, that is played, that is drawing people to come?

MA: Yeah, it is part of it.

DS: Part of it.

MA: Yeah.

DS: Okay.

MA: And even his budgets, and the crusade is self-sponsorship.

DS: Okay, the sponsorship.

MA: Yes. Because he didn’t impose anything on us. He didn’t say, “Go and bring this; go and bring that.” Everything was sponsored by himself.

DS: Okay. Now, would you say that using spiritual gifts again, it not only draws the masses, but also helps people to turn to Christ?

MA: Yes.
DS: Okay, you agree on that one.

MA: Yeah.

DS: Okay. Now, the last set of questions. Now, can you say that the crusade in 2002 measurably contributed to church growth in numbers?

MA: Well, maybe, maybe in terms of membership of the churches. Yes, because lot of people who gave their lives to Christ belong to one denomination or the other. But since the 2002 crusade we have also had some people who are self-founders, founding their own churches. That is not an offshoot of Bonnke’s crusade. That is out of their own imaginary, selfish end.

DS: So, would you say it was …

MA: So, but …

DS: … still church growth?

MA: … but it assisted us in church growth because it lessened our burden of touching, I mean, we are trying to win over some of them, so.

DS: So, or could we rather say that Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade maybe was a revival for the church, rather …

MA: It was.

DS: Yes.

MA: It was a revival for the church.

DS: Now, more a revival or more church growth? What would you say?

MA: More of revival.

DS: Revival. Okay.

MA: Which now transmitted to church growth.

DS: Later on.

MA: Later on.

DS: I see. So, since the church was revived, people became active …

MA: Yes.

DS: … and started winning souls.

MA: Yes.
DS: Okay. Now, in your opinion, just give me an estimate, just a guess. How many of those people who came to the crusade – I mean the masses now – how many of them have been Christians, I mean, true believers, church members before the crusade? – A percentage, a guess.

MA: Percentage? Maybe we say forty.

DS: Forty of them – percentage – that were already faithful Christians.

MA: Yeah.

DS: I’m not talking about nominal Christians.

MA: I know.

DS: Okay.

MA: Maybe forty.

DS: Forty. Okay. Let’s move on now. Now, once the people are called to receive Christ, to turn to Christ, they come and they fill out the decision card.

MA: Yes.

DS: Now, could it be that some people come, and they fill out the decision card today. They come tomorrow; do the same, and the next day again. And so they are counted three or four times. Could that happen?

MA: No, we cannot rule out that. But we always tell them that once you give your life to Christ first, you don’t need to do it on and on again. So, if that happened, it will be minimal.

DS: Are there any measures, you know, to …

MA: We did …

DS: … to prevent that.

MA: … yes. Yes. We had ushers who were monitoring. And then they sat down to look through the decisions slips, so that, I mean, so that we can know those people that comes from a particular area – zone. So, you just give those people in that area the decision slip to follow up.

DS: But, I mean, they have already been counted before that.

MA: Yes.

DS: That’s what I’m saying.
MA: Yes.

DS: So, the numbers have been there before they are …

MA: Yeah, before they. Yes.

DS: Before changing the …

MA: Changing.

DS: … corrected numbers.

MA: Yeah.

DS: Yes. Okay. Now, the numbers counted, are they the ones published? I mean, what I’m trying to get at is …

MA: Well, I wouldn’t say, because I’m not – I was not in the ushering department. For we asked them to submit the names, the list. So, I don’t know if those lists were published or not.

DS: Okay. Because, I mean – I know there were huge crowds coming there, and it was so difficult to find out where the person is.

MA: We only guessed. We could not guess, I mean, state specifically the number that was there.

DS: Okay.

MA: Yeah.

DS: Yeah, but I mean, even people who came to Christ, there were big numbers.

MA: Yeah.

DS: And how, how, I mean, how can you control? How can you know that this person, you know – I have heard that they had divisions made for counselling. I think they had counselling groups – they had.

MA: Yeah.

DS: On the ground there, I think. Didn’t?

MA: Yeah.

DS: Yes. Now, let’s say I came today and made a decision in group one.

MA: Yeah.

DS: And they put down my name. Next day, I go and make a decision in group 346.
MA: No, no, no, we had a means of detecting that.

DS: Okay.

MA: Yeah.

DS: But …

MA: Because all the group leaders would meet to share their experiences, and to compare their lists as well.

DS: But, I was told that …

MA: Except, except they were changing names. But if it’s the same name and the same address, they will discover it.

DS: But I was told, there were about thousand groups.

MA: Yes.

DS: Now, how can thousands groups, I mean, sit down and, you know …

MA: No, they met. They met later.

DS: … compare.

MA: They met.

DS: Later.

MA: Because we had overall head, in charge of that thing, that they will submit their reports to. So, the zonal heads now met later.

DS: Later. Now, how – when would that be? Like a week later, or? – I mean.

MA: I think it was two weeks after.

DS: After the crusade. Now, did the correct numbers still get back to Reinhard Bonnke’s …

MA: I should think so. You know I said, I did not …

DS: You didn’t know. I understand. I understand. Yes, yes. Now, one of the last questions now is – I heard that some of the people were coming to fill out decision cards – some of them coming with motives other than receiving Christ, I mean. Some may come, as you said, just maybe to receive a book, maybe for a blessing. Give me an estimate. Give me a guess. Of those people who came to receive, to fill out a decision card – how many of them came for reasons other than salvation?
MA: You know, many people came. You know that report.

DS: No, but I mean, the ones who filled out the cards …

MA: No, I cannot, because I don’t – I didn’t belong to that area.

DS: Okay. But you, I mean, you know the people. You wouldn’t give a guess or an estimate?

MA: Even those who said they came for salvation …

DS: Yes.

MA: … were also looking for books.

DS: Okay.

MA: Even pastors.

DS: Okay. That’s what I’m saying. They are saved, that’s just …

MA: Yes, pastors. Because we realised even after the crusade …

DS: Yes.

MA: … many things that have been said …

DS: That’s what I’m saying, so …

MA: … when the books didn’t arrive.

DS: So, pastors filled out a card …

MA: Yes.

DS: … just to receive one.

MA: To receive the books.

DS: So, how many of them, you think?

MA: The – you may – can say 90 percent.

DS: Ninety. Okay.

MA: Percent, 90 percent of all who came for the Fire Conference.

DS: Now, for the Fire Conference – now, how much would that be, of the people, the crowd that came …
MA: The crowd?

DS: I mean, I mean, the …

MA: Because the crowd were too many.

DS: Yeah, I mean, the crowd that came to receive Christ, that filled out decision cards.

MA: Yeah.

DS: How many of them? I’m not talking about Fire Conference, I mean.

MA: Okay.

DS: The people who came, that filled out decision cards. How many of them would …

MA: Because we learned, more than two hundred thousand people filled the decision slip that they gave their lives to Christ.

DS: And how many of them, you would say were …

MA: I can’t say.

DS: You can’t say. Okay. Yes. Now, would you say the follow-up is the responsibility of Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry? Or is it the responsibility of the local churches here?

MA: Well, if Reinhard Bonnke supported it, it would be part of his ministry. But we believe he has done his own and gone back. And the next thing for us, as local chapter, is to follow up these people, so that they don’t go back …

DS: Yes.

MA: … to what they, I mean, they were doing before. So, it was our own responsibility.

DS: Responsibility. Now, just to be asking now, the last question is – like for a ministry coming from Europe, like myself – I’m an evangelist.

MA: Yeah.

DS: I’ve been preaching here before, in Nigeria. Now, is there any advice you, as a provost, would give me? Things we maybe haven’t touched so far – an advice you can give me to – I should pay attention to, coming here to minister.

MA: Well, if you are coming here to minister, you have to know the person you believe in. Because you have to preach Christ and him crucified. And secondly, as I said, you have to address the needs of the people because you know there is poverty in Nigeria. And then before you can win somebody’s soul, you have to provide for him as well.

DS: Now, does …
MA: So, that would be part of it. It may not be through direct means. It will be an indirect means.

DS: But if somebody provide, let’s say humanitarian aid, you know, helping people. Wouldn’t that, you know – I mean, wouldn’t that make people just come for the bread, instead of for Christ?

MA: No, no. It is once you have won them to Christ, you provide for them.

DS: Okay, afterwards.

MA: Yes, afterwards.

DS: Okay. Now, thank you provost Adetunmbi. Thank you so much for your time, and for allowing us to interfere with your daily affairs.


DS: Thank you. God bless you and your ministry.

MA: God bless you, too.

DS: Thank you.
2.10 Interview mit Rev. Richard Olukoya Obafemi

2.10.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

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<td>Ort des Interviews:</td>
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<td>Datum des Interviews:</td>
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<td>Vicar/archdeacon of the St. Matthews Anglican, Ile-Ife</td>
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2.10.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: Now, we are here at Rev. Oba …

RO: Venerable Obafemi.

DS: Venerable Obafemi’s church, which is St. Matthews Anglican church in …

RO: Eleyele, Ife.

DS: … Eleyele, Ife. Thank you so much for letting us interrupt you in your daily affairs, and taking your time. I’ll be asking questions concerning the person of Reinhard Bonnke, the way he held the crusade, and the people who came. Well, first of all, you’ve answered it already, what is your denomination?

RO: Ours is Anglican Church.

DS: Anglican Church.

RO: Anglican Church.

DS: What is your general attitude toward the evangelistic ministry of Reinhard Bonnke? Is it positive, neutral, negative? Anything else?
RO: We thank God, is positive. We really appreciate it. During the [...] during the series of meeting he held, people troop out in large numbers to welcome him. We really appreciate – it is very positive in the land.

DS: Okay, now in your, I mean – if you think of Reinhard Bonnke, what is the first thing that comes to your mind, about his character? What kind of person is he? The first thing when you think of Reinhard Bonnke, what character does he have as a person?

RO: I believe – me I see, looking at him – you know, God has really called him. He was sent by God. Through his action and the way he interacted with people, you will definitely know that he is a man of God. He has been thoroughly – he has been called by God. And through his action, we know he is a real child of God.

DS: Do you believe that he is a humble man? Would you say that he is a humble man?

RO: Oh yes, very humble. His – even his physique will tell you that, you know, this is a man of God.

DS: Now, it has never been heard that Reinhard Bonnke has been involved in misappropriating funds. Now, concerning Ile-Ife, did you hear anything like that being done from his side?

RO: No. No, we didn’t have to make any other contribution. The way – the only thing I know is this conference.

DS: Fire Conference.

RO: Fire Conference.

DS: Yes.

RO: What I will just pay tokens of lamination, of your – which is personal.

DS: Yes, it was financed by his …

RO: Is financed by his ministry.

DS: Now, critics would say Reinhard Bonnke is giving false prophecies. What has your experience been in Ile-Ife?

RO: Those who may say that, probably they are not, I will call them – if they are not Christians, or born-again Christian.

DS: Now, those prophecies, are they coming true? Can you see them coming true?

RO: Oh definitely, it has been coming true.

DS: Like, for example?
RO: For example, we know there are problems in the land of Ife formerly. But through his prayer and any other thing like that – the way he handled the issue of problem between Ife and Modakeke – through his prayer, you know, there has not been anything of that nature up till now. I will not pray such an incident happen again.

DS: So, you are talking about the violence going on before, before he came.

RO: The violence, as we know before, is a long age violence.

DS: Now, you are also a Nigerian citizen.

RO: Yeah.

DS: And as Nigerian citizen, how do you evaluate Reinhard Bonnke’s personal friendship to president Obasanjo? Is it good? Is it helpful for the gospel?

RO: Yeah, yes. Is helpful because I – when he came to any city in the, any town in Nigeria, the security is conscious of his coming, and government is aware. So, I believe there is rapport between him and the government. And also he prayed for our government. He help to sustain the government through is prayer.

DS: Okay, so is positive. Now, before Reinhard Bonnke came, there were lot of advertisement going on. What was the focus of the advertisement? Which theme? Was it on healing, on Reinhard Bonnke, on salvation, on the blood of …

RO: No, salvation.

DS: Salvation.

RO: It is after salvation, other will follow. His main purpose was salvation.

DS: No, but I mean advertisement, was it …

RO: Yes.

DS: … on salvation? Okay.

RO: Yes, salvation. Through it, it will – when we talk of salvation, other thing will come under it. So it is very on salvation.

DS: Okay. Now, the things which were promised in the advertisement, did they come true? Or were people disappointed? Or were they surprised?

RO: No, we were not disappointed. Why disappointed? Whoever wants healing – it is not healing because he wants healing. It first of all – he must be first of all, be introduced to Christ. The salvation goal is the most important aspect of it. Through it, healing may come; other thing may come.
DS: But during the advertisement, there was no exaggeration? I mean, the advertisement was what really happened later on, was it?

RO: There was no exaggeration. What we normally – we knew about the advertisement – is a mover, prime mover. It helped us a lot. One thing that we knew about this [?]. The advert, this advertise issue mainly focus on what he has done somewhere, probably at Kano or any other place like that. The same advert will be placed for us here.

DS: Okay, so they are repeating it.

RO: Yeah.

DS: Okay, and now – then after the crusade was over, there are always reports in the local news, and other reports. Now, in those reports, were there exaggerations, or were the reports truthful? – As far as you know, as you can tell.

RO: I want you to know that Nigerian system – we have different religions. Some gave negative reports, but if per any Christian, any responsible Christian.

DS: Yes.

RO: Not negative at all. So, the report may either be from opposite religion.

DS: I see. But let’s say Christian reports, would they exaggerate numbers, or exaggerate anything? Or was it fine?

RO: I don’t believe there is a question of exaggeration because when you are on the ground, many people even – the majority of us wouldn’t sit down. We stood up, stand up – major. No, there is no place to hang out the – at least for that ground, is over almost four acres of land.

DS: Packed with people.

RO: Yes. So, people trooped in; majority came just looking for God as …

DS: Okay. Now, this is the first part of the interview. Is there anything you want to add at this point, about Reinhard Bonnke? It is …

RO: Like, I said, is a man of God.

DS: Okay. Let’s move on to the second part. We are short of time.

RO: Yes.

DS: I’m looking for the dynamics. Why people come and receive Christ? What makes Reinhard Bonnke so effective? Now, do you believe that the content of his preaching was drawing people to come and listen to him? – The content of the preaching.

RO: Oh, yes. He drew majority of us. He brought in many people.
DS: And, did – let me go a step further. Did it also bring people to salvation?

RO: Oh yes.

DS: The content. Okay.

RO: Yes, yes, yes.

DS: Now, what was the focus of his preaching? – The topical focus.

RO: That we should accept Christ.

DS: Salvation.

RO: Salvation.

DS: What about healing and so on? It was tied in?

RO: Is just part of it.

DS: Now, do you believe that Reinhard Bonnke adapted his gospel to the needs and to the culture of Ile-Ife?

RO: Yes, yes, yes.

DS: That was positive? Was it?

RO: Is positive.

DS: But he did not adapt that too much that the gospel was not preached correctly? I mean, he still preached the pure gospel.

RO: He preached accurate gospel through the interpreters.

DS: Yes.

RO: Yes, interpreters. Yeah.

DS: I understand. Yes. Now, why do you think he adapted the gospel? How can you tell he adapted the gospel? – I mean, in a good sense.

RO: The point is – let me have the question again.

DS: I mean, how did he adapt his message? In which ways?

RO: The message is very clear, and people get him immediately. Particularly those who are learned, and for those who are not learned, easily the interpreter will do something, and they pick it up.
DS: So, but he was using illustrations, local illustrations.

RO: Yes, local, local these things. Yes, yes.

DS: So, these kind of things. And those helped to …

RO: It helped us a lot.

DS: Now …

RO: Maybe I – probably because he is familiar with African culture, it helped him, too.

DS: That is – now, some people say that, you know, Reinhard Bonnke is – sorry about it – Reinhard Bonnke is preaching more about miracles and wonders than about Calvary. What is your take on that?

RO: I disagree with that.

DS: You disagree with that.

RO: His purpose – his message is on salvation.

DS: Okay, let’s move on quickly. We are rushing here. Let’s talk about the miracles. I know Reinhard Bonnke is saying that it’s not him, but is God doing the miracles. But you help me understand the people here. Do they perceive him as the healer?

RO: No.

DS: The people, I mean, not him.

RO: No, they saw him as a man of God, whom God uses to heal.

DS: Now, how does Reinhard Bonnke give the glory back to God? How does he do that?

RO: He thank God.

DS: He thanks God.

RO: He doesn’t hold the glory to himself. He gave glory to God.

DS: Okay, we are moving on. Some critics say the miracles happening in his crusades are not genuine or not lasting.

RO: I disagree with that notion.
DS: So …

RO: I disagree with that notion.

DS: In your experience. You have experiences, I mean, are there people in your area, you know of?

RO: Like I was telling my brother, the very day it started, I couldn’t make it. The second day I was a bit sick.

DS: Okay. You yourself?

RO: Yes, myself.

DS: Okay, interesting.

RO: My wife said, I should try as much as possible to go the third time. In fact, that feverish condition vanished on getting to the campaign ground, that without even saying any prayer.

DS: You were healed.

RO: Yes, I was healed.

DS: So, you are a living miracle.

RO: Yes.

DS: Okay, thank you. Now, moving on to the next topic, do you believe that Reinhard Bonnke’s proclamation of the gospel contributed to the solution of the problems, social problems of Il-Ife, directly or indirectly?

RO: Oh yes.

DS: In which ways?

RO: For instance, the unity in the community is well established, I mean, among Christians. Even some of these under religion group, they came. Muslim came, so any people of – make the choice of them – they voted for Christ.

DS: Now, in your experience – the people you know – did the crime rate go down? And the poverty level, did it change? For good? For better?

RO: I believe, we’ve – we experience such a thing.

DS: So …

RO: For those who are spiritually minded.
DS: There is less poverty now, and there is less crimes now, is it?

RO: We would say just after the crusade.

DS: Okay.

RO: Everything calmed down – crime, like I said, the crisis between Ife and Modakeke. So, we would feel an impact of his ministration during the period itself.

DS: And now? Is it still there?

RO: Well, because of the level of poverty in Nigeria, probably that may constitute to what we are saying, like armed robbery. But at the same time, we could still perceive that it is at the lower [?] here.

DS: Okay. Now, Reinhard Bonnke is – oh I’m sorry – Reinhard Bonnke is saying that the problem for – the cause of the problems is Satan. He is saying, Satan is causing the problems, I mean, all the social problems.

RO: I know, I know.

DS: Yes. Now, what is your take on that? Is it helpful to say that? Or should he rather say, you know, “You people must change. You are the problem.” What is your …

RO: Well, I believe what Bonnke was trying to let us know that the devil has come to destroy. So, is either we quickly, we – he was not saying, we should blame him for all these happenings. At the same time, what he was trying to say that if you run away – if you run away from him, he will flee. We shouldn’t permit him.

DS: Now, the next question – now, was Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry involved socially before the crusade, after the crusade – like doing humanitarian aid, starting small skilled businesses [korr. „small-scale businesses“] for the people to help them socially?

RO: On that – I don’t know what happens on that.

DS: Now …

RO: But I believe through his preaching a sensible – a sensible Christian could start something.

DS: Now, if a preacher comes from Europe and would help socially also, would that enhance the ministry? Would that help the ministry? Would that – evangelism become more effective?

RO: At a certain stage. What I’m trying to say – considering the poverty level here in Nigeria – so a minister from such an area, to say he will cover at least 60 percent of such an area, he may be lying. Because I don’t – what I’m trying to say is, the level of poverty has gone extra miles down.
DS: Now, moving fast again. Now, how did Reinhard Bonnke work with the churches in Ile-Ife? Did he contact them first, or did they invite him to come? What was – how did it work?

RO: We organised ourselves. We stay, we normally – we meet during the Fire Crusade; we meet. And there are series of meetings before he finally came. There is a representative, maybe I don’t know the name.

DS: Mr., Mr. Darko in Lagos. Yeah, yeah.

RO: Okay. Yeah, he came. Then he meant – we have local organisers, like local chairman and everything else.

DS: And you, within those local bodies, you could – did make your own decisions, could you?

RO: Yes, yes.

DS: To which extend?

RO: Yes.

DS: Like?

RO: We offered various advice, pieces of advice. This is what we do. Like what I’m saying what did – what would help us at Kano, may not.

DS: Okay. So, you had …

RO: We shared our own idea.

DS: Now, moving on – now, in the ongoing process of evangelism, here in Ile-Ife, how did the crusade fit in? Was it something new? Was it fine? Was is disrupting the ongoing activities here, of evangelism?

RO: I – we know – well, during those few days he was with us, people – everybody knew that somebody is in the town. Everybody recognized, either Muslim or any other, if you didn’t see by – they knew something new is in because by the time he will be going – he will go to that Bonnke road, where the crusade is being held.

DS: Yes, yes.

RO: Hardly you find anybody at home.

DS: Now, yeah – I mean, I mean the gospel crusades, was it a new thing in Ile-Ife? Or have there been gospel crusades before?

RO: Yes, is not, is not new. We are used to it.

DS: So, he was …
RO: But what makes his own spectacular – we’ve heard about him.

DS: The fame.

RO: Uh-huh.

DS: Okay, yes. Okay. Now, did Reinhard Bonnke and his ministry in any way leave the impression that he was imposing things on you?

RO: No, no, no, no, nothing like that. He didn’t even say he has his own church.

DS: Okay.

RO: Like, perhaps he would – if anybody who got saved would go back to your place of worshipping …

DS: Sorry, let’s talk about the Fire Conference quickly. The purpose of the Fire Conference is to equip the church workers, right?

RO: Yeah, yes.

DS: Now, did it help your church? Did it help the churches in Ile-Ife? In which way? – The Fire Conference.

RO: It helped us a lot because I will let you know that the majority of us, denominational – maybe I don’t know what is happening in my brother’s place. All I know is that we have been building upon this system.

DS: On the Fire Conference?

RO: Yes, we are building upon it.

DS: So, is there a lasting effect?

RO: Yes. See, that’s what I’ve been saying. We are still making use of some.

DS: Okay. Now, last part – we are moving fast. Now, we are talking about the masses of people, you know, that came. And my aim is to find out what was the dynamic drawing the people. What was it? And I’ll ask you a few questions. Now, there are so many preachers, here in Nigeria. Why do people prefer to go to Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade? What is different about him? Why does he draw the biggest crowds?

RO: Thank you Sir. Like I said, Bonnke’s faith.

DS: His faith.
RO: As God has been using him, we catch it up, and apart from that, everyone – whoever is concerned with deliverance – that salvation is real. I am talking about his faith, not – we know God is using him.

DS: Yes, yes, yes, I’m hearing you. Okay. Now, would you also say that his unique style of preaching is drawing the people? He is dramatic when he preaches. Do people like that? Do they come because they want to hear him preach that way?

RO: I don’t believe that. The purpose, their being here is because Bonnke is a man of God. Apart from being used by God, we know him to be very dynamic in his preaching, namely …

DS: That’s what I’m saying. He is dynamic. People like that, and they come.

RO: He …

DS: And now, is his preaching entertaining? Do people enjoy his preaching?

RO: Oh yes, yes. Because he uses local material.

DS: That’s what I’m saying.

RO: He uses local material. Even, many people didn't believe that – has he not been an African, Nigerian? He would make use of local material and common names.

DS: Could is also be that people are drawn by the good music at the programme?

RO: Well, this is part of it. Like, if it is an organised something – when it is organised, we have local, the local material we use. We were drawing from various churches. So, everybody became participative.

DS: Okay, and that made people come. Okay, the use of spiritual gifts during the crusades, like the gifts of healing, the gifts of the word of knowledge, do you believe those gifts helped to draw the people to come?

RO: Like I said, so far it involves majority of us, everybody were giving – we were giving our – the various gifts, that he have been given by God. We use it. Nobody denied. That’s why you are free to chose. Do you belong to the ushering session, prayer session? – And so on and so forth.

DS: But the question was different. I mean, the people who came, the masses, did they also come because Reinhard Bonnke is moving in the spiritual gifts? Because he is moving, you know, with gifts of healing and word of knowledge and so on.

RO: I don’t believe that is the main reason, the people come.

DS: But it is one element, isn’t it?

RO: Because?
DS: Because he is moving in the …

RO: Yes, yes.

DS: … spiritual gifts.

RO: … it is.

DS: Is part of it.

RO: Is part of it.

DS: That's what I'm saying, yes. Okay, last set of questions.

RO: Thank you.

DS: Okay. Now, did the crusade in Ile-Ife contribute measurably to the church growth in Ile-Ife, in numbers?

RO: Oh, surely, surely.

DS: Okay.

RO: Surely.

DS: I mean, did the numbers rise?

RO: Yes.

DS: Yes. Or would you rather speak of a church revival, instead of a church growth?

RO: I would talk of church growth, and at the same time …

DS: Revival.

RO: … church revival. Church growth in the sense that this is a city known as idol city, and we, as we – everybody knows it. Now, if Bonnke could come to this land, and many people gave his or her life to Christ, I think that is part of church growth.

DS: Now, did your church grow measurably, in numbers?

RO: That’s what I’m saying.

DS: Did it grow?

RO: It has.
DS: Now, how many of those people who came to the crusade ground, do you think were Christians, I mean, church members, faithful Christians, before the crusade? How many of them? – Just a guess. Give me a guess – estimate.

RO: They are many.

DS: Half of it? 40 percent? 30?

RO: I will say 60 percent.

DS: 60 percent …

RO: Of course.

DS: … were already Christians before …

RO: Yes.

DS: … they came.

RO: Just – they came just to help their whole Christian background.

DS: Okay. Now, could it be that some people, when they are called to receive Christ, when they come forward …

RO: Yes.

DS: … that they come …

RO: Altar call.

DS: Yes, when they come to the altar call today, they fill out the card. They come tomorrow again – fill out the card again. Does that happen?

RO: I think that has been the problem in every denomination, which a responsible Christian should take note. When, make an altar today, making it tomorrow again, the same set of people will come. Probably majority of this Christians did not know what an altar calls means.

DS: Now, are there any measures taken to prevent that? Has there been any measures taken?

RO: The only measure, I feel, you can take, is to reduce such an incidence.

DS: Yeah, but I mean, now the …

RO: For instance, here now, how could I be making altar call every day, when I know the same people who have been with me yesterday, are still with me. If I see any new face, is a different – I personally.
DS: But, I mean, in the crusade …

RO: In the crusade.

DS: … is there any measures undertaken to prevent that?

RO: If the same thing could happen, for instance, why should we make an altar call today if it is the start of the crusade? You may make it at the end of the crusade.

DS: Okay. But did the counsellors find a way to get those people out, who were making decisions two, three times? Could they filter them out?

RO: Well, it depends on [?] we say, we may not need altar call again. You may not need to come always. The fact that you have given, given yourself …

DS: But the problem was there?

RO: Is still there.


RO: I don’t – is not peculiar to Bonnke alone.

DS: No, I’m not saying – I’m not saying that. I’m just saying what, here in Ile-Ife.

RO: [?]

DS: Okay, we are moving to the very last question now. Now, I – interviewing people – I found out that people would come for reasons other than receiving Christ. And they will still out – fill out the decision card, right? Now, give me a guess. Of those people who come at the altar call, how many of them came for reasons other than receiving Christ? – Maybe to receive a book or any other reason, a blessing, whatever, without receiving Christ? How many of them? – A guess, a percentage.

RO: I think that will be very few.

DS: Okay. So give me a …

RO: Pardon.

DS: [?] just a guess, I mean.

RO: Probably 10 to, between 10 and 20 percent.

DS: Who just came for other reasons than receiving Christ?

RO: Yeah, yeah.
DS: So, you think those numbers are pretty much correct, except for 10 to 20 percent who came for other reasons? I mean the decision cards. I mean those people coming for other reasons, they fill out decision cards.

[Ende der Aufnahme]
2.11 Interview mit Rev. Akinbayo Labaade

2.11.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: Akinbayo Labaade
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 15.10.05
Denomination: Methodist Church
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Member of the board of governors
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/ Werk: Presbyter of the Methodist Church Nigeria, Ile-Ife
Bemerkungen: Da es Probleme mit den Kassetten gab, musste die Aufnahme einige Male unterbrochen werden.

2.11.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: Now, we are here at the Methodist Church of Nigeria in Ile-Ife, and I'm having an interview with the Very Rev. Labaade.

CO: Labaade.

DS: Labaade.

CO: Yes. Pronounce it well, Sir.

AL: You are correct.

DS: Alright.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: There was a short interruption because of low batteries. We continue now and I apologize for that. Now, as you just said, you belong to the Methodist denomination.

AL: Yes.
DS: And your general attitude toward the evangelistic ministry of Reinhard Bonnke is positive, you said.

AL: Yes.

DS: Okay. Now, let’s talk first about the person of Reinhard Bonnke, and then the – about the way the crusade was conducted, and at last about the masses that came. Well, first of all Reinhard Bonnke. If I speak of Reinhard …

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: We are still with the Very Rev. Labaade, and he is representing the Methodist Church in Ile-Ife and the surroundings. And he was the – part of the board of governors at the crusade in Ile-Ife, in 2002.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: As was just said, he is – belongs to the Methodist denomination, and his general attitude toward Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry, evangelistic ministry, is positive. Sir, I apologize for the disturbance. Can I ask the question again? In your opinion, what comes to your mind, you know, what comes to your mind when you think about Reinhard Bonnke, as a person? – I mean, his character. Can you repeat that, please? – His personal characteristic traits.

AL: Well, I believe he’s [?] as I said earlier on, he is worthy of elevation [korr. „elevation”] – a God sent man, a good man of God. The way he behaves, the way he smile, the way – I mean, he even conducted that crusade, even ministering the word of God.

DS: Now, would you say he is an humble man?

AL: Yes, is very humble.

DS: Very humble. Now, I’ve never heard that Reinhard Bonnke was involved in any misappropriation of funds. What was your experiences, here in Ile-Ife? Have you heard anything?

AL: No.

DS: Okay.

AL: We haven’t heard about it.

DS: So …

AL. About such an ugly thing, no.
DS: So, he must be an honest man.

AL: Yes, he is very honest.

DS: Some critics, they would say, “Well, Reinhard Bonnke is just pronouncing false prophecies.” Now, what has your experience been, here in Ile-Ife? The prophecies he pronounced, are they coming true? Which ones?

AL: Well, they are coming true because seeing is believing – throughout. Yeah.

DS: Is a sin?

AL: Seeing, yes.

DS: Leaving? Leaving?

AL: You see, then believe in.

DS: Okay. After seeing you believe.

AL: Yes.

DS: No, I mean, which prophecies did he make? And which prophecies are coming true now? Is there any?

AL: Well, I believe he – as they came to Ife then, Ife and environment, I mean, they are [?] the Lord Jesus Christ. And that is why we are moving very fast.

DS: Now?

AL: Moving forward.

DS: After the crusade now?

AL: And everybody will be Spirit-filled in Ife. Like every Wednesday we meet with all the ministers in Ife. We meet at that place for prayer, like for the whole town, and that was what he said that we should continue that, the – we should continue to water the fruit that was planted in Ile-Ife.

DS: So, your prayer meetings are helping the prophecies to come true, in a way.

AL: Yes.

DS: Now, but if Reinhard Bonnke pronounced – let’s say he said that the country will be healed or whatever. Can you see that it is happening, or is it not?

AL: Well, as for me, I believe what he said, or what he says anywhere, where he goes – not too long will come to pass.
DS: So it’s still to come to pass?

AL: Yes.

DS: Now, you are a Rev., but are also a citizen of Nigeria and now, how do you evaluate the personal friendship of Reinhard Bonnke with president Obasanjo? Is it positive? Is it helping the gospel? Or is it a disadvantage?

AL: Well, I think it’s positive because if there is any negativity in it, they wouldn’t have allowed him to be pronouncing Christ in this country. But he is so cordial with the head of state. So, with the support of federal government …

DS: So, it’s helpful.

AL: Yes.

DS: Is helpful.

AL: The only thing he had – he has problem with some areas, that is in the far north, over there. But in the south there is no problem whatsoever.

DS: Now, before Reinhard Bonnke came to Ile-Ife, there have been lots of advertisement going on, before that.

AL: Yes.

DS: What was the focus of the advertisement? Which theme? Like, were they advertising about Reinhard Bonnke, about healing, about salvation? What was it?

AL: I think the theme was peace in Ile-Ife and environment.

DS: Peace in Ile-Ife and environment. Okay. Now …

AL: Even in the whole country as a whole.

DS: And now, those advertisement – what was promised in the advertisement, was it kept in the crusade? Or you – was it even more in the crusade than was promised? Or was it just – or was it less?

AL: Well, you know, when you listen to the word of God, and the word God, I mean, the word of God put into your heart, will make you [live] a holy and a religious life, and then blessings will come out.

DS: Yeah. But I mean, when they were, like having these advertisement in television and maybe on sign boards, and expectations coming up in a person – were they met?

AL: There are a lot of advertisements and – in the radio, on television, and then they had handbills. They had posters and so on.
DS: Were you disappointed when you got there, or were you surprised – pleasantly surprised?

AL: Surprised. Surprised about what?

DS: I mean, was it more than you expected from the advertisement?

AL: That is what we expect because we want people to come en masse. Because when you don’t advertise, you won’t see people.

DS: Yes. But I mean, the people who were coming – now, I’m trying to understand if they, if the people were disappointed. I – they maybe have been expecting more …

AL: No, no, no.

DS: … by the advertisement.

AL: Nobody was disappointed.

DS: Okay. So it was – at least what was promised, was given at least.

AL: Yes.

DS: Even more.

AL: Yeah.

DS: Okay. Thank you. After the crusade was over, there are always reports, I mean, in the local press, in the ministry reports, and so on. In those reports, did you find any exaggeration?

AL: Well, there wasn’t any exaggeration, because the report was serious – those reports. The whole report was [?]

DS: Okay. Okay, that was my – so far about Reinhard Bonnke. Is there anything else you want to add at this point, about the person of Reinhard Bonnke? – If there is something, we haven’t touched yet.

AL: Well, there is nothing much to say about him than to, I mean, give thanks to God about his life. And we are still expecting him to come [?] I mean, to this area. Most especially because he has not been allowed to preach the gospel in the far north.

DS: Yes.

AL: But at the south, where he preached much, we still need help from him.

DS: In the south even?

AL: Yes. Because he is being used by God, you know.

DS: Okay. Thank you.
AL: And if he want to take the heart of those in the north, well [?]. You know, there are hundred – there are ninety something percent …

DS: Nineteen. [Aufgrund der Undeutlichkeit wurde „nineteen“ verstanden, obwohl „ninety“ gesagt wurde.]

AL: … Muslim.

DS: Muslim.

AL: Over there.

[Störung durch Geräusche im Hintergrund.]

DS: Okay. Thank you.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Now, we are continuing with part two. I'll be asking questions about how now – the way the crusade was conducted, you know, and the things happened there. Now, people came to the crusade. And I’m trying to find the elements which were drawing the people to come. So, could you say that one element – one reason for people to come to the crusade – was to, the content of Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching? I mean the content of his gospel, did that make people to come?

AL: Well, you see, some people I can say – some people, not because of the content of his preaching. But some people, they need healing. They need blessing. You know, some people – even if you are preaching, some people will not listen to that preaching. They will be – they will be expecting that he should pray, just pray, and let them be pleased. We have so many people like that.

DS: So, you would say they rather come because of healing?

AL: Some people came there because of healing and some blessing.

DS: Now, would you say that Reinhard Bonnke’s use of his spiritual gifts – gifts of healing, gifts of the word of knowledge, and maybe other gifts – did that draw the people also?

AL: Yes. Yes.

DS: It was part of it?

AL. Yes. It was part of it.

DS: Okay. Now, coming back to his preaching, can you remember what was the theme of his preaching, throughout the days?
AL: Return to God. I think I still remember that one.

DS: So, it’s on salvation.

AL: That is – yes, is on salvation, that he called Nigerians to return to God. We have been so far from God. And I can still recollect that he was saying, “Yepada! Yepada!” The way he spoke, it was rather very good.

DS: Uh-huh. Return! Return! Isn’t it?

AL: Turn, turn to God.

DS: Yes. Now, to which extent did his preaching content fit the culture, here in Ile-Ife? I mean, did he adapt the gospel to the culture in Ile-Ife, so people could him understand?

AL: I can’t really understand what you say.

DS: My question is that his preaching, the contents of his preaching, were they adapted to the local culture here? So people could understand what he was saying, you know.

AL: Yeah, okay. Yes, well …

CO: Whether he contextualised it here.

AL: Yes. Well, we could understand what he was saying.

DS: Why is that? What was so special that they could understand him? What did he do to make him understand?

AL: For me to make people understand?

DS: Yeah, what he did to make people understand.

AL: I think he – we had, there were interpreters. He will speak sentence and the people will interpret.

DS: But I mean, did the content, the things he was preaching, the themes.

AL: The themes.

DS: They touched people’s lives, didn’t they?

AL: They touched everybody’s life. The theme of his preaching touched everybody’s life.

DS: So, that means he was addressing, I mean, daily issues.

AL: Yes. I mean, the real issues, current things that affects human being.
DS: Now, some people, they accuse Reinhard Bonnke. They say, “Well, he preaches more about signs and miracles than he is preaching about Calvary.” What is your take on that in Ile-Ife?

AL: You mean?

DS: That he preaches more on signs and wonders …

AL: On signs and wonders.

DS: … than on salvation – than on Calvary.

AL: But I – yes – we – before signs and wonders will happen, we have to listen to the word of God. If we don’t listen to the word of God, and that the word of God will not go deep into your heart, and then the miracles and signs and wonders will not come.

DS: So, you would say.

AL: So, he will go deep into the word of God, than later talk about salvation. At the end of it all, it was that meaning of the cross of Calvary, that is for salvation – salvation for every mankind.

DS: So, you would say Reinhard Bonnke is preaching on salvation a lot, still?

AL: Yes.

DS: And the healing message is part of it.

AL: Is part of it.

DS: Okay.

AL: When you receive the word then you’ll be healed.

DS: Okay. Now, let me – help me understand the people of Ile-Ife now.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: We are still continuing. Now, we are still continuing. The last question now, was now, how do people perceive Reinhard Bonnke? I know Reinhard Bonnke is saying that he is not doing the miracles, but God is doing them. But how do people – you just answered the question. Could you kindly repeat, please?

AL: Well, God is the healer. He will preach and pray. God will heal.
DS: Now, what does …

AL: That is how people perceive him.

DS: Yes, what does Reinhard Bonnke do to bring the glory back to God? How does he do that? – To bring the glory back to God.

AL: Well, you know, God owns the glory. He – because the way the Lord God has been using him, it is mandatory, compulsory for him to give glory to God.

DS: And how does he do that?

AL: Because he – he does not do it by himself. He – God is with him. He has not been doing it by himself but by God. And so at times, we will see how he sing praises to God.

DS: Okay. So, he expresses praise to God, and that makes people understand that it was not him, but it was God.

AL: Yes.

DS: So, he is saying it publicly?

AL: Yes.

DS: In the meetings? Okay.

AL: Yes.

DS: Okay. Now, you don’t think that those miracles take away glory from God, in the crusade in Ile-Ife?

AL: Na.

DS: Now, some critics they would say, “Well, Reinhard Bonnke’s miracles, they are not genuine.” They will say, “They are not long lasting, those miracles.” What is your experience, here in Ile-Ife?

AL: Well, aren’t there those who received miracles? There you will get to know that is long lasting. Anybody who says that his miracle is – what can I, what word can I use – they are false or something like that. It means they have no God. They – It means their faith is too small.

DS: So, it’s the responsibility of the person healed to keep the healing up.

AL: Yes.

DS: I’m hearing you. Now, in your opinion, did Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade in 2002 contribute to the solution of social problems, here in Ile-Ife, be it directly or indirectly?
AL: Well …

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Okay. Please, oh yes – keep on, please.

AL: Oh, you don’t – as you said, I can’t understand that your question.

DS: My question is, if the crusade affected a change in society for the better. If there is any …

[Zwischenruf]

AL: [?] 

DS: … if there is any change, which can be traced back to that crusade – change in society, for the better.

AL: Well, I think …

[Probleme mit dem Aufnahmegerät]

DS: Has been moving now. Is okay now. Sorry.

AL: Well, it changes the society for the better. We – only, we want to, I mean to continue to be praying to God, so that things will not go back again.

DS: So, there were effects. Now, can you say that the crime rate went down, for example, or that the poverty level changed for better?

AL: For what level? Well, we know the situation in the whole country. I think for that time it was a bit better. But right now, you know, things are changing.

DS: Okay. Is back?

AL: It seems as everything is turned upside down, at large.

DS: And then – now, is the crime as bad as it was before? The crime – is it still as bad? Or is it better now?

AL: I know it’s better. I think it’s a bit better.

DS: Okay.

AL: I think it’s a bit better.

DS: Now, Reinhard Bonnke is saying that the cause of all these problems in Africa, in Nigeria – let me say in Ile-Ife – is the Satan. Now, do you think that statement is helpful for the
country? – To say it’s – to blame it on Satan? Or should he rather say, “You people have to change.”

AL: Well, everybody blames the devil. If anything happens, everybody will be blaming devil. People have never seen him face to face, but they know that Satan, the devil, exists.

DS: Yes, that’s right.

AL: So, any ugly thing that happens, we’ll be blaming the devil.

DS: So, and you think that, that is correct?

AL: Well, well, I mean, for what is …

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Yes, please.

AL: Well, I think is very correct because there are agents of darkness in the whole, and that’s …

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: … before. Is the first time.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: We are having trouble with the tapes here. Now, we are back to the question, whether it was helpful to say that – to blame Satan for all the trouble in the country, and the Rev. just said that it is true. The devil is responsible for the problems, caused in this world. Please, go on.

AL: Because there are agents of darkness, and the – you know, there are two types: children of God; children of the devil; and then children of light; and then children of darkness.

DS: So, you would say that statement is correct …

AL: Yes.

DS: … to say …

AL: Is very correct to say that.
DS: Now, is the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke – has it been involved in any social projects? Maybe before they came or after they left, like humanitarian aid, or let’s say starting small scale business for people to help them.

AL: Well, I can’t – I don’t know …

DS: Now …

AL: … of any business or any small scale industry done.

DS: … would you say it would be helpful – it would be helpful to add that aspect of the ministry to it?

AL: Well, it will be helpful because in some denominations now, we have business, I mean to help the youths. There is one church in, I mean, there is one denomination – Living Hope something. They take good care of these HIV …

DS: Yes.

AL: … people who have HIV.

DS: Yes.

AL: They are taking good care of them.

DS: And is it making the gospel more effective?

AL: Yes, it’s making it effective. Like Methodist Church, now we have the, I mean, the vulnerable children – we are taking good care of. That is – I mean, in two, I mean, about four local government councils in Ilesa there. And the Methodist Church of Nigeria is in charge of that.

DS: Okay. So, that would be a good point to add. Now, let me talk about how the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke worked with the local churches here. And at which point, did the church become involved? Did Reinhard Bonnke invite – did Reinhard Bonnke – was he invited by the churches, or did he come and invite churches to join into his programme? How did it work?

AL: You mean when he came for crusade?

DS: Yes, please.

AL: Well, I think the – this is the arrangement made by Christian Association of Nigeria.

DS: The CAN.

AL: Yes, the CAN. And so, we have to rally round and make it a very successful crusade.

DS: So, the CAN was inviting him?
AL: I think the F – what do you call it?

DS: PFN.

AL: The PFN and then – he came through the PFN. And then the PFN asked the, I mean, have told the CAN, and then the CAN – you know the PFN, the CCN, they are under the umbrella of CAN.

DS: Yes, of CAN.

AL: Now, so we got to know about it through the PFN, and then everybody agreed to be part of the thing, that we should rally round and support the crusade. And that’s why all the denominations in this area joined hands together to make it a success.

DS: Now, once the team was here, the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke. And of course they gave you some instruction, like they wanted you to have some committees and so on.

AL: Yes.

DS: Now, within those committees, which were formed, here in Ile-Ife, how much freedom do you have – did you have? How much freedom to make decisions?

AL: The committee?

DS: Yeah.

AL: I’m just a member of all the committee of the head of the churches.

DS: Okay. Now, in that …

AL: There, we have from all denominations, all churches, we have different – I think about seventeen committees did they have.

DS: Now, in that board, you were member of, in that board.

AL: I’m a member of the board.

DS: Yes, in that board – now, how do you feel the work? Could you express your desires, your advice? Did people listen to it?

AL: You see, the committee – the committee, the central working committee, they will bring their report to the board, I mean, the board members. And where we have to come in, we come in and advise that we do it like this. That is all the, I mean, the duty of the board …

DS: But I mean …

AL: … members, yeah.
DS: … was something imposed on you, from the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke? Or were you fairly free to make your own decisions? – Let’s say concerning the place of meeting, the choirs to choose, and so on. Were you free to do your own local decisions here?

AL: Well, we – you know, they will come also. Any decision made, I mean, the – those who represent Reinhard Bonnke would come at meetings, then we sort things out together.

DS: Okay. Together?

AL: Yes.

DS: So, you can also give your input …

AL: Mm-hm.

DS: … into that one. Okay. So, you don’t have the impression that things were like pressed on you?

AL: No.

DS: It was a work with, with CfaN.

AL: Working together to make everything.

DS: Okay. Now, let’s talk very briefly about the Fire Conference. I understand that the Fire Conference is geared toward equipping the church workers – the Fire Conference. And now, did the Fire Conference have an impact on Ile-Ife, in the churches in Ile-Ife?

AL: Well, it has a very good impact, very good impact.

DS: In which sense?

AL: Because I – everybody was struggling to attend that Fire Conference. I was there too, with all the members of my family. It was very nice, and it has a very good impact on the people of Ile-Ife.

DS: Now, what effect? I mean, what is happening since then? What changed?

AL: The – you see the problem we normally have is that – no follow-up, there is no follow-up. That is what is normally happening, whether there is any crusade, or Fire Conference, or this or that. There will be no follow-up.

DS: Okay. I’ll talk about that later. Yes. But can you still feel the impact even today, I mean almost three years after the crusade? Can you still feel the impact of that Fire Conference?

AL: Well, we are feeling it here in Ife.

DS: In which ways?
AL: Well, I don’t know of other denominations, but in Methodist Church, Nigeria.

DS: In which ways? You have more member, more workers? Are they more on fire? What is the?

AL: Well, we – series of programmes, that is on evangelism.

DS: You have now?

AL: Yes.

DS: As a result of that Fire Conference?

AL: As a result of the Fire Conference.

DS: Okay.

AL: Because we don’t want to, I mean, you have to move forward. You know that after the Fire Conference, then we become so low and so low, and then don’t do anything.

DS: So, so …

AL: Will want to kill that fire again.

DS: So, could we say that the Fire Conference revived the church?

AL: Yes. New revival.

DS: Okay. That was the second part. Let’s move right on to the third part talking about the people who came to the crusade. Now, in Nigeria, there are so many evangelists and pastors preaching all over Nigeria. Why are people drawn especially to the crusades of Reinhard Bonnke? I mean, why is he drawing the biggest crowds? What is the difference? Why people love him so much?

AL: Number one – it is because he is a white man.

DS: A white man. Okay.

AL: And then number two – he, that would be the very first time of his coming to Nigeria. People, want …

DS: To Nigeria or Ile-Ife?

AL: Well, I mean, to Ile-Ife.

DS: Yes.

AL: People – because I think the population of those who attended that crusade, I think Ife is one of the biggest – who had the biggest attendance. He even said it.
DS: Okay. Now, in your opinion, do you believe that also his style of preaching – he preaches dramatically – I mean, did the style of preaching contribute to the big crowd?

AL: Well, you see, there are different styles in preaching, you know.

DS: Yes.

AL: So, at times he will dramatise, and people – will make people laugh at times.

DS: So, he was entertaining people also.

AL: He will entertain people at the course of his preaching.

DS: So, do you believe that is one of the aspects, why people love to come?

AL: Yes, you see, because the way he preaches, you will even love it. You will even want – don’t even want him to stop. When the – at the very time you are enjoying that preaching, the man will just stop.

DS: Okay. Okay. I see, is still …

AL: We will be still expecting more, but he will just …

DS: Now, could it also be that many people come because there is a good music programme there?

AL: Yes, very good music. Good music, that is good choruses.

DS: So, would you say people are drawn by that to come?

AL: You know, people love music.

DS: Okay.

AL: In a situation, where there is a church, and then there is nothing like music, you see, people will not enjoy that service now.

DS: Okay. Now, the last aspect I’m trying to find here – now, his use of the spiritual gifts, like the gifts of healing, word of knowledge, maybe other gifts – you know better – the use of those gifts, do you believe that it also attracts the masses of people?

AL: Well, he is using his talent, the talent that God has given him – the gifts. He is using it.

DS: Yes.

AL: And so …

DS: And do you believe – in your opinion – does that draw the people to come …
AL: Exactly.

DS: … like masses?

AL: Exactly.

DS: Okay. Last set of questions – now, did – do you believe that the crusade in 2002, I mean, contributed measurably to church growth, here in Ile-Ife?

AL: Yes.

DS: In numbers?

AL: Yes, in numbers.

DS: Now, what about your church? Did your church grow as a result of the crusade?

AL: There are some churches springing up after that crusade.

DS: But your parsonage, your church here – this one?

AL: Well, we have our own. I think we have about three churches in Ife here. And then because those who are in the out stations, also they witnessed it. Maybe they came for that crusade.

DS: Yes. And did those churches grow?

AL: Yes.

DS: Numerically?

AL: Yes, they are growing.

DS: As a result of that crusade?

AL: Yes.

DS: And now, would you say the crusade of Reinhard Bonnke, did it cause a major church growth, or rather a church revival?

AL: Well, both, church growth and major revival.

DS: Both?

AL: Both.

DS: Now, I mean, there were masses of people there. You give me a guess, an estimation. How many of those people who came, I mean, the whole crowd – how many of them were
Christians, committed Christians, church members, born-again, before they came to the crusade? Give me a percentage, a guess.

AL: You mean in the whole of Ife?

DS: No, no. I mean the people who were attending the crusade. How many of them were born-again, committed Christians, church members before the crusade?

AL: That is an advanced question.

DS: Just give me a guess. Now, you know your people.

AL: If you say in my own church here – in my own, in our own denomination, in our own church there – well, we can easily say that. But in the whole of Ife, I know those people – I know that people came …

DS: No, no, not the whole of Ife. I mean just the people attending the crusade. That’s what I mean.

AL: People attending the crusade?

DS: Yes.

AL: You mean the number?

DS: No, not the number. How many of them?

CO: He is saying, when you look at the …

DS: … crowd.

CO: … as an experienced minister of the gospel.

AL: Yes.

CO: When you look at the crowd, the congregation on that crusade ground, you will know through their participation …

DS: Yes, if they are Christians or not.

CO: … whether they have been churched before, or those who are just coming for the first.

DS: Yes.

CO: Actually, he was trying to ask.

DS: That’s right.

AL: I will rather say, you know, what the Bible says, “Not everybody that says [?]”
DS: So, they are nominal Christians. Yes.

AL: Because many of the will not be. Many of them came there because they have a problem, one or the other. But those Christians, born-again Christians who were there, they – I mean, they were there to – I mean, just to move forward, to be more – to be spirit filled.

DS: Oh, I understand.

AL: But some …

DS: But how many of them?

AL: But some went there, I mean, with problems. I will say rather that – I think about 75 percent of that crowd …

DS: … were Christians …

AL: Yes.

DS: … before they came.

AL: Before they came.

DS: So 25 percent were unbelievers.

AL: Yeah, unbelievers who …

DS: About.

AL: I want to be healed. I want this. I want that. – Is not they are going to church, but simply because they've heard that this man is a miracle worker.

DS: Okay. Now, you know, when the altar call is made and people are coming forward, they fill out the decision cards, right? Now, could it be that some people, when they come, they fill out one decision card today, and then one tomorrow – the same person. – One, the third day. Could that happen? So, they are counted three, four times – some people.

AL: No, I don’t believe that.

DS: Now, what has been done to prevent that?

AL: You see, there are – I think there are ushers …

DS: Yes.

AL: … who know how to do that.
DS: But I mean, there are thousands of people. You cannot remember every person. How do you? Let me – let’s say I come to you today and then fill out a decision card. Now, tomorrow I might go to some other counsellor, somewhere in the other end of the crusade. How would he know that I have filled out one already, yesterday? That means, I could be just going from counsellor to counsellor every day and filling out decision cards, maybe just to receive a book, or something else. Is it?

AL: You mean, because if you – I mean, those who made their decisions …

DS: Yes, please.

AL: … I think is – will, will, will, will – I expecting them to fill just only one card.

DS: Yes, I understand …

AL: … when they are attending altar call.

DS: But, you know we are human beings. People, they come for reasons other than receiving Christ, and they fill out decision cards.

AL: How many times? When you fill a card today, and receive Christ into my life. Tomorrow again you fill another one?

DS: That’s what I’m saying. Now, are there any measures to prevent that?

AL: Well.

DS: Were there any measures?

AL: I think the ushers, they can simply take good care of that area because we have ushers. And then, immediately after the altar call, after they might have prayed for them, there are – there was also a follow-up. So that they will gather the people together with the – I mean, the counsellor with the ushers.

DS: Yes.

AL: And then there is a follow-up. I don’t believe the following day they will come again and write, you know, fill another card.

DS: Now, how many of these people coming forward to fill out a decision card – how many of them are coming for reasons other than salvation? How do you think? Give me a guess, I mean. You know your people – I don’t.

AL: Well.

DS: I know that some people come. Now, you can give me some reasons. They come not?

AL: I know they will come out en masse.
DS: For healing?

AL: People will come out for healing, and then for – to be a born-again Christian.

DS: And they all fill out decision cards?

AL: They will – no I think the – those who normally come out, that is during the altar call.

DS: Yes, please.

AL: They are those people who would like to give their life to Christ.

DS: Yes.

AL: But those who come out to pray because they have one problem or the other, I think they wouldn't be given. I think nobody give them cards, I think, but those who come out for altar calls.

DS: Okay now, let’s just talk about those who come out for the altar call. How many of them come for …

[Unterbrechung durch eine Stimme aus dem Hintergrund.]

DS: How many of them come for reasons other than receiving Christ? I mean – you know what I mean? The ones who are coming – no, let me just explain it to you. I explain it to you. I heard the story – we were interviewing people – that even some pastors would come out, fill out the card to receive one of those booklets.

CO: [?] Bible [?]

DS: To receive booklets.

AL: Okay.

DS: Yeah, that’s what I’m saying.

AL: Is it because of …

DS: … the booklets.

AL: … the book, they will receive?

DS: Yes. So, I would like you to give me an estimate of how many people, of those who came filling out the card, did not come to receive Christ, but for other reasons – be it a book, be it a blessing.

AL: To collect Bibles and …

DS: Whatever.
AL: … some other books.

DS: Yes. But they filled out the cards.

AL: Well, I – you see I can’t – I don’t think I can give any number or that. But I know there are many people who do that.

DS: How many?

AL: There are many people who do that.

DS: Half of them?

AL: We have pastors who will even fill about three, four, five times.

DS: That’s what I’m saying. That was – I just – now, how was that? How can they fill out three, four, five cards without being caught?

AL: Well, they know how they filled it.

DS: Okay.

AL: You know, there are pastors – and there are pastors also.

DS: I’m hearing you, yes, I’m hearing you. So, it is possible to fill out three, four, five decision cards.

AL: It is very possible.

DS: Okay. Very possible.

AL: Is possible.

DS: And it’s also possible that people come, or many people, come for reasons other than receiving Christ?

AL: Yes.

DS: Just to receive some book or something. Yes, yes.

AL: Come to receive books.

DS: Thank you. Thank you so much. Now, last question – the follow-up, which is done, I mean – or let me phrase differently, should there be a long term follow-up? And should that follow-up – is that follow-up responsibility of Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry, or is it the responsibility of the churches of Ile-Ife?
AL: Well, is the church – is the responsibility of the church. Reinhard Bonnke, he came and he did, I mean, the job, the Lord God has send him to do. And if it is for all, is for the responsibility of …

DS: … the church.

AL: … of the other local churches to follow up.

DS: Now, if you can give like a personal advice, let’s say. I’m an evangelist. What would you advise me to, you know? What should I pay attention to, when I’m coming to Nigeria to minister? Maybe some things we haven’t touched here, just …

AL: Well …

DS: … just some, some.

AL: … as an evangelist I will – if you are coming to minister in Nigeria, I think what – the first think I will ask you to do, even if you want to go and preach; I think you will have to meditate. Pray very well and ask God to take absolute control of what you are going to do because there are different types of people in this country. Some people will – some people will like it, and some people will not. Like when I was at Adjekota, one – that man came, with very, very young man – a very young man. I was the secretary to Adjekota local government there, and that is CAN.

DS: CAN, yeah.

AL: Now, we – that man came from Australia, very young – to, for a week long crusade.

DS: Crusade.

AL: Some people, I mean, some denominations did not partake when we were preparing. And during the crusade now, they came en masse, just to win souls to their own church.

DS: Yes, I see.

AL: And there was a problem.

DS: I see. Okay.

AL: So, we all, we have to – you have to pray about that. So that – is because the situation. That man – that evangelist then did not like it.

DS: I see.

AL: And there was, I mean, when there was a problem.


AL: No. Thank you very much.
DS: Thank you for your time.

AL: It’s a pleasure meeting you.

DS: Yes, thank you. God bless you.

AL: Thank you very much.
2.12 Interview mit Rev. ‘Lowo Mamadelo

2.12.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: ‘Lowo Mamadelo
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 15.10.05
Denomination: Baptist
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Advisor
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/ Werk: Senior pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, Ile-Ife
                                      President of the Osun Baptist Conference

Bemerkungen:

2.12.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: We are at Rev. Mamadelo’s church.
CO: Ebenezer Baptist Church.
DS: Ebenezer Baptist Church. Thank you.
LM: Ile-Ife.
CO: Ile-Ife.
DS: Ile-Ife. And first of all, it is a Baptist denomination you are belonging to.
LM: It is, yes.
DS: Okay. Now, what is your general attitude toward the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke in Nigeria? Is it generally positive, neutral, or is it rather negative?
LM: Oh, positive. Because anybody who has a flair for evangelism, the Baptists and myself, we want to jump at it. And we thank the Lord for his ministry.
DS: Thank you, let me just.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]
DS: Now, there is something I want to add here. Rev. Mamadelo …

LM: Yeah.

CO: Mamadelo.

DS: Mamadelo.

LM: Well, don’t bother about that.

DS: Rev. Momadelo is not just the pastor of this church, but he is heading something like …

LM: State Convention.

DS: The State Convention of the Osun State, is it?

LM: Of Osun State, yes.

DS: That’s very valuable, to hear your voice. Thank you. Now, I will be talking about three main topics. Number one – the person of Reinhard Bonnke. Number two is the way the crusade was conducted, how he was preaching and so on. And number three is about the masses who came to listen to him. Now, let’s talk about Reinhard Bonnke. If you think of Reinhard Bonnke, what is the first thought that comes to your mind, as – in his character – as a person?

LM: Well, I think Reinhard Bonnke gives me the impression that he is a man of God. His humility – he is very articulate, and his messages down to earth. You can easily understand. And that makes it so easy for our people to, you know, to rush to the crusade grounds from time to time.

DS: Now, so far we have never heard of Reinhard Bonnke misappropriating any funds.

LM: No, no.

DS: And that’s the same with Ile-Ife, is it?

LM: As a matter of fact, Reinhard Bonnke has been free from that. And in fact, he has a team who have been so faithful and honest that the disbursement of the funds – you know – we have nothing to complain about.

DS: So, he is an honest person, is he?


DS: Now, some critics, they imply that Reinhard Bonnke is pronouncing – giving false prophecies. What is your take on that one?
LM: Well, I don’t buy that because it seems that for the few weeks I had with him, he has been very sincere with his message. And he has not done anything that is outside the Scripture. You see, anybody who is scriptural, people don’t – they become so sceptical about them. And it depends upon their level of faith. But as far as I’m concerned, I think this is a man that I can very much, you know, admire.

DS: And now, did some of the prophecies come true? Or are they coming true now?

LM: Most of his prophecies have really come true. And as a matter of fact, most people who were at the crusade grounds, have heard the results of how the Holy Spirit was moving through this man. And he has done a lot, you know, in healing and many other things.

DS: Now, you would say the prophecies are coming – now, which prophecies would that be?

LM: I think there has been some growth in many of the churches around because many souls have been won. And he has said it, that the crusade was there to bring Holy Spirit fire into the people. And it is happening. Like many young men have taken to the ministry now. And I know, is a result of his prophecy and crusade.

DS: Okay. Thank you. Now, you are not just a pastor, but you are also a Nigerian citizen.

LM: Okay. Yes.

DS: And now, how do you evaluate Reinhard Bonnke’s personal friendship to president Obasanjo? Is it positive? Is it helping the gospel? Or is it counterproductive?

LM: It is positive. It is fruitful. I think his relationship with the president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is very cordial. You see – you know Obasanjo is a Baptist, too. And …

DS: I didn’t know.

LM: … and apart from being a Baptist, he’s a close friend to me, too. So, I was about to be his pastor, before he became the president. But, well, as the Lord will have it, I have to come here for some other assignment. Now, he – Obasanjo will relate to somebody who is very honest, like. – In fact, anybody who will not be straight forward with the message of God, Obasanjo cannot tolerate him, you see.

DS: Let’s talk about advertisement now – the advertisement before the crusades. Can you still remember the topics – the themes of the advertisements, be it in television, or on sign boards, or any?

LM: Well, I think, I want to say this about the publicity. During any of his crusades – because it is not only here alone that I watched it; I even watched it in the capital city of Osun, in Oshogbo, too – it has been very, very objective. And it has never revealed that it is a man doing this work. It has always pointed to Christ himself. So, I think he would not even want to entertain any publicity that will point to him. You see, and I think he has reacted to one, I learned, in Oyo – that is far away from here – that he said, “Well, they should do away with
that kind of advertisement because it is not Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade. It is the crusade of the Holy Spirit,” so …

DS: Reinhard Bonnke was saying that?

LM: Yes.

DS: Interesting, very interesting.

LM: So, I think somebody who sees God being in it and not himself – and he sees himself as the tool in God’s hands – is somebody, one can be proud of.

DS: Now, the things that were promised in the advertisements, were they kept at the crusade? Or were – was it more than promised? Or was it less?

LM: I would say people got more than they bargained for because you see, some people will come and go back home getting more than they never expected. I have seen some people, even many Muslims have turned to the churches in this city being as a result of his crusade. And many people were healed who never knew anything. In fact, I think I was a beneficiary of his crusade, too; because I used to have lower back ache. And I was there, you know, at the platform trying to clap, and then give assistance to people who are ministering there, either through song or even he in his message. And I discovered that one day, I was no more feeling the pain in my lower back. So …

DS: So, after the crusade was over, there’re always reports, like local press or from the ministries. Now, in those reports, did you find any exaggerations? Or was it truthful?

LM: No. Well, there were no exaggerations. Most reports, that I saw in the dailies, have always been the fact of the case.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Now, we are continuing the interview, and there was a short interruption. But now we are continuing, and now we are moving to part two. Last thing we said was that there was no exaggeration in the reports after the crusades.

LM: No exaggeration.

DS: Okay. Let’s move on to the crusade itself. I’m trying to find out what dynamics brought the people to the ground. What was behind – behind why they came? Now, do you think that the content of Reinhard Bonnke’s message is part of it? – Drawing people to come and attend his meetings?

LM: Yes, the message is part of the dynamics that brought people. Because his message is simple, Bible-based, Christ-centred. And I think the way people were receiving more and more, and understanding more and more of the rudiments of faith, right from the Scriptures, has been part of it, too.
DS: Now, would you say the contents of his preaching also contributed to the salvation of people?

LM: Oh, sure. Yes.

DS: Both …

LM: Oh yes.

DS: … the masses, and also …

LM: Oh yes. Oh yes.

DS: Now, what was the focus of his messages? I mean, which themes in Ile-Ife?

LM: Salvation.

DS: Salvation, was the main …

LM: Yes, salvation of souls.

DS: Now, to which extend did Reinhard Bonnke adapt his message to the culture, here in Ile-Ife? I mean, was he relating to the people? – You know, the message he was preaching.

LM: You know, that would not be totally too much. But he wasn’t too far ahead of people. At least, he was able to reach, you know, the average man in the congregation. So, I think, culturally he was able to comport himself, too. You know and can imagine how he will want to sing sometimes and dance like a Nigerian, and so on and so forth. Sometimes, he will wear the native outfit, so I think this …

DS: But would you say that the adaptation [korr. „adaptation”] is going so far as to water down the gospel?

LM: No, no. It – instead it goes to, you know, get people more because this one looks like us, you know.

DS: Yes, yes. Now, Reinhard Bonnke is being accused of speaking more about miracles, and signs and wonders than about Calvary. What is your take on that?

LM: That is not true. You see, when you listen to him very much, you’ll discover that he speaks more of salvation than of miracles. The only thing is that in the advertisements, you see, many people say, “Come, you will see deliverance, salvation,” this and that, and – and you know, many people, it is that miracle that they want. But before – when they get there, they’ll be touched, you know, be touched down by the message. And then you’ll discover that …

DS: So, the advertisement is just used to draw the people, but once they are there, there is a clear salvation message.
LM: Oh, sure, sure. In fact, it’s the salvation message before the miracle, you see.

DS: Now, let’s talk about the miracles. – Go ahead, please. Please finish, yeah. I’m sorry.

LM: Yeah.

DS: Go ahead.

LM: Yes, because many times, he will not even speak about miracles. But people who had miraculous healings would just want to say something about it. You see, it is only during the time of testimony that you’ll even hear him say something about miracles. He is not preaching miracles.

DS: Now, I know Reinhard Bonnke is saying that he is not the one doing the miracles.

LM: Yes, he will always say that. That is very, very common in his message.

DS: So, he will make it very clear.

LM: Oh sure, yes.

DS: Now, let’s talk about the people now, you know, the people that come. How do they perceive him, as the healer? I’m not saying he is saying that. But I’m just saying that the culture, the people in Ile-Ife, do they view him as the healer?

LM: Well, you cannot rule out the fact that some people will see him like that. But, you know, serious believers will know that they are going for the messages.

DS: Yes.

LM: And listening, they begin to receive healings and many other things. Yes.

DS: So, Reinhard Bonnke is pointing away from himself to God?


DS: In which ways? In which – how is he doing that?

LM: He – sometimes he will go a long way to let people know that I am not the one doing it.

DS: Publicly?

LM: It – yes. It is Christ doing this for you. But even in his message, it was not pointing to himself. He’s pointing to Jesus Christ. I remember the case that I went, somebody fainted and people called him to come and do the – he said, “Well, if the Lord will heal him, he will heal him. So, I’m about my father’s business.” And he went on preaching.
DS: Okay. Now, some critics again, they say, “Reinhard Bonnke’s miracles are not genuine or at least not lasting.” What is your take?

LM: That is not true because we have many people around here who – at least, I’m a living witness. My lower back [ache] is no more there. I can jump and dance now.

DS: Thank you. That’s – you know.

CO: Thank God. [?] you spoke to this [?] So, I’ve told him …

LM: Yes.

CO: … that you would have testimony. [?]

DS: We spoke about it when you left. We spoke about it already.

CO: Okay.

DS: So, is very – it’s on the tape. Thank you. Now, let’s move to a different topic. In your own opinion, did the crusade 2002 contribute to the solution of social problems in Ile-Ife, be it directly or indirectly?

LM: Directly and indirectly it has contributed to solutions, to our social problems because most of the young men will have become hooligans in this city. Having found the way of salvation, they became so business-like and hard working that they don’t take to such things. You see.

DS: Now, is there any statistics to proof that there was, like a reduction of crime?

LM: Well, we don’t compute this. We have no statistics to proof that. But we know, even within this community we know some people who have changed, and their life style have changed. What they are doing has changed. And we know that things are going on fine.

DS: Now, Reinhard Bonnke is blaming Satan, as the causer of all these problems in Africa and in Nigeria, let me say in Ile-Ife. He is saying that Satan is the one who is behind it. Now, is it helpful to say that?

LM: It is, in the sense that, you know, culturally, or traditionally – many of our people are traditional believers, and they know the work that Satan could do, in tampering with people’s lives. So, in his using that kind of expression here, it has gone a long way to help.

DS: So, it fits right in the local theology, right in there?

LM: Yes.

DS: Now, is – was the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke involved to help socially? Let’s say if – you know, providing humanitarian aid, or starting small scale businesses for people to help improve the social environment?
LM: Well.

DS: Or was it just gospel preaching?

LM: It is gospel preaching. And you see, ordinarily if any person around here will want to do that, they will want to depend on the local people’s resources. But for his own, is being funded solely by him, and he doesn’t depend there on anybody. But as to starting people on small scaled businesses and this and that, I have not seen – I have not known of that.

DS: But would that make the work of the – of an evangelist generally more effective, here in Africa, in Asia …

LM: Certainly yes.

DS: … in Nigeria?

LM: Certainly yes. Because you know, we have many young people who are not, you know, being fully employed. And if such a thing would happen, I know, many through that will even turn to the Lord. And it will help the work of an evangelist.

DS: Now, let’s talk about the collaboration between the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke and the local pastors. Now, at which point did the churches become involved? Did they invite Reinhard Bonnke, or did he show his intention to come, and then you cooperated?

LM: I think he came on invitation. I remember, he was to go to Ado-Ekiti, another state in this western side. And we learned that he had been so booked that he wouldn’t be able to come that year. But as the Lord will have it, the pendulum, you know, swung to our side. And so he had to change his plans, and then come here. It was through the CAN and the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria.

DS: PFN, yes.

LM: PFN, you know, so that he came here. He came on invitation.

DS: Now, once the team came, or once the ministry team came, they provided certain structure. I mean, they wanted you to form committees and so on. Now, within those structures, were you free to make your own decisions?

LM: Oh sure. Oh sure. We were free to make decisions because I think we are close to the grass roots than the thing – I mean, than the team. And unless anything that relates to the monetary aspect of it, when they will have to say this – what we want you to use this money for, and so on and so forth. But all others, we were free to.

DS: Now, how did this crusade fit into the ongoing evangelistic activities of the churches? I mean, did it …

LM: Well, the crusade has set many churches, you know, on fire – like he would put it, you see. And many people are catching the fire of evangelism from time to time. In fact, it has brought unity within the church leaders, and the pastors, and catechists.
DS: Now, I mean, you would say it was a project of the churches and of the ministry team, was it?

LM: Yes.

DS: Not just his project.

LM: No, no, no.

DS: Okay. Alright. So, you didn’t feel as if somebody was imposing something on you?

LM: No. No, no. Not at all.

DS: Okay. Now, let’s talk for a moment – or let me ask one more question. Now, this crusade evangelism, was it a new thing he introduced? Or was it being done here before, in Ile-Ife?

LM: Is not a new thing. But I think it is one of a kind. You see, we have had series of revivals and crusades like that. But none has so much been grounded like his.

DS: So, the method of crusade evangelism was not new. It was, it was …

LM: Some part of it is new, you know, because you know the – it depends upon one's exposure. And when he came, there are some other things that we have learned, you know, to include in our own method of evangelism, too.

DS: Okay. Now, let’s briefly talk about the Fire Conference. As I understand, the Fire Conference is geared toward equipping church workers.

LM: Yes.

DS: Now, in your experience, you know – as much as you know – did it affect the workers in a positive way? Is there a lasting impact now, even now?

LM: Yes. It has affected many church workers. Because some who felt that the way we were doing things – have changed their outlook with regards to that. Because it calls for right focus, and then a kind of – what you like – enthusiasm that will, you know, just speed you on, and then making it the way it should be, you know. Many things have changed, in most of the churches.

DS: So, would you say he should put more emphasis on the Fire Conferences?

LM: I will want to say that. I will want to say that because, you know, after the crusade, when the favour of that time is gone – back in the churches, as a follow-up – these people who have been equipped will be the one to carry on the work …

DS: Okay. Thank you.

LM: … to sustain it.
DS: Let’s move to the last part now, talking about the masses of people.

LM: Okay.

DS: And again, I’m trying to understand the dynamics behind the people. Now, there are so many preachers, all over Nigeria, I mean, on fire preachers. Why do people prefer to come to Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade? Why does he pull – draw the biggest crowds? What’s the dynamics behind it? You help me understand.

LM: Well, let me say that we have a mindset here, that when you want to balance an information, you listen to a person you are familiar with. And then you listen to a stranger. You will be able to balance – and whatever piece of information both of them have given to you. That’s number one. Number two – I think is much more on the personality of that man, and the way he presents the gospel. For example, I want to confess that most Nigerian crusaders or evangelists will want to promise you these – through the prosperity theology. But Bonnke will not preach that. And you know, when he – when somebody goes straight into the Scriptures, he tells the story as it is. Our people will want to be there. Our people will want to be there.

DS: Now, you would – then you would say that his …

LM: And Bonnke is the type. He will want to preach the word as it is.

DS: So, you would say his style of preaching – I mean, he preaches dramatically.

LM: Yes.

DS: And his style of preaching contributes to drawing the people to come.

LM: Oh sure.

DS: Yes.

LM: Very simple message, with appropriate illustrations. And, you know, the invitation too, is not a coercion. Simple invitation, and people will just, you know, troop out. Unlike some people who – they breathe sulphur and brimstone. So, like coercing people to make confession, you see.

DS: Now, you would say it’s also entertaining, isn’t it? – The preaching. I mean not. – In a good sense.

LM: I think it’s much more enlightening and educating than entertaining. No. No. You see, I wouldn’t want to say he’s entertaining. No, no, no, no, but because the illustrations will fix any truth in your mind – even if you want to forget that truth, and you remember the illustration – you will remember the truth.

DS: Could it also be that one of the dynamics is the good music used that draws the people?
LM: Well, maybe partly.

DS: You know, that’s what I’m saying, just …

LM: There – maybe. Yeah, yeah, partly. And the reason is that maybe some of these traditional music, you know, music being composed in traditional …

DS: Local.

LM: … tunes, and so on and so forth. But honestly, is much more of the man and his message.

DS: Yeah, I’m just trying to find elements. You see, there are more elements than just one. Yes.

LM: Mm-hm, mm.

DS: Now, the last that I’m asking is about, is – what about his use of the gifts of the Spirit? I mean, he is using the gift of healings and word of knowledge.

LM: Yes.

DS: And do you believe that those – the use of those gifts also draws people? Is this part of the dynamics behind the big crowd?

LM: Well, they do, they do. But he does not really emphasize; he doesn’t lean on such. For example now, maybe I heard him speaking in tongues, maybe twice or thrice, over the whole period. And just short, short utterances, not for people to know that – oh, this man is big, is like … No, no, no, no, not the one to impress people. But I think – yes, I think it is the gifts of the Spirit.

DS: And that draws people?

LM: Mm-hm.

DS: And let’s go a step further. Do you believe that it also helps to – the people to turn to Christ? – The use of the gifts.

LM: Yes.

[CO unterbricht kurz.]

DS: Alright. Let’s move to the last set of questions. Now, did the crusade in 2002 contribute measurably – I mean measurably in numbers – to the church growth in Ile-Ife?

LM: Sure. Yes.

DS: Okay. How much would you say? I mean, did it? Was it a tremendous growth or? Give me some impression.
LM: I think there was a tremendous growth because if you saw some churches that sprung up, after he had left, you will know that there was a tremendous growth.

DS: So now, …

LM: And many churches, you know, had their congregation swell.

DS: Okay. Now, would you say it was rather church growth in numbers, or more church revival?

LM: Well, both.

DS: Both.

LM: Both. There was church growth, and many churches were really revived.

DS: Now, a question, just give me a guess, an estimate. Now, of those big crowds, that came to attend the crusade, how many of them have been, I mean, saved, church members, faithful Christians, before the crusade?

LM: That’s a very big question.

DS: Just a guess. I will not nail you down. I’m just asking.

CO: He want you to give percentage of all those who – compared upon those who were there. As an experienced pastor [?]

LM: That is true [?]

CO: [?] for a long time.

LM: That is true.

CO: By their faces you will know them.

LM: That is true.

CO: And their [?].

LM: You will remember that it is not only the Baptist people that were on the crusade ground. There were so many other churches, too.

DS: Yes.

LM: Which it is not so easy to draw the line.

DS: Okay.
LM: However, I will want to say that maybe 25 percent.

DS: Were Christians?

LM: Mm-hm.

DS: Okay. Now, in the crusade, could it be that when the altar call is made, some people come, and they fill out the decision card today. And they come again tomorrow – fill out the second one. And they come again the third day. Could that happen?

LM: Different, different kinds of – different people. Not one who filled one yesterday, will …

DS: Now, which …

LM: Unless the decision for today is different from that of yesterday. You see. You – when somebody makes a profession of faith, he won’t fill the card the following day.

DS: Okay.

LM: Yeah, but if it’s somebody who is saying that, yes, I’m taking a decision on such and such a thing: to be a member of the church, or to going for baptism, and all that.

DS: Do they still fill the card?

LM: Yes. Yes.

DS: Could it be that they fill the card several times?

LM: Well.

DS: With the same reason.

LM: Not for the same reason, only for different reasons. That is the reason, you see.

DS: Now, which measure – measures have been taken to prevent that – that people would cheat?

LM: You see, like I told you, that is an articulate man. When he gives out his altar call, he knows what he’s saying, and people will understand what he says. And – so when they go to fill the card, they know what they are going to fill.

DS: Now, while interviewing pastors and people of the committee, I heard like the story, for example, that even pastors would go and fill out the card several times to get some of those books. It’s happening. I mean, I’ve heard it. So …

LM: I don’t think much of that happened in Ile-Ife here.

DS: Okay.
LM: Not, I don’t know, I – not to my knowledge anyway.

DS: Okay.

LM: Not to my knowledge.

DS: Now, of those people who come to receive Christ, or those people who come, who fill out the card, do you believe that there are people who are coming for reasons other than salvation? Like for, as I said, a book, or to receive a blessing, or to come closer to Reinhard Bonnke, whatever?

LM: No. Which regards to this Ile-Ife in particular, it is – I think through the move of the Spirit, they were able to fill those cards. Is not for his books or for anything. In fact, if there is somebody who has that kind of hidden agenda, is not to my knowledge.

DS: Okay, so – but would you say there are some people who just come and fill out cards, not twice or thrice, but who just fill it out to, you know, for reasons other than receiving Christ? You mentioned – there are few reasons that could be …

LM: Yes.

DS: … joining a church, or baptism, or something.

LM: Yes.

DS: Okay.

LM: Yes.

DS: Now, how many of those people – give me a guess – all of the people who are coming to the altar call, to the altar – how many out of them would be, let’s say not for receiving Christ but doing other decisions? Give me a guess.

LM: In fact, most church members who have been there for quite some time, have made one decision or the other to renew their faith. And this were – do I say – 30 or 35 percent.

DS: So, they’ve been church members, but they still did some commitment.

LM: Oh yes, they had to. Yes, because of that, they discovered themselves, and they filled that out. Having heard this message anew – yes, let me make up my mind to do this.

CO: Now, it was as if Jesus Christ has come, when you see the Ile-Ife that week. Non-Christians – we know them through the way of their dressing, you know, the Muslim, the way they cover their head, men and woman, and women, even their own sirs [?] – they were there during the crusade.

DS: Now, the follow-up after the crusade – do you believe it is the job of Reinhard Bonnke and his team? Or is it just the job – rather the job of the local churches here? – To follow up on those, on those …
LM: I think it is the job of the local churches here to make that follow-up. You see. He has done the best he could, and I think, you don’t go fish with your boat, and then draw your net, and you begin to do the job again for yourself. No, family members will be taking care of that. After all, you have done a lot.

DS: Now, for a European minister – myself – to come over to Nigeria and to minister here effectively, is there any advice you would just give me? – Maybe some things we have not touched so far. Just some good advice for young ministers, evangelists to make their work effective here in Nigeria, Ile-Ife, let’s say.

LM: Well, is a simple message – undiluted, and a message that will not make promises, which Christ will not want to fulfil, like this man. The humble spirit and the biblical messages, you know, will be of tremendous help to any evangelist coming into Nigeria. And once you don’t mess up with the politics of Nigeria, you have no problem.

DS: Thank you Pastor Mamadelo.

LM: Yeah.

DS: Is that right?

LM: Yes, you’re right.

DS: Mamadelo.

LM: You catch up …

DS: Yes.

LM: … too soon.

DS: Yes. Thank you for your time and the valuable information, and may God bless you and your ministry.

LM: We thank God. Thank you to you, too.
2.13 Interview mit Rev. Ebenezer Osasona

2.13.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: Ebenezer Osasona
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 15.10.05
Denomination: Christ Fishers of Man Church
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: General chairman (crusade chairman)
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/Werk: General overseer (pastor)

Bemerkungen:

2.13.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: We are here meeting Rev. Osa …
EO: Osasona.
DS: Osasona – sorry.
EO: Yes.
DS: And he is – bursary? Is this the …
EO: Bursary Department of OAU.
DS: Is at Bursary Department at Obafemi …
EO: … Awolowo University.
DS: … Awolowo University. Thank you. And he is the General Overseer of his ministry, and the general chairman of the crusade.
EO: Yes.
DS: Now, first question, I would like to ask is, which denomination do you belong to? Which denomination?

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EO: Christ Fishers of Man Church.

DS: Christ?

EO: Christ Fishers of Man Church.

DS: ... of Man Church. Okay. Now, what is your general attitude toward the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke in Nigeria? Is it positive, negative, or neutral? – Generally speaking.

EO: I think it’s positive.

DS: Positive.

EO: Generally speaking.

DS: Yes, so there might be some – but we talk about that later. Feel free to add anything if …

EO: No, no problem.

DS: Now, in – I’ll be asking questions about Reinhard Bonnke as a person first, and then about the crusade, and then about the people that came. So – Reinhard Bonnke, if you think of Reinhard Bonnke, what comes to your mind as a characteristic trait? Or, I mean, who is he as a person? What kind of characteristics does he have?

EO: I, I’ve seen him as very a consistent evangelist – very consistent evangelist. He’s been in the business of soul winning for a long time, and very consistent. He is very focused, and that is what I can say about him.

DS: Now, would you say he is a humble person – a humble?

EO: Oh, very, very. He is very humble.

DS: Now, it has been not known that Reinhard Bonnke has been ever involved in any misappropriation of funds. Now, concerning Ile-Ife, what was your experience? I mean, on his side, not locally – on his side.

EO: On his side?

DS: Yes.

EO: Well, you know we – as far as that is concerned – may not be able to answer that question because we don’t give him money.

DS: Yes, I see.

EO: He gave us money, to …

DS: Oh, I see.
EO: … and so …

DS: But do …

EO: It’s only his donors over there, that can actually say whether he’s honest – whether he’s.

DS: But do you regard him an honest person?

EO: Well, and one thing about – that is why I said, you need to see …

DS: … this chart. Yes.

EO: … the structure. Yes, maybe I’ll give you this one.

DS: I can make copies. I can give it back to you.

EO: You have a copy?

DS: No, I can make a copy, if you like.

EO: I think I should still have a copy.

DS: Okay, that will be great. Well, thank you.

EO: Of course.

DS: Thank you so much. This is amazing. This is very good.

EO: Yeah.

DS: Go ahead, please.

EO: You – one thing is that Reinhard Bonnke is not involved in planning of any of his crusades, I mean, at least in Nigeria. It is the …

DS: … the team.

EO: … committee – the crusade committee, that plans in collaboration with his director of crusade in Lagos, West African director …

DS: Rev. Darko.

EO: Darko.

DS: Yes.

EO: … in Lagos. And he, his own is – he was only particular about coming to minister and go away. So, the planning, the ordinary details of the crusade – he sends him money. They send,
they send money to their office in Lagos. It is the office in Lagos that now dispose it, as the executive arm of the – administrative arm of the CfaN.

DS: CfaN, okay. Now, some people accuse Reinhard Bonnke or imply that he is pronouncing false prophecies – some people say. Now, what is your take on that? I mean in Ile-Ife, in those days.

EO: Well, I can’t see anything to confirm that.

DS: So, are there any prophecies that he has made, which have come true, or which are coming true now?

EO: Well, I will say there are. God is using him to perform miracles. But I won’t – to say, to talk about a specific prophecy because I don’t – you know, he is not into, is not really into prophetic …

DS: I understand.

EO: … ministry.

DS: Yes. Yes.

EO: He’s into evangelistic ministry. And if prophecy comes, it’s just by the way. That’s the way I look at it. Is purely into evangelistic ministries, is not into …

DS: … into that one.

EO: … prophetic ministry.

DS: Okay. Now, you are also a Nigerian citizen. Now, how do you evaluate his personal relationship to – friendship to president Obasanjo? Is it positive? Is it helpful for the gospel? – His personal friendship to president Obasanjo.

EO: Well, I would say yes. It will have its positive side, and it may have its negative side.

DS: Well, what is …

EO: Positive side, in the sense that if it has not been for that friendship, he wouldn’t have been able to penetrate the country. You know, during the previous regime, before Obasanjo came in …

DS: Yes.

EO: … the regime banned …

DS: Oh yeah, I know that one.

EO: [?] You know, he was almost killed in Kano.
DS: Kano. Yes, ninety-one.

EO: So, uh-huh. So, if not for that friendship – because if not for the confidence Obasanjo has in him, penetrating the country once again would have been very difficult. That is the …

DS: … the positive side.

EO: … the positive side.

DS: What about the negative?

EO: The negative side – well, people might look at the political, you know, politicians are politicians anywhere. But people who might look the political …

DS: Now, but is Reinhard Bonnke – does he get involved in politics?

EO: No, no, no, no he is not. He doesn’t.

DS: But being together with president Obasanjo – there are probably critics about Obasanjo – and does it put him in a bad light?

EO: Well, Bonnke, like I said, is very focused. He’s an evangelist to the core. He doesn’t go into such. If he has any comments about the country, it will just be general comment, and it will be positive comment; and praying for the country, believing that the country will be great – with being on the Lord’s side that the country will be great. Is not involved in [?] – he limits himself to general comments about the country, any time he is around.

DS: So, would you say that the advantage is more than the disadvantages? – I mean, of his friendship. Is it more an advantage than disadvantage, is it?

EO: Yes, it is. I will say it’s more advantageous.

DS: Okay. You may still remember the advertisement before the crusade. You remember the focus of the, I mean the themes used? I mean, what was the themes of the advertisement? I mean the topics, the themes, the slogans used in advertisement, what was it about?

EO: You know, like I said, Reinhard Bonnke is not involved, you know …

DS: In that? Okay. So …

EO: … it is the – in the past. It is the local environment that organises that …

DS: Even the advertisement?

EO: … but – yes, advertisements, but we – because of their experience with Africans, they decided to take that aspect. We were also involved here locally; you see the media committee there. There is a media committee. The media committee is suppose to be in charge of those things: appearing on the TV; speaking on the radio; telling the whole country about what is
coming on – about the crusade, what will happen and generally, you know. Is always in the –
usually or mostly in the local dialect.

DS: And is it about miracles? Is it about Reinhard Bonnke? I’m not saying he is doing it. I’m
just saying what was, I mean, what was the topic? Is it about salvation, about Reinhard
Bonnke, about miracles? What is the – how do you draw people?

EO: You see, Jesus Christ says one thing, that except people see signs and wonders, they will
not believe. Because of the problem – economic depression, the social upheaval, here and
there – so people really are looking for miracles. And for any evangelist to make a headway,
he must have been endowed, anointed to perform miracle along, in his evangelistic crusade.
And that – God gave him that anointing – and that adds to what draw people to him …

DS: So, there are …

EO: … to the – to his crusades and so on.

DS: So, Reinhard Bonnke is not involved in deciding about the advertisement. But the local
people, they decide to use certain topics for advertisement, which will draw the crowd.

EO: Yes. See, like I said, they have – though there is a local media committee, like our own
media committee here. We produced our own local advertisement. We produce the – we
produce video films, audio films, during the crusade, you know. They have their own media
outfit at the CfaN office in Lagos. So, they have a professional man on that. So, they – most
of the time they are also Nigerians. They also understand the language of the locality they are
going. They most of the time sit down to plan the advertisement, the jingles. So the –
Reinhard Bonnke is not involved in that.

DS: I understand. Okay. Is good to know.

EO: Is not. In fact, he comes straight, when he comes to – when he gets to any environment.
He meets the leaders there, then straight to his hotel, and from his hotel to his crusade ground,
maybe the Fire Conference ground. Even in the morning, we all usually have Fire Conference
in – from the Fire Conference go straight back to his hotel. In the evening he comes back. He
comes from hotel straight to the crusade ground.

DS: I see.

EO: Straight back to the hotel. That’s what he does. He doesn’t – is not involved.

DS: Now, in those advertisements prior to the crusade, I mean. Or let me ask you differently.
Did the crusade keep what was promised in the advertisement? Or was it even more, or less?

EO: I don’t get you.

DS: I mean, the things that were promised in the advertisement, did they really come true? Or
was it beyond expectation, or less?
EO: Is just – usually, like I remember because I was also involved in the Oshogbo crusade. I was involved in Ilesa crusade then, before I became the chairman of Ife crusade. You see, the advertisement is nothing special. Is just drawing people, like the Oshogbo one, they say – you may not understand it because is in Yoruba dialect, “Reinhard Bonnke …

[EA singt in der Yoruba Sprache.]

EO: … Oshogbo.” Like that. Reinhard Bonnke is coming down to Oshogbo.

DS: To Oshogbo, okay.

EO: People should come to receive salvation, healing, and deliverance, you know.

DS: Just a song.

EO: Joy song usually.

DS: Now, after the crusade was over – there are always reports, I mean, in the local press and the ministries. In those reports, did you find any exaggerations, or were they truthful?

EO: No I – maybe. I think I’ll – like I said, I was involved in almost all the three crusades he had in this state.

DS: Yeah. Let’s just focus on Ile-Ife.

EO: Ile-Ife, okay. But if I’m to speak for Ile-Ife …

DS: Yes.

EO: … crusade, I will say there, in – with Ife there was no exaggeration, because there was no scandal.

DS: Okay, that’s good.

EO: That is it. Because there was, by the grace of God, there was no scandal. It was purely evangelistic crusade, and after the crusade the report was given …

DS: It was good, yes.

EO: … how the money was spent, and that is it.

DS: And now, let’s move to the second part. I’ll be speaking about the crusade and Reinhard Bonnke’s preaching. Now, I’m trying to understand the dynamics behind the masses coming.

EO: Okay.

DS: So, could …

EO: Attracting, such a …
DS: Yes, crowd.
EO: … crowd.

DS: Could it be that his content of preaching is part of it? – Part of the reason for the people to come – the content of his preaching.
EO: Well, yes is likely. It is – it is part of it, but mostly miracles, then sharing of books.
DS: Okay.
EO: Sharing of books and materials.
DS: Yes.

[Unterbrechung]
EO: Yes.
DS: The message, of course, also is part of it – the content. And books …
EO: Yes, books.
DS: Those are the things drawing people. Okay.
EO: Especially to the Fire Conference aspect of …
DS: Later on, okay. Yes. Oh, I see. Now, let’s – what was the focus of his preachings during those days? I mean, which topics did he preach on? Which themes?
EO: Like, you know, Reinhard Bonnke is a simple preacher. He preaches so simply, for everybody to understand. He preaches on the blood of Jesus. He preached on salvation. He’ll preach on deliverance and the power of the Holy Spirit. In fact, usually during the last day of his preaching, having ministered salvation, ministered deliverance, then he preached on …
DS: So, he’s …
EO: … the Holy Spirit.
DS: … building it up, building it up. Okay. That’s interesting.
EO: And then, one thing about it is that usually – from my own perspective, the way I look at it – his message is just the same simple message he carries all over. Because the message he preached in Oshogbo was almost the same thing he preached in Ife – was almost the same thing he preached in Ilesa earlier.
DS: I see.

EO: Yes. Usually. You may listen to the audio and video.

DS: Now, to which extend did he adapt his message to the culture, here in Ile-Ife? Was it, I mean, did he relate to the people?

EO: Yes, he did. He did. Like the last of his message, of his crusade, he dwelt so much on occultism. He dwelt so much on poverty, poverty eradication, elevation, whatever that people should not be contented in being poor.

DS: Now, do you believe, I mean, the adaptation was positive? Was it not going too far – the adaptation?

EO: No, it was – no it was not going too far.

DS: It was still the gospel?

EO: Though at times he got – he brought his examples from Europe, from Germany [...] Of course, that was his own climate. That was his environment. So, but he adapts – he would adapt to whatever he was preaching here.

DS: I see. Now, as critic – I know one critic, he is accusing Reinhard Bonnke of speaking more about signs and wonders than about Calvary. What is your take on that one?

EO: Well, is – I don’t believe it. I don’t believe it. He preached simple salvation message, and what else do we mean? We are talking of Calvary.

DS: Yes.

EO: He talks about simple salvation message.

DS: … simple salvation message, yes.

EO: And since he preached that, then – and any evangelist will also preach about the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, to heal and to deliver – Isaiah, “He has anointed me to preach the gospel, to deliver the captives, and to all” – and so on and so forth.


EO: Yes. So, I think to me, is in order. There is only aspect, not even – maybe we will come to that. The only aspect that I – they believe so much in crowd.

DS: He, he, he, he – no?

EO: Crowd, crowd.

DS: Yes.
EO: It is, the most of the time they have the impression that the – the number of people they have there, will determine the move of the Holy Spirit.

DS: Okay. Who has the impression?

EO: Hm?

DS: Who does have this impression?

EO: The – I think the CfaN people.

DS: Okay. Okay.

EO: Because they're always interested in …

DS: … big numbers.

EO: … big, in – in numbers. They are so much interested …

DS: I see.

EO: … in numbers.

DS: Now, thank you. Now, I understand that Reinhard Bonnke is saying that he is not the one doing the miracles. I know that. But help me understand the local people, here in Ile-Ife. Would they perceive him as healer?

EO: You know. It – with the knowledge of people, what he is dealing with, most of them are crack unbelievers. They don’t have teaching. They were not taught. They don’t know much about the Bible.

DS: Yes.

EO: So, the tendency was there, for them to see him as the healer.

DS: Yes.

EO: But for somebody that is knowledgeable – somebody that is versed in the Bible will know who is behind the healing. You know, that is just.

DS: So, what did he do to point the glory back to God? – I mean Reinhard Bonnke.

EO: Well, I think he – since he tells people that is the Lord Jesus, that does the healing; not he is the …

DS: He does it publicly in the crusade? He tells it?

EO: He does it. He does it.
DS: Is good. Now, some critics again, they say that his miracles are not genuine, or at least not lasting. What is your take on that one? – And for Ile-Ife.

EO: Well, there were some exaggerations, as far as the crusade – the miracles were concerned. Exaggeration – not on his own part …

DS: I see.

EO: … but on the part of the people.

DS: Of the local people?

EO: Mm-hm. You see, people go there because they perceive him as the embodiment of miracles. And what has not happened, people will say it has happened.

DS: Yes. But it’s not him saying it.

EO: Is not him saying it.

DS: Yes, yes. I’m hearing you.

EO: That is it. Is not him saying it.

DS: Yes.

EO: It’s people, that say it. So …

DS: So, that’s interesting. So, could it be that, you know, all these critics, they come up because other people tell lies; because other people say things have happened, which never had – did happen? Is that the reason maybe? I’m trying to find the reason because …

EO: Is likely that critics are people who are not really Christians, who want to discredit Christianity. In our environment we have that – we should have that. That oh, is just – like when he came to Ife, they brought a dead body to the crusade. And he told the people that he has no power to raise any dead body – that the one that came to live, that he did not even know.

DS: Yes, Daniel Ekechukwu.

EO: That it was in the basement – this Daniel, yes. That it was not even known. That was in the basement of the church, where he was holding crusade. That it was later that he was informed that is – a dead body rose. And since then I’ve not heard that somebody else rose. In fact, there was a time, a boy died on the campus here. He has died; they want to bury him. But they said, since Reinhard Bonnke will be coming in another two weeks, they should keep the corpse for him. And they came to me, to assi[st] – to seek my assistance. I said look – to me, I don’t see any – but if you want to go. And they took the corpse there. For the whole five days of the crusade, the corpse was there, and they returned the corpse for burial, at the end of the day.
DS: Oh, I see.
EO: So, is …
DS: … is the culture.
EO: Mm.
DS: Now, see what I’m trying to find out. There are some critics; they get their information from somewhere, you know. So, maybe they are getting the information from those people who are exaggerating. You know what I mean? And then, since they are exaggerating, when these critics come and try to find out whether it’s true or not, they find it’s not true. But it has not been true to begin with. Right? Are you getting me?
EO: Yeah, yeah.
DS: I’m trying to find where these critics get their information from, you know.
EO: That is what I’m saying. The – you have people that will just …
DS: … make up things.
EO: … get up and make up things, to discredit what you are doing.
DS: Yes, yes.
EO: That’s it.
DS: Okay.
EO: The one thing I know is that, many times he dwells so much on miracles.
DS: Reinhard Bonnke.
EO: After the message he will …
DS: After the message?
EO: Message – after the message, then he will give a long time for miracles, people that are – you see, it was people that has exaggerating. Even some sick people were themselves exaggerating.
DS: I see.
EO: Not exaggeration really, but how they might think they were using faith.
DS: Yeah, I understand.
EO: I hope you get it, so.
DS: I’m getting it. Is not Reinhard Bonnke doing it – is the people doing it.

EO: Is not, is not. Is the people doing it.

DS: Yes, I’m hearing you. Now, in your opinion, did the crusade in 2002 solve social problems in Ile-Ife? – I mean, directly or indirectly.

EO: It assisted to some extent.

DS: Give me some example maybe. In which area?

EO: Like the crusade ground, where we used – before Reinhard Bonnke crusade, that place was Enugu area.

DS: Demonic?

EO: It was – is demonic, owned by demonic people. Owned by people of – what do you call it – power of darkness, who can do so much in the power of darkness, and they practice occultism. And that place – all along, far about eighty hectares, eighty hectare, hectares of the land – and before Reinhard Bonnke crusade, nobody could enter that bush. But when Reinhard Bonnke came – in fact, we spent about three million Naira bulldozing all the trees to make use of that place. But now, if you are going there, the place, the whole place has become – in fact, they gave Christian Association of Nigeria about six acres of that land. Houses have sprung up there. Now, people are now living there.

DS: So, is a result of the crusade.

EO: Oh yes.

DS: Now, but let’s talk about the crime rate. Did the crime rate go down? Do you know that? Is there statistics, or do you just know from your environment? Did crime – is – went down?

EO: I don’t think so. I don’t think so.

DS: And socially, like poverty – was it eliminated to some extent? Or it – did it, I mean, I understand that a big crusade always brings, you know …

EO: I find, during the time.

DS: Yes.

EO: During that time …

DS: I know.

EO: … we know it has.

DS: But I’m talking about afterwards.
EO: After, afterwards.

DS: Yes.

EO: Say not much.

DS: Not much, okay. Now, Reinhard Bonnke is blaming Satan for causing all these problems in Africa, Nigeria, let me say in Ile-Ife – is blaming Satan. Now, do you think that is helpful – to blame Satan? Or should he rather say, “Well, you people must change.” Now, what’s your take on that one? Is it helpful for the society?

EO: Well, I think we believe as Christians that any evil thing comes from Satan, though it might be permitted by God …

DS: Yes.

EO: … definitely it comes from Satan.

DS: … from Satan, yeah.

EO: So, to that extent I will say is correct – is right to say that, to that extent.

DS: So, it fits right into your understanding, here in Ile-Ife.

EO: Because blaming the people might not do.

DS: I understand.

EO: Though, a man of God must also speak the truth, where he has to speak the truth.

DS: Yes.

EO: That is one thing. If the people are at fault, then they need to change. We must let them know that they need to change. So blame – I mean, Satan caused it initially. There is the cause.

DS: Yes.

EO: But the effect …

DS: … is on man?

EO: … is there. So, the effect – the Satan cause, is the cause – but the effect of Satan’s cause is what we see in the life of people. And people have to also take some steps, to make sure that the curses are removed.

DS: So, he fits right into the local understanding, I mean, the Christians. His idea fits right in there.
EO: One thing that I know about – you see, when Reinhard Bonnke gets to an environment, he asks about the people there – want to, want to know the type of idols …

DS: Idol worship.

EO: … the type of. So, he gets – he got equipped …

DS: Before.

EO: … before the crusade. And during crusade, God used him to mention some of these particular idols.

DS: Yes. Yes, is okay.

EO: So, and in most cases – at times people come with their charms, with their …

DS: Now, has CfaN or Reinhard Bonnke in his ministry been involved in any social projects? I mean prior or even after the crusade. I mean long term projects going on, like starting small scale businesses for people, or humanitarian aid, or such things. Or was it just gospel preaching?

EO: Just gospel preaching.

DS: Now, would you think that – would you say that if we would add the aspect of, you know, helping people socially, would that enhance the ministry? Would that help the ministry, the gospel ministry?

EO: Well.

DS: Or would it be a hindrance?

EO: One thing that we should understand is that we are talking of social responsibility.

DS: Yes.

EO: One thing we should understand is, CfaN is not a missionary team – is just evangelistic.

DS: Evangelistic, okay.

EO: In fact, that is why they don’t plant any church anywhere. To do what you are saying now, there must be a church on ground. So, but they would not go into – they wouldn’t go into church planting. And that is one thing I discovered, that if I’m to criticize, that is one thing I want to really say about their activities. You see, they are so much interested in preaching the gospel. What happens afterwards, nobody cares.

DS: So, you would say the follow-up …

EO: Follow-up.
DS: … should be stronger?

EO: Yes, it should be stronger. They are not really concerned about follow-up.

DS: We …

EO: When they finish their crusade in Ife, next thing that comes to their mind, “Where next do we go?”

DS: We will talk about follow-up later. This is a good point, yes.

[DS hustet.]

DS: Excuse me. Okay. Now, I want to talk about how the churches worked with CfaN. – I mean, their relationship. At which point did the church get involved in the process of organising the crusade? Did the church invite Reinhard Bonnke, or was Reinhard Bonnke telling the church, “I’m coming, would you help?” How was it? You know?

EO: Yes, in some cases. Not, you see, when you talk – when you say the church.

DS: The churches, let’s say.

EO: Usually it is Reinhard Bonnke that fixes where he goes because I remember, before he eventually came to Ife, people had sent for him twice. He refused to come, because he said the Holy Spirit had not led him to Ife.

DS: Okay.

EO: You know? So, when he decided to come – when we had known that he was coming to Ife – then they look for people that will assist them in the programme and so on. That is – that is usually what they do.

DS: Now, once they come, they provide a structure for …

EO: … the local.

DS: … the local. Yes, churches. Now, within the structure – within the committees, how much freedom was there to make your own decisions?

EO: That is one other thing because we have that problem in Ife here. Because many of our chairmen of the committees are enlightened people. Some of them are professors.

DS: Yes.

EO: Some of them are senior lecturers. So, they are highly intelligent, highly exposed people.

DS: Yes.
EO: That is where they have problems with the – their representative, Darko.

DS: Yes.

EO: Because that one want to corner every – everything. If I – we – whatever he says will be the final, even when the local organising people are …

DS: Oh, I see.

EO: … saying him …

DS: But I mean, I understand …

EO: … like …

DS: Please, go on, go on.

EO: Okay, like I have one instance. Like the choir, you know, they have planned there – but eventually Darko had somebody he wanted to bring from somewhere. And he will not even inform anybody. He’ll just bring them, and bring them and – you know. So, such things created friction at times. So, that is the only thing.

DS: But that was, I mean, I know Rev. Darko; he is from Nigeria. He’s a representative here. So, that was not really, I mean, was not really …

CO: Bonnke.

DS: What?

CO: Bonnke’s doing.

DS: Yes, it wasn’t Reinhard Bonnke’s doing, but it was one of his …

EO: No, that is – you know I’ve told you …

DS: Yeah, I understand that.

EO: … before that Bonnke …

DS: … is fine.

EO: … does not have hand in planning.

DS: Yes, yes. You told me, yes. Alright.

EO: So, whatever is – whatever happened during the planning, if you look at these …

[EO zeigt auf Stellen in dem unveröffentlichten Dokument The Organisational Structure For Great Gospel Crusade With Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke.]
DS: Oh, I will, actually I will.

EO: … like look at general chairman.

DS: Yes.

EO: The chairman, that is crusade chairman, shall be chosen among the Christian leadership of – among the leadership of the Christian community. It shall be a chairman, bla, bla, bla [sic]. Then look at the first function.

DS: Yes.

EO: The chairman, in consultation with the West African director, that is Rev. John Darko …

DS: Yes.

EO: … shall preside over every planning meeting. But you see, in consultation.

DS: I see.

EO: For my experience is that he was even doing all the meetings. If he didn’t sanction the meeting, we could not hold any meeting, so.

DS: Now, that’s very helpful because what I can see now is that this thing provided by CfaN has good intentions. [DS nimmt Bezug auf das unveröffentlichte Dokument The Organisational Structure For Great Gospel Crusade With Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke.]

EO: Yes, it has good intentions.

DS: But the way it worked.

EO: The human – the human aspect of it.

DS: I’m hearing you, yes. So, very clear. Thank you, that was very helpful.

CO: And I’m glad that we were able to talk to you, Sir.

DS: Very good, yes.

CO: Had it not been that you were in the office, where you were during this CfaN crusade, we wouldn’t have get this kind of insight.

EO: Oh, that is good.

DS: It was very helpful.

CO: Others didn’t know. Because all they’ve been saying was that Bonnke gave us freedom …
EO: No.

CO: … in whatever we do, yes.

DS: Which is true in a sense, but locally it didn’t work out that way because of – there was somebody in between …

CO: Yeah.

DS: … Bonnke and the other …

CO: [?

EO: Is – is the director.

DS: I understand. I’m hearing you.

EO: He is the chief administrator.

DS: Yes, in Nigeria.

EO: No, it’s for the whole West Africa.

CO: For West Africa.

DS: Okay, I didn’t know.

EO: Is just based in Nigeria.

DS: … in Nigeria. I see.

EO: Just based in Nigeria. So is – In fact, he has his deputy, but the deputy is in charge of finance. Darko is in charge of the field work, you know. That is the organisation at the CfaN office. There is other man there, Boateng Yusuff.

DS: I know, Rev. Darko is, I think, quite known. You can find references on him. Okay, that helps very much, very much. Okay. Now, how did the crusade fit into the ongoing evangelistic efforts of the churches, here in Ile-Ife? I mean, they’ve been having crusades before, didn’t they? – Before Reinhard Bonnke came. How did it fit in? Was it a new thing to do, or was it just fine? Was it just flowing fine, or?

EO: I will say it assisted the local evangelistic efforts. Because one – ordinarily it would have been very difficult for Christians in this town to come together, to do such event, if not for the rally point of Reinhard Bonnke crusade, you know. So, to that extent I will say it affects the evangelistic efforts of the churches positively.

DS: Positively.
EO: But what they used to say was that people with small churches should go out – should go and look for bigger places, and so on. But at the end of the day nothing happens, that is from my experience. Like I said, if there is no follow-up and …

DS: We will talk about that later, very good. Yes, that’s good. So, you would say that it was not just a project of CfaN, but it was also your project, here in Ile-Ife?

EO: It looked that way. Is like the English man would say, “He who pays the piper, dictates the tune.” Because most of the funds, in fact, if not 100 percent of the funds are supplied by CfaN, as 99.999.

DS: Okay.

EO: [...] Because of that the …

DS: Yes, I hear you.

EO: … CfaN had to dictate the tune, you know, so.

DS: Okay. Now, let’s talk briefly about the Fire Conference now. As I understand, the Fire Conference is geared toward equipping church workers. Now, the Fire Conference in Ile-Ife, which effect did it have on church growth or churches in Ile-Ife? Was it helpful?

EO: The Fire Conference, I will say it was helpful. Helpful in the sense that well, ministers and Christians were given some books they could read, to assist them. That is – apart from that, the effect of the conference was not really. Because the Reinhard Bonnke – what they call – ministers’ conference was nothing but an extension of evangelistic preaching. But this time to …

DS: … ministers.

EO: … to ministers. It was not really …

DS: … teaching.

EO: … teaching.

DS: Yeah, yes.

EO: It was not really teaching. I mean, that’s the way I look at it.

DS: Is fine, is your opinion. It’s just – yeah. I’m very pleased to hear, I mean, good insights. It’s helpful. And also to hear that, you know, that Reinhard Bonnke, as a person, is somebody we should admire. But there is things going wrong, way down somewhere, some – I mean, you know what I mean – is not Reinhard Bonnke to blame for many things.

EO: No, no, no.

DS: That’s what I’m saying, but …
EO: In fact, he is not even – is not informed.

DS: That’s what I’m saying because people always try to blame Reinhard Bonnke.

EO: Well, because he is the man. Just like in the country, people want to blame the president …

DS: President, yes.

EO: … even, if he is not there, so.

DS: So, and your information has helped to clarify things. It’s – I’m very grateful. Okay, let’s move to the next part, last part, talking about the masses of people who came. Now, I mean, there is so many preachers here in Nigeria, I mean, fiery preachers all over Nigeria. Why do people prefer to come to Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade? Why does he draw the biggest crowds? What is the difference between him and the …

EO: I think what really the difference is, is planning – is planning.

DS: Planning, yes.

EO: Then two – you know the other time we were talking about social responsibility, but there is nothing like – there is no social responsibility. There is nothing done to the local, but they share Bible, they share – that …

DS: Free stuff.

EO: … in its own attract a lot of people. Then I – like I said, miracles attract a lot of people, [?] so …


EO: Well, I don’t – that doesn’t really matter. Already he has become so, so much known in the country that the issue of colour or race does not really come in.

DS: And – so he has become very well known. That means the fame is a factor also.

EO: It is fame, yeah.

DS: Okay. Now, would you also say that the style of preaching – I mean, he preaches dramatically – is also some, an aspect that draws people? Could that be?

EO: Well, like I said, his preaching is so simple. Reinhard Bonnke preached very simple salvation message, and which people could understand. But most often what attracted them was miracles.
DS: Let’s dwell on the miracles a little bit. Would you say that the use of spiritual gifts, like the gifts of healing, or the gifts, or word of knowledge, or other gifts of the Spirit were part of, you know – were a factor in drawing people?

EO: Yes, it is.

DS: It is.

EO: It is.

DS: Okay.

EO: That is what people come to – come for.


EO: Yes, the music. You know the music, the musicians, the choir are from the local people, in the local environment. You know, so. The fact, the – Reinhard Bonnke preferred people singing in the local dialect. In fact, if he is ministering and you start preaching, singing in English, he wouldn’t like it.

DS: I see.

EO: Even if he doesn’t understand, he wanted everything to be localized and …

DS: … and that draws people.

EO: Yes.

DS: Is there any other aspect drawing people? You mentioned books, miracles. We talked about music, and – is there anything else you can think of?

EO: Well, you see. I’m sorry, maybe that will be off record. What I want to say may be off record.

DS: Okay.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Okay. Now, the last set of questions here. Now, we are coming to the point you were making before. Now, did the crusade measurably contribute to church growth in Ile-Ife? I mean, could you say the church is really growing after the crusade?

EO: To some extent, like I said the other time – to some extent.

DS: I mean in numbers, in numbers. I mean in numbers.
EO: Well, one will not be able to say specifically that the growth is as a result of Reinhard Bonnke crusade. For Reinhard Bonnke has left this place for over two, two and half years now. And people continue to work. Before he came people were working, and after he left the work continued. But God used him to assist the local. What they could not – what they wouldn't have money to do on their own – God used him to bring money to do it in a larger scale. So is now – depends on, like I said, it depends on each individual churches to tap from. And I know there is only one church that tried it. And that is Deeper Life Bible Church. But I don’t really know to what extent they really succeeded. But I know they tried it because they made sure they were not into any committee, apart from counselling committee.

CO: Were they informed on it?

EO: Yes, they were.

CO: Oh, I didn’t know.

DS: Okay.

EO: They didn’t want to, but I …

CO: You pressurized them.

EO: … was able to, I was able to pressurize them – the general pastor then. [?] And he told me that they will only participate in the …

CO: … counselling.

EO: … counselling, and nothing else.

DS: Now – I’m sorry. I lost my thought here. Yeah. Now, what would you say, after the crusade what happened, was it church growth or rather church revival?

EO: Say a church revival somehow, to some extent – to some extent really.

DS: And …

EO: Like I said, you see, it’s difficult to really say because …

DS: … trace it back.

EO: … if there be feedback between churches and the Reinhard Bonnke organisation, but there is nothing like that.

DS: Okay, no feedback.

EO: The moment they left, they left for good. Except, maybe in another time they want to come back to …

DS: I hear you.
EO: … again to organise another. So, there is no follow-up, either of the new converts or the churches, no follow-up of any sort.

DS: And now, how many of the people who came to the crusade, the masses, how many of them – just give me guess – how many of them were, I mean, true Christians, committed Christians, church members, before the crusade?

EO: Well.

DS: Is a guess.

EO: Well, it’s difficult, but I will say. I’m not talking of born-again Christians, but church members …

DS: Okay, church members. Okay.

EO: … who are committed church members …

DS: Yes, please.

EO: … from various background. I say they will be up to 60 or 75 percent of the population there.

DS: At the crusade?

EO: Mm.

DS: Mm-hm.

EO: I know there was a day it – in the night we had almost [?] eight hundred thousand participants, so …

DS: Many of them were …

EO: Christians, and the – yes.

DS: … Christians. Yes, yes. So now, in interviewing pastors, we’ve heard some stories now. And maybe it is good I’m asking you, you know, at the end of the interviews. And now, I’ve heard that sometimes people come and fill out more than one decision card. You know, they come today; they fill it out. The same person comes tomorrow, fills it out again, and the next day. I mean, did that happen? Okay. Could that happen?

EO: Well, is possible because of the level of educational attainment of people involved. Many of them are stark illiterate. Many, like I said, many came purposely for miracles. The real thing, they wouldn’t understand. So, when there was altar call today – even in our churches it happened that way, and my Rev. will bail me out.

DS: I see.
EO: See, even in the local churches it happened that way. When you have a programme – unless you keep telling them, look if you had come yesterday, don’t come today again – you know, is the same thing. So people keep on …

DS: … coming.

EO: … repeating – repeating the same thing.

DS: But they are …

EO: So is possible.

DS: … and they are filling out decision cards, again?

EO: Yes.

DS: Yes, but let me – is there any measure undertaken to prevent that?

EO: There, yes …

DS: To be able to correct the numbers.

EO: … there – in announcements it was said that people who had decided once, need not …

DS: … to come again.

EO: … to come again. Yes.

DS: But other than the announcement, is there any other measures? Did they compare notes, or something?

EO: It was difficult at that stage to compare notes.

DS: Because of the big numbers. I understand, yes.

EO: When you think about the numbers, than about the activities going on then. Though after the crusade, some people who are interested tried to sort out things. That is [?] 

DS: Now, after they’ve tried to sort out things, did that information still go back to CfaN?

EO: That’s what I’m saying, CfaN – the moment they hold their crusade, that was the end of it. They are not interested, they – I don’t see them as being interested in …

CO: … church planting.

EO: … church. They are not into church planting anyway. But at least getting interested in the live of the new converts, it can do. They don’t. There is no feedback.
CO: [?]

EO: And there is no follow-up. You know, there is no follow-up. There is no – they left because they are not into church planting. They left them into the hands of local people to, and …

DS: That means they are leaving with wrong numbers, basically. I mean, they have just counted the decision cards.

EO: Yes, yes.

DS: And they just leave with those numbers, without waiting for feedback, I mean, weeks or months after the crusade, after things have been sorted out.

EO: Yes, it may not be fake numbers, but …

DS: I understand, but I mean, the numbers are honest because they counted the decision cards, but there are – some of them are double or triple.

EO: It was not – it was not. I’m not sure is that high, I mean, the number is that high. Number is …

DS: Now …

EO: … may not be that high.

DS: … give me a guess. Of those people who come to receive – to fulfil the altar call, how many of them come for reasons other than salvation? Maybe they didn’t understand it. Maybe they come for a Bible, for the follow-up book, or – give me a guess.

EO: Is difficult to …

DS: … to guess.

EO: … to guess.

DS: Yeah, I understand.

EO: Difficult to guess, you know is – there is no way I could – I wouldn’t have been able to read their minds. But I know, that is, those things encouraged many of them to come.

DS: Because I was told that …

EO: Because at the end of the day, if they fail to get it, they feel not so good about it. And so, and that should tell you that …

DS: Yes. Now, let’s talk about follow-up now. You were mentioning it on the way, all the way. That is one of the weaknesses. Now, but do you think that follow-up should be a part of the ministry of an evangelist? Do you believe that?
EO: Well, if an evangelist has worked, he must see to the maturation of his work.

DS: But …

EO: Maybe, he is an evangelist. Though I know, since they are not into church planting, it’s difficult to follow up those people, really.

DS: Yes.

EO: For you got like – they produced books, flyers, counselling guidelines, follow-up guidelines, and so on. But that was the end. While I expected that having spent so much energy, money, and time, for the crusade, it would not be out of place to – if you are not even coming back, write back. You say, well, how are the people doing?

DS: I see.

EO: How, what is their – what’s their condition? What’s the situation? – Because they don’t.

DS: Okay. That’s it. So, yeah. But don’t you think, I mean, since there were committees here – after the crusade is over – can’t those committees, I mean, not function still in a way? Let’s say a follow-up committee on its own, why doesn’t that work?

EO: That is – that is how it suppose to be.

DS: Yes.

EO: But, you see, not many people saw the crusade as their own crusade. Many saw the crusade as Reinhard Bonnke crusade.

DS: Crusade, okay.

EO: And many, even in the committee, were so much interested in the material gains. You know material – this aspect, so …

DS: I see.

EO: … so, immediately the crusade [?] was over.

DS: They don’t care.

EO: They don’t need to work, was – okay, was finished. It was not suppose to be so.

DS: That means, if there would be a local, strong local body of – or committee that would do follow-up, that would be very helpful.

EO: Yes, it will be able to.
DS: Well, thank you. Is there any advice you could give, I mean, to a young minister like myself, coming to Nigeria to preach the gospel? – Any, any, you know, maybe something that we haven’t touched so far.

EO: Well, I think most of the things – the most of the advices, you could deduce from all we’ve been saying. You know, so – and of course, your focus will really …

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Okay. So, you said most of the information I can deduct from the, from the – this.

EO: Since I’ve never witnessed you …

DS: Yes.

EO: … your evangelistic working, there is not much I could say.

DS: I understand. Yes.

EO: Because I wouldn’t know your focus. Like I – like I said, I know the focus of Bonnke.

DS: Yes.

EO: I know his activities. I know the way he went about it, so.

DS: Yes. That’s been very good information, I mean, that you gave me. Really making things clear, and helping me to understand so many things. Thank you so much for your time, and that’s sure great. May God bless you.

EO: And bless you, too. Save journey back.

DS: Thank you.
2.14 Interview mit Rev. Olumuyiwa Oluwarotimi

2.14.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: Olumuyiwa Oluwarotimi
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 16.10.05
Denomination: Pentecostal
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Counsellor
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/ Werk: Presiding minister of the Divine Glory of Jesus Ministries
Bemerkungen: Die Aufnahme des Interviews war teilweise nicht zu entschlüsseln, da Rev. Olumuyiwa Oluwarotimi sehr schnell und undeutlich sprach und meine Stimme stark angeschlagen war.

2.14.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: Now, we are here with Rev. Oluwarotimi.

OO: Yeah.

DS: Oluwarotimi.

OO: [?]

DS: And he is the presiding minister of Divine Glory of Jesus Ministries.

OO: Yeah.

DS: Thank you for your time, Sir. And I’m going to ask questions about the Ile-Ife crusade. So just about Ile-Ife, 2002.

OO: Okay.

DS: But first of all I would like to ask about the person of Reinhard Bonnke. And then I’ll ask about the crusade itself, and then about the people that came to the crusade. So, let’s start with the first one. Now, before that – which denomination do you belong to? Is it the Pentecostal?
OO: Is Pentecostal.

DS: Pentecostal. Okay. What is your general attitude toward Reinhard Bonnke’s ministry? Is it positive, negative, or neutral?

OO: No, it’s positive.

DS: Positive. Now, if you think of Reinhard Bonnke as a person, what comes to your mind? What kind of person is he in his character?

OO: He’s a person, personality. In terms of keeping himself, I mean, what's really that what’s really challenging most today, how much he puts into the crusades, financially, time, and everything. And again, there is articulation, that he’s really highly articulate.

DS: Okay. So, the people understand him very well?

OO: Yes. The team, they – you know, they have programme, and there is a kind of – they are, they know what they are doing. And the faith – I mean, it will really affect you – in bringing to us what exactly happened, their focus and their goal effectively.

DS: Okay, and would you say he is a humble man?

OO: He is, I believe he is.

DS: And now, I’ve never heard that Reinhard Bonnke was involved in any misappropriation of funds. What about Ile-Ife?

OO: No, even in Ife’s crusade he didn’t raise any funds. He didn't raise any money. Though, I wasn’t in the planning committee. But I know, I had occasion where – even in Ibadan’s crusade – the offerings that were collected, he returned it to the CAN.

DS: To the CAN. I heard that one.

OO: He didn’t take the money.

DS: So, you were also in the planning committee?

OO: I was not in the …

DS: You were not. Okay, okay, that’s what I’m saying. Okay. Okay. Now, some critics of Reinhard Bonnke, they say he is pronouncing false prophecies. What is your take on that one?

OO: No, I wouldn't say he is pronouncing false prophecy. What I think is, you see, the man is a profound teacher, and there are – though there are some things he says, that may not be what the teach, I mean, the doctrines, for example, this issue of baptism of the Holy Spirit. I think there was one of the teaching session, where he said, “People say give me Holy Spirit, give me Holy Spirit, give me Holy Spirit.” That once you received the Holy Spirit, you have the Holy Spirit.
DS: Yes.

OO: But in our own locality here, in the [?] time that we pray for infilling of the Holy Spirit from time to time because the man leaks off. Due to activities, and the sin, and some kind of thing, you rub off. And then the Holy Spirit, I mean, my spirit departs. So, and then we believe that what a man should do, is to be filled all the time. But to him, if you that – there is no need asking for filling of the Spirit. Once you have Holy Spirit, you have Holy Spirit. He won’t leave you.

DS: I see.

OO: So just …

DS: that’s …

OO: … take it for granted that he is there. So, that might be one of those things people have seen that is, I think his own. His preaching is simplistic, very simple. And he had deep knowledge of the word. So it depends on people’s view.

DS: Now, did he pronounce any prophecies, that is saying like what could happen in Ile-Ife? Did he say something about Ile-Ife, what is going to happen in the future?

OO: No, I didn’t hear anything like that.

DS: Okay. Now …

OO: For now I – just a minute, what he said was that to the [?] of the people. He believed the word of God, you know, would go alive in the people, and there will be more – and I think the revival will continue.

DS: Yes.

OO: Because at the end of the crusade he asked, I mean, was it the director of programme? This man from Ghana or so, he asked if we want Bonnke to continue with the crusade. And everybody announced that – let him continue. And he said, “For how many days?” And then as long, he said. Then the man had said that he had to round up because he has another assignment; he wants to be elsewhere. So, if it was the burden of the people, [?] advocated him continuing with the crusade. So, he was a blessing to the people.

DS: Okay. Now, you are also a Nigerian citizen yourself. You are a Nigerian citizen. So, how do you evaluate Reinhard Bonnke’s personal relationship – friendship with president Obasanjo? Is it positive? Is it advancing the gospel?

OO: Well, the Bible says we should go. I mean, he followed the instruction of the Bible, that says, “Be at peace with all men.”

DS: Yes.
OO: Honour those who are in authority. So, for him to really have access to Nigerians, as a foreign minister, he had to be friends, I mean, he had to have cordial relationship with the leadership.

DS: So, it helped the gospel.

OO: It helped the gospel.

DS: That's what I'm saying.

OO: Because if he didn't really have links with the president of Nigeria, he couldn't have had opportunity to go the most [?]. For he went down to, I mean, very …

DS: … rural areas.

OO: … rural areas.

DS: I see. Now, you may still remember …

OO: And he had really backing. I mean, there was a security outfit to really helped him. Because there are these Muslims, the militant Muslim who have overridden the thing of [?]

DS: Now, who is paying for the security? Is it …

OO: I didn’t hear anything about that.

DS: Okay. Now, you still remember the advertisement about the crusade?

OO: Yeah.

DS: What was it about? Which topics were used? Which themes were used? Was it on – on what was it?

OO: I can’t even remember now. But I know that the theme was that – Ile-Ife for Christ, Nigeria for Christ. The essence is that Christ should be elevated. I can’t remember specifically the …

DS: No, no, just the theme.

OO: But I know the theme is Christ for Ile-Ife, and everybody will be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. [?] fire revival, by fire …

DS: … conference.


DS: Yes, yes.
OO: His focus is, get born-again and be filled with the fire of the Holy Spirit; the fire – will be filled with the Holy Spirit. And I think that is very vital. If you are – these teaching sessions complementing the crusade, helped a lot of people.

DS: I see.

OO: Because if they are just be preached to, and there was nothing like backup of teaching, it wouldn’t have been effective. And getting [?] of literature, and what [?] of how he spent so much money to distributing literature, even Bibles, free Bible course, thousands of copies of Bibles. It's really enormous, is a fit.

DS: Now, in the advertisement, what was advertised, now did it correspond with what happened in the crusade?

OO: Oh yes, because the advertisement, I mean, the clips in the video adverts were some of his previous crusades. And we saw a bit of it [?]. Yes, people being healed, blind seeing, lame walking, so.

DS: So, people were not disappointed?

OO: There was no disappointment. The only thing that I think – me, I as a person – was that if God is supreme, I thought – what I was expecting was that with that, such a large crowd of people – I was thinking that well, all the lames will walk; all the blind will see. But is even in the days of Jesus …

DS: … not all.

OO: … not all are healed, you know. Instead, even in Capernaum, he said they didn’t believe. So, he didn’t perform no miracles there. But nonetheless, there was no crusade he held that there were no miracles.

DS: I see.

OO: Miracles.

DS: Okay. Now, after the crusade was over, there are always reports in the local press, and then from ministries. In those reports, the ones you have heard about or read about, was there any exaggeration, or was it just the truth?

OO: Exaggeration – there was no exaggeration. No, I don’t thing there was any exaggeration.

DS: Okay, is there anything you want to add about the person of Reinhard Bonnke? – Just something we have not touched. Because we’ll be moving on to the second part.

OO: Okay, I mean what? What? Let me have your question again.

DS: I mean, if you want to add anything – if you want to say something, it is still …
OO: Well, the – what I just believe is that I want to think that our, this new generation – because Reinhard Bonnke is an elderly man. He is over a sixty. I – is a legacy for the upcoming ministers of the gospel that he should give himself out. No one will get the gospel, but when we plough into the gospel. Because with the money he had – the number of contemporary ministers, who heap up base to themselves to perhaps raise up big, what they call real estate or something, something – property, you know, to themselves, and making them for themselves. But you see, he was just giving out. So, that why I think we should really know, I mean, the ministers, and we should learn from him …

DS: … learn from him.

OO: … and the selfless, the selfless service …

DS: I see.

OO: … in the gospel.

DS: Okay, let’s move on to the second part, talking about the way the crusade was conducted.

OO: Okay.

DS: Now, do you remember what the theme was of his preaching, like throughout the days?

OO: The theme.

DS: The themes.

OO: Well, sorry. I thank you very much. You know, what happened is that I knew that each day – in fact, the very first night he told us what he was going to preach for the first four days. One – salvation. Then I – you know, something like it was in systematic.

DS: Yes.

OO: I couldn’t remember all – pray – I know that is [?], the last night was when he said – every night he prayed, but on the last night it was when he said, he is going do more of intensive prayer. And then he prayed for the late city of Ife. But each day in the – from every day, he will tell you what he had on ground for the four days. So he, you know, he keeps us – he didn't keep us in the dark, because I have heard, again because I'm informed about what he was going to do every day. And he followed the laid down programme, he had for himself.

DS: Now, do you think that the content of the preaching – the content of it, was drawing people to come and listen more?

OO: Well, I think what really – the most powerful thing there is the anointing, the anointing. Again, he embraced all the Christian folks because he want the heart of the bigger body – Christian body, the Pentecostal, PFN, and so every church, you know. All the churches were under these two umbrellas. So, because he came through them. So, there was no suspicion that he was going to take away the crowd. So …
DS: So, many people came.

OO: Yes, people came, so …

DS: Now, would you say that the content of the preaching – oh, never mind, let’s just go …

OO: The – at least, listen to me; the preaching was simple. He came down to earth. Even a baby would understand his preaching.

DS: Yes, I’m hearing you.

OO: … and [?] just saying somebody. You know, he uses some stories to explain salvation.

DS: So, you would think …

OO: So, he was very creative. He drew common stories for – to really bring out message of salvation. And again, even trying to mimic us using the local language, some syllables, Yoruba syllables [?] from interpreter. Like I remember the crusade in Ilesa, he said, “[?] turn, turn to Christ. Ipata! Ipata!” He couldn’t really pronounce well. But I remember that night. I don’t even remember the theme, but I mind the “Ipata! Ipata!” I knew it was him who stay in the house. When – and in Ile-Ife too, he was taking about, “Toni! Toni!” That’s to be clean. “When the blood will wash you clean.” [?] “Toni! Toni!” [?] So, it was really a way to get to the heart of the audience.

DS: So, he adapted his message to the people?

OO: Yes, in that way.

DS: And you think that, that adaptation [korr. „adaptation”] was good?

OO: Yes, it was like that. Because each night you find out that instead of the crowd to clean down, there was always like an increase.

DS: I see.

OO: Is – you know, just going on, on, until the last [?] and climax. So it’s all like that.

DS: So, some critics or one critic, I know, he accused Reinhard Bonnke of preaching more about signs and miracles than preaching about Calvary, that is salvation.

OO: That is not true.

DS: Is not true?

OO: Like, I mean, I don’t think so. Is not true. The focus is salvation, salvation, salvation.

DS: I see. Now, let’s talk about the healings. Have the – now, I know, Reinhard Bonnke is saying he is not healing people – it’s God healing them.
OO: That’s right.

DS: I understand. Help me understand the local people here. How do they perceive Reinhard Bonnke? – As the healer? I’m not saying he is saying that, but that the people – could that be?

OO: Well, you see, it’s a general option. And you know, in the days of Peter they had to lie down – lay some of these sick on the road that his shadow could fall on the sick, and they will recover. Like the case of Dorcas, the fact of – that they had to cry, and wept; the widows wanted him to do something about Dorcas’ case because she had been a very [?] So, normally any man of God who God is using to, I mean, work wonders, people want to see him as the person, a beggar of a – of the blessing. So, not that he was worshipped, but people really believed that moving close to him, or even rather if you had access of touching him, they would have really …

DS: Oh, I see.

OO: … [?] There is the belief that he was like Christ himself there. [?]

DS: But he, how was he bringing the glory back to God? How was he doing it in the crusade?

OO: Do what?

DS: Bringing the glory back to God.

OO: He kept saying it that, you know – all along he would talk about Jesus, the Lord. Praise the Lord. Glory be to Jesus. What I mean, he was just talking about God, the Lord Jesus in all that, and then emphasized the Holy Spirit in all things.

DS: Now …

OO: So, he didn’t point to himself.

DS: Now, some critics again say that the miracles worked there are not genuine, or at least not lasting. What is your take on that for Ile-Ife?

OO: Well, evidently I don’t really have any person very close to me that had miracles. But it was – I’ve not really heard that the particular person that received miracles – because it was one of the nights, was it Sun…, the night of the third day of the crusade, either the third day or the last day – there were about seven cases of [?] miracles. Even there was a case of a boy that was a Muslim – from the Muslim background and [?] lame – that was healed. And that one in particular, people are going to his house to find out was he. So, I have not really heard [?] that the boy is now back [?] I’ve not really heard people say anything like that. Okay, so, so, so [?] healing is back, back again to score one. But we cannot rule that out. If a person, like I just told [?] go and sin no more, that something worse than this will not come to you. So, if a man is healed and starts to go back to Satan, I know such a thing will come back again.

DS: That means that if somebody goes back to his old state of being, it is not Bonnke’s fault …
OO: Is not Bonnke’s fault, is that person – is that person's fault.

DS: I’m hearing you, yes.

OO: Yeah, that is scriptures.

DS: Now, in your opinion, did Reinhard Bonnke’s gospel crusade contribute to the solution of social problems in Ile-Ife, directly or indirectly?

OO: Contributing social problems?

DS: To solving, solving social problems.

OO: Yes. At least the – there were miracles. As far as I’m concerned, I’ve never – there had not been any. I’ve heard from the elderly people in Ife; no crusade like that had there held in Ife. And it was a time when all sorts of people, from different inclinations and their beliefs, whether deity worshippers, whatever, gathered there, even Muslims. So, it was like a rally point for people to hear Christ. And during that period we didn’t have what – we didn’t have these cases of people burglarizing [korr. „burgling”] into the houses, when the owners were at the crusade ground. So, there was like a – the whole heart, the whole town was up for the Lord, you know.

DS: But, but …

OO: And people were talking about Christ. I mean, even the – all these people who own the commercial vehicle, commercial drivers, they were there. So, they were forced to come and listen because they had to get people down …

DS: Yes.

OO: … up and down and there, so.

DS: Now, but I’m talking about long lasting solutions, like you can still sense it now – not just for the time of the crusade, but after then. That you could say, you know, since then …

OO: Well, after the crusade there was nothing like abnormality, you know. Like before the crusade I was worried, you know …

[ Mobiltelefon klingelt]

… after the crusade there was nothing like [?] again, and …

[ Sterke Störung durch das Mobiltelefon.]

DS: [?]
OO: He was here in 2002. For that whole year – the whole year of that programme, there were not pronounced cases of house burgling, burgling into houses, and all this [?], and then these activities of [?] what you call it now, these criminals?

DS: Yes.

OO: But you see, this 2005 is about three years.

DS: Yes.

OO: We still have, you know all these …

DS: Again.

OO: … serious cases of robbery and – but just after the programme – no. In fact, the issue of Olojo [?] it was a temporary subduing of such temple, you know. And again, after the programme the churches still kept on with the various units because he advocated various units – departments, for the crusade. The prayer-team still kept on with meeting and praying. [?] In fact, some other people who run the crusade have to adopt his method – written up various things for …

DS: I see.

OO: So, it is one thing. But even after the programme.

DS: Now, Reinhard Bonnke is saying that the cause of all these problems – social problems in Africa, in Nigeria, let’s say in Ile-Ife – is Satan. Do you think to say that is helpful? Or should he rather say – should he rather blame the people, so that they can change? You know what I mean?

OO: Well, the escapist approach is always – put everything on Satan.

DS: That’s what I’m saying.

OO: In fact, I speak with – well, I don’t think is always. Well, we know that the devil is the ruler of this world. And anybody who gives up to sin, is of the devil. But a number of times we cooperate with the devil. When somebody is presenting the gospel, and they refuse to receive the gospel [?] So, I think we also should be blamed, not really Satan all the time. [?] the right option, and that is the light of Jesus [?]

DS: I’m hearing you. So, okay. Then let’s move on. Did Reinhard Bonnke have any social ministries going on, like providing humanitarian aid or …

OO: I don’t know of any.

DS: Now.

OO: I don’t know of any [?], but I know that I heard – I didn’t know, but I heard that during that period he released funds to all these departments.
DS: No, I mean, not during the – I mean, before, after – long term projects.

OO: For the church?

DS: For the local people.

OO: For the – no, I have not heard of any.

DS: Okay. Now, do you believe that doing that would enhance the ministry of evangelism? Would it help, to also help socially?

OO: Yes, you see, like in the Acts of Apostle. You saw that people were distributing, you know; they had everything common, and assisted the needy.

DS: Yes.

OO: Yes. Definitely there are some. It is not really – I don’t think it’s appropriate to say that by giving out social help everybody will become born-again.

DS: No.

OO: Some will take, and they will never get born-again.

DS: Yes.

OO: They will take advantage of that. But I know that the gospel has to go hand in hand with – identify with the people. Yeah. So, if that’s roof or eat, I think it could still help. But if you – I wouldn’t think that if Reinhard Bonnke decided to do that – some other people with real meaning to him, they might want to think, he wants to set up a denomination and establish a church. So, I think as an evangelist – just doing his crusade and leaving, handing over to the local churches – to do that, you know, can help him to keep his integrity.

DS: Okay.

OO: There are a lot of suspicions.

DS: Now, how did the local churches work with CfaN? I mean, did churches invite Reinhard Bonnke to come? Or did he tell the churches, “I’m coming, please help me.”

OO: No, no, there are the two options, I now question. He – the CfaN have their own programmes. They have their own itinerary. But if at a local assembly or a particular town, a kind of a local congregation, or section of people that will want him to come – they will make a request that we have heard of you somehow, somewhere. We want you to come down. So, is the CfaN that now will decide where to place them, or whether he – they will honour the invitation or not. Yeah.

DS: Okay. Now, so …
OO: In the case of Ife, what I learned was that he was not suppose to come to Ife, because of his tight schedule, but because they had the crusade in Oshogbo; they had one in Ibadan. And eventually, even though having had that one in Ibadan and in Oshogbo, there was no need, because Oshogbo is just about a hundred kilometres away from here – that they might not need [?] He had another one in Ilesa, who is about twenty-five kilometres away from Ife. But eventually the Ife people believed they would need him here because there is a large population.

DS: Now, once the team came, and they provided some structure, I mean, they asked you to start committees, and so. But within the structure – within the committees, were you free to make your own decisions? – Within the committees.

OO: Decisions? Adherent to CfaN’s decision, or what?

DS: No, no, like, for example, the location of the crusade, the choir, and those things.

OO: Of course, we’ve actually – we could it.

DS: Okay.

OO: It is left in the committee, but there could be suggestions from CfaN, I mean, to help to enhance success of the programme. You know, they are the organisers, and they are the financers of the programme.

DS: But you work together.

OO: Yes.

DS: Yes.

OO: [?]

DS: So, you would say it was not just a CfaN project. It was the CfaN and the churches’ project, was it?

OO: It was – no it’s like a man riding on a horse to get to destination. The horse alone will not get there, and the man riding himself will find it difficult to get there because it’s going to be strenuous. So, the horse will, you know, assist the man. Is about the relationship.

DS: I see.

OO: It's a race about it. So, he provided the logistics. We provided the man power.

DS: But you did not feel as if something was imposed on you?

OO: No, no, no, no, no, no. It was a privilege.
DS: Now, let’s talk briefly about the Fire Conference. As I understand, the Fire Conference is geared toward equipping church workers. Now, did it have an lasting impact, I mean, that Fire Conference? Did really church workers become equipped, and have they been working since?

OO: Well, it is a difficult thing to – but what I know is, those who really went – those who came …

DS: From your church.

OO: From our own church?

DS: Yes.

OO: After the programme they still kept on with what they learned there. At least for a long time the impact of the Fire Conference was there. But you know normally, except the local church continues in that tempo …

DS: … lost …

OO: […] … we will loose it – we’ll loose them.

DS: Okay. That was the second part. We are moving to the third part now, talking about the masses of people that came to Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade. I’m trying to understand the dynamics, why so many people are drawn to Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade. I understand, there are many aspects, why people come. So, I will be asking about that.

OO: Okay.

DS: Number one – I know Nigeria has many preachers, I mean, spirit filled, on fire preachers. Why do people prefer to attend Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade? Why does he draw the biggest crowds? What’s the difference between the local preachers and him?

OO: I – the one major thing is, Reinhard Bonnke is not preaching a denomination, and he has the power of the Holy Spirit inside of him. I mean, he was deliberately good. There are a lot of problems – social problems, physical problems, and he came to preach the Lord Jesus with signs and wonders. And there was no strings attached to it. So, people want their blessing without being tied to anything. So like – so he came without any strings.

DS: And so they came.

OO: And there were – and he delivered the group. He preached the gospel, and they had solution to their problems.

DS: What about the factor that he is a white man? Did it also draw people? – That he is a white man.

OO: Well, I don’t – I wouldn’t know whether it is because he is a white man, but I think the issue is the integrity.
DS: Okay.

OO: He wasn’t the only white man that ever came to Nigeria. I think the issue is integrity and his strategy. You know, he carried along the whole church, the CAN and the PFN, the leadership …

DS: And that made the people come?

OO: That made people to come because the publicity was very intensive. I mean very, very intensive, you know, it was an effective publicity. And that is the flock who will normally follow their leaders, and all the leaders are part of the planning committee.

DS: So they come?

OO: So, they believe it is their own programme, not Bonnke’s programme.

DS: Yes, I see. Now, Reinhard Bonnke has a very unique style of preaching – very dramatic. Do you believe that his style of preaching also contributes to draw the masses? – The way he preaches, the …

OO: I wouldn’t know. I don’t – I think to me – I believe is the charismatic grace on him.

DS: Explain to me “charismatic grace”.

OO: What I mean is that this issue of praying […] For example, we have in Nigeria – we have E. A. Adeboye, Pastor E. A. Adeboye. He holds programmes, too. And in fact, the kind of – like this Holy Ghost Congress, that happens one day every year.

DS: Yes.

OO: They have millions of people turning out. At least about 1.5 million, 2 million, at that same programme, and is a black man. But the issue of […] is that, that programme they say is for everybody.

DS: So, that …

OO: And when they go, they receive miracles.

DS: I see.

OO: So, the issue – I think his simplistic preaching helped him to communicate …

DS: I see.

OO: … to everybody …

DS: Would you say …
OO: … so that nobody is in – was in doubt of what he was saying. We understood what he was saying. Even Primary School students will understand what he was saying.

DS: Yes.

OO: And so, and that’s making it interesting, you know. You are not at loss. And then again, there is interpretation, effective interpretation – trained interpreters. So, I think communication was okay. And there was also the power of God up backing him.

DS: Of course, yeah.

OO: So, that’s really – so everybody felt fulfilled coming.

DS: Do you think that preaching is entertaining – he does? Do others like to come and hear him preach because he has a way of entertaining them?

OO: Let me hear you again.

DS: I mean, he – is that preaching entertaining, in a way? Do people just come to listen to him?

OO: Well, the preaching was interesting; I wouldn't say entertaining.

DS: Okay. Interesting, yeah.

OO: He – because he often used stories. You know, he had his stories. He tells stories to relate to his point.

DS: I see, yeah.

OO: And even sometimes I wondered in my heart. I said that this teaching is so simple. But we here too, preach something like that, but we are not really getting the result he is getting. So, that why I say “the charismatic grace upon him”. It was very simple, for at least that is interesting. You will – these were interesting stories, and he will ... to Christ, so …

DS: Could it be that also the high class Christian music is drawing people to come and join …

OO: Of course, there will be so many factors that could bring people. Some people want to – during his crusade, there will be different music groups – so, musical ministrations. So, somebody will want to go there and listen, you know, because it’s always mixed multitude coming there. Some people come to listen to the music, and then they will still hear the gospel. And some people will listen to the music and then go. So, so many things will draw you. Some will want to come and see the crowd; they will hear the gospel. Some will want to come and sell their hot dogs, and they will still hear the gospel. So, so many things – that are many things that could really attract people’s attention there. But I think the power of God really was effective in getting people down to the place.
DS: Talking about the power of God, what about the gifts of the Holy Spirit? I mean, he is moving in the gifts of healing, of word of knowledge, and then the other gifts. Do you believe that the use of those gifts attracts the masses?

OO: Yes, I mean the healing gifts, word of wisdom.

DS: Yes.

OO: Yes, at least to me, I saw him operate – though he didn’t talk about visions, word of knowledge – he operated in word of knowledge, word of wisdom, healing, and miracles.

DS: And that draws people?

OO: Yes, I mean, these are the power gifts now. So [?] charismatic.

DS: Now, we are moving to the last set of questions. Do you believe that the crusade in 2002, I mean, contributed measurably to church growth in numbers, here in Ile-Ife?

OO: I would think the programme fortified.

DS: Fortified.

OO: Fortified the church.

DS: So, so …

OO: Because before, you know, this place is enclave of idolatry. And for the first time, the whole church came as a body to traumatize the idolatrous world. And with that force, I mean, in fact, that the – it was around about the third year of the crusade. And is just like last year that the Oga of the land entertained this issue of the central idol worship, which they call Olojo. He didn’t hold that year Reinhard Bonnke came. He didn’t go the following year. Okay. It was only last – 2004, and this year …

DS: This year.

OO: … he did help yesterday.

DS: I, yeah.

OO: So, the first two years when this man came, Baba – this, the king – didn’t do anything like Olojo. It’s, it was like – it built up the church.

DS: So, I could say it was a church revival …

OO: It was a church revival.

DS: … instead of church growth, so much?
OO: Well, it’s – I wouldn’t – in my own sight, in our own church, there was no increase. There might be some other churches that enjoyed because there are all the names of those converts – were distributed …

DS: I see.

OO: … among the churches.

DS: So, speaking of your church, there was a church revival but no church growth – in your church.

OO: In our own church, I mean, the crusade helped. It helped us to love the Lord more, and really see the need to really contribute more, to do more for the Lord.

DS: How many of those – the whole mass of people who came there – how many of them were Christians, I mean, born-again, true believers, church members, before the crusade? Give me a guess.

OO: [?]

DS: Because you said that the leaders were involved, and the leaders were involved, and they brought their people. So, how many out of the crowd, half of it, 30 percent, 20, 60? What is your? Give me a guess.

OO: Well, I would think the church membership [?] can not be less than 30 percent – can not be less than 30 percent.

DS: So, it were people who’ve been Christians before the crusade?

OO: Yeah.

DS: Who came to the crusade?

OO: They came. And there are some people who are really Christians, who are not going to churches. They just say they are Christians. They never go to churches.

DS: I’m not …

OO: But they came to the crusade.

DS: Yeah. But I’m not talking about them. I’m talking about true Christians.

OO: The true Christians? Well, when you talk about true Christians, I – what I’m thinking about is this, what would, I would – you know, the programme has to do with all the denominations.

DS: Yes, yes.

OO: Even the [?], where they don’t believe in the Holy Spirit.
DS: I understand, yes.

OO: So, when we are talking about the true Christians, it will be difficult to assess. But if we are talking about the organising bodies – I mean, the churches that came together …

DS: Not, not.

OO: … various churches, whether they believe in the Holy Spirit or not, but they’d say Jesus is alive – that is about 30 percent of the crowd.

DS: Okay. Now …

OO: … spirit filled [?]

DS: You’ve been a counsellor in the crusade. Now, could it happen that somebody comes today and fills out a decision card, and leaves the decision card with you. The next day he comes to another counsellor, somewhere else, on the very …

OO: That one, you can’t rule that out.

DS: Yes, so.

OO: Because people sometimes, they don’t even understand what is decision. Some don’t believe that once they make a decision, the decision is permanent. So, anytime there is an altar call, they come out again and fill …

DS: And they are counted again?

OO: Of course, yes.

DS: Okay. So, are there any measures taken to prevent that? I mean to …

OO: There is no way you could, because it is a very big crowd.


OO: There would be, there would be – there was announcement. [?]

DS: Oh, I understand.

OO: But people will still come out – fill.

DS: Still fill, yes, yes, yes.

OO: Believing that they will be given that …

DS: Booklet.
OO: … follow-up booklet.

DS: Yes, yes.

OO: And I believe that is a relic. So, I’ve took one yesterday. I take another one today. I will keep it in my house, and – like hoarding the decision something.

DS: Now, you just mentioned a few reasons for people coming and filling decision cards. One is the booklet. Maybe another reason might be, they want to come close to Reinhard Bonnke, or they want to have some special blessing. Now, how many of the people now, who were coming to the altar call – how many of them, in your estimation, come for reasons other than receiving Christ?

OO: Is difficult to assess, difficult to assess, I mean. [?] But I know – what we know is that the card is filled after the preaching, after the altar call. And then he explained clearly, if you want to accept Christ …

DS: Oh, I understand. Yes.

OO: And again, you see, we cannot say the filling of the card was just for nothing, because each night there was the issue of burning up of occultic materials. There will be drum provided, where people could bring all their various occultic books and so on and so forth, and they are burned.

DS: Yes.

OO: So, I believe if they are not really repenting, they wouldn’t bring anything. They wouldn’t bring …

DS: No, I’m hearing you. Yeah, I understand. I’m just trying to find a figure, approximately.

OO: I wouldn’t know.

DS: Okay. Now, the follow-up for those believers, do you believe it should be done by Reinhard Bonnke’s team? Or is it the responsibility of the churches here? The follow-up – I mean, the long term follow-up, not just the short term.

OO: It wouldn’t be easy for Reinhard Bonnke’s team to do the follow-up. How many of them in the team – are on the team? And …

DS: Now, what I mean, should he take responsibility or not? I’m just asking, what’s your opinion?

OO: I don’t think. I wouldn’t know. I don’t think he is, he have to. What is the church, what is the – at least he came as an evangelist to that land.

DS: Yes, I’m hearing you.
OO: It should be the responsibility of the church to establish those ones. Yes, the evangelist
preaches; the pastors establishes.

DS: Yes, I'm hearing you.

OO: So, as they were expected to do the work of a pastor, along with the evangelical work.

DS: Yes, okay. And now, the very last questions. Now, we have talked about many things. Is
there anything we did not touch, like an advice you can give to young ministers from Europe,
like myself, who come over to Nigeria to minister here? – To make them more effective. Give
me some advice.

OO: Well, I – I don’t think I have any other thing. All – I just think that if one could learn
from Reinhard Bonnke, as I would expect anybody coming from God to learn from Bonnke –
Reinhard Bonnke, if he is an evangelist, a crowd evangelist.

DS: That’s what I’m doing right now.

OO: But, but somebody who is going to do mission work.

DS: Yes, is different.

OO: Is different.

DS: Okay.

OO: Mission work may not have to – though the mission work also will have to attempt to
work with the leadership …

DS: Yes.

OO: … in that local environment.

DS: I understand.

OO: A missionary wants to establish a church. So, the approach of a missionary would [be]
different a bit from Reinhard Bonnke’s own.

DS: Now, you just said …

OO: But I doubt.

DS: … evangelist. I mean, crusade evangelism, was it a new thing, here in Ile-Ife, or was it
done before? So …

OO: No, it’s been there. We’ve been holding crusades before Reinhard Bonnke. But the one
he has performed, we never did perform one like the one he did.
DS: So, you would say that, that crusade fit right into the ongoing activities in Ile-Ife? – I mean.

OO: Yes.

DS: It was fine.

OO: It was timely. It was okay.

DS: Timely, okay.

OO: And was widely welcome.

DS: Well, thank you so much …

OO: Thank you.

DS: … and may God bless you and your ministry.

OO: Amen.

DS: Yes, thank you. Amen.
2.15 Interview mit Rev. Femi Adedeji

2.15.1 Rahmen Daten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: Femi Adedeji
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 16.10.05
Denomination: Pentecostal
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Chairman of the music committee
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/ Werk: President of The Truth of the Gospel Church

Bemerkungen:

2.15.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: Now, we are interviewing here Rev. Pastor Adedeji.

FA: Yeah.

DS: Femi.

FA: Yeah.

DS: Is that okay? He is the president of The Truth of The Gospel Church, here in Ile-Ife. Now, let me ask you, which denomination do you belong to?

FA: I belong to The Truth of The Gospel Church.

Dr. Aluko: Is Pentecostal.

DS: Okay. Is it Pentecostal, is it?

FA: Is fully Pentecostal.

DS: Now, what is your general attitude toward the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke in Ile-Ife or generally? Is it positive, negative, or neutral? The ministry of Reinhard Bonnke, how do you …

FA: Is positive.
DS: Positive. Now, I will be asking …

FA: Because I’ve known him for quite a long time.

DS: Before Ile-Ife?

FA: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

DS: I’ll be asking questions about his person, then about the crusade, and then about the people that came to the crusade.

FA: Okay.

DS: Okay. Now, if you think of Reinhard Bonnke as a person, what is the characteristics, I mean, he has? What comes to your mind? What kind of person is he?

FA: Firstly, I see him as a selfless man of God whose zeal for souls is greater than his self. And because of that, the way I see him is like somebody who has poured out his own life, you know, for that ministry. Somebody who has laid his total person on a altar, for the Lord …

DS: But …

FA: Is somebody that is also – you can see, the love of Christ in him, you know. The way he does things, and he is a man of great faith …

DS: Would you say he is a humble person?

FA: … and his person.

DS: Would you say he is humble?

FA: Is a very humble person. Very, very humble.

DS: Now, it is not known so far that Reinhard Bonnke has ever been involved in any misappropriation of funds. Is not known. Now, what about Ile-Ife?

FA: Well, I’ve never heard of that. But what I know in Ile-Ife is, and common to all other places, is case or cases of people misappropriating, you know …

DS: But is not him doing it.

FA: … but for him. He – I have never heard anything like that, you know, happening.

DS: Now, critics imply that he is giving false prophecies. Some say so.

FA: Why?

DS: No, that is my question. What is your experience in Ile-Ife? – I mean.
FA: Well, I believe that as a man of God, and having ministry here, the – what happened in the crusade, you know, the output – the results of the crusade confirmed, you know, his prophecies to be authentic.

DS: Now, did any of the prophecies come true? Or were they – are they on the way? I mean, are they coming true, the prophecies?

FA: Of course, yes.

DS: For example. Give me an example of …

FA: For instance saying that the light of God has come and Ile-Ife, you know, is delivered by God. Now, we are seeing, you know, things that have been happening, here in Ile-Ife, you know. The gospel spreading, you know, having new chances and then breaking new grounds, they confirming that prophecy, you know, prophecy to be true.

DS: Now, you are also a Nigerian citizen. How do you evaluate Reinhard Bonnke’s personal friendship with president Obasanjo? Is it positive? Is it helpful for the gospel?

Dr. Aluko: His friendship with president Obasanjo.

DS: Obasanjo.

FA: Okay.

Dr. Aluko: Is it helping the gospel in Nigeria?

FA: Well, I don’t think I’m aware of his friendship with president Obasanjo.

DS: Oh yeah, they are friends.

FA: Okay. I was not even aware.

DS: They’ve been friends before even …

FA: Before?

DS: … before he became president.

FA: Okay.

DS: Before he became president.

FA: Well, I think that will enhance his chances, you know, to, you know, to be able to stage his crusades successfully.

DS: Now, do you still remember some of the advertisement in those day? What was the theme, the themes of the advertisements?
FA: The films?
DS: The themes, the themes.
FA: Themes.
DS: Yes, yes, yes.
FA: Okay. I don’t think I remember those things now.
DS: Just the main, main idea.
FA: But the main ideas, you know, were to invite people to come for not just healing. Healing was part, but to come for salvation.
DS: Salvation, okay.
FA: That salvation is so important, and then for the Holy Ghost, you know – Holy Spirit baptism, you know. And I know, you know, he also conducted this …
DS: Fire Conference.
FA: … Fire Conference. You know, so that Fire Conference was also part of the advertisement.
DS: So, would you say that what was advertised, corresponded to what really happened?
FA: Really. It’s correspond.
DS: Okay.
FA: Yeah.
DS: Now, after the crusade was over, there are always reports about the crusade. Now, did you find any exaggerations in those reports? – I mean, be it local press or ministry reports.
FA: There were no exaggerations. The reports were okay. The reports, you know, there is no way people will not be enthusiastic, you know, and overwhelmed by what they saw. But I believe the reports were in order, yeah.
DS: Let’s move to the second part. The Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, he is drawing big crowds. And I’m trying to find the dynamics behind, the dynamics – why the crowds was drawn. Could it be that the content of the preaching, the content, is drawing people?
FA: Yeah, the first thing I believe is, is his person. Are you getting it?
DS: Yes, yes, his person.
FA: Is his person, you see. He’s built a name for years.

DS: So, it’s the fame.

FA: I believe that so much. That whenever he enters a city, or the news that he’s coming to a city comes, everybody must be there to hear him speak.

DS: Now, what was the focus of his preaching? On which topics, on which themes?

FA: Okay, is salvation – is essentially salvation, essentially.

DS: Yes.

FA: And so altar call, altar calls were regular – each day altar calls, you know.

DS: Now, did he adapt his preaching to the local culture in Ile-Ife? Did he adapt the preaching?

FA: Of course, yes. I think Bonnke does that well, you know. He tries to. I think because he had been in Nigeria for quite a long time coming for crusades, he has been able to acquire some indigenous terminologies, you know. And even while preaching, he start to, you know, try to use the word, you know, local indigenous words. And that, that makes people, you know, to be interested in what he is saying.

DS: But the themes, the content of the preaching, did it fit the culture?

FA: Of course, yes.

DS: Okay.

FA: Yeah.

DS: Now, one critic is accusing Reinhard Bonnke, saying that he is preaching more about signs and miracles than about Calvary, about salvation. What is your take on that one?

FA: Well, I think, you see, the way he uses or emphasizes miracles is to buttress the salvation. Is to serve as a gain, a profit, you know – addition to salvation, you know. And I also see that he uses healing and miracles as tools, as baits …

DS: … to bring people.

FA: … to draw people to Christ for salvation. That is why is it.

DS: Now, I know Reinhard Bonnke is saying that he is not doing the miracles. God is doing the miracles. But help me understand the people of Ile-Ife.

FA: Yeah.

DS: Did they perceive him as the healer, the people?
FA: Yeah, yeah, I can understand you. Well, people don’t perceive him as the healer. But you see Nigerian traditional religion, which people are used to before giving their lives, you see, they have healers. So, there is that temptation, wanting to look at a prophet or an evangelist, somebody. But in most cases they see him also, you know, as a man from God that possesses, you know, extraordinary power, you know, to heal. That’s how people see him mostly.

DS: Now, what did Bonnke do to bring the glory back to God? How did he bring the glory …

FA: Number one – he, that man – everyday I observed, even while ministering – will give a space of praise worship. That praise worship was constant, and I always observed him. He loves that section, that moment giving praise to God. And even when he brings people up, you know, people that have been healed, he emphasized that they have been healed by God, and that people should give glory to God’s name.

DS: Now, critics suggest that the miracles performed by Reinhard Bonnke are either not genuine or at least not long lasting. What is your take on that?

FA: People may say that because it is common today, you know. We’ve got reports of people that’s, you know, do healing with electric, electric buttons and electric carpets in the church. People do that. And we have ministers of God, you know, all over the world now using talisman and you know.

Dr. Aluko: Diabolic means.

FA: Uh-huh! You know …

DS: Yes, yes, yes.

FA: … we have that. And we have people who also just do a camouflage, you know, fake …

DS: Tricks.

FA: … tricks, you know. That is common. So people might want – some people might want to think like that. But in most cases, I think I can confidently say that most people believe that the miracles are genuine. And I’ve never heard of any report of something that, you know, later on they say is no more, you know, or that is temporary. No, no, no.

DS: Now, did the crusade in 2002 contribute to the solution of social problems in Ile-Ife, directly or indirectly?

FA: Well, I think it does. I think it does.

DS: In which ways?

FA: For instance, one of them is the naming of that road. That very road …

DS: Bonnke Road.
FA: … as Bonnke Road. I think is one. And then …

Dr. Aluko: […] idol worship.

FA: Yeah, and then number two – that ground, where the crusade was held, is already reserved for gospel things. The [...] said if the land owners want to get money, we’ll pay them. That place is to be reserved for God forever. So, I think.

DS: What about crime? Did the crime go down, or the poverty?

FA: Well, you know, this place, there used to be community crisis.

DS: Before?

FA: Well, there used to be, and I think is being reduced to barest minimum, since then. I don’t think we have very serious crises, as before.

DS: Now, Reinhard Bonnke is blaming the Satan as being the cause of all these problems, social problems in Africa, in Nigeria, let’s say Ile-Ife. Now, do you believe to blame Satan is helpful? Or should we rather blame the people, and say, “You must change.”

FA: I believe we should blame Satan, not people.

DS: Okay.

FA: Because nobody will wake up and want to be a defiance – want to be a violent person or a destroyer of good things. So, I believe that is Satan working in them.

DS: Now, was Reinhard Bonnke’s team or Reinhard Bonnke involved in any social projects, helping the people, like small scaled businesses or humanitarian aid, prior to the crusade or afterwards?

FA: I’m not aware of any here.

DS: So, it was pure gospel preaching?

FA: It was first gospel.

DS: And then – now, in your opinion, if somebody comes from Europe, an evangelist, and adds that aspect to his ministry, would that make the ministry more effective?

FA: Of course, yes. Because we, by experience what had happened in the past here, such projects have enhanced, you know, the gospel tremendously. You know, because meeting social needs, you know, also made the people believe that, that God that is preached to them, you know, he can solve their problems and is worth following. Yeah. So, is very helpful.

DS: Now, how was the collaboration between the – Reinhard Bonnke’s team and the churches here in Ile-Ife? At which point did the churches get involved? Did they invite Reinhard Bonnke, or did he say, “I’m coming, please help me.”
FA: I think it was – I think it was both. They were planning coming to Ife, I learned. And – but they were thinking it was not to be at the time that, that crusade was held. But I did not know how we got to know that here. And then we sent to him that just to be here, just to – he has to come now. So, it was both. It was both, yeah.

DS: And once the team came, they provided some structure. I mean, they asked you to start committees. Within those structures, were you free to make your own decisions?

FA: Of course, yes. We were free, but it was limited.

DS: Okay.

FA: Are you getting it?

DS: Yes.

FA: I think Bonnke has got his own standards …

DS: Probably.

FA: … you know, and structures, and various styles, you know, how things should be done. Though we, we might – we sometimes think differently, that this is how it should be. For instance in the area of music, I think that also happened. But things were resolved, and where we cannot prevail we allow, you know, things to go the way […] …

DS: Yeah, I heard about the problem with the music, that Rev. John Darko.

FA: Yeah.

DS: He brought somebody else. Yes.

FA: Yeah.

DS: But anyway. Now, how did the crusade fit in the ongoing evangelistic activities, here in Ile-Ife? Was it a new thing, or was it common to have crusades?

FA: No, it’s common. We have crusades every now and then in Ife. But the only thing is that it has – I don’t think we have got a crusade that pulls crowd as that of Bonnke. But crusade is a regular thing in Ife here.

DS: So, would you say that the crusade of Reinhard Bonnke was just his project? Or was it his and yours as well? – I mean, the churches here. Was it a joined project, or was it just Reinhard Bonnke’s project?

FA: It is joined

DS: Joined.
FA: Yeah.

DS: Did you have the impression in anyway that there was some things imposed on you? Or was it just a collaboration?

FA: Well, you know, since the sponsorship comes from that end and …

DS: … you play that music.

FA: … it will, it will …

Dr. Aluko: Who pays the piper, dictates the tune …

FA: Who pays the piper, dictates the tune. You see. So, it was like that. It was like that actually.

DS: But still you had some freedom? But still you had some freedom to make decisions.

FA: Yes. Yes.

DS: Let’s briefly talk about the Fire Conference. I understand that the Fire Conference is geared toward equipping, equipping church workers.

FA: Ministers.

DS: Yes. Did it, did it? Was it effective?

FA: I think it was. It was effective.

DS: And did it leave an lasting impact? – On the workers, I mean. You have a church here. What about your church? Did it really impact your church?

FA: Of course, yes. Of course, yes.

DS: In which ways?

FA: Number one – you see, the – there is no way one can attend the Fire Conference, listening to Bonnke’s experience about the Holy Spirit, that your zeal of God will not increase. You see. So, and then reading his book “Evangelism by Fire”. Although I’ve got the book long time ago, there is no way a minister of God can read that book and you remain same. So, you go back home, and then you are in fire for Christ. So it was after that crusade, here in my church, although we used to go for house to house evangelism.

DS: Yes, before.

FA: Then I told the church that we can – we must go beyond that.

DS: Yes.
FA: So every month now this church, we will distribute ourselves to different centres.

DS: Even now?

FA: Early in the morning.

DS: Still?

FA: Yeah.

DS: Still.

FA: Yeah, early in the morning, and we go, you know, we go and distribute tracts, you know. So we have been doing that since then.

DS: Since then?

FA: Yeah.

DS: Okay. Okay, thank you for part two. Let’s move on to part three. I’m going to talk about the masses of people that came, and I’m trying to understand the dynamics. Why did people come? Of course, there is more then one dynamic there.

FA: Yes.

DS: So, I’ll be asking questions from that direction. I mean, there are so many evangelists in Nigeria, spirit filled, on fire evangelists, preaching the gospel. Why are so many people drawn especially to Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade? Why is he pulling the biggest crowds? You know, what’s the difference?

FA: I’ve told you the other time that his person, his personality, you see, the name – hearing, you know, Reinhard Bonnke, you see. The name is enough to pull crowd here because one – you mention Reinhard Bonnke – lot of things are associated, the miracles, you know, the way people response [korr. „respond”] to the call, you know, to salvation call. So, that makes people come, in most cases.

DS: What about the fact that he is a white man? Does it also help to attract people?

FA: It attracts people, but I don’t believe that is the case, in his own case. That name, that name Reinhard Bonnke – everywhere he has gone to, there have been reports of massive healings, and miracles, and salvation. So, he’s coming, you know – so his name, his person, I believe that …

DS: So is the …

FA: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

DS: … the biggest one. Okay. Now, what about the style of preaching? I mean, he preaches dramatically, and does it also help to draw a crowd? – To preach dramatically.
FA: Well, if people say, “Well, I’m going to look at how he is, he preach.” I think that will, too. I don’t think anybody will want to go and risk his life, you know, with the multitude, you know, because you want to see how somebody is dramatizing. I don’t believe that. I believe that people really, people that go to witness what God will do, they – many people also want miracles, you see. Many because there is so much suffering. There is so much problem, spiritual and physical. And so people throng there to see that their problems are solved.

DS: Let’s dwell on that for a moment. Could it be that the use of spiritual gifts – you just mentioned healing, the spiritual gifts: healing, word of knowledge, and other gifts, used by Reinhard Bonnke – is part of the dynamics drawing the crowd? – The use of the spiritual gifts.

FA: Yes, in a way. Because for instance, if he starts the crusade the first day – if there are no signs, no wonders, nothing to confirm what he says, probably the second day people, you know – the turnout may be low. So, I believe that the spiritual gifts, you know, are also an essential factor.

DS: Now, you mentioned he is also using stories, local stories.

FA: Yeah.

DS: Do you believe that he is, you know, using those stories – he is entertaining people, and that people just love to hear him and come because he, you know, because they want to hear him?

FA: You see, yeah. I believe that. You see – now, if you go to – people study missions. They know that one of the things should be done, is to – is to get yourself integrated, you see, to the people, by learning the language.

DS: Yes.

FA: By, you know, coming down to their level – so, and Reinhard Bonnke, you know …

DS: Does that?

FA: … did all of that. And that, you know, made people to love him. So, this man loves us. You know, this man loves us. And then, you know, that made people to also show love to him, and wanting to hear him.

DS: Now, I know I’m asking the chairman of the music committee now.

FA: Yeah.

DS: Do you believe that the Christian music – that, that music offered there, would also draw the people? Is it one factor?

FA: Of course, yes. Yeah.
DS: Now, what is different about that music? I mean, why do people like to come to his crusade to hear that music?

FA: Well, number one – there will be, you know, everywhere he organises crusade, there will be a mass choir, a mass choir.

DS: So, that’s unusual.

FA: Yeah. So, that mass choir, you know, it will be drawn from churches, from all the churches, you see. And so, many people will want to be involved, you know. Many people will want to be involved, whether as singers, or even to go and listen to music. That is number one. Number two – special guest artists, that are, you know, renown gospel musicians, you know, in town, are also normally invited. So, many people will want to come and then, you know, hear them sing. Yeah.

DS: So, in Ile-Ife it was also local singers, here in Ile-Ife?

FA: Yeah, local singers here, I mean, the mass choir performed …

DS: It was local.

FA: … and then. Not just local, we have some musicians from around this place, and then one musician from Lagos. Apart from another one that, I think, Rev. Darko loves to invite …

DS: … to invite.

FA: … everywhere, everywhere they go.

DS: But it were all Nigerian?

FA: Yeah.

DS: Nigerian singers?

FA: They all Nigerians.

DS: Alright. Let’s for a moment go back to the …

FA: Well, sorry, there was – I think there was a gospel artist, a white man, I think, that came with the team …

DS: Okay.

FA: … that also …

DS: Here in Ile-Ife?

FA: … did minister. Yeah, that also ministered.
DS: We are continuing …

FA: I get lemon sweet.

Dr. Aluko: [?]

DS: Now, the use of spiritual gifts did it also, not only draw the people, but also contribute to people making decisions? Do you believe?

FA: To make?

DS: Decisions for Christ. I mean …

FA: Make decisions.

DS: Yes, I mean, to salvation decisions. The healing, for example, or the word knowledge, if it also helped people to make decisions for Christ.

FA: I think it could. But in most cases I believe – my own believe is that, you see, it’s the power of God, you see, the anointing of God upon the man of God. When he makes the call, that makes people come to give their live. Some might be there, you know, in error, you know – just go there because they want to be, you know …

DS: You talk about …

FA: … identified, you know – just come out, you know. But in most cases, I believe that it was the power of God, that brought them out.

DS: Now, the last set of questions – do you believe that the crusade in 2002 contributed to church growth measurably, in numbers, in numbers?

FA: Well, we had converts. I’m not sure about the follow-up, if we handled the follow-up well. But surely, you know, there were converts. But I’m not sure whether, you know, the converts were well taken care of …

DS: Afterwards?

FA: … you know, afterwards in the churches.

DS: Now, do you believe that follow-up is the job of the pastors or of Reinhard Bonnke? The follow-up, is it the job of the pastors, or?

FA: It’s suppose to be the job of the pastors.

DS: Okay …
FA: Yeah.


FA: Yeah, yeah, that was obvious.

DS: I mean in numbers.

FA: In numbers? Well, we did, but not very significantly. But I think that is peculiar to us because our own church, we preach undiluted truth. And that, you know, I – so people might come now and then go, and then, and so. But at least we could notice, you know, improvements, you know, in the …

DS: So, could …

FA: … attendance.

DS: … could it be that the crusade caused more of a church revival than church growth?

FA: To me is more of revival.

DS: Revival.

FA: More of revival.

DS: Okay. Just give me an estimate, a guess, on your side. How many of those people – the whole crowd of people that came to the crusade – were Christians, I mean, true Christians, born-again, church members, before the crusade – who attended? Just give me an estimate.

FA: In terms of number?

DS: No, in terms of percentage.

FA: Okay …

DS: Like 20 percent.

FA: Okay. I believe that the percentage of Christians should be maybe forty.

DS: Four zero?

FA: Yeah, 40 percent.

DS: Now, could it be that some of the people – some people would come the first day, and they would fill out a decision card, and next day go somewhere else, and fill out the decision card?
FA: No.

DS: You don’t think so? Because I’ve been told that even some pastors were going three or four times to fill out decision cards. In the interviews I was told so – to get a book.

[Dr Aluko spricht zu FA in lokaler Sprache.]

FA: That is not – it’s not common.

DS: Okay.

FA: Is not common.

DS: Are there any measures, I mean …

FA: Because here in Ife, I believe that we have many Pentecostal pastors, that are enlightened, that are born-again – people that are also serving as workers. So, if that happened, it would be among, you know, maybe …

Dr Aluko: [?]

DS: Yeah, but let’s talk about the – just, I mean, the unbelievers. They come today – fill out a card. And tomorrow he comes again, and fills out a card. I mean, just the normal people, not pastors, let’s just say.

FA: Using different names. When that …

DS: Possibly.

FA: Well, that is possible.

DS: Now, are there any measures to prevent that? – Any, any measures?

FA: Well, we, the people that were in charge – I think people in ushering unit, they were also given instructions to check out for things like that.

DS: But there were about one thousand units.

FA: Yeah.

DS: Now, if I do make a decision in unit one, and then I – next day …

FA: I don’t know how effective …

DS: That’s what I’m saying.

FA: … you know, that may be.

DS: Because I can make a decision …
FA: So, there is no way that you still not get people who …

DS: … doing that.

FA: Yeah.

DS: That’s what I’m saying. Now, you mentioned before that some people come for reasons other than Christ. I mean, when the altar call is made, they come. Some want a book; some want something else.

FA: Yeah, some for something else. Like some people come to sell their market. Some people know that they will sell there. Some have made Bonnke’s photograph in a calendar, you know – they sell. So, for some people is a good time for …

DS: … market.

FA: … commercial profit. You see – market.

DS: But talking about the people who come at the altar call, who make the decisions, how many of them come for reasons other than Christ – other than the salvation? You know what I mean? People come because of a booklet. They come because of healing interest, just curiosity. What is your guess?

FA: That may be something like 60 percent.

DS: Six, zero?

FA: Yeah.

DS: So, more than half of the people just come for reasons other than salvation.

FA: Yeah.

DS: Okay. Now, you said the follow-up should be the job of the …

FA: … of the pastors.

DS: … pastors. Local churches here.

FA: Yeah.

DS: I see. Now, last question before – is there any advice you would give me or a minister coming from Europe who is – wants to minister here in Nigeria, in crusade evangelism? Any other advice? We talked so much now – any other advice you can give me personally?

FA: Well, I think the advice I will give is that evangelists, that will come to evangelise or organise crusade in Nigeria, should bear in mind, you know, and address issues of crime, corruption, you see, that have really eaten deep into our culture, you see.
DS: You mean …

FA: I believe. Yeah.

DS: … address in the preaching or in the preparation of the crusade, in the committees?

FA: Both, in the preaching and then as a focus, you know, trying to sanitize a nation, you see – the nation. Because I believe Nigeria is a blessed country.

DS: Yes.

FA: And then we already – the knowledge, I mean, the awareness of the gospel is already there.

DS: Yes.

FA: You see? But we have pastors – we have churches, but how many people are really doing the will of God? People, for selfish reasons they are involved in crimes and corruption, and all that, and all those vices. I believe that people should be educated. People should, you know – people if they hear from people, you know …

DS: … from outside.

FA: … from outside, I believe it will. – Because I think that’s why many ministers of God, you know, before he – where he had conducted crusade in Nigeria, we heard that people were even diverting his money, you know.

DS: Yes, I've been hearing that.

FA: Some people, you know.

Dr. Aluko: [?]

FA: … doing all sorts of things, you see.

DS: So, did Reinhard Bonnke preach on crime? Did he preach against crime?

FA: Well, he generally preached against sin, you know, generally against sin.

DS: Okay.

FA: Yeah. But you see, somebody who want to take that as a focus, must have – do some research and know what are the crimes that are prevailing, you know, in this place, you know. And then try to address it, and then – and then pray to maybe bind and cast out whatever, whatever – the spirit that is responsible for things like that.

DS: So, so …
FA: But the deliverance of Ife was paramount in his mind, too. You see, because he prayed to really bind the principalities and the spirit of idols, you know – idolatry, here in Ife. I know he did that.

DS: Well, thank you. Thank you so much.

FA: Thank God.

DS: God bless you.

FA: God bless you, too.
2.16 Interview mit Mrs. Iboro Oladimeji

2.16.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name der Interviewten: Iboro Oladimeji
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 17.10.05
Denomination: Pentecostal
Funktion der Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Leader of the women group
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/Werk: Leader in church

Bemerkungen: Das Interview wurde teilweise durch laute Bauarbeiten im Hintergrund gestört.

2.16.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: Okay. Now, I’m interviewing Mrs. Oladimeji, and she was the leader of the women’s group at the crusade in Ile-Ife, 2002. Now, let me start with the first question. Which denomination do you belong to?

IO: I’m a Pentecostal.

DS: Pentecostal. What is your general attitude toward the evangelistic ministry of Reinhard Bonnke in Nigeria? Is it positive, neutral, negative?

IO: I would say both, positive and negative. Positive because of the breakthrough. He was able to enter into places. And then he can conduct crusades because he has the equipment and everything, and really able to gather – the Lord has blessed him with crowd. And people come around, and people really get healed and saved. But the negative aspect is because of our Nigerian motive. Because he comes with so much money, people feel there is money here, and they begin to exploit. And at the end of the day, people begin to quarrel over money. So, places where Bonnke has visited, it’s so difficult for another ministry to enter with crusade because it becomes so expensive. People want you to feed them. They want you to give them Bibles. They want – so its making it for – is frustrating us.

DS: I understand.

IO: We, the local people, we can’t – we can’t go to places where he has been there, except we have the money.
DS: I see. So, he has really brought up a different level, which you cannot reach.

IO: Which we cannot.

DS: I understand. Now, I will be asking questions, first of all about the person of Reinhard Bonnke, then about the way he conducted the crusade, and then the last question, about the masses of people that came. So, number one is about Reinhard Bonnke’s person. If you think of Reinhard Bonnke, what comes to your mind first? What kind of person is he? What are his characteristic traits?

IO: I see him as an anointed man of God. In fact, I have known him before seeing him because I’ve been watching a lot of his video tapes. I believe God is greatly using him. So, I personally see him as a great man of God. Yes.

DS: Would you say he is a humble man?

IO: I think so. I think so.

DS: Now, so far we’ve never heard that Reinhard Bonnke was involved in any misappropriation of funds.

IO: No.

DS: And now concerning Ile-Ife, has there anything been heard about that one?

IO: No, no.

DS: Well, some critics, they say that he is uttering false prophecies. Reinhard Bonnke is uttering false prophecies, some people say. What was your experience in Ile-Ife about that?

IO: I don’t think so. I don’t think so, because it was more evangelical than prophetic.

DS: And now, the things he said – there are some things he said, I know. Are they coming true? Like for the country, that the glory of God will come or something like that.

IO: We have been expecting to see the glory of God. And I would say it started because more banks began to come in. Because you know, Ife is just surviving a very terrible and tribal war.

DS: Yeah, I heard about that.

IO: Then so many things were destroyed, and the investors ran away from the ground. And apparently, I could say that we begin to see good things happening. The NTA, you know, is established, you know. Yes. I will say yes, by the grace of God.

DS: Thank you.

IO: Yes.
DS: I stop here.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: ... and continue.

IO: Oh, thank you very much.

DS: Yes. Let’s continue. Now, Reinhard Bonnke is a personal friend of president Obasanjo. Now, how do you evaluate his friendship? Is it positive? Is it helping the gospel? Or is it counterproductive?

IO: I think it’s helping the gospel because it’s a blessing for us to have the president we have now.

DS: Yes.

IO: And there was a time when Bonnke was banned from entering Nigeria. So, we see it as a blessing.

DS: Okay.

IO: Yes.

DS: So, it helps the gospel to spread throughout Nigeria.

IO: To spread, yes.

DS: Now, can you still remember what kind of themes were used for the advertisement, before the crusade? There were lots of advertisement going on. What kind of themes were they using in the advertisement?

IO: Themes, as in what?

DS: Like in the advertisement, like for – like, say sign boards or, you know, TV adds.

IO: They had big bill boards – not much, not much of that. They had banners. They had posters because we women wore the posters all over – use it to make head gear; wore it on our body – because we had a lot of Jesus march all around the town.

DS: But what was the focus, the theme? Was it on healing, on Reinhard Bonnke, on salvation? What was the theme of all those ongoing things?

IO: Well, I think people were just looking out for more of healing because of the miracles we’ve been hearing. So, you see people coming with their sick. In fact, some people brought their dead. People from – they brought dead bodies …
DS: I heard about that.

IO: … to the crusade ground. Many people came expecting their dead to rise and things like that.

DS: So, the focus of the advertisement was miracles.

IO: No. The advert was more on the crusade, you know – I mean, power crusade.

DS: Okay, power crusade.

IO: But people have already heard of Bonnke, and heard of his testimonies. So, I think it’s more on the concepts of people, what people were coming for.

DS: Okay. Now, did the people get what they were promised to get in the advertisement? I mean, when they advertised, let’s say the miracles and things, and – did it correspond with what actually happened later? Or was it beyond expectations? Or was it less? Was it just fine?

IO: I would say just fine. There were some miracles. Definitely, there were a lot of miracles.

DS: Now, after the crusade was over, I mean, there are always reports from, let’s say from local press, from ministries. In those reports – were they truthful? Or was there exaggeration?

IO: I don’t know what reports actually.

DS: Like, let’s say the local press writing about the crusade.

IO: They only write about the, the – they may just talk about the miracles that they saw, and in the place, and also talk about the crowd, then the presence of the king and eminence, people like that.

DS: And in those information, did you find anything exaggerated, or?

IO: I don’t think so. I don’t think there was much of exaggeration.

DS: Okay. This is the first part about Reinhard Bonnke, pretty much. Is there anything you want to add so far, about his person maybe?

IO: About his person …

DS: Yes.

IO: … no, I – maybe because I’m biased. Because I’ve always loved him and his ministry. So, my answering may be one-sided …

DS: Yes. It’s, it is …

IO: … but then.
DS: … your impression, your opinion.

IO: Yes.

DS: Yes.

IO: But I think he has to maybe reorganise the people that are handling the ministry for him.

DS: We’ll talk about that.

IO: Okay.

DS: Later on.

IO: Okay.

DS: Thank you.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Alright, we are continuing with part two, talking about the crusade and how it went. Now, there were many factors which were drawing people to come and attend the crusade. I’m trying to find out which factors there were. Of course, the Holy Spirit is drawing people, but I mean, there are other factors. What about the content of his preaching, like the themes he was using? What kind of themes would he use? What would he preach about?

IO: I can’t remember everything now …

DS: Yeah, but just …

IO: … but I know he preached on healing. He preached on the Holy Spirit. He preached on the power of God and salvation. Of course salvation first …

DS: First.

IO: … and then others follow.

DS: Now, do you think that those kinds of preachings, the content of it, would attract people to come and listen – the topics he chose? Or was it rather something else?

IO: No, I think they were okay. Yes.

DS: Now, to which extend did Reinhard Bonnke adapt his message to the cultural setting, here in Ile-Ife? – I mean, his message, the content of the message.

IO: You mean, was it – did it fit into the culture?
DS: Culture – yes.

IO: Not really.

DS: Of course, he is from Europe.

IO: Yes, not really.

DS: But to which extent? Did he try at least?

IO: I can’t remember. Only for his exclamations, “Eyi!”

DS: “Eyi!” – I heard about.

IO: Almost everybody became excited about.

DS: Yes, yes. Okay. Now, there is one critic who is saying that Reinhard Bonnke is preaching more about miracles, and signs and wonders, than about Calvary – than about salvation. What is your take on that one?

IO: I think miracles are meant to attract people. And then you talk about salvation later. Because especially in Nigeria, where there is a lot of problems, I think the miracle comes up first. And when they come for the miracles, then you talk of Calvary. Because if you start with Calvary – yes, it’s a powerful topic, and if the Holy Ghost will take the eminence, you know – but what will catch people first …

DS: … is miracles.

IO: I’m blind, oh. Maybe I can get my sight there.

DS: So, that is the reason why Reinhard Bonnke is emphasizing miracles.

IO: Yes.

DS: So, he is using it as a bait …

IO: Yes.

DS: … to bring them into the kingdom of God.

IO: Yes. And in Nigeria, I think that is how it should be, even in churches. You know.

DS: Miracles first.

IO: Miracles first.

DS: Now, I know Reinhard Bonnke says that he is not doing the miracles. God is doing it.

IO: Yes.
DS: But help me understand the people of Ile-Ife, how they perceive him – the unbelievers or even the Christians – how they perceive him. Is he the healer? I mean, I’m not saying he is saying it, but the people.

IO: The people, they see him as someone that has the power of God with him. They still attribute it to God because this area – people are more religious, kind of. It’s either you are an idol worshipper or you are a Christian, or you are a Muslim – everything still being ascribed to God. So, they rather see him as a man that has authority with God, something like that. They will still link it back to God.

DS: To God.

IO: God is with this man.

DS: Now, how does – how did Reinhard Bonnke, you know, divert the glory back to God? How did he do that?

IO: Yes, there was a woman, you know, that gives him – I’ve forgotten, but he was always asking: Who did this?

DS: Yes.

IO: He was always asking, “Who did this? It’s Jesus that did this. Is not Bonnke, is Jesus who was.” He made sure, he always pointed people back to Jesus.

DS: Now, some critics again, they say Bonnke’s miracles, or some of the miracles, are not genuine or at least not lasting. What is your take on that, about Ile-Ife?

IO: Well, I wouldn’t know about other people that got miracle, but the testimony of that man, that died and came back to life. During the Ife crusade, the man was sitting in front of me. I happened to be – I helped the wife to carry her baby, when the wife went up to give her testimony. And the man sitting in front of me, he was practically still smelling of the chemicals they used in the mortuary. He was still – he was still smelling hospital and all those kinds of things. So, personally I knew, if all other testimonies are not lasting, I saw this one …

DS: … this one.

IO: … and I was close enough to them to perceive him. He was still smelling somehow. You know, you wouldn’t feel comfortable staying too much close to him, so.

DS: But about the Ile-Ife crusade, did you hear any rumours that people got healed, and then it didn’t last? Or?

IO: No, I didn’t hear such.

DS: Now, in your opinion, did the gospel crusade in 2002 contribute to the solution of social problems, here in Ile-Ife, directly or indirectly?
IO: Yes, because of the development that came after, after the crusade.

DS: But did it just come because he brought the finances, and there was …

IO: No.

DS: … jobs, or …

IO: No.

DS: … just?

IO: I see it more as a spiritual opening, and God releasing blessing on the land.

DS: Okay. So, his spiritual ministry had an affect on the social improvement of Ile-Ife?

IO: Well, I think so because I was looking – maybe because I was looking out for it. You know, because we really prayed; we women prayed. And there are some things we told God, we wanted to see. And, you know, when you have told God which you want to see, you begin to look out for those things. Yes.

DS: Now, is there any statistics being done on the crime rates or, you know, the poverty level has been declining?

IO: No, there is no such statistics.

DS: From your personal circle of people you know, can you say – or neighbourhood – can you say that people have become, you know, more peaceful? Is there less crime? Or is there less poverty?

IO: I – well, talking about poverty, the situation generally in Nigeria, things actually became worse, I mean financially. The economy became tight, you know. That is it about the economy. But the crime rate – I would say I don’t know. I don’t know because is still …

DS: … still happening.

IO: Yes, still happening.

DS: Or could we say it was just a short term relief?

IO: Maybe.

DS: Now, Reinhard Bonnke is blaming Satan. He is saying, Satan is the one causing all these trouble, problems, in Africa, in Nigeria, let’s say in Ile-Ife. Do you think it’s helpful to say that? Or should he rather say – should he rather blame the people, so that they can change?
IO: I think we rather blame the people because particularly like Ife, everybody came out for that crusade. And what gets me upset is, during this Olojo Festival, the same group of people, that all came out to give their lives to Christ …

DS: At the crusade?

IO: … at the crusade. You see all of them, you know, trooping out for the, I mean, you know, this …

DS: … Olojo Festival.

IO: … this Olojo Festival. So, I think it’s more – the people have not really embraced it.

DS: Yes.

IO: They have not completely yielded. So, they still service the altar, which gives the devil the power to still control their life.

DS: Can you explain a little bit about this festival – Olojo Festival?

IO: I think is a time they worship the God of iron. That’s all I know about it. I don’t know much about …

DS: Is a demonic, demonic thing.

IO: Yes, they still service all their shrines in Ife, all their shrines.

DS: Even after the crusade?

IO: Yes, they have over three hundred and sixty …

DS: … four.

IO: … four gods. And they’ve still serviced each altar. In fact, concerning the crusade ground, we had problems from the Ifes because we were the ones that, you know, that brought Bonnke to that land. The family that owns the land, you know, fought us because they say that there is a god on that land. Obatala, that is the name of the god. There is a god on that land, and that if Bonnke steps that land, the god will die.

DS: A weak god.

IO: Now, you say, you say …

[Störung durch laute Bauarbeiten im Hintergrund.]

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]
DS: Now, let’s continue. You know, the last question was about the statement, whether blaming Satan is helpful or not – if blaming Satan for all the problems, if it’s helpful or not.

IO: I don’t think it’s helpful.

DS: Blaming Satan?

IO: No, I think we should …

[Störung durch laute Bauarbeiten im Hintergrund.]

IO: Sorry.

DS: Okay. That’s alright.

IO: I think we should blame the people. Of course, Satan has his blames. I think we can’t overrule that. But for Ife in particular, I am disturbed about the level of Christianity. You know, is as if people are hypocrites, as if they are just going to church for the name of going to church, and still back home practicing their idols.

DS: I see.

IO: Yes.

DS: Now, was the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke involved socially, helping people? I mean, like humanitarian aid, or starting small scale businesses for people …

IO: No.

DS: … to help them. Do you think that aspect would enhance the ministry of evangelism? Would it help to reach more people?

IO: I don’t know of other places, but here people will exploit it. Because even the Bibles he brings, you will be surprised that ministers were getting the Bibles and selling them.

DS: Mm-hm, that’s what I …

IO: So, bringing such a think, people will always be dancing round him, just for that favour and …

DS: About?

IO: … that wouldn’t make them Christian.

DS: Oh, I see. Now, let’s talk about how the work was going on between, I mean, the team, the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke, and the churches here locally. Now, who initiated the contact? Did Reinhard Bonnke come – say, “I’m coming.” Or did the churches invite him to come?
IO: The churches initially, the Ife, I think they sent for him. And he said, no he wasn’t coming. Then another group sent for him. I think they sent for him three times.

DS: Yeah.

IO: And he said, he wasn’t coming. And finally – but God spoke to him, and God told him, “Go to Ife.” And that was when he extends to us that he was coming, and of course everybody was exited.

DS: So, once the team came, and they asked you to form committees.

IO: Yes.

DS: Now, within those committees – within that structure, were you free to make your own decisions? I mean, local decisions like, you know, what kind of music, which place, and so on.

IO: Yes, we decided what will – what will fit the – yes.

DS: Now, would you say it was Reinhard Bonnke’s project? Or was it the churches’ project? Or was it a joined project?

IO: I would call it a joined project. Even though Bonnke funded it, but the way that everybody came out with [?] to cooperate with him – without the people he wouldn’t succeed.

DS: Oh, I see, and now …

[Störung durch laute Bauarbeiten im Hintergrund.]

DS: … did Bonnke or his ministry leave the impression to impose things on the churches here, the decisions or so? I mean, so it was in cooperation …

IO: Yes.

DS: There was room for discussion, for …

IO: He didn’t impose anything. But people came with their various beliefs, and he did not go into doctrine. He don’t go into – he just preaching Jesus Christ, salvation, power of God.

DS: Now, let’s talk about the Fire Conference for a moment. As I understand, the Fire Conference is geared toward equipping church workers.

IO: Yes.

DS: And now, did it have an impact, lasting impact – the Fire Conference, for the church in Ile-Ife?

IO: I think it did.
DS: What about your church, or your churches?

IO: Yes, for our church – because I made sure all the church workers attended – and it was a time of refreshing, equipping, gathering strength again to fire on. Yes.

DS: So, there was – there is an lasting impact you can say.

IO: Yes. Yes.

DS: Now, would you wish Reinhard Bonnke to do more of the Fire Conference and less of the crusade? Or what would fit the needs of Ile-Ife?

IO: I think for Ife we would need more of the Fire Conference – more teaching.

DS: Yes.

IO: I think the people need good teaching.

DS: Teaching.

IO: Yes.

DS: Now, let’s talk a little bit about the crowd now, the crowd that came – people that came. I’m trying to understand the dynamics why people come to Reinhard Bonnke’s crusades? I mean, there are many factors. Of course, the Holy Spirit draws them; I know that. But there are many other factors, and I’ll be asking questions from that direction. Now, there are so many preachers in Nigeria, I mean, evangelists, spirit filled, on fire. Why do people prefer to go to Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade? Why does he draw the biggest crowds in Nigeria? What’s – what are the differences in your opinion?

IO: I think is just God. The favour of God is upon him. I think it’s more of God than any other. Of course, people would come with so many other reasons …

DS: That’s what I’m saying, yeah.

IO: … so many other reasons. But they also would do that to other crusades. But why such a crowd? – I think is just God.

DS: Yeah. What about the fact that he is a white man? Would that attract people?

IO: No, not really, not really. He, if – his name.

DS: His name.

IO: He has made a name in Africa and in Nigeria. So the name, the fame, and all those things attached to him – not just that he’s white.

DS: Now, Reinhard Bonnke has a very dramatic style of preaching – now, is a unique style. Do you think that his preaching style also attracts people to come and listen?
IO: Yes, yes.

DS: And now, his way of preaching is it entertaining? Do people like it?

IO: Yes.

DS: And you think that, that will help to draw the crowds? An, an …

IO: Yes.

DS: … part of it.

IO: Yes, it is.

DS: I’m just gathering bits …

IO: Of course …

DS: … but yes, yes.

IO: … of course, it’s part of it.

DS: Now, let’s talk about music. Now, how would you say does music draw people to come? Is it …

IO: Music also draws people to come because during that period we – we choose the musicians that come in.

DS: Locally?

IO: Locally. We choose the local musicians and people that would stir up the hearts of people.

DS: Yes.

IO: Yes.

DS: Now, what about the use of the spiritual gifts? I mean, Reinhard Bonnke is using the gift of healing, and word of knowledge, maybe some other gifts. Could it be that those, the manifestations of those gifts, also draw people?

IO: Of course. Without those gifts, I don’t think the others would draw that much of the crowd. Because people come and sleep the – they come from far, and they sleep on the crusade ground. I mean, when they have no accommodation, they sleep there. So that – these are people that are desperate; they are in need.

DS: Now, let’s go a step further. Would you say that the use of the spiritual gifts also contributes to making decisions for Christ?
IO: Yes.

DS: You mentioned that’s attracting the people, just …

IO: Yes.

DS: Yes, alright.

IO: Yes.

DS: Okay, the last set of questions here – now, did the crusade in 2002 measurably contribute to church growth in Ile-Ife, in numbers?

IO: I’m not very sure, because number one – at the end of the day, everybody goes back to his own church. So, there is nothing like somebody moving from maybe one church to the other. And the unbelievers, already they have ways of resisting. So, when you go out – because we have the decision cards to go out to get them – some of them may have given you false addresses. And some of them, when you actually meet with them, they tell you they are not coming. They don't want to follow you to church.

DS: So …

IO: So, it’s very little impact, I would say.

DS: In terms, in numerical growth?

IO: Yes.

DS: Now, would you describe it rather as a church revival, instead of a church growth?

IO: Yes.

DS: So, the church was revived and strengthened.

IO: Yes.

DS: Okay. Now, give me an estimate – give me a guess. Of the whole crowd that came to the crusade ground, how many of them were, I mean, committed, born-again Christians, church members, before they [?] the crusade? – It is a guess.

IO: Born-again?

DS: I mean true believers.

IO: True believers.

DS: Not just nominal Christians – true believers.
IO: True believers are not many in this town. I don’t think. Can I say 10 percent? Maybe, maybe I will – I don’t know how to quantify …

DS: I understand.

IO: … but maybe 10, 10, 20 percent. Not much.

DS: Now, could it happen that sometimes, let’s say I’ve come after the altar call – I’ve come and I filled out a decision card. The next day, I come again and fill out a second decision card. And next day the third one, and so on. Can that happen?

IO: No, we – he made sure – he kept telling them, if you came yesterday, you don’t need to come today. It’s only those that came yesterday.

DS: But still people came more than once. I heard stories …

IO: Of course.

DS: … stories like some, even pastors going three, four times – filling out decision cards to get the booklet.

IO: Bibles and booklets.

DS: Yes. So, in your opinion, it could happen?

IO: It could happen.

DS: Now …

IO: At least for what they can get.

DS: … what were the measures, you mentioned, you know, to prevent that? You mentioned, Reinhard Bonnke was announcing not to come the second time.

IO: Yes.

DS: But what else was done to prevent that happening?

IO: I don’t think there was anything else.


IO: I wasn’t in the counselling …

DS: Oh, I see. I see.

IO: … team, so I don’t really know how they operated.
DS: Okay. Now, as we just discussed, the – many people were coming forward at the altar call. And they fill out decision cards, but they didn’t really come to receive Christ. They came for reasons other than that: like to receive a booklet; maybe to come closer to Reinhard Bonnke; to come for other reasons. Give me an estimate. Give me a guess. How many of those people who came, did not come to receive Christ but fill out – filled out decision cards?

IO: I think with my understanding about the Ifes, they love prayer. So, many of them would have just wanted more blessings, more blessings …

DS: But did it …

IO: … they were coming out for blessings. And they will be ready to give their life to Christ for – as long as they are blessed. So, how would you say that? I think they still came out to give their life to Christ.

DS: Okay. Give me a guess. How many of those, let’s say coming in one day, how many of them – percentage – did not come …

IO: Okay, that came out sincerely to give their life to God?

DS: No, no, how many came not sincerely?

IO: Okay. Just coming, and maybe because others are [?]

DS: Yeah, just filling out decision cards, without, you know, really wanting to make a decision for Christ.

IO: Maybe 60 percent.

DS: Six, zero? Sixty. Okay. So, that means the majority of them came for reasons other than salvation. And that probably also explains why there was no measurable church growth.

IO: Yes.

DS: Okay. Let me ask you. Follow-up, in your opinion, is it the job of the Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, or is it the job of the local churches here? – Follow-up.

IO: He makes it the job of the local churches here. That’s how he does his …

DS: But in your opinion?

IO: In my opinion, I think he should do it. If he does it, it will be more effective.

DS: But he is very busy. In which ways do you think could he do that? What would help …

IO: Maybe …

DS: … the people of Ile-Ife?
IO: … maybe, like anywhere he goes for his crusades – because that is what at times we do, when we go out for crusades.

DS: Yes.

IO: When he goes out for crusades, instead of five days, he could make it – maybe add another two, three days. So that after the crusade, all those that gave their life to Christ – you know, we have the decision card – all those that gave their life to Christ, there is now meeting, you know, like the Fire Conference. Now, it will be a different meeting – just with those that have just …

DS: The new believers.

IO: … given their – with the new believers. Just some few, maybe two or two days with them, and then – now it will now be easier for us to follow up from there.

DS: I see.

IO: It will be more effective.

DS: Now, you mentioned before that sometimes you would follow up, and then the person will say they don’t want to come.

IO: They say they are not coming. You keep going and going, and when you are tired, you give up.

DS: Okay. Now, last question, is there any advice? We’ve talked about so many things now. Maybe there is something we haven’t touched in this interview. Maybe you have some advice for European evangelists coming over to Nigeria – what to do, I mean, some advice. What would be better? What, on what to improve – from your perspective.

IO: Well, I think the best way is not just to bring everything in. You know, Bonnke comes with everything. He doesn’t disturb anybody for anything. And people relax. I know salvation is free, for Jesus paid a price.

DS: So, you would say that …

IO: It should be a joined, we – because we have believers and ministers. There should be people that could put in something, or so. We would not have as much as he has. We would not be able to put in what he put in. But there should be something coming from us, too. That will make us responsible.

DS: But there was collection taken in the crusade, which, as far as I know, went back to the CAN – CAN.

IO: CAN.

DS: Yes.
IO: It ends with CAN. It ends there. It – it ends in the pocket.

DS: Okay.

IO: It doesn’t come down to us.

DS: To the churches?

IO: Yes.

DS: Yeah.

IO: It ends up there.

DS: Okay, okay. Thank you so much. We are just interviewing Mrs. Oladimeji, who was the leader of the women’s group at the crusade in Ile-Ife, in 2002. Thank you. God bless you.

IO: Thank you.
3. Weitere Interviews

3.1 Interview mit Rev. Fola T. Lateju

3.1.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: Fola T. Lateju
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 13.10.05
Denomination: Baptist

Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation:

Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/ Werk:

Bemerkungen: Dr. Fola T. Lateju arbeitet im Religious Department der Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.

3.1.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: So, we are here at the University of Ile-Ife, the Religious Department, and I’m speaking with Rev. Fola T. Lateju. I’m sorry for pronouncing it wrong.

FL: You are doing alright.

DS: So, please keep on talking. Yes.

FL: Yes, I have already suggested that in order to have an authentic interview, there is the need to look for people within the three main culture – Christian culture. That is the Pentecostal group, the Evangelical, and the Orthodox Christians. Now, for the, you know – propose the Pentecostal because crusades and open air services are something that are more attractive to the Pentecostal. And they will want to, you know, take part in the counselling session, the miracle performance and all other …

DS: Yeah. Yeah.

FL: … things. And to the Pentecostal, the idea of crusade is something of great importance, which they believe will boost the ego of the ministry, so to say. And because of that, they always like to be part of it and share their own view, whatsoever. Then we cannot shy away, you know, from whatever things they will want to gain materially, you know, from such a,
you know, crusade organised – open air services. When it is not actually handled by them, but handled by somebody else, and they are just participant and resource, resource persons that would be used on ground. – Then the Evangelicals.

DS: Yes.

FL: The Evangelicals too, are also inclined to the idea of crusade, but their emphasis is always more on revival crusade. And that is where they come in into this evangelistic crusade, organised in the country. And not all are inclined to the idea of miracle.

DS: Okay.

FL: Sort of – they are not so much, but their own primary concern is the soul winning. The soul winning, and that is where they differ from the Pentecostal who are so much inclined to superficial, I will say signs …

DS: Okay.

FL: … and wonders. Now, the Orthodox, you know, the Orthodox are established churches.

DS: Like the Anglicans?

FL: Anglican, Methodist, Catholic, Baptist.

DS: Also, yeah.

FL: Baptist share Evangelical …

DS: … and Orthodox wings.

FL: … and Orthodox traditions. So, and the same thing with the Anglican. The Anglican Commission of Nigeria today share both …

DS: Okay.

FL: … Evangelical and Orthodox tradition, but they are more of Orthodox. Now, the Orthodox churches are a little bit sceptical when it comes to the …

DS: Mass crusades.

FL: Yes, mass crusades.

DS: Yes.

FL: Because the reservations they always have is about whether the group who – the group organising the crusade, want to start a church and …

DS: Okay.
FL: ... by ...

DS: Yes, I'm hearing you.

FL: So, by the organised crusade they may not – they may, at the end of the day now, have some of their members into these new religious ...

DS: Yeah, Yeah.

FL: ... movement, so.

DS: Okay, that was helpful. Thank you so much.
3.2 Interview mit Rev. Clement Ogunniyi

3.2.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

Name des Interviewers: Daniel Schott
Name des Interviewten: Clement Ogunniyi
Ort des Interviews: Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Datum des Interviews: 15.10.05
Denomination: Baptist
Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation: Counsellor
Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/Werk: Associate pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, Ile-Ife

3.2.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: We are having one interview with Pastor Ogunniyi, Clement Ogunniyi?

CO: Yes.

DS: Who has been of great help for these interviews. And he will be sharing his observations, he has made. And he has some notes here, about observations he made during those interviews. And that will be helpful to clarify a few things. Please.

CO: Thank you, brother Dan. There is no doubt that, even right there on the crusade ground, pickpocketers, robbers, snatchers of cell phones, purses were there operating. As Reinhard Bonnke was preaching, noises were heard from here and there. And the ushers were just ushering those who were healed of their previous infirmities.

DS: While he was preaching?

CO: While he was preaching on the stage. Reinhard Bonnke himself did not know – he wouldn’t have known that someone has been healed …

DS: … healed.

CO: Prior the crusade, people – the kind of advertisement you'll be [...] our pastors are here, was that: come for healing. You know, the blind will see, this and that; the lame will walk,
and so on and so forth. So, quite a number – a good number of people came for such a purpose, instead of coming to seek salvation of their souls. Even though Reinhard Bonnke’s focus was on …

DS: … salvation.

CO: … salvation, encounter, personal encounter with Christ. He emphasised on this emphatically. Yet the people – because they’ve hear of the case of one man who came back to live – and that has been the – one of those, because if you have asked me – one of those, the dynamics that brought people, that attracts people to the crusade ground.

DS: I see.

CO: That must be emphasised. Bonnke financed the whole crusade, no doubt about that.

DS: Now, you think that that’s a good thing, or it’s a bad thing?

CO: Sir?

DS: Is it a good thing that he financed the whole thing?

CO: No, the CfaN is there …

DS: Yeah, I understand but …

CO: … and that’s the whole thing. With this all things were connected on daily basis.

DS: Yes.

CO: And that is the question I asked the other time, that where do the money goes to?

DS: Yes.

CO: I think that question has been answered the other time.

DS: Answered – that goes to CAN.

CO: CAN, to the CAN – Christian Association of Nigeria. Many Muslims, male and female, especially females came. Even in their full regalia, so that you can easily identify them …

DS: Yes.

CO: … that these people are Muslims. They were there. People came from far and farer places. And that is when you were asking this question, concerning church growth …

DS: Church growth.

CO: … church planting, after this crusade. That’s why it is, it has not been effective – all that effective for churches to be planted.
DS: But I mean, I mean …

CO: Yeah, yeah, yeah. This is what I mean.

DS: But I mean, let’s say – I mean, if many people get saved, at least some people out of Ile-Ife have been saved.

CO: Yes.

DS: A good number of percentage.

CO: Yes. Yes.

DS: So …

CO: Not a number of percent, but when you see the people – like I said, I’ve never seen a sea of people, like that in my life. At one time, to reason that I’m a pastor, I have to leave the place with my pregnant wife, as early as possible, so that we won’t be choked among the crowd. So, people were there – so many people were there. But they came from far places. There are people who came from more than fifty kilometres away. They are not residing in Ile-Ife. Though, when they give their lives to Christ – Bonnke himself knew this, was quite aware of this, told them that they should identify with church, any church of Christ in their domain, when they again get back home. That is that. So, the way people responded, confirmed the lordship of Jesus Christ – the way they responded to this crusade. Most of the people may know this, actually came in, in order to be blessed with miracle, one miracle or the other. I have mentioned the issue of the man who was raised from dead.

DS: Now, let me. I …

CO: Many Muslims were seen, many Christians, disciples of Christ. I can assure you, that’s my personal experience. Because I didn’t stay where ministers suppose to stay. I intentionally decided to stay among the crowd, to hear what they were saying. And this will be a kind of feedback. Even …

DS: Very good.

CO: … as a pastor, for other pastors to know. Many Muslims were there in their full regalia. You will say – huh. I told them, these people are secret disciples of Jesus Christ. That is the way I saw them. You will know that these people, they knew something about Christ. When we were singing, they sing with us. Even hymns from the hymnals, and you see the way they dressed …

DS: And they’re Muslims.

CO: … this person is not serious. Something is wrong somewhere, and I can understand. See Nicodemus, the way he did his trip. Because if he should confess Christ publicly, he would have lost his prestige, or lost his, even his life – risking his life. So, such a thing cannot be ruled out in Bonnke’s crusade, here in Ile-Ife. He came out to join other Christians publicly
that week. When I saw the crowd, it was as if Christ has come. That’s what I – I was, I mean, I'm a pastor. I was afraid because of the crowd. Has Christ come? – The noise. But, I thank God for the CfaN. Bonnke does plan everything. It is the PA – public address system was super, so that in spite of the noise of the crowd …

DS: … you can still …

CO: … when he said “Praise the Lord”, when he shout “Hallelujah”, when he said “Eyi” …

DS: Yes, yes, yes.

CO: … you will know that he wants to begin. And Reinhard Bonnke is having such a computerised gadget, as to measure how many people were there on the crusade ground. I saw such a thing, as they were using it. And he has such equipments as well, to detect whether criminals are here or not. So that – they are moving about. You see such a gadget, that will move in the air, raised up and moved, to know – to see whether things were going right or not. So, we give glory to God for that. I wanted to say something, this …

DS: Is interesting.

CO: I forget now. You wanted to ask me a question?

DS: No, I’m still digesting, you know – digesting. Now, let’s talk maybe a little bit about the Catholic problem we had because I’m trying to research as objective as possible. Now, we have had many interviews with Pentecostal pastors …

CO: Yeah.

DS: … which I would put in, I mean, which belong to the Pentecostal camp. Then we have had, I think two interviews or three interviews, which we could put in the Orthodox camp.

CO: Orthodox, yeah.

DS: That is, we had the Seraphim and Cherubim Church. Is that a Orthodox?

CO: Cherubim is not Orthodox.

DS: Is not, is Pentecostal?

CO: Well, is it Pentecostal?

DS: Or evangelical?

CO: That is one of the African oriented churches.

DS: Now, where would they fit in, in those three categories? Or is it a new category?

CO: African oriented churches, those are the white garment churches. [?] They are not Evangelicals. Now, they are not …
DS: … Pentecostals.

CO: They are not Orthodox. They are not Pentecostal.

DS: Okay. So, so many things.

CO: I don’t see them as Pentecostals, unless we ask.

DS: Okay.

CO: I will ask …

DS: Yes. So we have …

CO: … tomorrow and let you know. I will ask my pastor tomorrow.

DS: Okay. And then – but we had at least two pastors today, didn’t we? – Out of the orthodox camp, which was …

CO: The Anglicans.

DS: The Anglicans, yes. Exactly, and there was [?] is in my room. Anyway, and then we had several pastors – Baptist pastors …

CO: Yes.

DS: … which are of Evangelical camp.

CO: Yeah, yeah, of – Evangelicals.

DS: Yes, and the majority was Pentecostal camp, is it?

CO: Yes.

DS: Yes.

CO: The majority of it.

DS: So, I think by the numbers of interviews we made – I think it represents the involvement of the people in the crusade. I mean, there were probably mostly Pentecostal involved.

CO: Yeah.

DS: Some Evangelical, and only few Orthodox.

CO: Yeah.

DS: Am I right?
CO: You – is not so. The Orthodox were there. The Anglicans, you know, when people say let’s talk of the Anglicans, they speak with a loud voice. That’s their area: administrative edge – today whom I have lead you to.

DS: Yes, I know. I understand.

CO: And speak to us as well. I’ve just lead you to another one.

DS: Yes. No, I’m saying …

CO: But the …

DS: … mostly. I’m not …

CO: Those Pentecostals, they don’t know how, they don’t – I’m sorry to say – they don’t have …

DS: Oh. I see, a central …

CO: … united voice.

DS: I see. I see. But still, still, now …

CO: Still, you want to bring them together?

DS: Yes, still thinking about, like chairmans [korr. „chairmen”] of committees and so on. I mean, because, I mean – the position of a chairman let’s say, could be occupied by a Pentecostal, by a …

CO: You are right.

DS: You know what I mean? So, let’s say the provost, or provost, or the bishop, or whatever you call him, he could send people and say, “You are becoming the chairman of this one, this one.”

CO: Yeah.

DS: That’s what I’m talking about.

CO: See, the man we went to, yesterday.

DS: Yes.

CO: Oyedeki.

DS: Yes.

CO: I can still see that as Orthodox.
DS: As that one.

CO: Is of – our African Church came out of the Anglican.

DS: Anglican. So AC is Orthodox church?

CO: Still Orthodox.

DS: Okay. So, maybe we should sit down tomorrow or something, go through my data and just mark them.

CO: When will that be tomorrow?

DS: Let’s see – maybe, let’s just finish this. So, we have people occupying the committees. You know what I mean?

CO: Okay.

DS: I think that resembles pretty much of the interviews.

CO: Yeah.

DS: That’s what I’m saying.

CO: They were many. And I’m not surprised, as per what I hear today, that the PFN began it. And what this man said, Pastor Osasona – what he said now, that they asked him to come. I didn’t know that. I wouldn’t have known that.

DS: That’s …

CO: My pastors too said it, that he was invited.

DS: Yes, yes. He said that he …

CO: But he said no.

DS: He said twice, even twice.

CO: The Lord has not asked him to come here. And at the fullness of time, he now told them that, “Okay, I want to come now.” I didn’t know that they invited him. And that is one of the reasons why the Pentecostals were much more. On these …

DS: Because of the PFN inviting …

CO: [?]
DS: … Reinhard Bonnke, I think. That’s what I’m saying. So, most – those important positions they – in the committees – were occupied mostly by Pentecostals? Could you say that? Because, I mean, we visited with so many people and you know.

CO: You are right.

DS: That’s what I’m saying, and …

CO: But, there were other committee – there are various committees. Like this one, I mean, my own Baptist pastor, too – Opadeji too headed a committee, he was saying. That is Evangelical camp – or Oyedeji, that is Orthodox. He too was heading a committee. Even Venerable Ogbomoso, I still call him Orthodox. I will let you know that tomorrow.

DS: Yes, but I mean, the name would say it's Orthodox, is not Anglican.

CO: Uh-huh.

DS: Yes.

CO: Is of the, I mean, very close to the Anglican church, where we went to yesterday. But their own setting is quite different. Very, very much emphasising on the Old Testament, still performing all these rituals.

DS: Okay. But maybe we can just sit down or so, and find out. Okay.

CO: Tomorrow …

DS: Thank you.

CO: Thank you.

CO: Tomorrow is.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: … on tape because then I can use it as a source, you know what I mean?

CO: What I’m saying is that the Catholics, we tried as much as possible to interview them, too. We visited their church – their churches. On meeting them in the house of the catechist, he was not around. We asked of the father – Rev. father in the church of Ile-Ife.

DS: Yes.

CO: We asked of him. He was not ready to listen to us. When he has been told that Evangelist Daniel Schott will be returning back to Lagos, whether Sunday or Monday morning – yet he said we should come again on the day after tomorrow, Monday or Tuesday.
DS: So …

CO: That means that he is not willing to respond to our questions. And apart from that, even during the crusade I didn’t see them. I didn’t see their pastors and their catechists. So, they are not much involved in the crusade.

DS: Yes, and even not interested in giving a statement.

CO: Yes, they are not interested at all …

DS: So …

CO: … in giving a statement.

DS: Okay. No, that’s alright. Okay. Thank you.

CO: Yeah.
### 3.3 Interview mit Rev. Ransom S. Bello

#### 3.3.1 Rahmendaten des Interviews

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**Funktion des Interviewten bei der Großevangelisation:**

**Funktion in der lokalen Kirchengemeinde/ Werk:**

- Head pastor of the *Calvary Life Assembly Int., Kano*
- National vice president of the *PFN*

**Bemerkungen:**

Dr. Ransom S. Bello war der Publicity Chairman für Bonnkes Großevangelisation in Kano (1991) und konnte als derzeitiger „vice president of the PFN“ wertvolle Einschätzungen über den Dienst Reinhard Bonnkes in Nigeria abgeben.

#### 3.3.2 Transkript des Interviews

DS: I’m interviewing Bishop Bello in Kano, and he is the vice president of the PFN …

RB: National vice president.

DS: National vice president of the PFN. And he – you were the representative, you were the PR, publicity …

RB: Publicity Secretary of Bonnke’s crusade.


RB: Yes. That’s right.

DS: Could you just explain to me how the whole thing developed – how it came to those riots and the problems?

RB: Okay.

DS: That will be interesting.
RB: Okay. There was an earlier crusade, that held in Kaduna.

DS: Of Reinhard Bonnke?

RB: Yes.

DS: Okay.

RB: Just about two hours drive from Kano. It was so successful.

DS: '91 also?

RB: Yeah. Yeah. I think so, yes. It was so successful, and then that …

[Das Telefon von RB klingelt.]

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: There was a phone call coming in, but we are continuing.

RB: Yes, so because of the massive attendance – great success of that crusade in …

DS: Kaduna.

RB: … Kaduna. Now, the news came to Kano, and then the Muslims kind of began to develop some resistance to it. And then …

DS: But in – during that time, they were already preparing for the Kano crusade?

RB: Yes.

DS: Okay.

RB: Yes. And like I said, I was the publicity chairman. And Suzette was here, since some weeks before the crusade, to organise some prayer meetings.

DS: Yes, yes.

RB: That was very interesting. So, the thing was really on top gear. The publicity was very well done, you know, and then – I think the awareness was so much in the city that you could almost feel in the atmosphere some kind of resistance to it. Everybody was aware. You know the way he brings his, you know, money; we printed, I mean, printed so many copies of the flyers and posters, everywhere.

DS: Yes.
RB: And also we devised some means of reaching the Islamic women who cannot be reached very easily. We made our women to dress like them, and then we printed some of the handbills in the local dialects. And then we sent them to the cities; that’s where they live. And I think that is part of the offence. And so the – before that day we knew something was going to happen because the atmosphere was so charged, you know. And I think they were so scared about the – because of the Kaduna success. They were so scared about that. And they wouldn’t want that to happen in Kano, at all. Kano is the eye of the north. It is centre of the Islamic aggression in this country – is Kano. So, that was it. And then, you know, and before the – in fact, even the government was trying to flame us. For instance we wanted to use the race course.

DS: The what – the?

RB: The race course, a place where the horse, you know …

DS: Oh, they running. Yeah.

RB: Race course. We call it a …

DS: A Races course, yeah, yeah. Yes.

RB: Yeah, good. And they were giving us promises that it was going to be alright, but at the – some of the last moment, they disappointed us. But we got another venue. And they had brought the equipment from Germany, you know. The speakers, everything, you know, was in the – available to use. All of a sudden the riot just broke out.

DS: And explain to me how – the crusade was not even on?

RB: No. We have not started.

DS: But the equipment was there?

RB: Yes, already there.

DS: So, there was – the preaching was suppose to be on that day? Or the next day?

RB: I think it should be the next day.

DS: Next day.

RB: Yes, because they were about to mount the equipment, you know, that day and everything, so.

DS: And people came to riot. I mean how?

RB: How it started?

DS: Yeah.
RB: In Kano here the – there is no notice. All of a sudden [?] they sing their song, the Islamic war song. Anywhere they are, they start killing. And then commotion sets in. People run helter-skelter and things like that. That’s it. But they had already planed, you know – they wanted to even destroy the equipment, but our men resisted them.

DS: So, they attacked whom? They attacked the Christians who were on that crusade ground, or?

RB: Yeah, there were some Christians on the crusade ground. Watching …

DS: The day before.

RB: Yeah, watching over the equipments.


RB: Yes. So, they fought them, and then they left the equipment area. God just helped them anyway. And that’s how the riot broke. It was so serious.

DS: So, people were killed?

RB: Too many people. At least think about four, five thousand people were killed.

DS: Were killed?

RB: Yes. Yes. Is a massive …

DS: Christians?

RB: Yeah, Christians. You see, you know they show – it was like a war. Any, you see – the point, the point was that – where you are at the time the riot, you know, breaks out, is very important. You know, people go on activities every day. And if you happen to be in the midst of, or in the place where you cannot escape, that’s it.

DS: So, they was targeting Christians?

RB: Oh yes, they target. These are, you know, the north. Even – they even killed Muslims from the south. So, this was like both, religious and tribal.

DS: Tribal?

RB: Yes.

DS: Oh.

RB: So, it was so much. It was so terrible. It was horrible.

DS: So, what happened afterwards? I mean, they started killing. How did it develop?
RB: Well, after the killings and everything …

DS: They were using guns or machetes?

RB: All kinds of guns were used, and knifes, sharp knifes. They have a kind of …

DS: Machete?

RB: Yeah, a kind of instrument with a curbed end, to easily, you know. You know, pregnant women were slashed open, and the baby brought out – smashed against the wall. So many people were dumped in a dry well – many people. Some people, they just had locked – they locked up the people in the house, set the house on fire. Is very, is very, is very horrible. I mean, is very horrible. I mean, is not something that is worth remembering. Is really very horrible. Many cars were burned. You could see corpses all over the place, laid at, you know, the streets everywhere. And the government couldn’t just do anything, because they were part of the whole thing. That is the problem. Police were part of the whole arrangements. They couldn’t help us, you know, and they would seal – you know, Kano is in different blocks, you understand? There is a block where the north indigenous live in particular. There is a block where the indigenous live. But the other blocks are mixed.

DS: Mixed.

RB: So, it is where – it is in those blocks, they killed so many people.

DS: In the mixed ones.

RB: Yes. Now, the police would block the entrances, so they wouldn’t allow us to go to rescue our people. So, the killing was just massive – massive.

DS: So, what happened then? Reinhard Bonnke, he was not in those areas?

RB: No, no, no. I think he was in a particular hotel. I think in Praise Hotel, here in Kano, and eventually hidden somewhere, and eventually taken away.

DS: By the government, military, or by the police?

RB: I’m not too sure. But what I heard is that they sent a plane to pick him up here, and some of the American citizens that were here, were taken away. So, I believe that the government must have helped, you know, to making that to work out.

DS: So now, looking back now, could you – I mean, since you said, you sensed something was going to happen – wouldn’t it have been wiser to just stop the whole thing? Or, I mean, you know what I mean? Who is to blame now?

RB: Well, it’s the Muslims. I mean, this is a free nation. This suppose to be a secular nation. We are suppose to be able to carry out our religious activity, anywhere we are in the country.

DS: Yes.
RB: Since nobody had spoken out that, you know – I mean, even though we could see that some people are not happy, but that was not sufficient for us to just decide to stop the crusade. So much money has been spent, awareness created, and so we couldn’t just stop it like that.

DS: But you were not expecting that kind of reaction.

RB: Yes. I was not expecting the …

DS: On that scale.

RB: … that scale. That was the worst, you know, followed by …

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

RB: … last year, you know, last year here.

DS: Okay.

RB: Yes.

DS: Last year, were people also killed here?

RB: Oh my goodness. I – I don’t know. I will look – I will look out for a booklet. I think some of the – some people came from Europe, and then …

DS: We were hearing things in Europe.

RB: … compiled. They came physically. They came here, and they saw things with their eyes. They come – there were some compilations, and one of the men gave me one of the booklets. I wish I can lay hands on mine, so I can give you a copy of that, you know. It was serious; it was very, very serious. Last year was, in fact, worse than 1991 – ’91.

[Klopfen an der Tür.]

DS: Before – oh.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

RB: I had some guests from the US.

DS: Yeah, you were talking about last year – 2004.

RB: It was terrible. It was the worst ever.
DS: And you were right here?

RB: Oh yes, I was right here. You see, because the reason was because it was kind of backed up by the government. There were some killers, in a particular place in Plateau State. Some Christians killed some of the Muslims, in kind of reprisal attack. So, Kano Muslims now decided to fight. And the governor was behind it. It was well …

DS: … organised, prepared.

RB: That was the greatest bloodshed in this land.

DS: Now, coming back to '91. Now, how did Reinhard Bonnke deal with it? – I mean, if there are five thousand, six thousand people killed – were killed.

RB: Yes, what will the guy do? Is not his fault.

DS: And that is what you would also say – it wasn’t his fault?

RB: Right, it’s not. It wasn’t his fault, and the government allowed it. They permitted him to come here. But it was thereafter, he was banned from coming to Nigeria. I’m sure you know that.

DS: Yes, yes.

RB: That was that time of – it was this president, head of state, that brought him …

DS: … back.

RB: … back eventually. You know, and – but up to now, I don’t think he can come to the – is not allowed to come to the north. I don’t think so.

DS: Okay.

RB: But he can come to Abuja – no problem. But Kano!

DS: Yeah. So, you said that time in, let’s say ’91 – since the crusade did not take place, and then we had these riots – the church attendance dropped dramatically.

RB: Yes, seriously. Like in my church, we went down by nothing less than 20 percent. Yes. And at the last year crusade, I lost eight hundred people.

DS: Crusade – who was?

RB: Last year riots.

DS: Riot – yes, yes, yes, yes.

RB: I lost eight hundred people.
DS: Eight hundred people, you said, who moved out, I think.

RB: Who moved out.

DS: Yes, yes.

RB: Yes. And we lost only three people by death, who were killed, from our own church. But other people were kind of …

DS: Now, what was it that really provoked these radical Muslims? I mean, you said, you went into the villages inviting them with some special invitation.

RB: Yes.

DS: I mean, what was provocative about it?

RB: I think the provocation came from two ends. Number one – they were unhappy. They were very unhappy with the success of the crusade …

DS: … in Kandu.

RB: Many Muslims were converted. I mean, as early as three o’clock in the afternoon, the field was already getting jam packed. People closed their stores …

DS: … in Kadun?

RB: Yeah, in Kaduna.

DS: Kaduna.

RB: Yes. So, they don’t want the same thing to happen in Kano.

DS: That is one thing, one reason.

RB: That’s, yeah – a very powerful reason. Then number two – the publicity was very aggressive.

DS: Okay, aggressive?

RB: Yes, and very wisely done.

DS: Like in which ways aggressive? – I mean.

RB: Well, when you see posters everywhere, that is rather aggression – when you see handbills and posters all the way …

DS: Oh, you mean the way it was done.

RB: Yes.
DS: I mean, the slogans was aggressive? The slogans, were they aggressive? The mottos, you know – the slogan.

RB: Oh, no, no, no, not at all, it was …

DS: Just the mass …

RB: Yeah.

DS: … the massive – okay, I see.

RB: You know, because, you know, Bonnke gave a lot of money, so we could make so many posters, unlike in normal crusades. So, everywhere in the town you find the crusade. There were banners, and like I said, we sent people into the city because men are not allowed to enter those houses. Okay. So, we sent our women.

DS: I see.

RB: To dress like them, and go into those places, and then invite – and they were willing to come.

DS: Now, let me ask you a general question – more general question. Now, crusades – I know that people are, you know, are used to crusades in the south. I mean, not just Reinhard Bonnke’s crusade – there are many people who are doing crusades.

RB: Oh yes.

DS: Even in Ile-Ife, there is one going on. But I mean, here in the north, what would be – I mean, you as a pastor here, and in Kano – what would be the best way to reach the Muslim community? Is crusade the right way?

RB: Okay. Is one of the ways. This is a right way, but not the only way. Like we held a crusade here – my church had a massive crusade, just about …

DS: Open air?

RB: … yeah, about four months ago, here in Kano. But that is in the north, in the city where the indigenous live – is outside the city.

DS: Outside, yes.

RB: It was successful. Many of the Muslims were converted. Okay. But usually, there are better ways of reaching the Muslims, you know. Like we befriend them – one-on-one basis. You see, when you talk to them on a group basis, nobody is going to listen, because one is watching the other …

DS: Yes.
RB: … to see, who would betray, you know, and things like that. But on one-on-one basis, you will hear them speak their mind. And then, with a private follow-up – well organised follow-up. And some of those ones, if they are converted, we take them out of the city, and take them to Bible schools in the south, or relocate them, you know. So, there are some – there’re many things we’ve been doing.

DS: I understand.

RB: And apart from that, in the interior people are not really Muslims. They are not. The real indigenous are not Muslims. They have their idol worship and things like that.

DS: Okay. Okay.

RB: Yes.

DS: But the Muslims, they don’t touch them?

RB: No, no, no, no.

DS: Okay. So, they just targeting the Christians.

RB: Is the Christians, that is the problem. We are the aggressive people. Churches are springing up everywhere, you know. So, they know we are very aggressive, you know. And things like that. So, and sometimes too, we use welfare to reach some of them – medical, you know.

DS: So, that is also a good thing. I was asking in the other interviews.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: Yeah, I was asking this question in the other interviews that – now, would it be helpful, I mean, to add to the crusade evangelism they are doing, let’s say Reinhard Bonnke, for example, or any other ministry – to add the aspect of, like humanitarian aid, like providing people with some material help? Would that help the gospel?

RB: Yeah, that’s exactly what I said. We use so many other means, like we – we go on the weekends, with some medical facilities, to help the people. And sometimes we build schools for them – for the community, not just for Christians alone.

DS: I understand, yeah.

RB: Sometimes we build – some Christians built, you know, what they call it – water facilities.

DS: Yes, yes, yes. They drill a whole.
RB: Yeah, yeah, bore whole. So, which is for the entire, you know, community. And that has actually helped.

DS: Okay.

RB: That really helped …

DS: So, you would say the north, I mean – I’m still trying to find out which way is more effective. Since now, I myself an evangelist, you know. We’ve been having crusades like in Rwanda, it was indoor. But Kenya, we had outdoor crusade. We also dealt with Muslims there. We also had opposition there – in Kenya, for example – from the Muslim side. I’m still trying to find out, you know, which way – maybe give me some advice. As a European preacher, coming over here, trying to reach, let’s say the north of Nigeria, should I do rather crusade evangelism – if at all? Or should I rather just invest into those social projects, and then make friends? – If you compare those two.

RB: I think the latter one is, of course, more effective.

DS: But …

RB: The crusade is okay. But most of them will not even – may not even turn up, you know, and all that – since it’s a public thing. But I think the most effective way is, you know, having some, what I call charity, you know, welfare packages and things like that, and personal evangelism.

DS: Okay. That is …

RB: I think they are more effective, as far as I – I’ve been here since 1982.

DS: Yes.

RB: So, I have some little experience about how to get some of these people converted.

DS: And, talking about the south now, you think crusade evangelism is fine there? Or should you rather also switch into those kind of programmes in the south?

RB: Yes. I think both are necessary because the south, you know, is open – is open to the gospel. So, in crusade, of course, you know that people have converted. And we can’t also, you know, take out the need for personal evangelism, you know. I think both of them are necessary in the south.

DS: What I was finding out in these interviews was – number one was that a great part – a big part of the people who came to the crusade were already Christians before they came, and before the crusade. Number two – many people, they made – they filled out decision cards with reasons other than receiving Christ, many of them.

RB: Yeah.
DS: And then also, I found out that many people, I mean, they would go and make decisions two, three, four times. I even heard pastors – that the pastors would go and fill out decision cards, just to get the booklet. And they do it three or four times. So, I’m just, you know – I’m trying to evaluate if it’s effective, still …

RB: Yeah.

DS: … the crusades.

RB: The truth is that I do not doubt the fact that, you know, people will be saved during the crusade, but may not be as much or as many, as it is being publicised.

DS: That’s what I’m saying, yeah.

RB: Yeah, because in the churches, we don’t see the increase in the churches, I mean.

DS: So, you would say that after the crusade – after a crusade, there wouldn’t be much increase.

RB: Uh-huh, you know, because if one hundred thousand people – five hundred thousand people actually converted.

DS: Yes.

RB: We should see the impact …

DS: That’s it.

RB: … in most of the churches, but we don’t see it …

DS: And that is what I was hearing – what was – all of the – all in the interviews. They were saying the same thing. And they were also saying that, I mean, it was rather – oder [deutsch] after I asked them, they would say or admit, “It was rather a church revival than a church growth.” They had some growth, but not too much actually.

RB: The commitment of our lives, you know – like kind of commitment our lives back to God, and things like that, which I believe that happens.

DS: Now, investing that much money – let’s use the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke, or any other ministry who are coming in with a lots of money, finances – which is, you know, with good intentions, of course, to reach the lost. Would it be wiser, in your opinion, to – you know, to direct those funds into a different channel?

RB: Yeah, you see, you know – I don’t know whether I’ll be in the best position to really comment on that, but I – maybe that’s the calling, maybe that is the way he feels it should be done, perhaps. But I believe that if that much of money is allowed to go on charity projects – you know, some other, you know, hidden, but more effective – I think we will have more results.
DS: Interesting.

RB: Yeah.

DS. That is interesting to hear from a pastor. Yes, interesting.

RB: You have more result, I mean, that is very obvious. You know, building churches for them in the local areas, building roads for them. I mean, I mean, you are making it – well, I’m talking of Muslims especially.

DS: Yes, yes.

RB : Unreached areas. I think …

DS: But I mean, the south is reached pretty much. What I did, I marked all the places, where there were crusades of Reinhard Bonnke. The south is really covered …

RB: Yeah.

DS: … all over with their crusades, and – yeah.

RB: I think one of the biggest problems we have is that there is a lot of people, that give their lives to Christ. And they have to give it again and again. I don’t know, you give your life to Christ ten times.

DS: Yes.

RB: I don’t know about that. But I’m not really convinced that they understand what they are doing. Most people in this churches are not really born-again.

DS: Okay.

RB: Yes. You see, they are just religious.

DS: Isn’t it?

RB: Pentecostal circles.

DS: I understand. Yeah, genau [deutsch].

RB: Like somebody says, our Christianity in Nigeria is like one hundred, you know, feet wide and two feet deep.

DS: Oh, I …

RB: You know what I’m saying?

DS: Yes.
RB: There is no depth.

DS: Yeah.

RB: There is not depth.

DS: So now, part of our ministry, of Global Evangelistic Network is – we are doing crusades. We are also, I myself, I’m also equipping church members and leaders – depending on how it works out – in the area of evangelism, personal evangelism. I offer a seminar on personal evangelism. Now, would you say that, that kind of teaching – would it, could it be regarded a good way of reaching the lost in Nigeria? I mean, me coming in, or somebody else doing it, teaching the church, equipping the church …

[RB hustet.]

RB: Excuse me.

DS: … how to witness …

RB: Yeah.

DS: … how to be effective, and then reach the lost.

RB: Yeah, it’s an effective way, but then there is something that Bonnke does, which is also not to be overlooked. Now, he has ministers’ Fire Conference, alongside with the crusade.

DS: I know, yeah.

RB: And the purpose of that is to fire on the ministers, teach them, you know – empower them to go back and perhaps do some more – …

[Ein Telefon klingelt.]

RB: Don’t worry. Don’t worry. – … and do some more things …

DS: Yes.

RB: … for the Lord, you know. But I still believe, at least as far as the lost is concerned, this crusade method may not be the best to reach the indigenous. In the south maybe – perhaps. But because most people that go to the crusades, they are all – they go to church.

DS: Yeah. That’s what I’m saying.

RB: They go to church on Sunday.

DS: But basically the church going Christians are reached again. I mean, of course, some of them are not saved; I understand that.

RB: […] Yeah.
DS: But they can hear the message in the church.

RB: Oh, they go to church.

DS: Every Sunday.

RB: Yeah, they go to church every Sunday.

DS: So, the reached are being reached again.

RB: Again and again.

DS: But the unreached are not being reached.

RB: Not at all.

DS: I’m hearing you.

RB: You know that’s just – that is the truth.

DS: And now, would you say that, like you said Reinhard Bonnke is doing the crusade, and he is also doing the Fire Conference.

RB: For ministers.

DS: Yes. So, should there be – in your opinion – should there be more emphasis on Fire Conference, more on equipping? But let’s say you have a budget, that big. And if you divide it up, should we put more, I mean, of the finances and resources into the Fire Conference, in equipping?

RB: What to me – if I’m in a position to advise, I would say yes. You see, because I – okay, let me give you an example. I was called upon to be one of the committee whatever, in Abuja, to – for the crusade in Abuja.

DS: This, coming up?

RB: Yes.

DS: This. Okay, yeah.

RB: Because since it can not come up north, he wants me to help mobilize the pastors from northern Nigeria.

DS: To come down.

RB: Come down. And then we told them – we said that’s a good idea, but let him know it’s going to cost money.
DS: Yes.

RB: Because the north is not as rich as the south. There is a lot of poverty up here. So, he must be prepared to help the pastors in the area of transportation, and possibly accommodation, where it is necessary.

DS: Yes.

RB: They said that is not in their manual, in their booklet, you know. And I say, “Okay, but this time already, we have to expand the booklet – your manual to include this for the north.”

DS: I understand.

RB: If actually you want to reach the north – because if you can reach the pastor effectively …

DS: … then send them back.

RB: … because he will – he will reach. Like Jesus Christ said – that man who was converted, he said, “I want to go with you.” He said, “No, no, no. Go back; they know you; they don’t want me, but you are part of them. You go back and …”

DS: Yes, yes.

RB: You know, so in my own advice – that would have been my advice.

DS: Now, let’s look at the whole of Africa. I know Reinhard Bonnke is moving from south up north. And he is trying to reach all of Africa. Now, if you just – just over all – I mean, he has been in ministry for so many years now. And then, I mean, no doubt it was successful.

RB: Yeah, very.

DS: But I mean, if in your opinion – to reach Africa, is that the right way – doing crusade evangelism? Should he keep on doing it? – I mean now, putting it into the African context, not just Nigeria.

RB: Well, they should because there are so many places, that are yet unreached in Africa. So, crusade would be very, very necessary to reach people on a massive scale.

DS: And you think …

RB: … for them.

DS: And you think the crusade itself – the method of crusade evangelism?

RB: Yes.

[Ein Telefon klingelt.]
DS: Go ahead.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

DS: We are still talking about Africa.

RB: We have so many people. Because, you see, the kind of revival we had in Nigeria is not the same in other – many of the African countries. Is not the same. So, crusade is still very, very necessary.

DS: Yeah, I know, but such …

RB: … such, that they could – should think of other ways, of – because this crusade, we – sometime the fruit is difficult to really account for. You understand? Is difficult to account for the fruit of this crusades.

DS: I understand, yes.

RB: Since he doesn’t have a church, you know. And then from that – like I said, when you find out from this pastors who cooperate with him to have this crusade, and ask, “How many people have come to your church?” And they will be able to say, “Well, we don’t see much growth.” And this is why there should be other ways of, you know, reaching the people in a more effective way.

DS: Yes, that’s what I’m saying.

RB: That’s what I’m trying to, you know, I’m trying to say.

DS: And you think, generally speaking of crusade evangelism as it is – is it a common way of reaching the people here? – I mean in Africa, let’s say.

RB: Oh yes, from the beginning.

DS: So, it is not strange to them?

RB: No. Right from the days of T. L. Osborn, I mean, that was very effective. I mean, nothing can have done this much anyhow, without crusade.

DS: Crusade.

RB: Yeah. T. L. Osborn in those days – coming to Nigeria. Oh goodness, that was great. Many people were saved. I think like Ayo himself …

DS: Yes. He was saved …

RB: He was saved in the crusade.
DS: Okay. T. L. Osborn?

RB: Whether Osborn or maybe Idahosa, but he was saved in a crusade ground.

DS: Yes. Yes.

RB: So, in those days we didn’t have so much enlightenment, progress, revival in church, like this. So, that’s why, I mean, crusade had done a great …

DS: Before, but you think it’s time now to …

RB: [?]

DS: … to change methods.

RB: I believe it’s time to begin to change our methods. Still have to [?] to, you know, really ensure that this the – there should be accountability. There should be a way to know if people are actually getting saved, you know. And then, some other – smaller, not visible, not loud, you know, like for instance – ways of reaching, you know, people and things like that.

DS: What about television ministry in Africa? I mean, would it be of any good?

RB: Very good. Very good.

DS: I mean, there are still many people in the villages. Do they all have television, or is it?

RB: Whether they have TV in the villages?

DS: Yes.

RB: There are lot of towns in Nigeria that have TV.

DS: Okay. There are lot.

RB: Yes. It’s a very powerful outreach.

DS: So that’s – see, I’m just trying to figure things out. There are so – I mean, there are millions of dollars invested in one crusade, which is fine. I mean, I’m not saying that’s wrong, in a way. In a way it’s fine, but still, if you would use that money to buy air, airing time – you know what I mean – and go on television, and I mean, just reach all of Africa.

RB: That’s right. That’s why, you know, wisdom is necessary in soul winning. From the Bible perspective – “He that win a soul is wise.”

DS: Yes.

RB: Wise in different ways. You must be wise. Is also wisdom to do that. But the point is, I – you know, my belief is that if so much is being spend on crusade – to me, I may not be too comfortable with that, you know. And because there are many other ways, like I’ve been
saying, to channel that fund to reach out to people, like this TV. You – you cannot fight with the TV.

DS: Yes.

RB: You, when – you know, is you and the TV in the house. And a lot of people have been saved, you know, by that way. So, like you were saying, I really agree with that so much. But the issue – I don’t know, maybe – perhaps, you know, they had grown from one stage to the other. I don’t know what plans they have next. I don’t know what, you know …

DS: Yeah …

RB: So, nobody can tell him.

DS: But also one thing is, I mean, in the last few years, the focus was so much on Nigeria. But before, you know, all over Africa, I mean, the south more. Last years, I mean, I was reading the reports, just Nigeria, Nigeria, Nigeria.

RB: You know why it must be so? Because I believe that Nigeria is the eye of Africa. Nigeria is the – you see if you can reach Nigeria, you will reach Africa. That is very obvious.

DS: Okay.

RB: If you check it out right now, you will find Nigerians – every part of the world.

DS: That’s right, yes.

RB: And they are occupying vantage positions in the trait of the gospel. I mean Ashimolowo, you know, Ghana …

DS: Adelaja.

RB: … Kenya.

DS: Yes, yes, yes.

RB: Of course, because you see the – Nigeria is central in reaching Africa.

DS: And because – I also think they have the most dense population.

RB: Of course, we have the population.

DS: Yes, yes.

RB: We do, you know.

DS: During …
RB: The population, I mean – you know, they are everywhere, everywhere. Nigerians everywhere, raising churches and, you know.

DS: Now, to summarize the – our discussion – like for a minister who is coming over to Nigeria, or lets say Africa – let’s put it in a bigger content – context. What would be your advice? Like, you know, in any area – like what you say a minister should know about. How should he? See, in my concern – I’m concerned about lost souls, you know. And from your perspective, for a ministry to come from Europe and to do effective ministry in Africa.

RB: Well, the first is – I think the first thing to do is to get connected with the right people.

DS: Locally?

RB: Yeah, locally.

DS: Church leaders?

RB: Right people. Not just church leaders, right people. I know what I’m saying. The first – if you fall into the hands of phoney leaders, they will harass you up, and your image – your image could be dented. Your image, it depends on who you actually – you relate with.

DS: Yes.

RB: Because if a man has no testimony, and that is your best friend, you know, you gone have problems, you know, reaching people. So, the right people – then, the right method. And is good to – like you are doing right now – to kind of make some interviews, and you know …

DS: … research.

RB: … research, you know, and know exactly what to do. I don’t want you to bring money from Germany and waste it in Nigeria.

DS: Yeah, that’s what – that’s the point. I mean.

RB: I can give you an example, but I wouldn’t be too specific. I was in the US. I have a friend; I regard him as a father, but he said, “No, no, no, I’m your friend.” I said, “Okay, Sir.” I warned him in the US. We have an organisation, and I was like next to him. I said, “If you want to make an outreach in Nigeria, just be careful who you connect with.” And he said, “Okay.” There was a particular man and, you know, he came along, and then many funny things happened. The money was messed up, and it was so sad. We had to settle the issue back in the US. That man came to the US, and then the man – the leader himself, and we settled the whole thing. I said, “But I warned you before.”

DS: Yes.

RB: You know, I don’t want your image to – if you really want to do an effective work, you have to be connected with the right people. That is very, very important.
DS: So, how do I get to the right people? Do I use the CAN or the PFN, or how do I get to the right people?

RB: Well, I think the PFN is a good venue. CAN – CAN is a political cum religious organisation because is made up of born-again, not born-again, Orthodox, Christians …

DS: Very broad.

RB: … spiritual, you know, spiritualists. You know, very, very – too broad for convenience. But …

DS: I see.

RB: … we don’t have a choice here. That is what the government will want to recognize. But PFN will give you better, you know, direction.

DS: I had my own share of experiences. Like even before coming here, I received a letter of an supposedly official letter of invitation, from the PFN. And what I did, I sent a copy to Bishop Bayo in Manchester, and he replied that it’s a fake.

RB: You see that.

DS: Things like that. I know what you are talking about.

RB: You know, because you need the resources to be able to reach out to people. And if those resources are wasted, then there is a problem there.

DS: Yes.

RB: So, that’s just my advice. And is also good to think more of the ministers, how to reach the ministers.

DS: To equip them.

RB: To equip them. Because they will be able to do the things you cannot do, in the interiors and other areas.

DS: So, would it be a way of saying, okay if, you know, if like – I specialize in evangelism, doing it and also teaching it. To say, “Okay, lets have a ministers’ conference. Let’s equip them and – like throughout the week – and send them back, and see what, I mean, let’s see the result.” Would that be a wise way of doing it?

RB: Yes, a good way of doing it.

DS: And what about books – publishing books in that direction? Me, I was thinking into that direction before.

RB: Yeah. Now, publishing book is – is okay. Somebody says, “If you want to hide any information from an African, put it in a book.” Well, I don’t know. I don’t know how relevant
that is now. But I would advise this. It’s depending on where you want to – which part of the country – the peculiarities. For if is in the north for instance, I think apart from equipping the ministers, there should be some practical steps. Now, I was privileged to preach a message in our bi-annual conference; that is the whole national PFN. I was asked to speak about the north, the limitations to outreaches in the north. After I spoke, people’s eyes were opened. Because those guys in the south don’t even know what is going on up there. They don’t know. Then the president of the PFN that time, Bishop Bokonko, he was so touched. He said he will sponsor fifteen pastors from the north.

DS: Sponsor?

RB: Yeah, and he will pay them ten thousand every month, for at least – for one year. That I should look for those, who are actually labouring in the interiors, which I did. Even one of the things that was presented to the public yesterday, as a PFN empowerment, you know, project. Those are practical things to help these pastors in the interior. I don’t mean that pastor is already, or – I mean those people are struggling and …

DS: Yeah, yeah.

RB: They say – I can’t do what they are doing. I can’t stay in the village. So, but I can empower them to stay there and help them with the buildings, and things that can practically, you know – apart from the seminar. Seminar is good, but we also need to empower them materially, as much as possible.

DS: Now, there – during those interviews I also found – one thing is that people were complaining to me saying that after the crusade is over, there is no more feedback. I mean, they can talk with [?] of Reinhard Bonnke. The team is gone, and that is the end of the story. There is no more feedback with the field. You know what I mean?

RB: Yeah.

DS: So, maybe that is part of the reason why the message is not getting back. The feedback is not there.

RB: That’s right.

DS: People just keep on doing it the same way.

RB: The same way. Because that’s – they need to sit down and evaluate, you know, the success, the – I mean actual success now.

DS: I think that is part of, you know, that might be part of my contribution. Because that’s what I’m doing.

RB: That’s right.

DS: And I’ll see how it works out. I’ve heard so many good things about Reinhard Bonnke – as a person, as a man of God – you know. But as you – the outcomes of the ministry seem to be meagre, compared to that investment.
RB: Compared to the investment. Of course, that people were healed, that many were …

DS: Yeah.

RB: … many kinds of cases.

DS: No doubt about that, yes.

RB: But the truth is that the actual outcome may not be as bogus as it is been publicised. What – now, when you talk of the actual outcome.

DS: Yes.

RB: You know. That is my honest opinion about it.

DS: Now, what about the follow-up? Some pastors or ministers suggested that the follow-up should also be done, at least partially, by the ministry team of Reinhard Bonnke. What is your take on that one?

RB: Yeah, that’s what they need. That is if they can fashion out a mode, a modality for that, that’s going to be alright. They cannot establish a church.

DS: No.

RB: And they don’t intent to do that. But there should be a way that they can call all of the converts, you know, for meetings, you know, to even check up if they are still there.

DS: So, that means …

RB: [?]  

DS: That means they have now a crusade. They have a Fire Conference, which is geared toward equipping the church workers. And maybe we should add the third aspect …

[Ein Telefon klingelt.]

RB: See how to …

DS: … follow-up for unbelievers.

RB: Follow-up, yes. I think that will be good.

[Aufnahmegerät AUS]

[Aufnahmegerät AN]

RB: … proper follow-up.

DS: The third aspect – proper follow-up.
RB: If, I mean, you cannot be doing something over the years. I don’t know, maybe I’m no longer current. I don’t know.

DS: Yes.

RB: For the little I know, I – there should be need to sit back and really check up how effective, you know, have you been? Well, the souls – what part could we play in conserving them? Can we go – just go out for a conference of those who are saved in the last December retreat, of the crusade? Let’s see the turnout. You know, things like that, or personal correspondence, you know, and all of those things. So, because I believe the Lord said, “I sent you to go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit shall abide.”

DS: So, you should be evaluating not by the masses, but by the fruit outcome.

RB: Is – real what matters is the abiding, is the – I don’t judge you by your activities, but by your abiding fruit. That’s how I can judge you, is how many people actually stay.

DS: Now, has anybody of the African leaders or Nigerian leaders, let’s say confronted the ministry, or confronted Reinhard Bonnke with these facts you are just telling?

RB: I’ve not done that. And I can promise you I will because the African director is my very close friend.

DS: Rev. Darko.

RB: Darko, he is my …

DS: In Lagos.

RB: … very, very close friend. I will ask questions, when next we meet, about some of these, “What are you guys doing about follow-up?” – You know. Maybe I’m no longer current, perhaps. I want to ask him …

DS: Yes.

RB: … to hear what he has got to say. And I’m not aware of any leader, that has confronted them. I don’t know, but I have not, as a person.

DS: Yes, yes.

RB: You know?

DS: Okay. Well, thank you so much. That has been lots of good information. I mean, it was – yeah – very, very valuable. Thank you.

RB: Thank you so much.

DS: I was just interviewing Bishop Bello in Kano.