Ethnicity and the Church: the Case of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana

By

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ABSTRACT

Ethnicity and the *Church* are two vital subjects in mission studies. However, the focus has always been on the latter. As a result the Church's theology of ethnicity is weak. Fear, ethnocentrism and theological blindness account for the little interest in the subject of ethnicity. However, a Church that neglects ethnicity does so at her own peril.

God's dealings with Israel, a history of the growth of the Church from one culture to another makes the study of ethnicity imperative. Failure to acknowledge and harness ethnicity can lead to ethnocentrism or tribalism which is an enemy to God's mission. God's mission essentially reconciles, unites and enriches people from different ethnic groups whilst ethnocentrism or tribalism excludes, divides and impoverishes them.

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana like the wider society has to cope with ethnicity. Whereas the Church has harnessed ethnicity in her mission, she has, nonetheless, failed always to do away with ethnocentrism or tribalism. The PCG has not been faithful to her parent missionaries' strategy of planting indigenous churches among the non-Akan and non-Ga. The current PCG's strategy amounts to Akan-Ga cultural mission.

Ethnicity and Christian identity are crucial to providing people with their true secure identity. A Christian always has to come to terms with his dual identity, that is, belonging to an ethnic group as well as to Christ. A theology that affirms this dual identity will be in a position to have healthy multi-ethnic churches and be effective in mission.

Andrew Walls' Three Tests of Christian expansion: *The Church, The Kingdom and The Gospel Tests* serve as our measuring instrument. The PCG has not passed these Tests satisfactorily. She needs the *Pentecost experience*, that is a fresh touch of the Holy Spirit. The thrust of this thesis is that, when the PCG experiences this *Pentecost,* integration, reconciliation and embrace will be achievable among her multi-ethnic membership.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my grandmother, Tini Mumuni and My Uncle Moses Mumuni for being instrumental in my education. I also dedicate it to the Christian family of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. May this work prompt the PCG to strive to be the Church she is meant to be – a multi-ethnic church.

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"Not to us, O LORD, but to thy name give glory, for the sake
of thy steadfast love and thy faithfulness!" (Psalm 115:1).

I thank God for the opportunity He gave me to draw the PCG's attention to the issue of ethnicity in this study. Even though I had already decided to research into that area, the current Synod Clerk's challenge on his assumption of office on 1ˢᵗ March 2000, was an added motivation.

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Solomon Sumani Sule-Saa.

May 2000.

DECLARATION

With the exception of the sources specifically acknowledged in the text, this dissertation is entirely my own work, and has not been submitted to any other university.

REV. SOLOMON SUMANI SULE-SAA

SIGNED AT AKROPONG – AKUAPEM, GHANA THIS 26TH JUNE, 2000

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Abbreviations

Bible Study and Prayer Group	BSPG
Evangelism and Lay Train Committee	ELTC
Presbyterian Church of Ghana	PCG
Northern Outreach Programme	NOP
Ghana Evangelism Committee	GEC
Northern Mission Field	NMF
Regulation Practice and Procedure	RPP

The Three Regions of Northern Ghana

Upper East Region	UER/UR
Upper West Region	UWR
Northern Region	NR

The Seven Regions of Southern Ghana

Brong Ahafo	BA
Ashanti Region	AS
Eastern Region	ER
Greater Region	GA
Central Region	CR
Western Region	WR
Volta Region	VR

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Ethnicity and the **Church** are two important subjects in Christian theology. However, the former is normally not given the attention it deserves. Yet it plays a crucial role in the life and work of the Church (Nichols Alan, 1995:9). The Jewish holocaust, "ethnic cleansing" in the former Yugoslavia, the Rwandan massacre, and other ethnic conflicts elsewhere, including that of Ghana in 1994 (Aboagye-Mensah, 1999:18) have revealed how ill-prepared the Church has always been when it comes to handling problems of ethnicity. No serious thought has been given to a **theology of ethnicity** because of its sensitive nature. It seems the church is afraid as well as reluctant to address the subject of ethnicity (Aboagye-Mensah, 1999:18). Peter Kodjo is in agreement with Aboagye-Mensah's view and describes ethnicity as an explosive political dynamite, hence the Church's fear to openly discuss it (Kodjo Peter, interviewed, 1999).

Aboagye-Mensah further critiques the Church's response to problems posed by ethnicity. He questions the wisdom of the Church's attitude and action whereby "ethnically motivated problems are swept under the carpet". As he rightly diagnoses, these problems do not just disappear by ignoring them (Aboagye-Mensah, 1997:2). Rather than try to avoid this sensitive subject, a more fruitful option will be "to engage ourselves as Christians in a serious theological analysis of the understanding of the *Church* and *Ethnicity*" (Aboagye-Mensah, 1997:3).

The Church's mission has often been brought into question for ignoring or taking lightly the warning signs of unhealthy inter-ethnic relations both within and outside the Church. The Christian Council of Ghana, aware of this deficiency, devoted its 1994's mid-year seminar to the theme: "The Church, Ethnicity and Democracy". This current study examines how *Ethnicity* and the *Church* serve God's mission with special reference to the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG).

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) is among the four largest denominations in Ghana [Ghana Evangelism Committee (GEC), 1989]. These are the Roman Catholic Church, Church of Pentecost, Methodist Church, Ghana and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. The PCG was brought into being by the Basel missionaries from Switzerland and Germany (Asamoa, 1944:5; Antwi, 1998:56f). The Basel Mission

was founded in 1815 with the task of spreading "beneficent civilisation and the Gospel" (Rennstich Karl, 1982:94). Scottish missionaries also nurtured the Church, when the Basel missionaries were forced out of the country in 1917 by the British colonial administration, because it could not trust the German missionaries to remain impartial in the political affairs of the country during the First World War (Smith, 1966:18). This fear of the British was not groundless, because the Basel Mission had been approached before by the German empire to serve her (Germany's) interest overseas (Rennstich, 1982:98f). From this incident we can infer that ethnic rivalries are not unique to Africa, Europeans also experience them. For example, bitter rivalry existed between the British and Danes and this made the Basel Mission's work difficult (Effa Ababio, 1991:101).

The Basel missionaries had a policy of planting **"vernacular-based churches"** among the different ethnic groups in Ghana. Hence part of their duty was "to study the language and the tradition (culture) of the people carefully in order to understand them better"(Rennstich, 1982:94). Their pioneering work was among **the Akan (Twi)** and **the Ga-Adangme** ethnic groups in southern Ghana (then Gold Coast). The PCG, building on this precedent, somehow continued with the policy of planting vernacular churches. This policy has resulted in the planting of churches among most of the southern and a few northern ethnic groups in Ghana. It is worth noting however, that whereas the Basel missionaries developed the Twi and Ga languages as part of their missionary strategy, later PCG workers have not done so with the other ethnic groups in their mission fields. For instance the Basel missionaries had the Bible, liturgy book and hymnbook translated into Twi and Ga (Hall Edward, 1983:9), but very little has been done by the PCG for newer ethnic groups in this area.

The PCG, however, continues to use the **Twi and Ga languages** without much zeal to develop the other newer languages that have been brought into the church. Consequently, the multi-ethnic membership of the PCG notwithstanding, it is perceived in certain areas of Ghana as a "foreign church" because of its southern roots and outlook (Krass, 1970:43ff and Kpobi David, 1999). This is given some weight by the use of "Twi/Ga" liturgy and hymns in the urban centres and also at the Church's national meetings. In northern Ghana, for instance, the PCG is referred to as "Kanbonga" (Twi) church, "Twi" being the language spoken by the Akan, the largest ethnic group in Ghana.

The pioneering work among the "Twi/Akan" and Ga-Adangme ethnic groups in the PCG has given them an edge over the ethnic groups that later joined the PCG. The latter are perceived by the former as "newcomers" who have to be integrated into the

Church's structure, which is basically "Twi" and "Ga" in expression (Krass A, 1970:43f). The Ga and Akan have embraced the PCG and become so dominant in its affairs that the later ethnic groups tend to perceive themselves as marginalised by an ethnocentric group.

Statement of the Problem

As already noted the "Akan/Twi" and "Ga-Adangme", were the earliest ethnic groups to benefit from the missionary activities of the Basel and Scottish missionaries. The Bible, hymnbook, catechism, liturgy and service books were translated into these languages. The Basel and Scottish Missions aimed at the **indigenisation** of the Church, to give it an African character (Rennstich, 1982:97). Thus, from the inception of the PCG, language, as a dimension of ethnicity, has played an important role in the propagation of the Gospel. "Twi" and "Ga" as well as English became the *lingua franca* of the Church. However, as the Church grew beyond the Akan and Ga areas, a problem emerged with the assumption that all the other ethnic groups are capable of speaking "Twi" or "Ga". They are expected to pay the price of learning the two afore-mentioned Ghanaian languages as a condition for becoming members of PCG. Consequently, the Twi and Ga people "speak and behave as if the PCG revolves only around them" (Azumah, J. in the *Christian Messenger,* 1999:7). This became evident in the struggle that preceded the renaming of the Church in 1926 (Gyang-Duah, 1996:125). The name initially suggested was **"Ga-Twi Church"** but this was resisted and rightly so by the other ethnic groups, who felt being excluded by such a name. The wrangle over a new name for the church brought the issue of ethnicity to the fore. *Inter alia,* people, began to ask the following questions:

- Does the PCG have the will and resources to continue with her parent missionaries' policy of indigenisation?
- Is the PCG truly a national Church or is it an extension of "Twi" and "Ga" ethnic churches? How adequately has the Church dealt with past inter-ethnic grudges and hostilities of her members?
- Could it be the "Twi-Ga" dominance of the Church that makes most Northerners (ie. people from northern Ghana) perceive the PCG as a "Twi" (kanbonga in most of the northern languages) Church?
- Is it therefore the case that the PCG has abandoned her missionary parents' policy of catering for the language needs of all the ethnic groups within the Church?

The **Twi and Ga hegemony** of the PCG is bound to result in the marginalisation of the ethnic minority groups and undermine Christian unity among her members. It is for this reason that ethnic rivalries and tribalism are occasional sermon themes of the PCG's Presbyterial (the second highest Court of the PCG) and Synodal (the highest Court of the PCG) meetings. Please refer to the PCG's Organisational chart for the courts. Though the use of indigenous languages has helped to bring different ethnic groups into the PCG, the integration and reconciliation of these ethnic groups is not complete.

How effectively has the PCG been able to integrate and reconcile the different ethnic groups into one family, in which "there is neither Jew nor Gentile"? Genuine conversion seeks to create a new humanity, where the dividing walls of hostilities amongst the different ethnic groups are broken down (Ephesians, 2:14-19). For the Christian Church ought to be a haven for all peoples (Haselbarth, 1994:118). Has the PCG succeeded in doing this?

One can argue on biblical grounds, and from the history and ethos of the PCG, that the Gospel affirms ethnicity (Sanneh, 1993: 28f). That means it affirms the ethnicity of others as well as "our own". This is what Miroslav Volf calls *embrace* (Volf, 1996:143). This raises the problem of how to preserve the functional, not just the notional, unity of a church which simultaneously affirms several ethnicities (Bosch, 1982:22). How do we maintain the dual position of **ethnic identity** and **Christian identity** in the PCG? This study seeks to investigate the perception that ethnicity in the form of tribalism or ethnocentrism exists in the PCG. The theological and ethical implications of the negative manifestations of this ethnicity will also be examined.

Objectives of the Study

This study seeks to:

- examine the role of ethnicity in the growth of the PCG;
- investigate the PCG's missionary methods among non-Twi/Ga peoples;
- analyse the status and attitudes of minority groups within, and towards, the PCG ;
- investigate how far ethnic consciousness is a source of frustration to minority groups within the Church;

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- examine the theological and ethical implications of the practice of ethnicity within the Church;

- develop models in which there can be an integration and reconciliation of ethnic groups as demanded by Christian identity.

Hypothesis

Ethnicity has played both positive and negative roles in the life of the PCG. It has been crucial in the accomplishment of significant tasks in Christian Mission History. On the other hand its extreme negative form, *Tribalism* or *Ethnocentrism,* has undermined the life and work of the PCG, such that as a Church engaged in mission, the PCG may not pass the Church, Kingdom and Gospel tests (Walls, 1995:7ff). Sound theological teachings would help the PCG maintain a balance between ethnic identity and Christian identity among her membership. Furthermore it could enhance genuine inter-ethnic reconciliation and integration.

Relevance of Study/ Motivation

There are a number of reasons for undertaking this study. The first is existential: the harm ethnicity can do if it is abused. The well-known cases already mentioned illustrate this. Thus the quest for peace necessitates the study of ethnicity.

The second reason is a quest for a genuinely reconciled multi-ethnic Christian community. A number of individuals as well as groups have alleged that tribalism and unhealthy rivalries exist in the PCG, and these allegations need to be substantiated or debunked.

Thirdly, the motivation for this study is a theological one. An understanding of the nature and role of ethnicity, (language and culture being part of it) is crucial to Christian missions. That the Church in Rwanda could be implicated in ethnic genocide should pose a challenge to the Church worldwide to examine her theology of ethnicity. This study on ethnicity in the PCG is therefore an attempt in that direction. How strong are the ethnic ties vis-a-vis Christian identity in the PCG?

This study is relevant for the simple reason that it is systematic and promises to bring practical benefits to the PCG. For instance, the models we shall be examining could challenge the PCG to find out how best her members can co-exist harmoniously as a multi-ethnic Church. Christian unity was a vital element of Paul's missionary strategy, which is the paradigm the PCG should emulate (Allen, 1979:126). In this way, the PCG and other churches could be helped to find ways of dealing creatively with the issue of ethnicity. It would also be making a modest contribution to the fight against the negative tendencies of ethnocentrism, and thus to the promotion of peaceful co-existence of ethnic groups in general and in the PCG in particular.

The subject matter also addresses issues of topical interest to the social sciences namely: ethnicity, education, health, religion, socio-economic and political matters- all of which play crucial roles in the spread of Christianity. The study also picks up issues that are of missiological concern. Missiology or Mission History is not done in a vacuum but deals with these contextual issues mentioned above.

Definition of Terms

It is appropriate from the outset, to define certain terms and draw attention to variant rendering of certain words to aid readers' comprehension of this study.

Ethnicity is used in this study in two senses: Sociological and Missiological. From Social-Anthropological point of view, it refers to an individual's or a group's social identification (Eriksen, 1993:3). In this sense, "ethnic group" and "tribe" mean the same thing (Nukunya, 1992:223). Most writers, however, prefer to use the word "ethnic group" rather than "tribe" because it "has mitigated the formerly strong distinction between 'moderns' and 'primitives'"(Eriksen, 1993). Closely associated with *ethnicity* is *ethnocentrism* or *tribalism.* This is the negative expression of ethnicity, which is selfish and regards people outside one's ethnic group or tribe unfavourably.

From a *missiological* point of view, ethnicity is "the largest group within which the gospel can flow along natural lines without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance due to culture, language, geography . . ."(Robb, 1989:8).

Church is derived from two Greek words *kuriakos,* (which means belonging to the Lord) and *ekklessia* (which denotes an assembly) (G.W. Bromiley, 1987). The term

Church is used in this study to refer to both the assembly of believers worldwide and as a denomination or a local group of believers (congregation).

Indigenisation with special reference to the Church, means allowing the Christian Church to reflect the cultural milieu in which she operates (Idowu, 1965:11). Put differently, to indigenise, is "to live as a Christian and yet as a member of one's own society, to make the Church "*A place to feel at home*"(Walls, 1997:7). Negatively put, to indigenise means not to make the Church look alien to any people in a given area.

The Church as Pilgrim, simply refers to the universal nature of the Church, that is, the fact that, Christians are One in Christ, (irrespective of one's cultural background or place in history). The pilgrim principle refers to the common features which bind churches together (Walls 1997:8).

Variant rendering of some the words used in this study are:

Asante and Ashanti; Akuapem and Akwapim Akyem and Akim, Adangme and Adangbe. We shall be using the first form of the word as well as the second form as used in texts quoted.

Scope and Limitation of the Study (Delimitation)

In this study, we shall mainly focus on the PCG in Ghana but where appropriate we shall also draw on our knowledge of the PCG's congregations abroad to compare or to illustrate a point. Our fieldwork is concentrated on the Akuapem, Ga, Asante Presbyteries and the Northern Mission Field (NMF). These presbyteries can be identified on the map at 69 showing PCG's presbyteries. These are representative enough of the PCG for the purposes of this study.

The **Akuapem Presbytery** is crucial in any study of the PCG because it was among the first Presbyteries to be established and was the cradle of the PCG. It is the "Jerusalem" of the PCG. The pioneer missionaries among the **Akan** and the **Guan** settled here and passed on the Gospel to the other ethnic groups.

Being the Presbytery which hosts the national capital, the **Ga Presbytery** is representative for several reasons. All the different ethnic groups in Ghana can be found there. Moreover, the **Ga-Adangme** was among the first ethnic groups to be evangelised by the pioneer missionaries. In addition, the Ga Presbytery is economically the most influential in the PCG. This Presbytery hosts the PCG's Head Offices as well as the cream of her membership.

The **Asante Presbytery** is chosen because it is in the middle belt of the country and serves as the meeting point between Southerners and Northerners. It is also the second most influential Presbytery, economically, in the PCG.

The **Northern Mission Field (NMF)** is chosen because it is the least evangelised in Ghana (GEC, 1989) and is home to most of the ethnic minority groups. Moreover, the peoples of the NMF are culturally and linguistically different from the Twi and Ga peoples.

PCG pastors and other members from Presbyteries outside those mentioned above, have been included to find out if there will be any difference in their responses from our focus areas.

The study shall mainly focus on the Akan and Ga-Adangme people on the one hand and the peoples of Northern Ghana together on the other hand. Our discussion on ethnicity, though multi-disciplinary in approach, shall lean more towards a theological perspective. The sample chosen is restricted to adult members of the church between the ages of 18-65 and over.

Review of Relevant Literature

The literature relevant to this study will be derived from studies in Ethnicity, Mission History, and History of the PCG. The multi-disciplinary nature of this study demands this broad range of literature.

Related Literature on Ethnicity

Ethnicity is receiving much attention in the social sciences at this present time, because it has become too visible in many societies to be ignored. Discrimination on ethnic grounds is "racism" which can create hostility and violence (Eriksen1993).

There are about 8,000 ethnic groups in the world. Most states are polyethnic nations (Ogot, 1996:1). Bethwell Ogot's *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Democracy in Africa (1996)* provides us rich information on ethnicity in the east African context, especially, how it affects politics and national life. This will be helpful in throwing light on the problem being investigated in this thesis.

Hugh McCullum's book, *The Angels Have Left Us The Rwanda Tragedy and the*

Churches, relates the Rwandan genocide asks, "why did the message of the gospel not reach the people who were baptized"? (McCullum, 1994:75). He attributes the genocide to the Church's glossing over the ethnic tensions within her own ranks. Instead of healing these ethnic tensions, she rather accommodated them (McCullum, 1994:78). It thus underscores the necessity for the Church not to gloss over ethnocentrism among her members.

Similarly, the analyses of issues of ethnicity with special reference to the Rwanda massacre in 1994 continued in *Transformation (1995)*. These have ethical and theological implications which will be helpful in the study of the PCG's context.

G. K. Nukunya's book, (1992) *Tradition and Change in Ghana An Introduction to Sociology* gives a sociological perspective on ethnicity in Ghana. Nukunya diagnoses the phenomenon of ethnicity or *tribalism* and suggests how it can be controlled (Nukunya, 1992:221-241). This is very relevant to this study as it portrays ethnicity in the wider Ghanaian society. With this study as a background we can scientifically examine ethnicity in the Christian Church, and the PCG in particular.

While Nukunya calls *tribalism* a vice (1992:221), Assimeng asserts that *tribalism* is not a wholly negative phenomenon but that it promotes solidarity among members of a particular group (Assimeng, 1981:162f). It would be interesting to test the validity of this claim in the light of the Gospel of Christ and in the context of the social relations and interactions within the PCG.

Language is a dimension of ethnicity and is a tool of communication. Boadi's *(1994) Linguistic Barriers to communication in the Modern World* provides vital information on communication barriers that are an issue within the PCG. He notes that "language creates barriers between individuals... ethnic groups, the two genders and social classes" (Boadi, 1994:4). This fact is crucial in our investigation of the PCG's missionary strategy and communication since she is a multi-ethnic Church.

The Christian Council of Ghana's 1994 mid-year seminar which examined ethnicity in the Church and in national politics resulted in the publication of a booklet entitled: *"The Church, Ethnicity and Democracy" (1994)*. The book, though helpful, does not deal specifically with the PCG with her unique history and ethnic composition.

The above literature deals with issues related to ethnicity, its definitions, general nature, manifestation in national politics, religious life and will be relevant for this study as it depicts the context the PCG lives and works in.

Related Literature on Christian Mission History

The literature in this section deals with the meaning, nature, methods and the existential issues related to missions. The literature covers the Ghanaian as well as the international scene.

Christian mission involves all the activities related to evangelism and provision of social services. Christian Missions are born out of God's own Mission, *missio Dei,* which is, God's redemptive activities in the world (Bosch,1992:390). Ethnicity too is subject to God's mission. A good knowledge of the dynamics of ethnicity is therefore of utmost importance to the life and work of the Church.

John Robb, argues in his book, (1989) *Focus! The Power of People Group Thinking a practical manual for planning effective strategies to reach the Unreached,* that it is imperative for the Christian missionary to understand a people's way of thinking in order to effectively communicate the Gospel to them, and plan effective strategies for reaching people with the Gospel (Robb , 1989).

In (1908), *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the first three Centuries,* (2vols.), Harnack painstakingly explains how missions were carried out in the first three centuries by the Church. Thus, the model or pattern of missions in the early Church can be compared with the current PCG's model or pattern by establishing areas of consensus and conflicts.

David Bosch's (1992) *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* examines several models or patterns of missions from the inception of the Church to the twentieth century. Though he does not include specific African models, those he examines can contribute to an understanding of the current PCG's model or pattern.

Roland Allen's (1979) *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or ours?* assesses missionary methods critically. Missionary methods are very crucial determinants of the outcome of missions. He provides a useful biblical measuring instrument which can be used to assess the missionary methods of the PCG. A biblically sound method should enhance effective transmission of the Gospel of Christ from one culture to another. This is so because relevant missionary methods are not fixed, they vary from one culture to another in order to meet people's needs.

It is for this reason that Lamin Sanneh argues in his book, (1989) *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on culture,* that no one cultural form of expressing Christianity should stifle other cultural expressions. The whole argument of Sanneh is that, no one cultural expression of Christianity should be the norm for every other culture. For every culture is capable of translating the Gospel (Sanneh, 1989:29). This fact accounts for the diverse expressions of Christianity across cultures. Despite its diversity across cultures it is essentially one faith.

For this reason, A. F. Walls in his book, (1997) *The Missionary Movement in Christian History Studies in the Transmission of Faith,* calls for a balance between the anxiety to indigenise and the necessity to be catholic (universal). This perspective is crucial when it comes to considering the ethical implications of the use of ethnicity in mission.

John Mbiti (1973) "African Indigenous Culture in Relation to Evangelism and Church Development," in (Beaver, Ed) *The Gospel and Frontier Peoples; a report of a consultation December1972,* argues that African indigenous culture affects evangelism and church development. It is therefore relevant for this study in that it can help to explain how Ghanaian culture has influenced the kind of evangelism and church development with respect to the PCG.

Kwame Bediako in his book, (1995) *Christianity in Africa the Renewal of a Non-Western Religion,* argues that though Western missionaries brought Christianity to Ghana, the faith can not be said to be alien to Africa or be viewed as an exclusively Western religion. This book is helpful in understanding the relationship between the Western missionaries and Africans in the communication of the Gospel in the PCG.

In his unpublished paper, "Church and Ethnicity: A theological reflection on humanity" Robert Aboagye-Mensah argues that, "The question of human identity is a theological one. What constitutes our essential humanity is defined by God alone. We are human beings because we are made in God's image, in his likeness" (Aboagye-Mensah, 1997: 12). Though the paper does not deal with PCG specifically, its general principles are applicable to our study.

G. M. Bediako's M.A. thesis, (1980) *Jew, Gentile and the Church: the emergence of Christian consciousness in the Book of Acts* depicts how Christian consciousness

emerged out of a polarised Christian community of Jews and Gentiles. This analysis brings to light how Christian identity can come about in a multi-ethnic context like that of the PCG's.

The above literature contributes useful information on mission, the subject of this study. The information therefore serves as a foundation for this thesis to build upon as it provides us with an interpretative key to the Ghanaian missionary context.

Literature Related to the PCG

The PCG's history comes under Ghanaian as well as that of West African Church History. The literature below describes the context in which the PCG was born and in which she engages in missions.

Kofi Agbeti in his book, (1986) *West African Church History, Christian Missions and Church foundations: 1482-1919,* explains that the Basel Mission's work involved West Indians missionaries. The people of Akropong and Aburi did not get along well with them (West Indians) because they could not speak the indigenous language and moreover looked down on the indigenes (Agbeti, 1986). This fact has a serious implication for mission history, and provides justification for this study. H.W. Debrunner and Noel Smith are two other important European writers whose works on the early days of the PCG are relevant for this study.

Hans W. Debrunner's (1967) *A History of Christianity in Ghana* deals with all denominations in Ghana. Although it does not give much attention to ethnicity and how it relates to the PCG's missionary work, it is nonetheless helpful to the general understanding of the growth of Christianity among the different ethnic groups in Ghana.

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1835-1960: A younger Church in a changing society (1966) by Noel Smith, is an authoritative book on the PCG, covering the period from 1835-1960. Smith provides useful information on the beginnings of the PCG, such as, the work of the Basel Mission and the circumstances that necessitated the bringing in of the West Indians, and later the Scottish Mission, who all worked to reach the Akan and the Ga-Adangme people with the Gospel of Christ Jesus. The present study hopes to draw on Smith's work to examine the multi- ethnic nature of the PCG in relation to missions.

Robert Addo-Fening's (1997) history of *Akyem Abuakwa 1700-1943* serves as a helpful guide to the understanding of the Basel Mission's work among another ethnic group and the issues they had to confront. The book also relates the story of the Mission's work from an African perspective. Its limitation is that it does not concern itself with the theological analysis of the missionaries' work.

Samuel Prempeh's doctoral thesis, (1977), *The Basel and Bremen Missions and their Successors in the Gold Coast and Togoland, 1914-1926; a study in Protestant Missions and the First World War,* assesses the impact of the First World war on the Protestant missions in the then Gold Coast (now Ghana) and Togoland (now Togo). This was a crucial period for the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, for her missionary parent, the Basel Mission, was driven out of the country and the Scottish Mission took over. There were areas of continuity and discontinuity with the initial missionary strategy. The study also throws light on how the various ethnic groups reacted to the Missions and their work. The present study, however, moves beyond this to examine the role of ethnicity in the growth of the Church.

Similarly, K. Effa Ababio's doctoral thesis, (1991), *Conflict, identity and Co-operation- the Relations of the Christian Church with the Traditional, Colonial and National States in Ghana with Special reference to the period 1916-1966,* analyses the relationships among the missionaries, the Traditional Authorities and the Colonial regime that immensely affected the growth of the Church in Ghana. The study throws light on how ethnic and colonial structures affected the Church's work and therefore is helpful to the present study.

Charles Gyang-Duah's doctoral thesis, (1996) *The Scottish Mission Factor in the Development of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana: 1917-1957,* examines the circumstances surrounding the coming of the United Free Church of Scotland to Ghana in the Scottish Mission. He also looks at the role the Mission played in the building and development of the PCG. The study reveals the Mission's attempts to indigenise the PCG. The present study moves beyond the mission's indigenisation policy to investigate the current PCG's work among the various ethnic groups.

John Hall's Masters thesis, *Children of a "Stranger-God", Half –Christians or Ghanaian Christians? A study of the work of the NOP of the PCG and the Light it throws on issues of inculturation,* looks at the issue of inculturation. He concludes that, "the

N.O.P. has successfully coupled conversion to Christianity with cultural continuity" (1995:41). The work deals with some of the ethnic factors involved in the NOP's work and will aid understanding of the wider PCG.

John William Young's Masters thesis, (1997) *Making the Presbyterian Ministry to the Dagomba people of Ghana more Effective,* also looks at how the PCG can improve upon her work among the Dagomba of Northern Ghana. His research revealed that language, tribal and class barriers exist between Dagomba and Southern people who make up the bulk of the PCG's membership (1997:58). This is of great interest to this present work, for it sheds light on the perception of an ethnic group from northern Ghana which might be representative of the others.

In Abraham Berinyuu's book, (1997). *History of the Presbyterian Church In Northern Ghana*, the PCG's work in some areas of northern Ghana has been related by both Western missionaries and the indigenous people (Berinyuu, 1997). This information contributes to the understanding of the PCG's missionary work among the Northerners. The book, however, does not cover all the ethnic groups in the North; neither does it seriously tackle ethnicity in relation to the Church's mission that this study attempts to do.

The Rev. F.J. Dankwa asserts that, there is tribalism in the PCG in his booklet, *A Mini Life-Story of Rev. F.J. Dankwa, M Th.* He calls on the PCG to curb "Tribalism" within her ranks. The hint provided by the booklet is the subject of this investigation.

The present study seeks to address the subject of *Ethnicity* and the *Church* which have not been seriously covered by the literature reviewed. The data I shall gather on ethnicity in the PCG would therefore enable me to build on these previous works.

Theoretical Framework

This study comes under Mission History. Lamin Sanneh's theory of *mission by translation* which informs my theoretical framework states that: "the recipient culture becomes the true and final locus of the proclamation without the presumption of cultural rejection" (Sanneh, 1989:29). Mission, according to Sanneh, ought to be cross-cultural, and should therefore dissolve the barriers of cultural exclusiveness (Sanneh, 1989:30). Mission ought to be cross-cultural otherwise genuine Christian discipleship cannot take place. It is for this reason that Lesslie Newbigin argues, "All our reading of the Bible and

all our Christian discipleship are necessarily shaped by the cultures which have formed us" (Newbigin, 1989:196).

Furthermore, Andrew Walls' analysis of Latourette's "Three Tests of Christian Expansion": *The Church Test, The Kingdom Test and The Gospel Test,* (Walls, 1995:7ff) will serve as the interpretive key of this study. *The Church Test* refers to the emergence of a Church or community of believers worshipping the Lord together as a result of the proclamation of the Gospel. With time, however, the Church can become an *institution,* loses its initial mission and then will need renewal in the form of *Kingdom signs.* The Kingdom signs are in operation when *movements* arise out of the *institution* to reform it, so that, it remains focused on its original mission. By *the Gospel Test,* Walls refers to the effect of Christ' presence, directly or indirectly on the wider community. I propose to interpret the PCG's life and ministry by using these three Tests.

Research Methodology

In this study, primary and secondary sources will be accessed.

Method of Data Collection

Primary data

The principal means for collecting the primary data was by field research involving different categories of people in the PCG as respondents.

- 350 were given a questionnaire to fill. The collected questionnaires were then analysed according to the hypotheses already stated.
- 12 key leaders in the PCG were interviewed using a questionnaire and recording their responses with a tape recorder. The recorded information was later transcribed and analysed in line with the hypotheses of this study.
- Archival material, especially Paul Jenkins' Abstracts of the Correspondence of the Basel Mission was consulted.
- Synod minutes, Reports and Correspondence on the PCG were also consulted.

Sampling Procedure

Sample size: The questionnaire was administered to three hundred and fifty (350) persons using quota and purposive sampling procedures: 100 persons from northern ethnic groups;

150 persons from the Akan ethnic groups; and 100 persons from the Ga-Adangme and other ethnic groups.

Quota and purposive samplings were found appropriate, because of the specific persons and information we sought.

The Sample came from these different categories of the PCG's membership:

- Synod Committee (both men and women) the executive body of Synod, the highest decision-making body (purposive sampling)   31
- The Clergy/Other Agents (purposive sampling)   69
- Presbyters or Elders (quota sampling)   63
- Presbyterial Committee Members (purposive sampling)   11
- Ordinary members (quota sampling)   106

For the interview, 12 distinguished PCG leaders were purposively chosen in order to provide us with the relevant information for this study. The sample comprised:

- The Rt. Reverend Dr. Samuel Prempeh, (current Moderator) from 1999
- The Reverend Dr. C. Gyang-Duah, (current Synod Clerk) from 1999
- The Very Reverend I. H. Frempong, (past Moderator) from 1979-1986
- The Reverend A. L. Kwansa, (Past Synod Clerk) from 1955-1969
- The Reverend A. K. Sah, (Past Synod Clerk) from 1975-1985
- The Reverend E. S. Mate-Kodjo, (Past Synod Clerk) from 1985-1995
- Professor J. H. Nketiah, (Lay person, University of Ghana)
- Madam Florence Yeboah, (Lay person, GHACOE Women's Ministry)
- The Reverend Peter Kodjo, (current Ga Presbytery Chairman)
- The Reverend Dr. I. K. Fokuo, (current Western Presbytery Chairman)
- Mrs. Juliana Senavoe, (Lay theologian, Christian Services College)
- The Reverend Dr. A. A. Akrong, (Ordained theologian)

Secondary Data

The reading and analysis of published and unpublished documents constituted this section. These documents included: books, theses, journals, newspapers and published papers delivered at various forums. We also made use of any other useful secondary source material we came across.

Data Analysis

The data from the questionnaires have been analysed in tabular and chart or graphical form within the framework of the hypotheses of the study. Similarly, the interviews on audio cassettes were transcribed and also analysed and then incorporated into the body of the study. The data for this study are organised into six chapters including acknowledgement, definition of terms, abbreviations, maps, tables and appendices.

Chapter One serves as the **Introductory Chapter** and covers the introduction and background to this Study. The items covered by this chapter include: the Statement of the Problem, Objectives of the Study, Research Hypothesis, Relevance of the Study /Motivation, and the Scope and Limitation of the Study (Delimitation). The other items include the Review of Related Literature, Theoretical Framework and the Research Methodology.

The **Chapter Two** is on **God's Mission and Ethnicity.** It covers some significant landmarks in Christian mission history. This chapter opens by considering the meanings of Mission and Ethnicity and their inter-relationship. The aim of this chapter is to show that Ethnicity need not be negative. Other items examined are, Ethnicity and God's Mission in the Old Testament under the following themes: "Ethnicity can be turned to positive advantage", "Ethnicity in God's creation and plan", "the call of Abraham", "Israel as God's Agent of mission". Also Ethnicity and God's Mission in the New Testament cover: "Jesus' incarnation and work", "Jesus' seeming endorsement of Jewish ethnocentrism", and "the disciples' work along ethnic lines". Towards the end, the role of ethnicity during the Reformation and in the Western Missionary Enterprise is discussed.

In **Chapter Three,** the topic, **"PCG and Ethnicity in Historical Perspective"** is discussed. The themes covered are: the peoples of Ghana, the ethnic situation prior to Colonialism, the impact of Colonialism on ethnicity in Ghana, the interface of Christianity and ethnicity in Ghana, a brief history of the PCG, her Presbyteries, inter- ethnic relations in the Presbyteries and the visions of the Presbyteries in relation to ethnicity.

Chapter Four headed **Manifestations of Ethnicity in the PCG** analyses the research findings. The nine issues covered include these: "Tribalism in the PCG", " the Relationship between bigger or larger ethnic groups and smaller ones," "Recruitment of Church Agents," "Elections at the Presbytery level," "Creation of Presbyteries and Mission Fields," "Elections at the Synod level," "Prejudice and ethnic rivalries in the PCG," "Church appointments" and "Language(s) used in church services". In addition to the data on the items mentioned, this chapter also discusses some of the data collected

from the interviews conducted including "Freudian slips" which betray people's true feeling of tribalism.

Chapter Five deals with the topic, **Ethnicity and Christian Identity.** The themes discussed include the following: the Christian's Dual Identity, ethnicity and identity, ethnic groups' interrelationship that could involve tension, intolerance, hostility, harmony or assimilation. The function of "Ethnocentrism/Tribalism", and a subsequent critique are made from the perspective of the social sciences. The issue is further pursued from the theological angle hence the issue of Ethnicity and the Gospel. The Gospel is seen in this chapter as the breaker of the ethnic barriers. The rest of the chapter then examines the subject of ethnicity, reconciliation and integration.

Finally in **Chapter Six, the summary of findings, recommendations and our concluding remarks** are made. The topics covered in this chapter include Church Models, Walls' Three Tests of Christian expansion, steps towards an authentically reconciled multi-ethnic missionary Church and then our concluding remarks.

GHANA : ETHNIC GROUPS
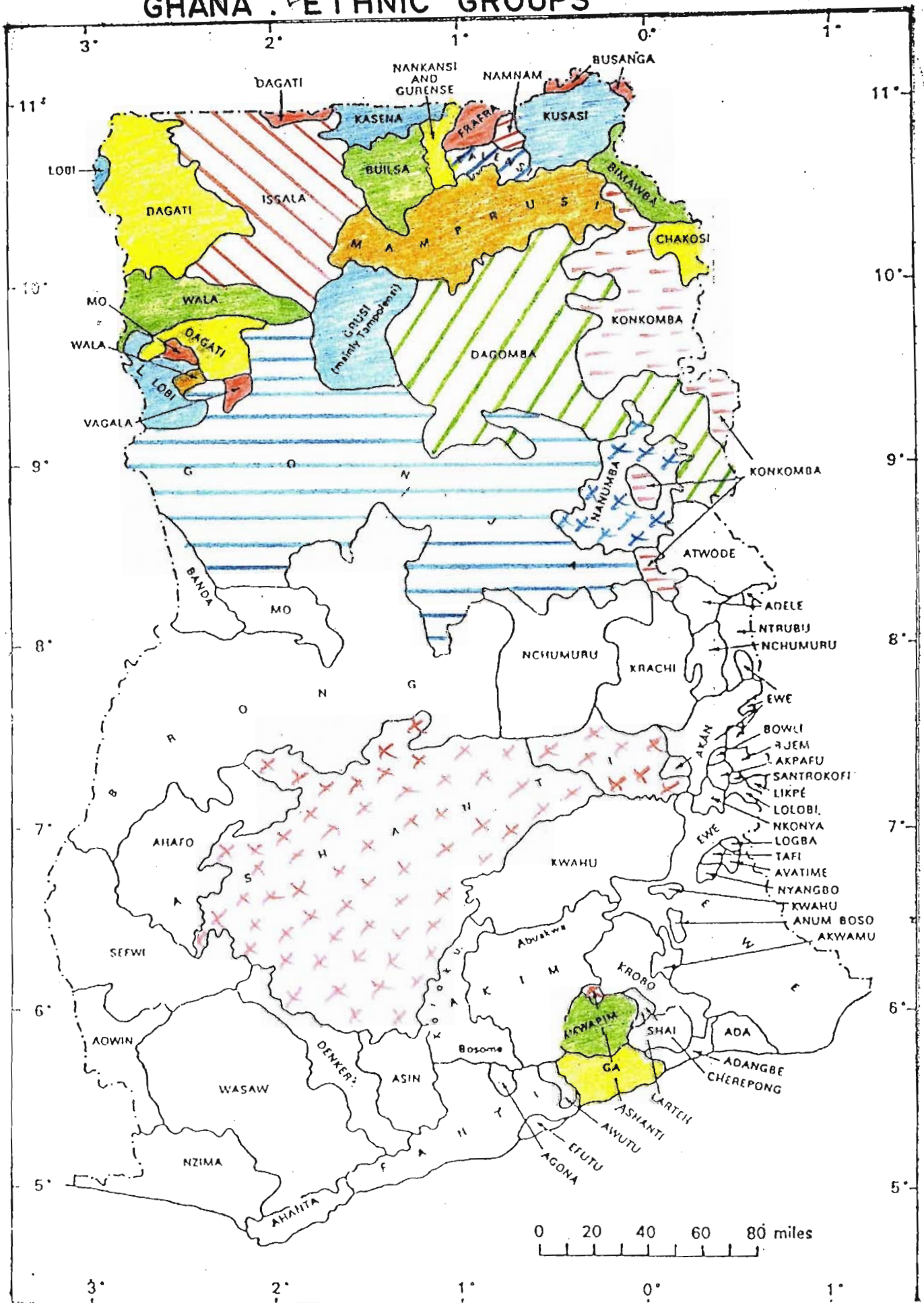
Drawn by D. J. Drah, Geography Department, University of Ghana, Legon.

CHAPTER TWO

GOD'S MISSION AND ETHNICITY

Introduction

This chapter looks at the concept of **mission** in the light of the Christian faith. It also examines the meaning and role of **ethnicity** in God's mission. We shall trace the beginning of ethnicity from the biblical records, its role in God's mission in the Old Testament, as well as in the New Testament. Furthermore in this chapter, we propose to show that ethnicity need not be negative and that God has used it purposively in carrying out his mission through Israel, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Church. Thus, this chapter is a brief biblical and historical overview of the Christian traditions relating to mission and ethnicity.

According to evangelical Christian Mission Theology, God is a personal God and seeks the fellowship of human beings who are made in his own image (Stott, 1999:3). God in his love and mercy therefore continues to seek and to restore sinful humanity to the state of harmonious relationship, vertically (towards God) and horizontally (towards fellow human beings). This is the central theme of the Bible, which Christians believe is the word of God. It is in the light of this belief that theologians claim that God is a missionary God. J. S. Pobee, for instance argues that:

> mission is not because some individuals decided to go and preach, but in obedience to the Sovereign Lord who sends. It is God's mission that people join in. A prerequisite of mission then is to learn to listen and hear the voice of the Lord who sends (Pobee, 1991:21).

Mission is God's own business in which his people are invited to participate. With this realisation it is imperative for the Church to pursue God's agenda instead of a human agenda. Mission, however, is not done in a vacuum. The human context is the laboratory for mission. Ethnicity is an integral part of this human context and therefore plays a crucial role. The fact that people are born and socialised along ethnic lines should be borne in mind in mission studies. It is interesting to note that the Gospel of Christ also spreads along ethnic or cultural lines (Sanneh, 1993:24f). To engage in meaningful mission therefore, one must understand the dynamics of ethnicity.

What is Church Mission?

The twentieth century theologian, Emil Brunner, expressed the relationship between the *Church* and *Mission* picturesquely when he noted that, *"The Church lives by mission as fire lives by burning"*(quoted by Sanneh, in Ford D., 1997:555). *The Church* here is understood in the sense of John Stott's definition that, it is "God's people, his *ecclesia*, called out of the world to be his, and existing as a separate entity solely because of his call" (Stott, 1982:23). The Church's call, however, is not for her own sake. Rather, she has been called and sent back into the world, with the task of extending the kingdom of God. It is for this reason that, Lesslie Newbigin, argues that the Church "cannot be understood rightly except in a perspective which is at once missionary and eschatological" (Newbigin, cited by Stott, 1982:23). The Church's missionary task ends only at the end of time, that is at Christ's return. This task is not voluntary, it is "a divine coercion" (Blauw, 1962:126).

If the Church indeed lives by mission as argued by Brunner, then, what is this *Mission?* According to Pobee, *Mission,* for sure, is not a biblical term. It derives from the Latin word "missio" which means *"Sending"* (Pobee 1991:18). David Bosch seems to be making the same point, that mission has to do with "sending". In more detail, he explains that:

> …'Mission' presupposes a sender, a person or persons sent by the sender, those to whom one is sent, and an assignment...the real sender was God who had indisputable authority to decree that people be sent to execute his will (Bosch, 1992:1).

N. J. Opperwall, however, disagrees with Pobee's view, that *mission* is not a biblical word. He argues the word is derived from the Latin word *mitto* ("send"), "denoting a task that a person or group has been assigned (usually by God or God's representatives) and sent out to perform". He explains further that, "in the RSV OT the term occurs only in 1 Sam 15:18, 20 as a translation of Heb. *derek*. Here it refers to Saul's God-given assignment to destroy the Amalekites" (Opperwall, 1986:384). In reinforcing his argument from the New Testament, he notes again that:

> …the RSV uses mission more specifically with reference to the ministry of the Gospel, both in word and deed. In Acts 12:25 mission translates Gk. *diakonia* (lit. service, ministry; AV. Ministry, NEB

task) referring to the famine-relief expedition upon which the Church in Antioch sent Barnabas and Saul (cf 11:29; RSV relief). In Gal 2:8the RSV appropriately uses mission to render Gk. *Apostole* (lit. apostleship [AV]; NEB apostle; cf apostello, send out) which here refers to Peter's commission to preach the gospel to the Jews. In 1 Cor 11:12 the RSV supplies 'mission' and the NEB 'apostleship' (Opperwall, 1986:384).

There is consensus among the three missiologists, however, that *Mission* is all about "sending" somebody to accomplish a task. Simply put then, *mission* is God's will for His people who have been called and are in turn sent out to do His will (Stott John, 1999:3f). This underscores the fact that the ultimate authority behind mission is God Himself.

The church's mission is an offspring of *missio Dei* (God's mission). *Mission* is to be understood as that process God himself had initiated to bring sinful humanity to himself. It is in this light that God is perceived as the missionary God. Although there are numerous definitions of *Mission,* the definition of David Bosch is most helpful here. That definition encompasses the meaning of *Missio Dei* and *Missions*. He explains that:

> Mission was understood as being derived from the very nature of God. It was thus put in the context of the doctrine of the Trinity, not of ecclesiology or soteriology. The classical doctrine on the missio Dei as God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit was expanded to include yet another "movement": Father, Son and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world (Bosch, 1992:390).

From the above definition, *mission* is God's idea and plan of reaching out to the world in love. Mission should therefore not be defined narrowly in terms of only the "church" and "salvation". The Church only serves as God's agent in this process of mission. C.G. Baëta, grasped this fact and succinctly expressed it in this way: "God is the originator of the mission and the first missioner is Christ who, at the same time, is himself the content of the mission" (Baëta, in 'God's mission in Ghana', 1974:14).

Thus, from what has been explained, *God's Mission gives birth to Church Missions.* The former also inspires and sustains the latter. This perspective focuses on God rather than on the human agency alone. It is precisely for this reason that the church's engagement in mission looks to God from its beginning to the end. The church engages in mission because she herself is the product as well as the agent of God's *Mission.* Baëta is again helpful here, for he articulates the missionary role of the church in relation to God's work in his creation:

> The church is indeed God's chief agent in his mission to the world, being itself the major fruit of that mission. The church must fulfill its missionary role or else it is not a church, so the mission is a condition of its very existence (Baëta, 1974:15).

It is also worth noting the contemporary usage of the terms *Mission* and *Missions*. These days "Missions" tends to be used rather technically for organisations engaged in "mission". "Mission", however, is used for the whole activity beginning with God and delegated to His people.

God's mission indeed resulted in the coming into being of the church. The church therefore does not exist for her own sake. She exists precisely to continue with God's *Mission* in the world. Many missiologists seem to agree on the subservient role of the church to God's mission. For instance, Moltmann stresses the fundamental fact that, "It is not the church that has a mission of salvation to fulfil in the world; it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father that includes the church" (Moltmann 1977:64 as quoted by Bosch, 1989:390). The Church's mission is influenced by many factors one of which is ethnicity.

The content of mission is the Gospel of Christ that preaches the Triune God acting in love to redeem his creation. God is the initiator of mission as well as the one who consummates it. The object of God's mission is always human beings and the rest of creation. This mission is universal and cross-cultural.

"Mission" and **"evangelism"** are usually seen by ordinary Christians as one and the same thing. Technically, however, there is a great difference. "Mission" encompasses "evangelism" and not the other way round (Bosch, 1989:152). Bosch explains elsewhere that Mission should be seen:

> as the total task God has set the church for the salvation of the world or as the church's ministry of stepping out of itself, into the wider world in this process crossing geographical, social, political, ethnic, cultural religious, ideological, and other frontiers or barriers. Evangelism, in contrast, may then be regarded as one of several dimensions of the wider mission of the Church, indeed the core, heart and center of mission (Bosch in Missions Dictionary, 1987).

Thus in mathematical terms, "Mission" is the superset in respect of "evangelism", whilst "evangelism" is the subset of "mission".

What is Ethnicity?

Ethnicity has undergone changes in meaning in the history of society. It is the noun form of the word "ethnic" which is derived from the Greek word *ethnos* (which in turn is derived from the word *ethnikos*), and originally meant a "heathen" or "pagan" (Williams R., 1976:119). "Ethnic group" is synonymous with "tribe", as well as "ethnocentrism" is with "tribalism" (Nukunya, 1992:223). Most writers, however, prefer to use the words "ethnic group" rather than "tribe" because it "has mitigated the formerly strong distinction between 'moderns' and 'primitives'"(Eriksen, 1993). In Social Anthropology, " it refers to aspects of relationships between groups which consider themselves, and are regarded by others, as being culturally distinctive"(Eriksen 1993:3).

Ethnicity therefore has to do with the classification of people and group relationships. Closely associated with ethnicity is *ethnocentrism* or *tribalism*. This is the negative form of ethnicity, which is self-centred and regards people outside one's ethnic group or tribe negatively. Since the words "ethnic group" and "tribe", as well as "ethnocentrism" and "tribalism," are used inter-changeably by writers, we shall be doing the same in this study. By this approach we shall be demonstrating our sensitivity and awareness of the different schools and their preference for a certain term.

Most Ghanaians feel uncomfortable with the use of the words, *ethnicity* and *tribe*. It seems these words have been "demonised" judging from people's reactions when they are mentioned. Florence Dolphyne, the first woman Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana, at a Christian Council of Ghana's seminar, confirmed that, "...as a nation we are rather nervous about ethnicity and ethnic identity" (1994:40). The nervousness may be traced back to Ghana's political history.

Prior to colonial rule, the various ethnic groups were independent states only loosely associated with neighbouring ethnic groups (Akrong, 1999 interviewed). Colonial rule, however, forced them into one state. After independence African politicians sought to build a unified nation out of these disparate ethnic groups. These politicians were anxious to create a national identity that transcended ethnic loyalty by suppressing ethnicity (Akrong, 1999 interviewed). But should this quest necessarily mean the denial of one's ethnic identity? Perhaps colonisation has contributed to the negative notion associated with ethnicity (Davidson, 1992:101). This is not to blame the then colonial powers for every ill associated with ethnicity in the country. For ethnic problems in the form of ethnic wars abounded prior

to colonialism. Colonialism only aggravated an already bad situation. As noted earlier, the creation of artificial nation states by Western colonisers created a scenario where different ethnic groups were forced to live together under the single roof of the modern nation state. The presumption was that with time, the pre-existent ethnic identities and loyalties would die a natural death. This however, has not been the case. In most cases, the creation of these artificial states has rather reinforced pre-colonial ethnic identities and loyalties (Assimeng, 1981:163 and Davidson, 1992:99).

After independence, the nationalists attacked ethnicity relentlessly, hoping to wipe it out and to weld the ethnic groups or tribes together in the new state (Nukunya, 1992:221 and Davidson, 1992:103f). The failure to realise this goal and the rising tide of ethnic sentiments in the body politic in Ghana has given ethnicity and its associated words a negative image. In fact they have assumed the status of insults. For example, the expressions "ethnically conscious" or "tribalistic" or "an ethnic party" have a negative connotation (Davidson, 1992:101ff).

The danger of losing the full meaning of ethnicity has become very great. Apart from the political arena in which ethnicity tends to be portrayed in the negative light, in the religious field it also experiences a similar negative connotation. Some Christians tend to believe that cultural expressions of the faith negate the universality of Christianity (Timiadis, 1985:240). They therefore read negative meaning into ethnicity not because it gives one cultural identity, but because they fear that ethnic identity might undermine Christian unity (Bosch, 1982:16). Hence, ethnic expressions of the Christian faith often evoke mixed reactions of joy and suspicion, or nervousness (Schmidt-Hesse and Kaseva, 1996:207). The fear of undermining Christian unity and "purity" is the key reason usually given for these reactions. We should not however, let these reasons stop us from our pursuit of an understanding of the full meaning of ethnicity.

Ethnicity should not carry a negative tag or label; for, as Aboagye-Mensah, explained at a Mid-year Seminar of the Christian Council, "... ethnicity is neither good or evil" (1994:21). He then went on to show that, "ethnicity has strong potentials for good". At the same time he cautions "that ethnicity is potentially dangerous, especially when it becomes a yardstick for measuring everything and everybody outside our particular group"(1994:21). The fact that ethnicity has a potential for evil as well as a potential for good should not hinder our discussion of it (Kodjo Peter, 1999, interviewed). An objective discussion of ethnicity is therefore helpful in order to have a fuller understanding of it.

Aboagye-Mensah, defines ethnicity as " a people's collective consciousness of who and what they are, their social identity, common memories and interests, and so on" (1994:21). This definition seems to suggest that only members of an ethnic group can define themselves. If that is what is implied, then the definition is overlooking the equally important role of outsiders in defining the identity of a people. For outsiders' perception of an ethnic group can influence how such a group will behave and relate to others.

Another definition of ethnicity by Ogot is that, it: "...is a form of social organisation in which the participants themselves played a primary role in determining and maintaining their identity. It is a dynamic interactive process, reflecting social cleavages and material competition" (Ogot, B. A, citing Frederick Barth, 1996:16). The above definition is not comprehensive enough as it fails to take into account the outward determinants of social identity.

A much more comprehensive definition deemed appropriate, for this study is that given by Florence Dolphyne. According to her:

> In Ghana, the language communities are more or less co-terminous with the ethnic boundaries, so that each of these languages is spoken by a speech community who share a common history, a common belief system, a common culture in terms of how they view human life and have certain observances related to important stages in the life cycle, such as rites related to the birth of a child and how it is named, ...puberty rites of passage into adulthood ..., marriage procedures and observances related to death and rites of passage of the dead person into the ancestral world (1994: 38).

Thus ethnicity defines a people in the totality of life. This identity is recognised by both the group members as well as those outside the group. Ethnicity is about life itself. It shows us how a particular group of people live and relate to one another and to others who are non-members. Ethnicity plays crucial roles for its members such as the first kind of natural affiliation and initial sense of identity (Nketia, 1999, interviewed).

Ethnicity in the form of tribalism or ethnocentrism can cause serious harm in the public arena, where it can be exploited to the detriment of non-members. This is particularly true in a pluralist context such as the modern state. For instance, ethnic rivalries in the public sphere have the potential for causing havoc in the form of clashes or wars. This is particularly true in a situation where a particular ethnic group seems to be enjoying most of the benefits meant for all. Ethnicity can create hostility and disharmony where there is perceived injustice. For instance, in Rwanda, some politicians and religious leaders exploited

ethnicity negatively to divide and rule (McCullum, 1994:2ff). Rather than shy away from dealing with the ethnicity phenomenon, responsible Christian mission has to positively grapple with the issue (Akrong and Kodjo, 1999, interviewed).

Ethnicity Need not be Negative

The words "ethnicity," "tribe", "ethnocentrism" and "tribalism" in themselves are neutral. It is the meaning we invest in them that causes the problem. Words are dynamic and assume new shades of meaning from time to time and also from culture to culture.

The negative role ethnicity plays is at two levels: private and public. The way individuals are socialised by their ethnic groups makes them to stereotype other ethnic groups. These stereotypes are generalised misconceptions of people who are different from us. The unfortunate thing about stereotyping is that it does not give people the chance to prove themselves. Dolphyne's analysis of the harm this can cause is worth mentioning here:

> This stereotyping of members of particular ethnic groups creates distress and causes conflicts at a personal, individual level, and there is a need for us to see everybody as an individual who may be good or bad irrespective of his ethnic origin...much of the stereotyping is passed on during the socialisation of our children; in the generalised adverse comments that we make about members of particular ethnic groups (Dolphyne, 1994: 40).

Dolphyne's argument is apt for there are good and bad people in every ethnic group. Psychologists note the tremendous harm stereotypes can do to an individual as well as a group's well-being. It produces prejudice towards the one being stereotyped and therefore limits our knowledge of such a person. It also imposes unnecessary restriction on others and ourselves because of the "boxing-in" function of stereotyping people. In brief, stereotyping robs people of objectivity (Calhound F.James and Joan Ross Acocella, 1990:252).

Ethnicity can be turned to Positive Advantage

Ethnicity provides a number of benefits to its members. Among them are: identity, security, support, and a sense of belonging. Our first identity is acquired through our birth into a family which is the basic unit of an ethnic group. The identity is further reinforced through socialisation by the ethnic structures. The immense role ethnicity plays in this

direction is well captured in Dolphyne's statement that "Ethnicity is essential for an individual's stability of mind and character" (Dolphyne, 1994:39). One's ethnic identity also guarantees one's acceptance, support and self-esteem. These benefits could be both material and psychological. This positive aspect of ethnicity that enhances one's identity was utilised by the early Basel and Scottish missionaries (Prempeh Samuel, Kwansa L. A., Akrong A., Mate-Kodjo and Gyan-Duah, 1999, interviewed). The value of one's ethnic identity is very much cherished when one finds oneself in a strange and hostile environment and a member of one's ethnic group is at hand to assist one. Notwithstanding the positive roles ethnicity plays, it can also be problematic (Prempeh, Gyan-Duah and Akrong, 1999 interviewed).

Ethnicity in God's Creation and Plan

The first eleven chapters of Genesis deal with the general history of mankind. This section is an attempt by the biblical writers to account for human migration and diversity. Chapter 11 traces ethnicity back to God. The above passage seems to suggest that it was God's judgement on rebellious humanity that brought into being diverse languages which is an aspect of ethnicity. The diversity of language was meant to scatter the builders of the Tower of Babel who sought their own fame rather than God's glory. Not all scholars hold this view. We shall consider in this section the views of three scholars on the story of Babel.

The story of the Tower of Babel is the last primeval historical account of the widening chasm in the relationship between God and humanity (Bediako K., 1997:1). Just as the name Babel has different interpretations, so are the stories behind the Tower of Babel. Whereas Babel's original meaning in Babylonian and Sumerian (Babili) meant "Gate of God" or "of the gods", it meant "confusion" or "mix up" (balal) in Hebrew (Bediako 1997:2). According to Bediako:

> Babel symbolized the separation or parting among nations and peoples, with the attendant tendencies towards the entrenchment of differences into virtual hostility among peoples (Bediako 1997:3).

The halting of the building of the Tower of Babel caused deep-seated differences. Human beings tended from that time onward to resent the differences in others. The focus shifted from what united people to what differentiated them from others. When a situation like this

occurs, it leads to communication breakdown. We are prone to see the effects of the Tower of Babel episode as a curse.

Genesis 11 alone leaves no doubt that the Tower of Babel episode attracted God's judgement, but linking it with Genesis 10 as Stephen Rhodes does, yields a more positive interpretation. He urges, that, instead of viewing the story of Babel as one of God's curses culminating in human differences, languages and cultures as the result of God's curse, it should rather be seen as the fulfillment of God's blessing on his creation. The crux of his thesis is that, "multilingual and multinational humanity was God's intention all along" (Rhodes S., 1998:). Rhodes therefore sees the rebellion of humanity not so much as an abuse of language and culture in seeking to make a name for themselves without reference to God as argued by Bediako (1997). He rather sees human beings' rebellion in their refusal to heed God's command to 'multiply, and fill the earth' (Genesis 1:28; 9:1). For Rhodes, the problem had to do with humanity's unwillingness to scatter on the face of the earth because of fear. This fear led them to seek a kind of unity among themselves outside the framework of God's plan. He further argues that, "Even with the acknowledgement of differences, the writer of Genesis focuses not on what separates humanity but on what unites human beings: the family" (Rhodes 1998:24).

A synthesis of the theses of Bediako and Rhodes is found in John Kselman's comments on Genesis in the Harper's Commentary. Writing on the topics "The Table of Nations" in Genesis 10 and "The Tower of Babel" in Genesis 11 John S. Kselman, acknowledges that "the prehistory of Genesis is complex and obscure". He sees Genesis 10 or the Table of Nations as a complex ethnological statement that attempts to group humanity, linking them to Noah's three sons. According to him, recent studies suggest that "the three lines of descent are sociocultural, based on distinct ways of life, group characteristics and professions". To understand the Table of Nations and The Tower of Babel, it is imperative to understand how the biblical writer attempts to account for the multicultural, multi-ethnic reality of humanity. It is in this light that Kselman explains:

> Shem's descendants comprise the nonsedentary, migratory segment of the population, the nomadic tribes; the descendants of Ham, the sedentary agrarian population of village and town; and the descendants of Japheth, the maritime nations, the seafaring inhabitants of islands and coastal areas (Kselman, 1988:92).

This account on the multicultural or multi-ethnic composition of humanity prior to the episode of Babel is hinted at in Genesis 10. Humanity was ethnically heterogeneous, because God willed it and gave it his blessing. Commenting on the difference between the accounts of Genesis chapters 10 and 11, Kselman notes that:

> The spreading abroad (vv.5, 32) and the dispersal (v.8) of the peoples with their distinct languages receive a positive evaluation in Genesis 10 as a movement and distinction intended by God. A negative evaluation of the same phenomena is presented in the following episode in Genesis 11:1-9 (Kselman 1988:92f).

Whereas ethnicity is portrayed as being diverse and is perceived positively in Genesis 10, reflecting Rhodes' perception on this subject, the opposite is the case in Genesis 11. In the latter, ethnic diversity is a result of sin and this view also informs Bediako's perception on the subject. God in his mercy reversed the curses of Babel with the inauguration of the Church on the Day of Pentecost. It is interesting that both Bediako and Rhodes come to this same conclusion on ethnicity as reflected in their interpretation of the event of Pentecost. Rhodes remarks:

> On Pentecost all heaven broke loose, and the Holy Spirit descended upon the cacophonous humanity gathered in Jerusalem, transforming their dissonant voices into holy harmony. Those who had previously been separated by geography, culture and language suddenly found themselves speaking with, hearing and understanding others with whom they had nothing in common save that they were all descendants of Abraham (Rhodes, 1998:13).

According to Bediako too:

> Pentecost was the reconciliation of the nations but achieved only through Jesus Christ, actualised in the Holy Spirit, and for the sole glory of God, which alone is the sure way to the blessing of the nations. Pentecost was not the dissolving of cultural diversities; rather it was the divine demonstration that different cultures can and do have one and the same Lord and Saviour and therefore are under one and the same discipleship (Bediako, 1997:3).

Both Bediako and Rhodes therefore see the significance of Babel in the event of Pentecost. It takes divine grace alone to bring about harmony between different ethnic groups. Babel brought about entrenched hostility and disharmony between ethnic groups but God who always acts in mercy to redeem human rebellion, acted on the Day of Pentecost. Ethnicity in

its diversity was redeemed for God's use. This fact buttresses Rhodes' argument that God's intention for humanity has been multicultural and multi-ethnic all along. That God loves diversity is borne out by the fact that He did not dissolve the different ethnic groups into one but rather, He brought about the reconciliation and harmony out of the confusion that Babel introduced.

The Call of Abraham

The people God uses are always called from ethnic groups, Abraham, the father of faith not exempted. He was called from his ethnic group, which was to be considered later with other ethnic groups as Gentiles, by his descendants, the Israelites. Abraham was called by God to begin a nation or "a new ethnic group" that would embrace all the other ethnic groups in God's kingdom (Aboagye-Mensah, 1999:21).

> The LORD said to Abram, "Leave your country, your relatives, and your Father's home, and go to a land that I am going to show you...I will bless you and make your name famous, so that you will be a blessing...And through you I will bless all the nations (Genesis 12:13).

Writing on Israel's missionary call, Walter C. Kaiser Jr. notes that, God's word to Abraham in the above passage "was international and universal in its offer, scope and intention" against the backdrop of the Table of Nations in Genesis 10 (Kaiser Jr, 1999:10).

God always calls us from an ethnic background as in the case of Abraham. Our ethnic background is the raw material God works on in his transformation of his people. God's call always implies that certain aspects of our ethnicity would have to be moderated or mellowed. Ethnicity is central in the salvation history of God and humanity (Aboagye-Mensah, 1999: 21).

The Israelites, an amalgamation of ethnic groups, were nurtured for their final destination in the promised land (Gottwald, 1985:296f). The attempt by the Egyptians to curb the growing influence of the Israelites is what may be described in today's terminology as limited "ethnic cleansing". This policy of the Egyptians paved the way for God's intervention. Both the Egyptians and the Israelites were conscious of each other's different ethnicity. Their relationship is a reflection of most inter-ethnic relationships. That God intervened to deliver the people of Israel from the ethnic domination of the Egyptians, is an unequivocal proof of his disapproval of the oppression of smaller ethnic groups by bigger or

larger ones. God's deliverance and call of Israel were for a purpose. When Israel's election is seen together with her vocation it is not problematic (Carr, D.1996). For Israel was to be God's agent of his mission to the other nations (ethnic groups). Israel was to be God's agent of mission to the world in three ways according to Walter C. Kaiser Jr. Firstly, she was to proclaim God's plan to bless the nations as conveyed by Genesis 12:3. Secondly, Israel was to participate in God's priesthood to bless the nations. Thirdly, Israel was to prove God's purpose to bless all the nations as hinted at in Psalm 67 (Kaiser Jr. 1999:11).

Use of Israel as Agent of God's Mission

The people of Israel lived in Egypt as a distinct community of "ethnic groups". As Mcbride notes:

> ...Yahweh, created a people distinct from all others, nurtured it in wilderness isolation, and granted it through conquest arable land in which to dwell. Israel does know itself to be both continuous with and radically separate from other peoples;...(Mcbride Jr, 1988:14).

God has always been very involved in the histories of all ethnic groups. Through his mercy God has left his imprints on ethnic groups as revealed by their cultures. The blessings of God on ethnic groups were not limited to Israel alone. Israel herself benefited immensely from her neighbours (Gottwald, 1985:55f). It is a truism that in many respects the people of Israel were unique. However, we cannot stretch this argument to imply that the Israelites did not, like all other nations or ethnic groups, engage in cultural borrowing. The people of Israel were called to be God's agents of his mission to the rest of the people of God. They were chosen not because they were special. The choice was entirely dependent on God's love and mercy. Deuteronomy 7 eloquently expresses Israel's election as one of sheer grace.

Simon Maimela warns that the symbol of Israel is subject to abuse if it is not used responsibly. For this reason he urges us to see the symbol of Israel as connoting "holiness, holiness of instrumentality or servanthood in the hand of the electing God whose purpose in the election is to redeem the world and establish God's kingdom" (Maimela, 1987:26ff).

Hence from the inception of God's election of Israel, Abraham the founder of the nation of Israel was made aware of this responsibility. He was to be the father of nations and not only of Israel. The prophets often impressed on their fellow Israelites that they were meant to be witnesses to the Gentile nations (Aboagye-Mensah, 1999: 21).

Jesus' Incarnation and Work

Jesus Christ was born into an ethnic group. He participated in the cultural practices of the Jews. For example, St. Luke reports that Jesus was circumcised when he was eight days old (Luke 2:21). He was then taken to Jerusalem for the purification rites (Luke 2: 22ff). Jesus went through all the rituals required of Jews. For instance, "...when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom; ..." (Luke 2:42). From these passages it is clear that Jesus was nurtured and socialised as a true Jew (Rhineland Evangelical Church, 1980). George E. Ladd aptly expresses this when he writes that, Jesus "came as a Jew to the Jewish people. He accepted the authority of the law, conformed to temple practices, engaged in synagogue worship, and throughout his life lived as a Jew" (Ladd, 1996: 246).

He was so knowledgeable of his people and their ways that when he taught he did so with authority. According to St. Matthew: "...when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching for he taught them as one who has authority... (Matthew7: 28,29).

Jesus was perceived as one of the Jewish rabbis, as revealed in John's account of Nicodemus' encounter with Jesus. Jesus was addressed as "Rabbi" or "Teacher" (John 3:2) and had disciples as the Rabbis did. Jesus was thoroughly a Jew in every positive aspect. This underscores the fact that there is nothing wrong with belonging to a particular ethnic group. We can faithfully participate in all the positive aspects of our ethnic groups and still be used by God to accomplish his mission (Akrong A. and Gyan-Duah, 1999, interviewed).

God's Purposive use of Ethnicity

It is because of God's purposive use of ethnicity that he allowed his Son to be incarnated to fulfil His (God's) mission. This mission involves Jesus revealing the Father, his own sacrificial death and resurrection to effect transformation in the lives of human beings through the power of the Holy Spirit. In his incarnation, Jesus was perceived as any average Jew to the extent that the writers of the Gospels even depicted him as sharing in the ethnocentrism of the Jews. Was Jesus immune from the spirit of ethnocentrism? Three passages suggest that he was not.

In John 4:22, Jesus is reported as telling the Samaritan woman: "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews." Matthew also

reports the missionary assignment Jesus gave the disciples. According to him Jesus gave this explicit instruction to the disciples: "Go no where among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritan, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel…"(Matthew 10:5).

In another moving story relating the story of Jesus' encounter with the Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:24,26), Jesus apparently portrayed himself as a male Jew of his day, when the woman tenaciously implored him to heal her daughter. The Matthean account suggests Jesus ignored the woman's request when he answered, "I was sent to only the lost sheep of the house of Israel…It is not fair to take the children's (Israel's) bread and throw it to the dogs (Gentiles)." These statements attributed to Jesus no doubt convey an ethnocentric attitude. A careful study of the passages, however, exonerates him of tribalism. We shall briefly examine the comments of William Barclay and another commentator R. T. France and conclude with Aboagye-Mensah's explanation of these statements on the last passage.

William Barclay comments that, first, we need to note Jesus was in a Gentile territory and therefore could have symbolically been wiping out the distinction between clean and unclean people, that is the distinction between Jews and Gentiles. Turning to Jesus' conversation with the Gentile woman he explains the term "dog" was a symbol of dishonour. It was "a Jewish term of contempt for the Gentiles". Jesus, however, used a diminutive implying a pet, minimising any offence. "In Greek, diminutives are characteristically affectionate" according to Barclay. He explains further that his voice and eyes might have helped the woman not to take any offense at the use of the term (Barclay, 1975:177-179). The fact that the door of communication was open leading to the granting of the request makes Barclay's explanation plausible. France is also in concord with Barclay's explanation but dilates further. He notes,

> the main interest is in the question of Jesus' response to the faith of a Gentile. Both Mark 7:24-30 and Matthew 15:21-28 describe the same event. However, the former dwells more on the healing but less on the conversation whilst with the latter, the opposite was the case. He observes that the woman's response to Jesus' teasing statement not only led to the granting of her request (the healing of the daughter but something more. She received the highest accolade *Great is your faith!* from Jesus. She might have come to the realisation that 'the true Israel will transcend the boundaries of culture and nationality' (France, 1985: 245-248).

For Aboagye-Mensah, the passage indicates Jesus' own attitude to ethnic boundaries. He breaks them down by his action. Thus, he "shifted the boundary lines so that they are

centred more on the heart than food (ethnic identity). The heart, therefore, has become the common denominator" (Aboagye-Mensah, 1999: 20).

It should be pointed out immediately that the general attitude and approach of Jesus to his ministry was not ethnocentric or tribalistic. He was not a slave to Jewish ethnocentrism. Most of his commendations went to Gentiles who displayed rare faith, as in the case of the Centurion. Luke reports this Gentile soldier's encounter with the Jesus:

> And Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, The centurion sent friends to him, saying to him, 'Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. For I am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me: and I say to one, go and he goes; and to another come, and he comes; and to my slave, do this and he does it.' When Jesus heard this he marveled at him and turned and said to the multitude that followed him, 'I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith' (Luke 7:6-10).

Jesus appreciated the worth of all peoples irrespective of their ethnic backgrounds. This is why he could praise Gentiles where necessary and condemn his fellow Jews when it was necessary to do so. It was true that Jesus identified with the Jews in all the positive values. However, he never allowed himself to be bound by the negative aspects of that culture. God's will and guidance were the determinants of Jesus' whole conduct.

Jesus also noted the fact that some Gentiles possessed exemplary qualities of goodness. The story of the Good Samaritan depicted the Samaritan as being more virtuous than the Jewish Priest and Levite (Luke 10:25-37). Naturally, an ethnocentric Jew would not hold a natural enemy of the Jew in such high esteem. Jesus accepted Samaritans even when they were hostile to him and would not welcome him in their towns. Jesus rebuked his disciples when they suggested calling down fire to consume the Samaritans (Luke 9:51-56). Another example of Jesus' recognition of the Samaritans was his unprecedented acceptance of their hospitality on another occasion, (John 4:40).

The ministry of Jesus was inclusive. Thus Jesus made room for Jews as well as for the Gentiles. David Burnett argues in support of this fact that:

> When Jesus turned over the tables and put the merchants out of the temple he was not just making a plea for a more spiritual worship but demanding that room is made in God's house for the Gentiles to come and worship...(Burnett, 1986:135).

The fact that Jesus became a Jew did not mean He shared in their ethnocentrism (Blauw, 1962:68). He was known to participate in Jewish cultural life as far as it was consistent with God's will. We, like Jesus, can participate in our own cultural life as long as it does not go against God's will. Like Jesus, Christians can also transcend ethnocentrism and see the positive values in other ethnic groups. Ethnicity is not necessarily evil, for Jesus made good use of it and paved the way for his followers to continue his mission along similar lines.

The Disciples Worked along Ethnic Lines

The first disciples were Jews through and through. They were very comfortable with their culture. Their view of Gentiles was informed by the general Jewish perception. Even though Jesus had instructed the disciples to preach the Gospel to all peoples, the disciples did not do so. They were comfortable in Jerusalem and remained there until persecution broke out. Even though the Pentecost episode unequivocally pointed to the fact that the Good News was meant for all ethnic groups whose representatives could hear God's mighty works in their language, the disciples were slow to respond to Christ's mission. However, with their obedience, "a church of Jewish Christians and Gentiles Christians gradually emerged"(Rhineland Evangelical Church, 1998:547).

The Church should always ensure that she makes room for cultural diversity otherwise she could be overtaken by events and even be working against God's will as was the case in Germany when the church was silent whilst six million Jews were killed. As the Rhineland Evangelical Church observed, "an intolerant Gentile church eventually squeezed the Jews and eventually supervised their massacre later by Hitler" (Rhineland Evangelical Church, 1998:547).

The Disciples Worked beyond Jewish Borders

It is unlikely that the disciples would have gone beyond the Jewish borders to preach the Gospel in their own discretion if persecution had not come. The evidence in Acts seems to suggest that God always took the initiative to get the Gospel preached among the Gentiles. This is not to suggest that God sent the persecution for its own sake. In his mercy He enabled them to witness to the people from whom they were seeking shelter.

It was when a great persecution broke out against the church following Stephen's death, that the believers were compelled to leave Jerusalem. As they moved to Judea, and Samaria, they preached the gospel. Until then, the Apostles were reluctant to send the urgent message to the Gentiles as can be inferred from Acts 8:1.

Peter's Vision of Essential Unity of All God's People

It took God Himself to convince Peter in a vision to go to Cornelius to present the salvation message of Jesus. Peter's obedience to God's revelation made him confess: "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation any one who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him" (Acts 10: 34).

Peter was surprised to find out that God was ahead of him and had prepared the Gentile family, that is, Cornelius and his family, to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. Peter was further astounded to find out that these Gentiles were given the Holy Spirit in the same way as the Jews had been given. Not all the Jewish Christians came to understand that they had to transcend their ethnic and cultural prejudice in order to bring the Gospel of Jesus to the Gentiles too. This explains why Peter had to defend himself before the Jewish believers after the Cornelius' episode.

Luke records the reaction of the Jewish believers to the news that the Gentiles too had received the Gospel. Peter had to face the "die-hard" Jews who were not favourably disposed to Peter's action. Luke explained this incident below:

> …when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticised him, saying, 'Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them'. But Peter began and explained to them in order: 'I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision…And I heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Peter; kill and eat'. But I said, 'No, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth'. But the voice answered a second time from heaven, 'What God has cleansed you must not call common…And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction…If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to withstand God? (Acts 11:1-17).

Peter meticulously explained to the Jewish Christians that what he did was on God's initiative and instruction. God unequivocally instructed him to come out of his ethnocentrism and go to the Gentiles also. One wonders if Peter genuinely accepted the Gentiles

unconditionally as fellow brothers and sisters. A case in point was when he went back on his earlier stance of eating and fellowshipping with the Gentiles. He withdrew from them when Jews from Jerusalem got to Galatia. This attitude attracted Paul's sharp criticism because Peter allowed ethnocentrism to overcome him. His actions in Galatia prompted Paul to rebuke him because he withdrew from table fellowship with Gentiles for fear of condemnation of fellow Jews who had come from Jerusalem (Galatians 2:11,12).

The response of the Jewish Christians to Peter's defence is revealing. Luke records that: 'When they heard this they were silenced. And they glorified God, saying, 'Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance unto life' (Acts 11:18). Were these Jewish Christians truly silenced? Their ethnocentric perception continued to cloud their judgement of how the Gentiles were to be brought into the Church. Later battles they waged with Paul culminating in the Jerusalem Council tell the fuller story.

The Apostle Paul acknowledges the ethnic origins and human differences and variations as part of God's creation. In Act 17:26 and 27a Paul explained that:

> From one human being he (God) created all races on earth and made them live throughout the whole earth. He himself fixed beforehand the exact times and the limits of the places where they would live. He did this so that they would look for him...

Ethnicity is no doubt God's creation. The purpose of this creation is that all the ethnic groups would be brought to worship Him in their diversities. We can therefore argue that God longs for all ethnic groups to be converted. Consequently, when all ethnic groups come under Christ's discipleship, a process is set in place to remove the negative tendencies within them. For the removal of negative tendencies is also part of the process of redemption. *Ipso facto,* Christ longs to redeem all ethnic groups so that he can use them to fulfil his mission. Redeemed ethnicity can therefore be an asset rather than a liability.

The Reformation Effected along Ethnic Lines

Prior to the Reformation, the Pope was the overall head of the Western Church, that is the Roman Catholic Church and Latin was the *lingua franca*. As such the liturgy and Mass were in Latin (Bosch, 1982:16 and Timiadis, 1985:240). The English, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, Italian and other churches under the Western Roman Empire

were all bound together by Latin. This superficial unity was, however, shattered by the Reformation Luther brought about.

It can be argued that the Reformation succeeded because of **the power of ethnicity** (Timiadis, 1985:240). The support the Reformers enjoyed from their "nations" or "ethnic groups" gave them the impetus to venture on such a risky journey. Alan Thompson writing on the Reformation, noted that:

> During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the modern day nations of Europe had begun to grow strong, and to unify their peoples. Many people believed that the political ruler of each land, and not the Pope, should be responsible for the church life of his own nation. The various national languages were becoming more important than the universal language, Latin, and serious literary and scholarly writings were being published in French, German, English, Italian, Spanish, and other languages (Thompson, 1976:3).

It can be seen from above that, the basis of the Reformation was more than just doctrinal. Ethnicity or nationalism played a very dominant role. The peoples of Europe wanted church autonomy, churches in their lands that would reflect their national aspirations (Bosch, 1982:17). It was the quest for such a church that made the German princes provide a sanctuary for Luther in the heat of his persecution by the Roman Catholic Church. David Bosch subscribes to this when he explains that: "the success of Luther's reformation can be partly attributed to the fact that for many people it was a symbol of Germanic resistance to **Latin domination"** (Bosch, 1982:16).

Denominations that sprang up following the Protestant Reformation were, by and large, along ethnic and national lines. For example, the Lutherans and Anglicans, were German and English churches respectively. It was thus the Church divided along ethnic lines which was introduced into the colonies by Europeans.

European missionaries established denominations reflecting the ethnic rivalries back in Europe. They often tried to resolve the bitter rivalry and competition amongst them by assigning geographical areas to themselves for missionary activity (Pobee, 1991:6). Often these geographical areas coincided with language groupings. The result of this arrangement was that certain ethnic groups tended to belong to certain denominations. Thus membership of a particular ethnic group invariably meant one would belonged to the pioneering missionary body which worked among that group (Pobee, 1991:17). As a result of this, Pobee notes that **"tribal churches** have been planted". This would have far-reaching

consequences for the subsequent growth and development of churches like the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

Conclusion

God is the **missionary God** hence he initiates mission. He created multi-ethnic humanity to serve the purpose of His mission. Ethnicity that does not come under God's redemptive power can be disruptive of human society. Ethnicity can be recognised as a tool in God's hand to accomplish His mission on earth. It has been argued above that the issue of ethnicity is highlighted in the call of Abraham, in the history of Israel, in Jesus' incarnation and ministry, and in the history of the early Church and the Reformation. An examination of ethnicity in the light of God's mission is therefore a matter of necessity. The role of ethnicity in the carrying out of God's mission is amply illustrated in the establishment and growth of the PCG which is the subject of the next chapter. Dr. Noel Smith's map on the spread of the PCG on page 41 graphically explains this process.

Savannah Woodland & Grassland

Forest

Ranges between 1000 & 2000 feet

Tribal areas **AKIM**

Main Mission Stations with date of foundation Kibi (1861)

MILES 0 10 20 30 40 50

GRUNSHI
NANKANNI
KUSASI
Bawku (1955)
Navrongo
Garu (1958)
Bolgatanga (1955)
Lawra
MAMPRUSI
Sandema (1957)
Gambaga
DAGATI

Wa

DAGOMBA

Tamale (1949)
Yendi (1913)

Damongo

Bole

Bimbilla

Black Volta

IVORY

GONJA

TOGO

COAST

Salaga (1950)

Banda

GYAMANG

River Volta

Sampa
Nwereme (1932)
Atebubu
Kete Krachi
BRONG-AHAFO
Wenchi

Berekum

Sunyani

Dormaa Ahenkro (1927)

Kpandu

Bechem
River Afram
ASHANTI
Agogo (1930)
Ho
Kumasi (1896)
Abetifi (1876)
Anum (1864)
KWAHU
Bekwai (1944)
Begoro (1876)
EWE
SEFWI
River Tano
Fomena
Odumasi (1859)
Adidome
Gyadam
KROBO
Akuse
Ofin
Kibi (1861)
Akropong
Enchi
Pra
AKIM
(1835)
Late
Keta
Dunkwa
ADANSI
AKWAPIM
Aburi (1847)
Ada (1876)
DENKYERA
Prasu
Oda
ADANGME
Nsaba (1891)
Abokabi (1854)
AGONA
GA
Christiansborg (1828)
Accra
Winneba
NZIMA
FANTI
Elmina
Cape Coast
Axim
Takoradi
Sekondi

River Birm

Pra

The Spread of the Presbyterian Church in Ghana

From Noel Smith (1966)

41

CHAPTER THREE

PCG AND ETHNICITY IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Introduction: the peoples of Ghana

Ghana is peopled by different ethnic groups, as shown on the map at page 19, that were independent "nations" or "kingdoms" prior to colonialism and independence (Buah, 1998:1; Nukunya, 1992:4). The map on ethnic groups give the reader a fair idea of the multi-ethnic nature of Ghana. Each group has its own cultural beliefs and practices (Assimeng, 1995: 9). Their histories and traditional institutions also vary significantly, and they owe allegiance to different traditional deities and political structures. **Language is the key distinguishing factor** among these ethnic groups (Buah, 1998:3). There are big as well as small ethnic groups. Buah claims that "the Akan constitute more than half the country's population" (Buah, 1998:3). Though the Akan are the largest ethnic group, Buah's estimate of their number is rather on the high side. A break down of eleven of the sizeable ethnic groups given by Dolphyne is as follows:

Ethnic Groups/Tribes in Ghana	Approx % of Population
Akan (i.e. Asanti, Fante, Akuapem, Brong, Akyem Kwahu, etc.)	44.00
Ewe	13.00
Nzema-Ahanta	4.00
Dangme	3.52
Ga	3.50
(Dagbani)/Dagomba	3.30
Wali-Dagaate	3.00
Gurenne/Frafra	2.00
(Kusaal)/Kusasi	1.80
Gonja	0.90
(Kasem)/Kasena	0.55

Source:(Dolphyne, 1994:37).

There are about forty-two different languages in Ghana. These languages have their dialects and variants spoken by different communities. Florence Dolphyne observes that, "the language communities are more or less co-terminus with the ethnic boundaries" with members of each ethnic group sharing a common culture (Dolphyne, 1994:37). The common culture could be in the form of a shared history of origin, festivals, customs and etiquette. **Ethnic identification** is valuable in the Ghanaian society because it can either open opportunities for an individual or deny an individual such opportunities. The greatest benefit of ethnic identity is the community it provides the individual (Antwi, 1996:5).

One's ethnic identity can be established in a number of ways such as *language, history, cultural practices, tribal marks and sometimes one's mode of dressing* (Dolphyne, 1994:37). One's ethnic identity is established through birth. Naturally, one has no control over the tribe or ethnic group into which one is born (Akrong and Gyan-Duah, 1999, interviewed). Modernisation, however, has made it possible for one to change one's ethnic identity, for example through naturalisation. It is in the light of modern trends that Justin Willis argues that: "...tribes are not given, immutable social groups, the boundaries of which are defined solely by birth" (Willis, in Ogot, 1996:10). He argues this way because to him, "ethnic categories are social constructs - social categories which are made by people, and which change over time" (Willis, 1996:10). Thus, it is possible for new tribes to come into existence and others to disappear and still others crossing the boundaries between tribes (Willis, 1996:10). It can be deduced from the above argument that there is no single uniform concept of ethnic identity (Willis, 1992:191-208).

According to some scholars, ethnic identity is a false consciousness created by external circumstances in response to the impact of modernity. To them, it is entirely the product of people's perception of their political interests or the product of ecological circumstances (Willis, 1996:10). This explanation is not wholly satisfactory. If ethnic identity is that fluid, as this argument seems to suggest, then, how is it that the ethnic bond is so strong and easily binds people together who see themselves as belonging to a particular group? Naturally, people easily identify with those who share an ethnic affinity with them. It makes sense to consider ethnicity as both a created phenomenon and a daily experience of people who are involved in its creation and recreation (Willis, 1996:10).

Though all the peoples in Ghana share a national identity, there exist significant differences between those of southern Ghana and their counterparts in northern Ghana. One's name and place of origin invariably indicate one's ethnic affiliation. Surprisingly, food serves as another distinguishing feature of one's ethnic affiliation (Aboagye-Mensah, 1999:19).

Southern and northern Ghanaians have stereotypes about each other. There are religious stereotypes that define one's religious leaning in respect of the two groups. Elom Dovlo explains this phenomenon in relation to Christianity and Islam, the two religions associated with the ethnic and geographical distribution of the people of Ghana. According to him:

> The two are associated with the southern half and the northern half of the country respectively and there seems to be a persistent southern feeling of superiority. In fact this negative attitude is so strong that in the class research ...it came to our notice that at times Muslim converts to Christianity in the southern half of the country are still held at arms length by most members of our congregations and are still referred to as "Nkramofo"(an Akan designation for Muslim) and worse still the derogatory "Mpepefo" (Dovlo, 1991:41f.).

Prejudices issuing from ethnic stereotyping abound both in the wider society and within the Church. These differences can be accounted for historically, culturally, ecologically, economically, educationally and religiously. In the next section we shall examine the above factors which have distinguished southerners from northerners in some more detail.

The Ethnic Situation Prior to Colonialism and Christianity in Ghana

As we noted earlier, the over forty distinct ethnic groups lived as autonomous native states in intense rivalry (McCaskie T. C., 1998:137). These ethnic groups practised different systems of government. Whereas most of the ethnic groups in the south and north of the country lived under centralised rule (chieftaincy) a few were acephalous communities, that is, without a centralised ruler. Each family head oversaw his family. It will be misleading however, to assume that the centralised political systems were uniform across the ethnic groups that practised them (Nukunya, 1992:68). Examples of ethnic groups that practised the centralised form of government included the Akan and Ewe in southern Ghana and the Mamprusi, Dagomba and Gonja in northern Ghana. The acephalous societies included the Tallensi and other smaller tribes (Nukunya, 1992: 67ff.).

There were ethnic rivalries and hostilities often expressed in the form of wars. Some powerful groups extended their rule over weaker ones (McCaskie, 1998:135). This affected inter-ethnic relationships, for it brought about a distinction between vassal and suzerain ethnic groups (Gyang-Duah, 1996: 14). The stronger tribes imposed their wills on the weaker ones. A classic example was the Asante who received homage and tributes from tribes in

both southern and northern parts of the country. Ethnic groups that were subject to the stronger ones, were expected to provide slaves, or other forms of tribute and service. This exploitation sprang from a sense of **ethnic superiority.** In fact, the weaker ethnic groups were often considered slaves who had no rights and could therefore be used in ritual murders, be made to carry chiefs, be castrated and subjected to various forms of abuse. Northerners, especially the slaves, were abused in these ways (Prah, 1975:306ff). This scenario resulted in the development of a **superiority complex among Southerners** and **an inferiority complex among Northerners.** The weaker ethnic groups had only two choices open to them: to submit quietly or to rebel and get crushed.

In most cases, the weaker ethnic groups submitted and lived peacefully with their stronger neighbours. Their submission was not without resentment. **Grudges were nursed.** Inter-ethnic relations were often characterised by mistrust or suspicion. Subsequently Colonialism and Christianity promoted peaceful co-existence among ethnic groups in some cases (Aboagye-Mensah, 1993:131). In others it is also known that they worsened existing ethnic tensions (Gyang-Duah, 1996:14-22 and Aboagye-Mensah, 1993:132).

The Impact of Colonialism on Ethnicity in Ghana

Negatively, Colonialism undermined traditional authority when it usurped the **position of the tribal chief.** This action brought about social upheavals in traditional society. Among the negative repercussions were disloyalty of subjects to their chiefs, tension and destoolment of chiefs with its attendant consequences (Effa Ababio, 1991:71, 78-79).

Positively, however, Colonialism and subsequent decolonisation have welded the peoples of Ghana into a **unitary state;** and a central government now enforces peaceful co-existence among various ethnic groups (De Graft-Johnson 1991:78f). The institution of a national police service has guaranteed security for all. This has promoted inter- ethnic mobility and competition (Nukunya, 1992:123). The introduction of a money economy and the exploitation of natural resources have brought in their wake development which has affected the inter-ethnic relations significantly (Nukunya, 1992:122-125).

The policy of **"Indirect Rule"** through traditional chiefs adopted by the British, subjected ethnic groups without centralised political organisation to the authority of more powerful ones (Effa Ababio, 1991:78). Furthermore, the creation of colonial administrative

districts and boundaries divided some ethnic groups such as, the Kasena people of northern Ghana (Barker, 1986: 217; Howell, 1997:5) hence weakening them in a way.

The Colonial Administration's policies towards the then Northern Territories contributed to their backwardness compared to their southern counterparts (Prah, 1975:306-312). *The policy of excluding the north from missionary enterprise adversely affected the educational and social development of the area* (Berinyuu, 1997: 5). The **missionaries** were known to be the **bearers of education and social development** (Odamtten, 1978:105). For reasons better known to the Colonial administration they argued that, the Northerners should be left in their natural environment to develop without the influence of Western missionaries. They were afraid that the missionaries would bring about enlightment and thus cause the people of northern Ghana to fight for their rights. Apart from this reason, the Colonial Administration also feared that introduction of Christianity would provoke religious tension and instability. The policy of **treating the north as a labour reservoir** under-developed northern Ghana. This also led to the widening of the gap and stereotyping of Northerners by Southerners (Prah K., 1975: 306ff.). This development has had serious repercussions on the relationship between Northerners and Southerners. Kwesi Prah analyses the relationship between Northerners and Southerners as a result of the above developments:

> Migrant labourers from the north moving south...depended on casual employment and the goodwill of the people in the areas they passed through. Some travelled all the way south to be welcomed with a refusal of employment. Unwilling to return empty handed after their long and arduous trek, they accepted any job offered. Economically deprived, without money in a steadily expanding cash economy, the Northern migrant worker in the south was also socially ostracized. Southerners maintained firm social controls over the migrant labourers, excluding them from close and intimate relations. In the south, Northerners were, and still are, treated as pariah by their southern compatriots. High illiteracy rates among the Northerners exacerbate their exclusion from urban social intercourse (Prah 1975: 310).

Prah has rightly observed the exploitation of Northerners by Southerners. The Northerners' plight stem out of the fact that they have high illiteracy rate and abject poverty. The most serious problem Northerners face is a negative attitude of Southerners towards them. Consequently, the Northerner often felt and saw himself as a socially ostracized person. This has been worsened by Southerners' feeling of superiority to Northerners and leading to name-calling (Dovlo, 1991: 14f.). This has produced resentment within Northerners towards

Southerners. The resulting negative attitudes, no doubt, have adversely affected southern Christians' mission to Northerners.

Interface of Christianity and Ethnicity

At this juncture, it is necessary to appreciate the philosophy of the Western Missionaries towards Africans. According to Karl Rennstich, Mission was defined by Western missionaries as:

> reparation (Wiedergutmachung) for injustice committed by Europeans, so that to some extent the thousand bleeding wounds could be healed which were caused by the Europeans over many centuries through their most dirty greediness and most cruel deceitfulness (Rennstich, 1982:95).

Western Christian missionaries had to come to terms with the ethnic reality in the country (Akrong, 1999, interviewed). They had to find out how they could win the confidence of the chiefs and their peoples. Prior to the imposition of colonial rule *the chief held the key to the success or failure of missionary enterprises* (Gyang-Duah, 1996). The chief was indispensable to the missionary enterprise because he was the first person the missionaries contacted. His acceptance of the Mission and its message opened the door to the ethnic group for evangelistic work (Effa Ababio, 1991:35). The hospitality and protection given to missionaries by chiefs paved the way for them (missionaries) to settle in the communities to work.

The situation however changed with the advent of Colonialism. The white *missionaries were perceived as part of the Colonial Administration* by both the imperialists and indigenous Africans. For instance the Danish colonial government sought to portray the Basel Missionaries that way (Effa Ababio, 1991:99-101). To most Ghanaians, all whites were "obroni", that is, (Twi word for white people). The missionaries therefore found themselves in the unenviable position of sharing in both the blessings and curses of Colonialism (Christensen T. and Hutchison, 1982:98-102 and Effa Ababio, 1991:100f). While some of them tried to win the trust of the ethnic groups through respect and friendship, the majority demonstrated racist tendencies and tried to subvert African culture.

One of the criticisms often leveled against the Western missionaries also was their **outright condemnation of African culture** (Busia, 1961: 86). Critics of the missionaries claim that the missionaries did not only embark on outright condemnation of African culture,

but that they indoctrinated their converts to do the same. Most of the clashes with the traditional authorities centred on missionary condemnation of cultural practices or the questioning of the chiefs' absolute authority over the Christians. It is for this reason that some scholars see the creation of the *Salems* (Christian quarters) as a source of mistrust.

The "Salems" were in most of the Akwapim towns (Smith, 1972:65). The policy of encouraging the building of these *Salems* was informed by the *Basel Missionaries' desire to realise the Kingdom of God on earth, hence the founding of "Christian Colonies".* Thus "Christian Colonies" were being founded as part of their missionary task (Christensen and Hutchison, 1982). The *Salems* also gave the missionaries more authority to supervise the Missions' work.

Addo-Fening views the formation of the *Salems* by the missionaries as "a campaign of enticing Christian converts to abandon their homes in the main townships and to settle at the mission stations variously known as *Salem, Christian village, or oburonikurum"* (that is Twi language for the whiteman's town). In Kyebi the Salem began in 1861. By 1863 many of the school pupils were keen to live there. (Addo-Fening, 1997:59).

Some traditional authorities saw the *Salems* as undermining the unity of their people (Addo-Fening, 1997:59). Some African scholars hold the view that the *Salems* were intentionally set up to challenge the traditional authorities and to alienate the Christian converts from their cultural backgrounds. Addo-Fening explains that the *policy of persuading Christians to relocate their homes at the mission stations* was a source of alarm to the okyenhene (paramount chief of the Akyem pepole) and his chiefs. They suspected that it was a deliberate attempt to reduce interaction between the nascent Christian community and the non-Christian community as a first step towards the eventual creation of a dichotomy between church and state (1997: 59).

Addo-Fening further analyses the *Salem* in relation to the Basel missionaries' work in Akyem. He explains that the "okyenhene", the paramount chief of Akyem Abuakwa and his chiefs could not take kindly to any attempt to encourage some members of their community to live in physical isolation from the rest, for the Abuakwa were a people who found security in greater numbers (1997:59).

Kwame Bediako looks at the *Salems* differently and writes:

> Some textbooks suggest that the Salems divided our society and argue that we have suffered from that. I hold a different opinion...The creation of the Salem brings out the difference between the Methodists and the Basel missionaries. Wesleyans did not build Salems because

that was not their experience. The Basel missionaries, on the other hand, came from something similar to Salems (Bediako K., 1999:17).

This new perspective helps to correct the overly critical perception of the *Salems*. The Basel missionaries offered what they knew best to their converts. What most textbooks do not usually discuss is the real function the *Salems* were meant to fulfill. Bediako however fills this gap by explaining the real intention for their creation. He argues that:

> It was not a way of demarcating the town. The missionaries realised quite early that propagating the Gospel was a long-term work and that it was impossible to achieve results overnight. The Salem was acquired to replicate the Salems they had themselves come from. The town of Abokobi was modelled on a particular Salem in Germany called Korntaal, a wholly Christian village, self-contained with school, church and farm; and Abokobi was built like that. The idea was to build a model community beside traditional community, to be a kind of 'control experiment'...The idea was to show how one could be a Christian in a context that people could observe (Bediako K., 1999:17).

Most of the criticism against the *Salems* were on political and moral grounds. The fact that people were not forced against their will to live in the *Salems* proves that they had something positive in them. The *Salems* could therefore be seen as **alternative communities** to the traditional ones. They facilitated discipleship for they were insulated from the hostile unchristian environment.

Contributing to the debate on the merits and demerits of the *Salems,* Gyang-Duah comes to the conclusion that the *Salem was a necessary evil* (Gyang-Duah, 1988:220). He identifies two negative impacts of the *Salem* on the traditional community. In the first place he sees the *Salem as being disruptive of traditional social order*. This was possible because traditional social controls were weakened because the *Salems* were not under them. This situation led to the second negative effect of the *Salem* vis-à-vis traditional community. The *Salem community felt superior to the traditional one* (Gyang-Duah, 1988:218f).

It was not in all cases that the missionaries created the *Salems* of their own volition. Circumstances compelled the formation of some of these *Salems*. Some Christians were chased out of their communities and had to be resettled. Instead of perceiving the *Salems* negatively, the solace they provided to persecuted Christians should not be overlooked. Whichever way one views the *Salems*, their existence introduced a gulf between Christians and their non-Christian relatives. On the whole the *Salems* did more good than harm.

Some nationalists have charged Christianity with weakening traditional authority and institutions. The consequence of the missionaries' preaching was that, the myths that preserved traditional authority and institutions were being challenged. People who did not want to observe traditional custom, which is the basis of ethnic identity, sought refuge in the *Salems* (Addo-Fening, 1997:59ff).

Christianity challenged the very things that defined people's ethnic identity. As E. A. Asamoa noted, " the Church's attitude towards African beliefs, has generally been one of negation, a denial of the validity of those beliefs" (Asamoa, 1955: 297). Asamoa further notes the repercussion of such denials:

> What often happens as a result of such denunciation is that a state of conflict is created in the mind of the Christian, and he becomes a hypocrite who in official church circles pretends to give the impression that he does not believe in these things, while in his own private life he resorts to practices which are the results of such beliefs (Asamoa, 1955:297).

Thus, people's worldview, customs and practices were subverted. This created an **identity crisis in the Ghanaian Christian.** This development deprived the African Christian of an integrative conversion that he or she sought.

Basel and Scottish Missions Worked along Ethnic Lines

Noel Smith writes that, "the state of Akuapem is the historical home of the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society so far as the work in Ghana is concerned". This explains why for the period of fifty years, that is "from 1835 to the 1880-90 decade" they enjoyed some monopoly (Smith, 1972:64). The Basel missionaries had to move to the Akuapem state because their first attempts at Osu in the coast were frustrated by untimely deaths of the pioneering missionaries. Though they wanted to also avoid the political struggle between the Danes and the English, they had to cope with an indigenous political struggle within Akuapem itself.

In an interview with the Rev. E.S. Mate-Kodjo, a past Synod Clerk, he agreed that *ethnicity was a key factor in the conversion of the Akuapem people.* According to him Andreas Riis failed initially to make converts among the Akuapem. After twelve years of seemingly unproductive labour (1828-1840) Riis was recalled. When he went to bid goodbye

to the paramount chief of Akuapem, Nana Addo Dankwa I (1843), a very interesting conversation with far-reaching consequences took place. The chief is alleged to have told Riis that:

> When God created the world he made Book for the Whiteman and Fetish or Juju for the Blackman, but if you could show us some blackmen who could read the whiteman's Book, then we would surely follow you (Centenary Report: re West Indians, 1843-1943:8).

Commenting on the above conversation, Mate-Kodjo, explains that, Nana Addo Dankwa's remarks were influenced by considerations of ethnicity and history. The current chief, Nana Addo Dankwa III, a great grand-nephew, gives a different version of what Addo Dankwa I is reported to have said. His version of the said conversation is as follows:

> Since the creation, most Africans have been adherents of fetish and juju and their involvement in these have not in anyway undermined their basic culture as Africans. If you want Africans to know how to read the Bible and to become adherents of your new religion, then you must make sure that they remain culturally African (Mission in Context, 1986:17).

Gyang-Duah's attempts to reconstruct the conversation to bridge the two versions. Gyang-Duah speculates that out of sympathy, Nana Addo Dankwa I, might have told Riis:

> God gave us our religion which is different from yours. That is what we have known since the creation. We do not use a book like you white people do in your religion. Moreover we did not see any black people among you when you came. That is why my people have found it difficult to accept your religion and read your book (Gyang-Duah, 1996:36).

Whichever way you look at it, the chief and his people saw the white missionaries as different people (i.e. of a different ethnic group). Though the West Indians who were recruited in 1843 could not speak Twi, *they at least proved the point that, Christianity was not the preserve of the white "ethnic group"*.

Commenting further on how ethnicity was harnessed to spread the Gospel, Mate-Kodjo focused on the role the Presbyterian Training College played in this. He recalled that:

> When the missionaries came, they recognised the fact that we have different tribes. And when they came they used education as a means of evangelism. So when they were taking in people into Akropong

Training College, they took the people by ethnic groups. They made provision for Ewe, made provision for Adangme, they made provision for the Ga, they also made provisions for the various groups within the Akan. They trained all these people in Akropong to become instruments to evangelise their own areas... But then, Akropong did something else. It made sure the other ethnic groups, the Ga, the Krobo, the Ewe and the Northerners, who came to Akropong to study, also studied Twi, so that while they could be used to evangelise or teach in their own areas, they also learned Twi to be useful to the biggest language group in Ghana. The teacher- catechists were sent out to the Akyem areas, on foot preaching the Gospel. Furthermore, they were sent to all the areas the Basel missionaries were already working. Thus ethnicity was positively used to promote the fast spread of the Christian faith (Mate-Kodjo, 1999, interviewed).

The Basel Mission pioneered work among the Akuapem and Ga peoples. From these bases they moved to the neighbouring ethnic groups. The history of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana reveals that its growth has been along ethnic lines. Language played a key role in it. We shall examine the evidence available for the growth of the Church among the various ethnic groups: Akuapem, Ga, Krobo, Dangme, Akyem, Akyem Kotoku, Agona, Guan, Ashanti and the peoples of Northern Ghana. The map on the spread of Presbyterian Church in Ghana on page 41 is instructive at this point.

The Basel missionaries under Andreas Riis, settled in Akropong, because of the favourable weather. Another reason was the fact that, the people in the hinterland had not yet become debauched by contact with Europeans on the coast. The missionaries realised, that to get to the heart of a people was to speak their language and to look like them. This was one of the reasons why the West Indians were brought to Akuapem to induce acceptance of the Gospel by the Akuapem people. These Jamaicans were, however, restricted in their interaction with the Akuapem people because they spoke English (Smith, N. 1966:39). The Basel missionaries only began to establish themselves in the Gold Coast when they took the study of Twi and Ga languages seriously and involved indigenous personnel. Noel Smith throws more light on this issue:

This consolidation was achieved by a concentration upon the mastery of the Twi and Ga languages, by a gradual extension of evangelical activity in the main towns in the Ga, Akwapim and Krobo districts, by a careful training of indigenous personnel...(Smith, 1966:45).

Thus, *the Akuapem, Ga and Krobo ethnic groups provided the initial nursery from which the Church was to spread to other ethnic groups.* The Basel missionary policy was aimed at

developing Churches to cater for the spiritual needs of converts in their indigenous languages. It was for this reason that the Twi and Ga languages were reduced to writing.

The role of indigenous personnel in the spread of the Church in Akuapem and other areas was very crucial. For instance, the spread of the Church to the entire Akuapem and Ga areas was the work of indigenous trained catechists and teachers who began to emerge from the Akropong seminary. These catechists and teachers worked by and large among their own ethnic groups as chronicled below:

> At Larteh...the catechist Edward Samson is said to have restored a dead boy to life by prayer, an event which occasioned a sudden response to the Gospel. In 1862, David Asante was placed in charge and within five years could report a congregation of two hundred. At Aburi,...Alexander Clerk baptised seventeen young men in1856...Theophilus Opoku and Nathanael Date took charge of the mission at Mamfe, while in Adukrom the young Joseph Mpere gave himself, after his conversion, entirely to the furtherance of the Gospel in his home town. In the Ga-Adangme area Paul Mohenu, Carl Reindorf, Adolf Brandt, Carl Quist and others were active in preaching and in caring for the new Christian groups. Thus Africans themselves played a notable part ...in the spread of the young church; in village after village the pioneer of the new movement was the catechist-teacher, the 'young' from the Seminary at Akropong (Smith, 1966:51ff).

The reception of the Gospel was always facilitated by the use of the people's language. The most successful personnel were those of the same ethnic groups being evangelised or those who identified with them or thoroughly understood their languages. The firm rooting of the Gospel in the Akwapim, Ga and Krobo lands gave the impetus for the expansion of the Church into other ethnic areas.

The Gospel spread from the Akwapim Ridge to the Akyem, Ga, Krobo and Dangme peoples. Simon Suss mastered the Twi language and also built a family of African youth who carried the Gospel to the unevangelised (Smith, 1966:52). *Whereas ethnic solidarity enhanced the spread of the Gospel, ethnic strife turned out to be a great enemy.* A case in point was how the ethnic conflict between the Akyem Abuakwa and the Akyem Kotoku disrupted missionary work there (Smith, 1966:53).

Further expansion of missionary work saw churches planted among the Guan people in the Anum areas who are Twi- speaking (Smith, 1966:53). As noted earlier, ethnic strife tended to destablise missionary work. The Asante invasion of Anum and the capture of the

missionaries, Ramseyer and Kuhne to Kumasi in 1869 interfered with missionary work in Anum (Smith, 1966:54).

The Basel Mission Committee had a policy that all people were to be given the opportunity to **hear the Gospel in their mother-tongue** (Smith, 1966:54). Two exceptional missionaries who contributed immensely to realise this dream were J. G. Christaller and J. Zimmermann. The former worked among the Twi-speakers and the latter among the Ga-Adangme people. Their achievements are enviable and are enumerated below:

> Christaller's work achieved three things: it raised the Twi language to
> a literary level and provided the basis of all later work in the language;
> it gave the first real insight into Akan religious, social and moral ideas;
> and it welded the expression of Akan Christian worship to the native
> tongue (Smith, 1966:55).

Zimmermann's achievement is similar to that of Christaller's according to Smith. In his estimation:

> …Zimmermann was not only the moving spirit in the establishment of
> the Mission in the Ga-Adangme area but his work in the Ga language
> was almost of the same calibre as that of Christaller. His translation of
> the four Gospels appeared in 1885, was followed two years later by a
> Grammar and a Dictionary. By 1886 he had completed the translation
> of the entire Bible, finished the Ga Hymn Book…(Smith, 1966:55ff).

Such were the feats of these missionary scholars who have left indelible marks on Ga and Twi speakers. Their endeavours became models for subsequent outreach to other ethnic groups. Having successfully established viable churches among the Akuapem, Ga, Krobo, Adangme, Akyem and Guans, the stage was now set for the Basel Mission to reach out to the north. By this time the Twi-speaking people (Akyem Kotoku and Agona) in the west and south of Akyem bordering the Fante people had been reached. Similarly, the Twi –speaking people in Volta had had the Gospel preached to them. Smith explains the missionary strategy at this point, thus:

> After 1875, Basel mission concentrated its efforts towards the up-building of
> its work in the Ga, Krobo and Akwapim districts, and, imbued with the hope
> of preaching the Gospel in Ashanti, a network of well- established Christian
> congregations was established in Akim and Kwahu (Smith, 1966:108).

The work among the Akyem spilled over to the Kwahu people. From the Kwahu and Akyem areas it was now feasible to reach the Asante people. Indigenous Christians were

equipped by the missionaries to work in the Asante Akyem area with Bompata as the main station. Ramseyer's captivity in Kumasi facilitated mission work in Asante in a manner similar to the experience of Joseph in Egypt. Ramseyer pioneered the work among the Asante people. The Gospel spread from Asante to the peoples of Brong-Ahafo, especially among the Twi speakers. The peoples of Northern Ghana were not left out of the strategic planning of the missionaries. Smith reveals that:

> The aim of the Basel mission was to be in a position to evangelise
> the north of Ashanti, as well as to have a firm base for work in the
> Northern Territories, as they were then called (Smith, 1966: 142).

In an interview with Rev. A. K. Sah, a past Synod Clerk, he said the PCG's missionary strategy was always to evangelise the capitals or semi-capitals to act as a catalyst for the evangelisation of the rural areas around them. The strategy also took into account the ethnic constituencies of their field of operation. Language was a potent tool in drawing people to the church.

The missionary work in northern Ghana also proceeded along ethnic lines. The Gonja in Salaga, the Dagomba in Yendi and Tamale, the Mamprusi in Gambaga, the Frafra in Bolga, the Kasena in Paga and Navrongo, the Kusasi in Bawku and Garu. The languages here were however, not developed as were done for the Twi and Ga peoples. This is not denying the fact that some attempts were made. For instance, part of minute 55 of Synod Minutes, 1961, deals with literature in Northern Ghanaian languages reveals that:

> The Rev. C. F. Paton reported on progress made on works made in
> Northern languages. Due to the help of Prof. Rapp (with the assistance
> of Mr. V. Aboyer) a book in Frafra had been produced containing
> hymns, Bible- readings and prayers. In Gonja, Rev. O. Rytz had
> produced an enlarged edition of a similar booklet. In Buli St. Mark's
> Gospel would shortly be published. In Buili, Dagbane and other
> languages, duplicated sheets of hymns and Bible passages had been
> prepared (Synod Minutes, 1961).

Curiously, most of the people involved in the development of the northern languages were white missionaries with northern Assistants. Was the lack of involvement on the part of southern Church Agents, a result of their unwillingness or a lack of the pre- requisite skills? Or does this confirm Northerners' perception, that Southerners consider the north as a God-forsaken area, which must be avoided, if it lies within their power to do so? The concern here

is that, the zeal with which the Ga and Twi were developed is lacking in attempts being made to develop the northern languages.

PCG'S Mission along Ethnic Lines

It can be concluded from the evidence gathered above that, **the PCG has grown along ethnic lines since its inception, the pioneer ethnic groups being the Twi and Ga.** The peoples of northern Ghana who reside in the north as well as in the south, have also been reached with the Gospel along ethnic lines. This is evident in the ministry of the Northern Outreach Programme (NOP). The NOP was began in 1989 to reach out to peoples of northern Ghana who were seemingly neglected by the predominantly Akan and Ga Church, that is the PCG (Dovlo and Sule-Saa, 1999:113). The GEC noted that the seeming neglect of the northern tribes was mainly because of the language and cultural differences between Northerners and Southerners (The Task, 1989). This scenario of a denomination growing along ethnic lines is not unique to the PCG. Most of the denominations in Ghana have grown along ethnic lines.

Ethnicity in the Naming of the PCG

As the PCG grew and reached "maturity" she wanted autonomy from her parent Mission. In a bid to consolidate her autonomy, she sought to adopt a neutral name that would not identify her with the Basel or Scottish Missions. Among the initial suggestions of indigenous names was one from the then Synod Clerk, the Rev. N.T. Clerk. He suggested the name, "Ga and Twi Church," which was immediately rebuffed. The prompt reaction was justified because the Church was now a national Church and not the monopoly of the Ga and Twi people. Gyang-Duah analyses why the other ethnic groups objected to such a suggestion.

> The problem with Clerk's proposal however was that it technically eliminated other ethnic groups from the equation. This must have occurred to Clerk because he attempted to calm down the other ethnic groups in the Church by appealing to them to accept his proposal. But his attempt yielded no dividends (Gyang-Duah 1996:125).

Commenting on the debate to get an indigenous name for the PCG, the Rt. Rev. Sam Prempeh said, it exposed *the danger of building the Church on ethnicity* (Prempeh, 1999,

interviewed). Choosing a name that was not inclusive was deemed to be a recipe for the disintegration of the church. This was the case because, "other ethnic groups wanted their names included" for "ethnic loyalty was very strong in the Church" (Gyang-Duah, 1996: 125). One wonders if the situation is any better today.

Thanks to the timely intervention of Rev. Dr. Wilkie, of the United Free Church of Scotland, the term "Presbyterian" proposed by him was adopted (Gyang-Duah, 1996:125). It aptly described the government of the Church that was being practised. **An opportunity for PCG to evolve a theology of ethnicity in response to the ethnic wrangling was missed** with respect to the renaming of the church. Though a neutral name was adopted instead of the ethnic group labels, the seed of ethnic consciousness had been deeply ingrained in the life and work of the PCG. The naming of the PCG Presbyteries, as will be shown later, bears eloquent testimony to this. The bane of these ethnic labels was to be felt in the multi-ethnic congregations that developed as a result of migration of various ethnic groups to pursue their economic activities. Consequently, different ethnic groups now live side by side as neighbours. The trouble with the ethnic labels on presbyteries is that, the perception was created that the presbyteries belonged solely to the dominant ethnic group in whose territory the others lived.

A Brief History of Four of the Presbyteries of PCG

The PCG today comprises thirteen presbyteries. Among them are the **Akuapem, Ga, Dangme-Tongu, Akyem Abuakwa,** Volta, Western, Central, **West Akyem, Kwahu, Asante Akyem, Asante, Brong Ahafo** and Northern Mission Field. Nine of the presbyteries enboldened bear ethnic labels and this has serious implications for a national church which is multi-ethnic. For purposes of the study we shall limit ourselves to the Akuapem, Ga, Asante and the Northern Mission Field.

The Ga Presbytery

As an institution the Pesbytery's roots go as far back as December 1828 when the Basel Missionaries arrived at Osu. The Presbytery is a microcosm of Ghana in terms of its ethnic composition and was created to foster the extension of the kingdom of God (Quarshie, 1997:4). The Ga Presbytery was created from the earlier Ga-Adangme Presbytery

on 17th December 1971. *Ethnicity, among other reasons, was advanced for the dissolution of the then Ga-Adangme Presbytery.* The three reasons advanced were:

(1) The Gospel should be preached in the local languages of the people.

(2) Since Dangme-Tongu was basically rural, the method of evangelism must be adapted to rural conditions to suit the people

(3) Such a method would afford the Dangme-Tongu people an opportunity to intensify the propagation of the Gospel Message among their own people (Ga Presbytery's 25th Anniversary Brochure, 1997: 9).

The influx of the non-Ga into the Greater Accra region, has brought mixed blessings to the Presbytery. *The cosmopolitan nature of the Presbytery has been a recipe for ethnic rivalry and tension.* The Reverend Jonathan Mensah, the then Presbytery Clerk hinted in his report in the Anniversary Brochure that there were " a few unhealthy developments on the ethnic front". The Presbytery Clerk was diplomatically reporting a very serious inter-ethnic relationship, between the Ga and the Akan. There have been accusations and counter accusations of tribalism or ethnocentrism. There have been attempts in the past to break up the Presbytery along ethnic lines and this brought no small trouble (Dankwa 1996:20f).

The Ga Presbytery has always tried to be an inclusive Presbytery. The Clerk explained that it was because of this that they rejected exclusive names such as: "Ga Shikpon" Presbytery, "Ga Mashie" Presbytery and "Ga Madziano" Presbytery. As an attempt to be an inclusive Presbytery, a position was deliberately created for non-Gas. The Dangme-Tongu Presbytery was carved from the former Ga-Adangme Presbytery, at an emergency Ga-Adangme Presbytery meeting held at Dodowa on Friday 17th December 1971. This Synod decision formally brought to an end the fifty- two years existence of the erstwhile Ga-Adangme Presbytery. The basic reason was ethnicity. *The Dangme-Tongu people wanted to affirm their identity, develop their language and enhance the evangelisation of their area.*

The likelihood of splitting up the presbyteries further is high, judging from the trends leading to the creation of presbyteries. As soon as the Tongu and Dangme people feel they can stand on their own, they are likely to call for their own presbyteries to reflect their ethnic aspirations.

The Akuapem Presbytery

When the first attempts to create a mission station could not be realised because of the death of the missionaries at Osu, a suburb of Accra, the sole survivor, Andreas Riis,

moved to Akuapem to settle in 1835. It was from here the PCG was to spread to other ethnic groups. The establishment of the Akropong Training College in 1848 became the beacon for spreading the Gospel as Teacher- Catechist were trained. Noel Smith writes that, "after 1853 the first stream of trained catechists began to flow from the Seminary at Akropong, a fact which enabled the Basel Mission Church to spread to practically every part of Akwapim" (Smith, 1972:64-65).

Kwamena Poh, notes that the Basel Mission was the first active Mission to begin work among a truly indigenous people, who had not been very much influenced by Europeans (Poh, 1974:1). Akuapem consists of three broad ethnic groups: the Guan, the Akan and strangers made up of aliens, northern and southern Ghanaians (Brokensha, 1972:76).

From outside the Akuapem state one sees a strong unified people. However, a closer association with the three categories of people reveals suspicion, fear and resentment characterise their inter-personal relationships. Three unconscious statements, that is *Freudian slips* from the three categories of people reveal that they bear each other grudges.

A Guan from Abiriw said, "we Abiriw people are humane, we are not bloodthirsty and treacherous like the Akropong people" (Akan).

An Akropong man also said, "we Akropong people are not bad, we only don't want to be taken for granted like the others".

A Builsa (Northerner) complained, "As for these Southerners, they are cheats, they think we Northerners are animals"!

Interestingly all these speakers are Christian leaders. If leaders are able to make these utterances, then we can guess what the ordinary non-Christians will say. *The Akuapem Presbytery, and the PCG as a whole has a herculean task of dealing with these entrenched grudges which have historical roots.* They impede the PCG's mission openly or subtly.

Kwamena Poh writing on the creation of the Akuapem state explains how the *concord of Abotakyi* was reached. Abotakyi is a small town between Mampong and Amanokrom where an agreement was reached between the Guan and the Akyem. When the Akyem succeeded in driving out the Akwamu (an ethnic group that made life bitter for the

Guan) they entered into agreement with the Guan people so that they could keep away the Akwamu (Poh 1972:41f). Poh explains that:

> The 'Concord' took the form of oath taking; the oath of the Kyenku shrine of Obosomase was administered with the promise that they would never throw off their allegiance to the new dynasty. Despite this oath the Akwapims and their new overlords lived in uneasy peace. This is symbolic in the adage which is still current in Akwapim today: ' *Ofori nkoa apem wonsom bi, wonnan bi, nso wcnne won ho'* (Poh 1972:41).

The Basel Mission came to establish the PCG in this environment. The Akuapem state is the home of the PCG. In fact, for fifty years there was no other church besides the PCG (Smith 1972:64). The present Akuapem Presbytery extends beyond the Akuapem state as shown on the map of PCG's presbyteries. The Twi language is used although the Guan have their own language. *What the missionaries failed to do for the Guans was that they did not develop their language as they did for the Akan.* Thus, the Guan were compelled to learn Twi, which they did so well, in order to function in the PCG. It came to light in a conversation that most of the experts of the Twi language are not the Akan but the Guan (Bediako, 2000, in a discussion).

The Akuapem Presbytery was initially part of the former Akuapem-Volta Presbytery which was dissolved by resolution at its 1993 presbytery meeting held at Aburi on the 24th-25th April, 1993. Subsequently, the Akuapem and Volta Presbyteries were constituted in the same year on separate occasions. The ethnic factor could not be ruled out of consideration in the creation of the new Akuapem and Volta Presbyteries. The latter felt they were being cheated by the Akuapem because they were ethnically different.

Volta Presbytery comprises Akan and Guan peoples with a few others from other parts of the country, and was officially created on 4th July, 1993 and ministers to several ethnic groups such as the Konkomba, Gonja, Nanumba, Akan, Buem, Tapa, Guan, Ewe and others. The pioneer Presbytery Chairman, evaluating the task facing the new presbytery, concluded that the "ceremonial Christianity" prevailing there could not nurture Christian fellowship and brotherliness amongst these peoples (Dadzaa, 1999 interviewed).

By "ceremonial Christianity", the Chairman was probably referring to "church-goers" with little Christian impact on their conduct. He was convinced that these ethnic groups needed to "be bathed in the word of God and washed in the blood of Jesus". For him

therefore, radical discipleship was the key to realise a genuine Christian community among the diverse tribes in their jurisdiction.

The Asante Presbytery

The work in Bompata was to serve as the springboard from which the Basel Mission could launch out to Asante. Ramseyer is honoured as the one who planted the PCG among the Asante. This does not deny the fact that Riis had earlier visited Kumasi. It was the defeat of the Asantes by the British in 1874 that opened up Asante for Christian missionary work. This fact made *the Asante to resent Christianity initially because it was perceived as the "religion of the victors"* (Souvenir Brochure for the Centenary Celebration, 1896-1996:18).

The early Christian converts and school children in Asante were generally slaves. With the passage of time, however, the indigenous Asante embraced Christianity. It is amazing that most *Northerners consider Christianity now as an Asante religion.* Asante was to become the watershed in PCG's expansion northwards. Being one of the richest regions of Ghana, Asante attracted people from all parts of the country (Nukunya, 1997:160). This situation explains why the language of this area, Twi, is now widely spoken in Ghana. Northern migrants and those of the other regions in Ghana have learnt this language.

One difference between the Asante and Ga Presbyteries is the fact that whereas in the former there are no "Ga congregations", in the latter there are "Twi congregations". Could it be the case that Twi is easier to learn than Ga or that the Akan do not want to learn Ga? All Asante Presbytery congregations apart from the NOP ones all use "Twi". Some non-Akan respondents to our questionnaire have expressed their *frustration at the sole use of "Twi" to the exclusion of other Ghanaian languages.* They complain that sometimes the hymn numbers in "Ga" or "Ewe" are not even mentioned because the assumption is that, every one understands "Twi" or ought to understand it (Questionnaire respondents, 1999). It was this same attitude that gave rise to the proliferation of "Twi" and "Ewe" congregations in the Ga Presbytery (Kaneshie Presbyterian Church Silver Jubilee Brochure, 1957-1982:xxiii - 2).

The Northern Mission Field (NMF)

This area covers **the three northern regions of Ghana** as shown on the map of PCG's presbyteries on page 69. It has more than twenty different ethnic groups (Barker,

1989:1). The earlier PCG's missionary efforts in northern Ghana suffered some setbacks. For instance, the four Basel missionaries who established a station in Yendi in northern Ghana in 1912 were interned and deported (Young, 1997:25). Furthermore, when the southern Ghanaian Christians continued with the PCG's work in the North, it was essentially among the Southerners residing there. The subsequent *southern PCG's Agents failed to continue with the Basel missionaries' policy of learning the language of an indigenous people so as to communicate the Gospel to them* (Young, 1997:26). The failure of southern Christians to do this for their northern brothers and sisters has seriously hampered the receptivity of Christianity or the PCG as their own.

The low level of evangelisation of northern Ghana, coupled with other problems led to the **change in status from Presbytery to Mission Field in 1972** (Young, 1997:32). This development is *a reflection of the PCG's lack of understanding of her own missionary heritage.* Thus, the PCG's blindness to her parent missionaries' theology of mission and ethnicity has brought about crisis in the creation of her presbyteries and mission fields. The crisis is epitomised in the changing of the status of the Northern Presbytery to the Northern Mission Field. *Ethnic barriers between Northerners and Southerners have been the bane of effective evangelism in the NMF* (Committee's Report, 1972).

Mission work in the NMF lags behind that of their southern counterparts. Several reasons account for this state of affairs. Among the reasons are:

- British Colonial Policy (Kwansa A. L. in Berinyuu 1997:5)

- Language and cultural barriers (The GEC's newsletter, The Task, 1990:1)

- Mutual distrust between Southerners and Northerners (Dovlo and Sule-Saa, 1999:113)

- Poverty and Northern migration (Dovlo and Sule-Saa, 1999:112)

- Unsuitable Missionary strategy (Bediako K., 1995:61f)

According to A. L. Kwansa, a past Synod Clerk and Inter-Church and Ecumenical Relations Secretary of the PCG, British Colonial policy in the then Northern Territories was a big hindrance to Christian mission there. The British did not want the peoples of northern Ghana to be influenced by Christianity and western civilisation. One of the colonial rulers, Captain Armitage, an atheist, "insisted that the Northerners be left alone in their natural environment and culture" (Kwansa, 1997:5). Kwesi Prah also attributes the backwardness of the Northern Territories, now the NMF, to the effects of British policy. The policy aimed at reducing this area to a reservoir of cheap labour (Prah, 1975:307). As a result of this policy,

missionary work in the North was delayed and made more difficult even when the policy was changed later.

Language and cultural barriers are another hindrance to the mission in Northern. This has been identified by the Ghana Evangelism Committee (GEC) in its newsletter, *The Task* (1990:1). Ghana is generally divided into "two sectors along geographic and cultural lines" (Dovlo and Sule-Saa 1999:112). The use of language between northern and southern Ghana makes this division pronounced. As Edward Hall notes in his booklet on *Ghanaian Languages,* language can serve both as a key to communication as well as a barrier to it (Hall E. 1983:5). To overcome communication barriers, translation from one language to another is resorted to. Reverend Alan Byer, one time missionary in the Sandema district found that there were *difficulties in comprehension with this method requiring three way translation: English through Twi to Kasem* (in Berinyuu, 1997:142). Most Southerners have not seen the need to learn the northern languages in order to communicate the Gospel. They rather *expect Northerners to learn the southern language (Twi) in order to join the church.*

Dovlo and Sule-Saa have also identified *prejudice as a factor militating against the communication of the Gospel from Southerners to Northerners.* Generally, Southerners feel superior to Northerners and call them by derogatory names. Northerners also respond with resentment and avoidance of Southerners (Dovlo and Sule-Saa, 1999:113).

As part of the PCG's administrative structure, the three regions of Northern Ghana were under the then Northern Presbytery. To enhance evangelism in the North, a committee of four (Rev.I.H Frempong, the convener, Rev. F.W.K. Akuffo, Asante Presbytery Chairman, Rev. A. K. Sah, Chaplain, St. Andrews College and Mr. A. P. van den Broek, Agriculturalist/Evangelist) was set up by the Synod of the PCG to undertake a survey of the area.

The **terms of reference** were: "To Survey the Whole Work in the Northern Presbytery, see how best the Church could tackle the **problems** there and make **recommendations**" (PCG, Minutes of the 43rd Synod, 1972: 33). The committee worked meticulously and came out with a comprehensive report. The findings relevant to this study include:

- *The attitude of Southerners.*

In the committee's words, "the attitude of the Southerner looking down upon the Northerner may also repel the Northerner"(1972:152) from the church.

- *Presbyterianism.*

By presbyterianism, the Committee which it means being loyal Presbyterians. It (the Committee) observed that:

> The South has inherited many things which have become part and parcel of her life and cannot be easily dispossessed One thing is the way of, and behaviour at worship. It is a temptation in some northern congregations to reject the spontaneous clapping of hands to rhythm of singing in the church as not Presbyterian and to enforce the sit still moody attitude (152).

- The *frequent pilgrimages Southerners make to shrines in the North.*

The committee analysed with deep insight the effect which Southerners' practice of visiting shrines in northern Ghana, has had on the receptivity of the Gospel by Northerners. They observed accurately that:

> Northerners think that the Southerners are all Christians because the Gospel has reached the North from the South…The most reliable protection to give them (Northerners) is to try and make members of their own language group preach the Gospel to them (152f).

- *Class differences.*

In the big town congregations, the committee further observed that: "There is a natural tendency for brethren from the North to group themselves together even at worship due mainly to the manner and fashion of their dressing" (152).

- *Cultural differences.*

The committee acknowledged the cultural differences between Southerners and Northerners and wrote:

> There are many cultural practices which tend to draw our brethren in the North from accepting Jesus or at least worship with the Southerners. One can think of clothing. This has been discussed

already but it is to be repeated if a heterogeneous congregation is to be obtained in the north (153f).

- *The Language factor.*

The committee again noted under cultural differences the role of language in communication. In this connection they argued that:

> Experience teaches that interpretation is not as effective to reach the heart of a people as to speak to them in their own language. Ability to use the language of a people is an essential prerequisite to a very effective evangelism (154).

For this reason they explained the effect of frequent transfers of evangelists on the work of evangelism:

> The transfer of our evangelists from one language area to another is another great hindrance to evangelism; because transferred evangelists do not take kindly to studying new languages and so they rely on interpreters (75).

Inter-Ethnic Relations in the Presbyteries

The inter-ethnic relations among the different ethnic groups is characterised by rivalry. There is competition amongst the various groups for positions and opportunities. *Loyalty to one's ethnic group is so strong that it tends to even supersede that to Christ.*

No ethnic group wants to be subordinated to the other. There is the tendency for an ethnic group to always compare itself to another ethnic group. It is this tendency that motivates many an ethnic group to want to have their own presbytery.

Visions of Multicultural Presbyteries

It seems the presbyteries do not have any vision or strategy to deal with the issue of ethnicity. As a result, there is suspicion amongst different ethnic groups in the presbyteries. The attitude of one ethnic group towards another is either one of tolerance, of convenience, or of fear and mistrust. Dissatisfaction among ethnic groups to a large extent brings about the quest for the creation of new presbyteries. When an ethnic group feels that it has many

members but is being marginalised, they try to exploit a loophole in the PCG's constitution (RPP) and agitate for their own presbytery.

Minority ethnic groups in the PCG desire to see the Church reflecting the multi-cultural society in which she ministers. Thus *if Presbyteries were to use ethnicity responsibly they could serve as the healing balm fostering reconciliation of the different ethnic groups* they represent rather than being a wedge in the sphere of their operation.

Ethnicity and the formation of Ghana's Denominations

Most of the denominations in Ghana have grown along ethnic lines. Hence certain ethnic groups are identified with certain denominations. We may not be far from the truth to equate particular denominations to certain ethnic hegemonies. Thus, in northern Ghana, many Dagaaba claim to be Catholic even if they have never darkened the door of a chapel. Dagaaba are dominant in the leadership of the Roman Catholic in northern Ghana.

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC), Ghana, is not only perceived as an Ewe Church; that was its original name: "Ewe Presbyterian Church". One of our interviewees captured this perception of Ewe hegemony of the EPC thus: "Where two or three Ewes are, there is EPC" (Mate-Kodjo, 1999 interviewed). Under a special agreement between the Basel and the Bremen missionaries, the PCG was to restrict its evangelism to the West of the Volta river, whilst the EPC worked in the East of the Volta. Under this arrangement some non-Ewe congregations which were planted by the Basel missionaries (PCG) were transferred to the Bremen (EPC). This agreement however had to be abrogated because of ethnic tension between the Ewe and the non-Ewe. It took a series of consultations between the two Synod Committees (that is PCG and EPC) to effect a peaceful take back of the non-Ewe congregations in the traditional EPC's stronghold (Decisions of the Joint Committee of PCG and EPC, 1988). *The crisis that threatened the initial friendly relationship between the PCG and the EPC demonstrates the failure of the two sister churches to handle the issue of ethnicity in their missions.* Thus, a series of ethnic crisis culminated in the formation of EP churches in the West of the Volta and the PCG also taking back congregations in East of the Volta that were earlier given to the EPC.

With the expansion of the PCG beyond the Ga and Akan, to include Northerners and other ethnic groups, the need to choose an inclusive name was realised early and accordingly effected in 1926. *The challenge that now faces the PCG is how to forge a healthy theology of*

ethnicity that is sensitive and embraces all ethnic groups – the earlier dominant ones as well as the newer ones in the minority.

In a similar vein, the Methodist Church was also perceived as a Fante Church. Hence most of the heads of the Methodist Church, Ghana in the past came from the Fante ethnic group. Thus, to be a Fante was synonymous with being a Methodist.

The challenge for the various denominations is for them to re-examine their missionary strategies in order to make room for all peoples.

Conclusion

Christianity was planted in a multi-cultural context. The roles played by the colonial powers, Western missionaries and indigenous Africans have influenced the planting and growth of the Church in Ghana. The PCG as well as other denominations have grown along ethnic lines. *The pioneer ethnic groups to be evangelised have not allowed the Gospel to be translated into the languages of the newer ethnic groups being evangelised as was done for them.* From the evidence gathered so far from mission history, *God does not endorse cultural imperialism in His mission in the world.* All the cultures of the various ethnic groups are suitable receptacles for the Gospel. In the PCG, the Ga and Akan have not enabled the other ethnic groups that are in the minority to also contribute to "Ghanaian Presbyterianism" and Christianity in general because they always want to squeeze Northerners and other ethnic minorities into their (Akan-Ga) mould.

The PCG's Organisational Structure on page 68 and map of her Presbyteries on page 69 are aids for the understanding of the next chapter.

PCG Organization Structure

Hierarchy of "Courts"

```
┌─────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────┐
│   Technical     │─────│    General      │─────│ General Assembly    │
│   Advisory      │     │   Assembly      │     │ Council (Synod      │
│  Commissions    │     │    (Synod)      │     │   Committee)        │
└─────────────────┘     └─────────────────┘     └─────────────────────┘
                                 │
                        ┌─────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────┐
                        │                 │─────│   Presbytery    │
                        │   Presbyteries  │     │    Councils     │
                        │                 │     │                 │
                        └─────────────────┘     └─────────────────┘
                                 │
                        ┌─────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────┐
                        │                 │     │    District     │
                        │    District     │─────│    Session      │
                        │    Sessions     │     │    Councils     │
                        └─────────────────┘     └─────────────────┘
                                 │
                        ┌─────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────┐
                        │                 │     │                 │
                        │  Congregational │─────│  Congregational │
                        │    Sessions     │     │    Executive    │
                        └─────────────────┘     └─────────────────┘
                                 │
                        ┌─────────────────┐
                        │                 │
                        │  Congregational │     (Not a Court)
                        │     Forums      │
                        └─────────────────┘
```
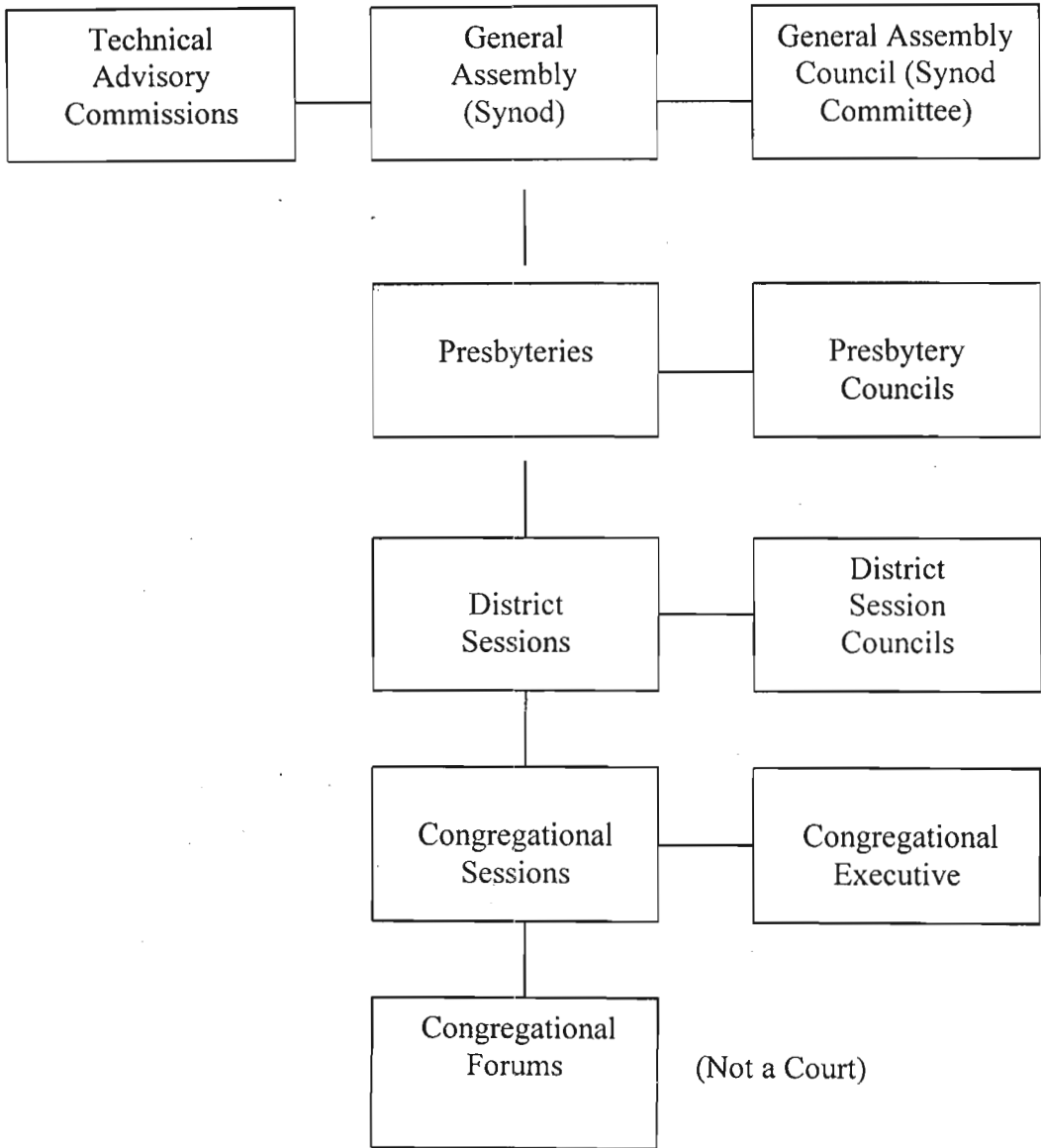
Provided by Rev. Dr. N. T. Clerk.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA
A MAP OF GHANA SHOWING PRESBYTERIES AND SERVICES

UPPER EAST REGION

Bawku
Widana
Garu
Bolgatanga
Sandema

UPPER WEST REGION

Wa

Langbensi

N O R T H E R N

R E G I O N

TAMALE

Salaga

Yeji

Kintampo

Sampa

BRONG - AHAFO

REGION

Berekum
SUNYANI
Dormaa-Ahenkro
Kyeremasu
Kwahasua
Aboabo
Kwadwokumikrom
(KKK)
Duayaw Nkwanta
Techimentia
Beahem

Mampong Ashanti
Ananekrom

ASHANTI

Asonomaso

KUMASI

Bibiani

REGION

KONONGO

Kwabu Praso

Donkorkrom
Tease
Ekye-Amanfrom

Agogo

ABETIFI
Kwahu Tafo

E A S T E R N

Osino
Begoro
Asiakwa

KYEBI

REGION

ODUMASE
Bena Hill
Suhum
Larteh
Mampong
Kraboa Coaltar

AKIM ODA
AKROPONG
Apuru
Adelso
Abokobi
Adeiso
Abokobi
Latern-biakorshie

AGONA NSABA
Asin Nsuta
Ananekro Beuase

CENTRAL REGION

LAKE VOLTA
VOLTA REGION

ANUM

Katamansu
Tema
Teshie
La
Osu
Legon
ACCRA
GREATER ACCRA REGION

Enchi
Asonkragua
Samrebor

WESTERN REGION

Sefwi Asawanso
Sefwi Wiasa

Dunkwa
Asin Praso
Asin Fosu
Asin Nuta

Kwamebikrom

Tarkwa

Cape Coast

Sekondi
TAKORADI

LEGEND

◉	Presbytery Head Stations
✚	Hospitals
◉	Clinics
▲	Primary Health Care (PHC)
▲	Agric. Stations
●	Training Colleges
●	Vocational Institutes
●	Senior Secondary Schools
▥	Nursing Training College
✚	Health Technical Unit (HTU)

STUDY AREAS

(12) Northern Mission Field
(5.) Ashanti Presbytery
(3.) Akuapem Presbytery
(1.) Ga Presbytery

PRESBYTERIES

①	Ga	⑥	Central
②	Dangme/Tongu	⑦	West Akyem
③	Akuapem	⑧	Brong Ahafo
④	Akyem Abuakwa	⑨	Kwahu
⑤	Ashanti	⑩	Asante Akyem
		⑪	Western
		⑫	Northern Mission Field
		⑬	Volta

Compiled and presented by: Rt. Rev. A. A. Beeko, Moderator, Presby. Church of Ghana (December, 1998)

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CHAPTER FOUR

PERCEPTIONS OF ETHNICITY IN THE PCG

Introduction

Tribalism is a reality in Ghana and has been widely acknowledged in the media. A few of the Press headlines on ethnicity in 1997 alone seem to suggest this. As many as fifteen of such headlines can be found in **appendix A.** It is acknowledged and addressed in anti-tribalistic articles, admonitions against using ethnicity to forment trouble in the Ghanaian society, and warning against impending ethnic conflicts.

The PCG's newspapers also have numerous headlines on the subject of "ethnicity" in the wider Ghanaian society as well as in the Church. Seven of such headlines are in **appendix B.** The sample represents a picture of the phenomenon of ethnicity within and outside the Church. The above headlines point to the widespread perception that tribalism exists in both the wider Ghanaian society and within the PCG.

The PCG is a microcosm of Ghanaian society. As such it is not immune to the scourge of tribalism, the negative expression of ethnicity. The late Justice Nii Amaa Ollennu, a one time statesman and a lay leader in the PCG, observed that,

> ...appointments to positions were made on tribal basis . . . By the practice of tribalism, we have subjected the nation to much woe, ...delayed progress in many directions. We tried legislation to stamp out tribalism but that rather gave it prominence and so intensified it...There seems a real danger that it may persist"(*The Christian Messenger*, 1979:1).

Does the PCG reflect this scenario painted of the wider Ghanaian society? In this section, we shall let PCG members and the evidence gathered from a qualitative study of the presence and magnitude of ethnicity in the PCG tell us the diverse ways in which tribalism manifests itself in the Church. Some of the indicators of the existence of tribalism as perceived by respondents include: electing people along ethnic lines, larger or bigger ethnic groups dominating smaller ones, partisan recruitment of Church Agents, prejudices and ethnic rivalries, appointment of Church Officers and language use dissatisfaction.

The everyday experiences of ethnicity by Church members in the form of ethnic prejudice are also valid sources and will be considered. One natural way ethnicity manifests itself is in the unconscious statements people make, that is, the *Freudian slip*. This term refers to "unintentional remarks that are assumed to reveal hidden impulses" (Atkinson R.L. et al, 1993: 206). In those unguarded moments, our prejudices or stereotypes come to the fore. Some of these Freudian slips will also be considered in due course.

According to the late Rev. F. J. Dankwa, a former lecturer of Trinity College, (a Theological Seminary for most of the members of the Christian Council of Ghana), there is tribalism in the PCG. As an outspoken critic of tribalism in the PCG, he wrote:

> I have…had the occasion to refer…to the existence of **tribalism** in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana … I want to …sound a warning note about the phenomenon called **tribalism** which should never be counternanced in the church of God because it is simply triple-Baalism in disguise – it is idolatry to the third degree; that means it is three times idolatry!…**tribalism** which is highly anthropocentric (man-centred) brought into the centre of the church to dislodge Christ is dangerously centrifugal and can only lead to disunity and to eventual disintegration of the church. Exactly that was what was going to happen when the late Justice Armah Ollenu in reaction to the evil of **tribalism** at one time nearly led the Ga Presbytery to break away from the rest of the church… I have also been very outspoken about the danger of **tribalism** in the church. And why shouldn't I, when even our politicians today have become apostles of anti-tribalism because of the disintegrating effect **tribalism** can also have on our whole national life. And has the ethnic problem not become a bane of the entire continent of Africa today? When I was in Switzerland (1972-1980), I wrote two letters to the Synod Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana about the danger of **tribalism** in the church. The then Synod Clerk, the Rev. A. K. Sah, wrote to tell me that he did not have the courage to pass on the first letter to the Synod Committee because the contents were too pungent…he returned the second letter to me because he found it more biting than the first one. It is noteworthy that in both cases he did not deny that there was **tribalism** in the church… (Dankwa, 1996: 20-21).

All attempts to find this letter referred to above proved futile. The Rev. A. K. Sah who was the Synod Clerk at the time could not remember the contents of the letters because of lapse of memory. He, however, admitted that the problem of tribalism was rather serious.

Tribalism in the PCG

The investigation of the level of awareness of tribalism in the PCG is based on written documents as well as information from field research. The field research includes the data gathered from a questionnaire administered, interviews conducted and from participant observation.

A questionnaire was administered to 350 members of the PCG, 280 of whom returned their responses. See appendix E for the Questionnaire.

The questionnaire contained both closed and open-ended questions. The Respondents of the questionnaire included:

- Ordinary Church Members   106
- Presbyters/Elders of PCG congregations   63
- Presbyterial Committee Members   11
- Synod Committee Members (the executive of Synod, the highest authority body in the PCG)   31
- Others made up of Pastors, Catechists/ Caretakers and Other Agents of PCG   69

In addition, twelve key leaders of the PCG from diverse backgrounds were interviewed using elements from the questionnaire. Please refer to appendix F for the interview. Their suggestions for the solution of the problems associated with ethnicity were also solicited. The 12 key leaders interviewed included:

- The Current Moderator, the spiritual head of the PCG;
- The Current Synod Clerk, the administrative head of the PCG;
- A Past Moderator;
- Three Past Synod Clerks;
- Two Presbytery Chairmen;
- Two Theological Educators
- Two Lay Persons, a Professor in African Studies and an Evangelical Women's Leader.

Questions for this study are analysed according to Status, Presbytery and Ethnic Group. The results are presented in tabular, chart and descriptive forms. Respondents were required to tick the appropriate box for the statement, "There is tribalism in the PCG".

TABLE 1 –Tribalism: Status of Respondent

STATUS	% Disagree	% Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Don't Know	% Nothing
Ordinary Church members	22.43	44.86	29.90	2.80	0
Presbyters	20.63	58.73	19.05	1.59	0
Presbyterial Committee members	9.09	54.55	36.36	0	0
Synod Committee members	45.16	41.94	12.90	0	0
Other (pastors/church agents)	17.65	55.88	22.06	1.47	2.94
Not applicable	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	22.86	50.71	21.79	0.71	0.71

Of the 280 respondents, about 23 percent disagreed that there is tribalism in the PCG. Fifty-one percent however agreed there is tribalism and about 22 percent strongly agreed that it exists in the PCG. Thus 73 percent of respondents agreed that tribalism is evident in the PCG.

Similarly, 11 out of the 12 interviewees responded that the negative form of ethnicity, tribalism, exists in the PCG and that it poses a threat to the Church's life and work. The reasons advanced are many and varied. Respondents who disagreed that there is tribalism in PCG stated that:

- "All Agents and members are treated equally".
- "Despite one's ethnic group, one can be posted to any area".
- "Most congregations/ presbyteries speak more than one language and are not always headed by natives".
- "As an institution there is no tribalism in PCG but for individual members, there is".
- "Appointments made in the Church are across all ethnic groups and it is on merit".
- "Pastors are accepted without complaining about their ethnic background".
- "The head of the Church at various times come from different ethnic groups".
- "Personally I have never been treated as such at any level".
- "The Church goes by the rules and regulations governing the institution".
- "Agents are posted not necessarily to their home presbyteries".

Respondents who agreed that tribalism exists in PCG however stated:
- "The Church itself has admitted this by making it an issue for discussion at Synod".

- "The pattern of postings and transfers of Agents lends credence to this fact. Presbyteries are saturated by their own tribesmen".

- "Most church members tend to sympathise with, support and fraternise with people of their ethnic group".

- "People often vote for individuals on tribal lines".

- "Some districts do not want pastors who cannot speak their language. Some do not want pastors from other tribes".

- "The ethnic names given to presbyteries is a clear indication".

- "The southern members do not regard the northern tribes among them".

- "There is serious segregation between southerners and northerners and they don't regard each other as partners".

- "There are tribalistic tendencies in all the congregations especially on the part of welfare schemes".

- "Ethnic groups love their members more than fellow Christians of different ethnic groups. We allow ethnic identity to influence our church elections".

- "This can be seen in Bawku congregation (in northern Ghana), where Southerners do not want to sing northern songs but expect Northerners to sing theirs."

- "We in the Tamale Rural and Urban districts (in the NMF) do not see each other as one people in the same Church".

The above answers are based on respondents' personal experiences or perceptions of the ethnicity phenomenon in the PCG.

To further probe the phenomenon of tribalism, four sampled presbyteries' responses are represented in the chart 1 below. To simplify our interpretation of the responses, we have combined the percentages of those who agreed and strongly agreed as agreed. Thus, unless otherwise specified, agreed represents respondents who agreed and strongly agreed.

About 32 percent of the 38 respondents from the Akuapem Presbytery denied the existence of tribalism in the PCG, whilst 60 percent acknowledged its existence in the Church. In the Asante Presbytery, the picture is similar to that of Akuapem. Thirty-two percent of the 31 participants disagreed that tribalism exists in the PCG, but 52 percent agreed and 16 percent strongly agreed that there is tribalism in the church. Thus 68 percent from the Asante Presbytery agreed that tribalism can be found in the PCG.
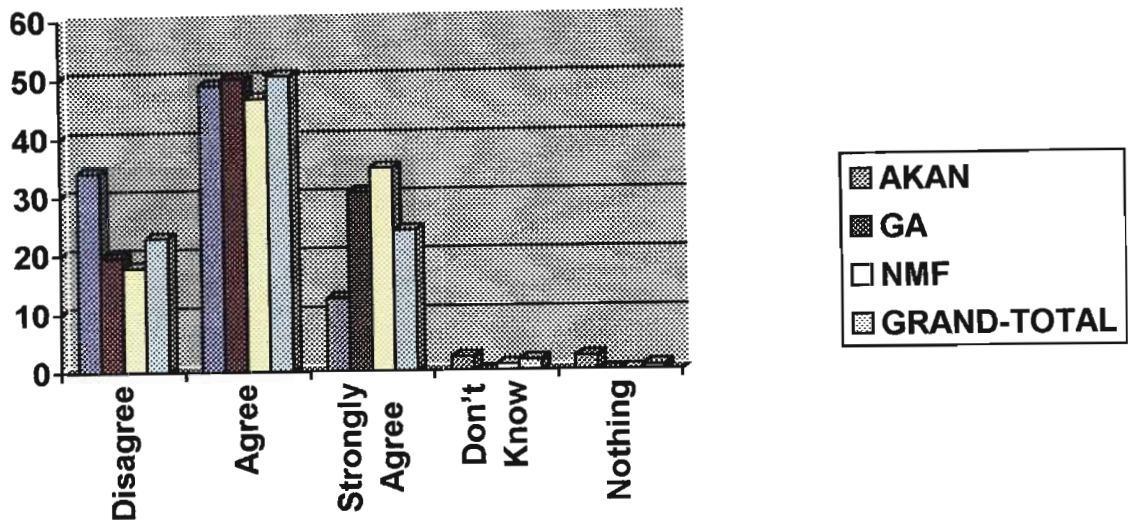
Chart 1- Tribalism: Presbytery
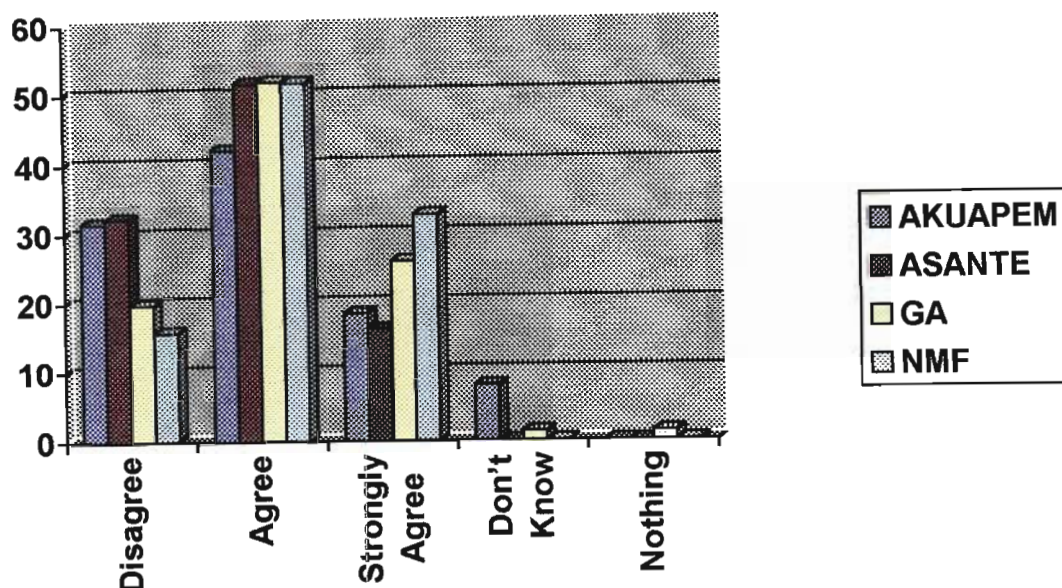
Of the 81 respondents, in the Ga Presbytery, about 20 percent did not agree that there is tribalism in the PCG. Fifty-two percent and 26 percent respectively admitted that there is tribalism in the PCG. In other words, 78 percent said there is tribalism in the PCG. A negligible percentage of the respondents either did not know or failed to fill portions of the questionnaire.

Sixteen percent of the 89 respondents of the NMF felt there is no tribalism in the PCG, but the majority felt tribalism is rife in the PCG. For instance, 52 percent agreed and 32 percent strongly agreed that tribalism exists in the Church. Hence 84 percent of respondents from the NMF acknowledged the presence of tribalism in the Church.

Significantly, the Akan presbyteries of Akuapem and Asante acknowledged a lower percentage of tribalism. These figures indicate that ethnic groups that are in the majority tend not to notice tribalism as much as those in the minority. In spite of the lower scores for the Akan presbyteries, the majority of their members still acknowledged the presence of tribalism in the PCG.

The subject of tribalism has been investigated from the perspective of ethnic groups too and shown in chart 2 below. The respondents of our questionnaire belong to twenty-two ethnic groups. We shall only look at the Akan, Ga and seven ethnic groups from the NMF. These ethnic groups (Dagomba, Mamprusi, Gonja, Builsa, Kusasi, Frafra, Kasena) are representative of the PCG's work among the ethnic groups in northern Ghana.

Chart 2 – Tribalism from the Perspective of Ethnic Groups

Legend:
- AKAN
- GA
- NMF
- GRAND-TOTAL

Categories (x-axis): Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Don't Know, Nothing

About 30 percent of the southern ethnic groups, which happen to dominate the PCG said there is no tribalism in the Church, whilst only about 18 percent of the northern ones said the same thing. However, about 49 percent of southerners and about 47 percent of northerners agreed that tribalism exists in the PCG.

Eighteen percent of Southerners and about 35 percent of Northerners strongly agreed that there is tribalism in the PCG. Thus 67 percent of Southerners and 82 percent of Northerners admitted that there is tribalism. This finding seems to suggest that Northerners feel the effect of tribalism much more because they are in the minority in the PCG.

When one compares the responses in terms of percentages between the Akan and the Ga, the picture is also revealing. Whereas 34 percent of the Akan did not agree that there is tribalism in the PCG, only 19 percent of the Ga are of that view. However, their affirmations of tribalism in the PCG are very close in terms of percentage – 49 percent for the Akan and 50 percent for the Ga. The picture is surprisingly different when we compare the responses of those that strongly agreed that there is tribalism in the PCG: as low as 13 percent for the Akan in contrast to 31 percent of the Ga interviewed. Furthermore, when we add up the percentages of the Akan who agreed and strongly agreed that there is tribalism in the PCG, it is only 62 percent as against those of the Ga, which is 81 percent. Thus, the Ga and the Northerners tend to feel tribalism more keenly than the dominant Akan group.

Out of the twelve persons interviewed only one blatantly denied the existence of tribalism in the PCG. The eleven acknowledged it and were very concerned about how the

PCG could combat it. Dr. A. A. Akrong's response concerning the presence of tribalism in the PCG is instructive and representative of those interviewed. According to him:

> Tribalism is a concept that has feelings. When people begin to manipulate the feelings it can be inimical to the church. It is usually a few who enjoy or benefit from the practice of tribalism. It allows one to be immoral (Akrong, 1999, interviewed).

The feelings associated with ethnicity are so strong that they even override rational reasoning. Akrong explains how these feelings can be manipulated. They (feelings) are usually excited, by appealing to people's fear of "the other people". For example, a statement like this might be made, "you behave as if you are not one of us" or "if you allow them, we won't have this post" (Akrong, 1999 interviewed). This can then induce people to vote for persons from their ethnic group who may not be qualified to hold certain positions, but because of tribalism they might vote for them. Freudian slips of people also reveal tribalism.

Freudian Slips Indicating Tribalism

A few examples of *Freudian slips* on ethnicity respondents shared are cited here for analysis. A northern pastor who was working in an Akan area cited his encounter with an Akan who told him:

> You are the first *pepe* (northerner) pastor I have met. We know you people as our labourers, toilet collectors and those who do our other menial jobs. Now that you are a pastor, do you expect me to receive the holy Communion from you?

For this Akan, a Northerner being a pastor is a misnomer, for the pastoral ministry has been perceived as a prestigious job fit for only Southerners. It could also be an expression of shock when he had to confront the reality before him that, something new was now taking place in the PCG. That is the fact that, the church is no more the monopoly of Southerners, but that, Northerners are now taking their place in it.

Another case of a *Freudian slip* occurred at the 1999 Asante Presbytery Conference. It was reported that, when a senior pastor of the PCG was making an appeal for financial support for a project, said, "If we can raise money to support 'strangers', (referring to the northern Christians from the NOP), why will we not all the more support our own Asante

people?" For this senior pastor, he regarded Asante people (Christians and non-Christians) as more of his people than his fellow Christians who are Northerners. It was good of him that when the NOP Co-ordinator of Asante protested against the remarks he realised the implications of what he had said, and then apologised.

In conclusion, the evidence from our data, suggests that **majority of Presbyterians agreed there is tribalism in the PCG.** Also, *the minority groups tend to notice it more than the dominant groups.* As we noted earlier, the unintentional statements that are made, otherwise known as *Freudian slips,* reveal people's true feelings inwardly towards somebody or something. The Freudian slips also confirm that there is tribalism in the PCG.

Relationship between Larger or Bigger Ethnic Group and Smaller Ones

The table 2 below presents the scores of respondents to the statement: " The larger ethnic groups tend to dominate the smaller ones". The responses are tabulated and analysed according to Status, Presbytery and Ethnic Group.

### TABLE 2 –Domination: Status of Respondent

STATUS	% Disagree	% Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Don't Know	% Nothing
Ordinary Church member	21.69	47.17	30.19	0.94	0
Presbyter	14.29	65.07	17.46	1.59	1.59
Presbyterial Committee member	27.27	45.45	27.27	0	0
Synod Committee member	41.93	48.39	9.68	0	0
Other (pastors/church agents)	27.54	46.38	21.74	2.89	1.45

From the above table 2, about 22 percent of Ordinary Church members disagreed with the statement that the larger ethnic groups tend to dominate the smaller ones. Seventy-seven percent, however, agreed and strongly agreed to the statement. Of the 63 percent Presbyters or Elders, about 14 percent of them disagreed with the statement whilst about 83 percent of them agreed and strongly agreed to the statement. Twenty-seven percent of the 11 Presbyterial Committee members disagreed that the larger ethnic groups tend to dominate the smaller ones but about 73 percent agreed that, that is the case. Of the 31 Synod Committee members, about 42 percent of them disagreed with the statement whilst about 58 percent agreed and strongly agreed with the statement. The respondents in the Other category are mostly Church Agents such as pastors. Whereas about 28 percent of them disagreed with the

statement, about 68 percent affirmed the validity of it. The percentage of those who did not know is very negligible – less than 3 percent. From the percentages of the responses of the respondents, we cannot ignore the claim that *larger ethnic groups tend to dominate ethnic minorities.*

Chart 3 gives the graphical representation of the score of the Presbyteries below.

Chart 3: Ethnic Domination - Presbytery
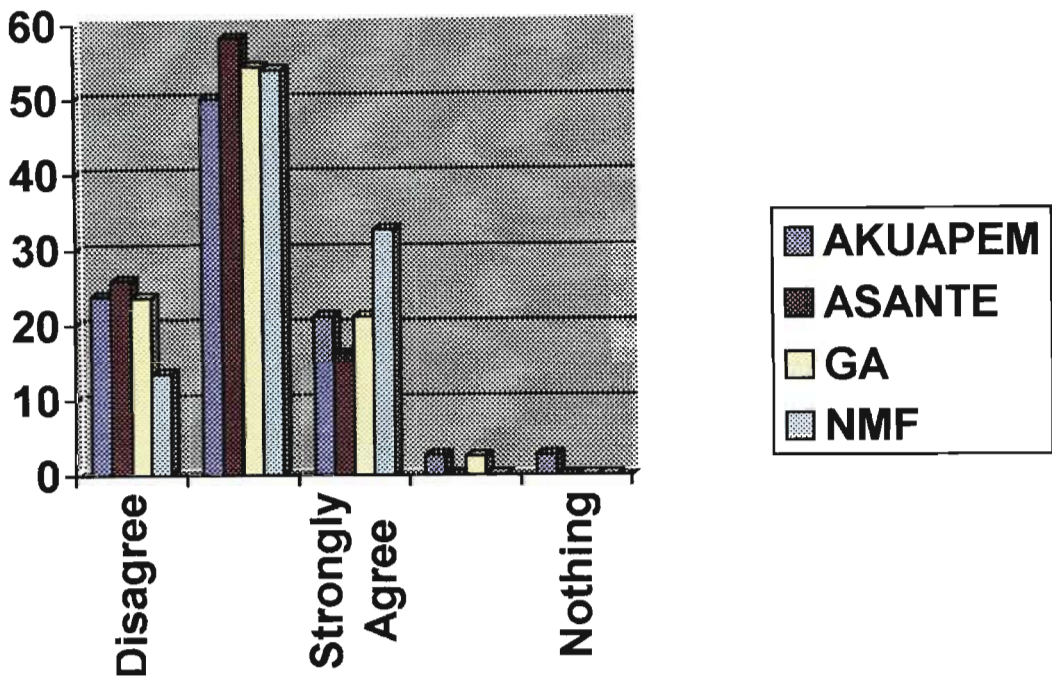
Domination is an index of the presence of *tribalism* or *ethnocentrism*. We now investigate if the presbyteries have similar scores or otherwise in chart 3 above. The respondents from the NMF had the least percentage score: about 13 percent of those who did not agree that there is ethnic domination in the PCG compared to 24 percent for the Akuapem and 26 percent for Asante Presbyteries. Asante Presbytery respondents had the highest score, indicating they do not experience ethnic domination in relation to other ethnic groups. It is significant to note that, all the Prebyteries had a majority of their respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing to the fact that larger ethnic groups have the tendency to dominate the smaller ones. The Northern Mission Field tops the list with about 86.5 percent, followed by the Ga and Asante Presbyteries with about 74 percent.

Chart 4 – Domination: Ethnic Group
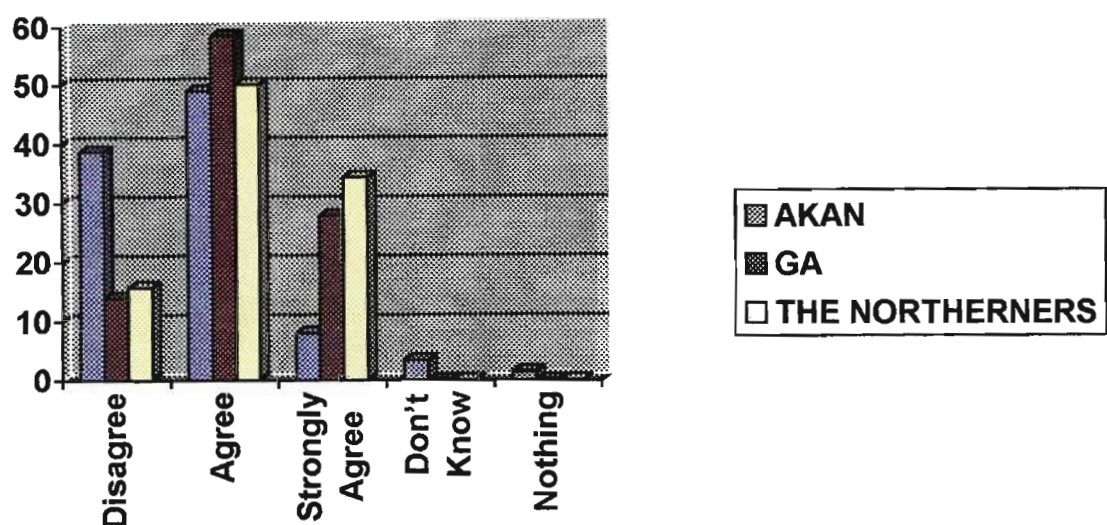
Grouping the two southern ethnic groups (Akan and Ga) together, we are in a position to determine the feelings and perceptions of Northerners as against those of Southerners as represented in chart 4 below. About 31 percent of the Akan and the Ga as against about 16 percent of northern respondents disagreed that larger ethnic groups tend to dominate the smaller ones.

Whereas only about 65 percent of Southerners agreed and strongly agreed that ethnic majorities tend to dominate ethnic minorities, the Northerners scored as high as about 84 percent. This high percentage representing Northerners' perception of ethnic domination might be the result of their experience as minority ethnic groups.

Recruitment of Church Agents

The Respondents responded to the statement: "Recruitment of Church Agents is influenced by the ethnic factor" tribalism being an aspect of it. Data in this section is also presented in tabular and descriptive forms as follows:

TABLE 3 - Recruitment: Status of Respondent

STATUS	%	%	%	%	%
	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Nothing
Ordinary Church members	42.45	38.68	13.20	4.72	0.94
Presbyters	41.27	28.57	15.87	4.76	9.52
Presbyterial Committee members	36.36	45.45	18.18	0	0
Synod Committee members	64.52	29.03	0	0	6.45
Other (pastors/church agents)	44.93	31.13	8.70	2.90	4.35

80

In the table above, about 42 percent of Ordinary Church members did not agree that recruitment of Church Agents is influenced by ethnicity. Those who agreed and strongly agreed that ethnicity influences recruitment represents about 51 percent and the rest did not know or made no response. Of the Presbyters, about 41 percent did not agree that ethnicity influences the Church's recruitment of her Agents. Those who agreed and strongly agreed that ethnicity plays a role made up about 44 percent and the rest did not know or left the space blank.

About 36 percent of the Presbyterial Committee members did not agree that ethnicity has a role in the recruitment of Church Agents whilst 63 percent agreed and strongly agreed it does. Thus, the latter make up about twice the percentage of the former. It could be presbyterial rivalry within the PCG that accounted for the higher percentage of those who agreed that ethnicity influences church recruitment of her agents. Some of the reasons the respondents gave are that:

- "In all church recruitment, the bigger ethnic groups are in the majority".
- "Some people can do better than others but because of their ethnic group they are looked down upon".
- "The Chairmen, (the heads of the presbytery) normally want people who can speak the language of the area".
- "Most agents are from their mother presbyteries".

About 65 percent of the Synod Committee Members did not agree that ethnicity influences church recruitment into both the Ordained and Lay ministry of the PCG. A lower percentage of about 29 percent thought ethnicity influences church recruitment. Some of the reasons advanced for their disagreement to the statement that, ethnicity influences the recruitment of Church Agents are:

- "All ethnic groups apply to be trained as Church Agents, and one's selection is based on one's ability to impress".
- "There is always an open examination and the successful ones are selected".
- "There is equal opportunity for both sexes and all tribal groups. Selection is done on merit".

About 45 percent of Church Agents did not agree that ethnicity plays a role in the recruitment of the Church's Agents. The average percentage of respondents who did not agree that ethnicity plays a role in the Church's recruitment of Agents is slightly lower, (that is, 45 percent) than that of those who agreed that it does (47 percent).

Chart 5 below consists of those presbyteries from which most of our sample came. Of the presbyteries in the focus group, the Northern Mission Field has the smallest percentage (about 36 percent) of those who did not agree that ethnicity influences the recruitment of Church Agents. The Ga and Asante Presbyteries are almost on a par in respect of percentages of those who disagreed that ethnicity influences the selection of church workers.

Chart 5 - Recruitment : Presbytery
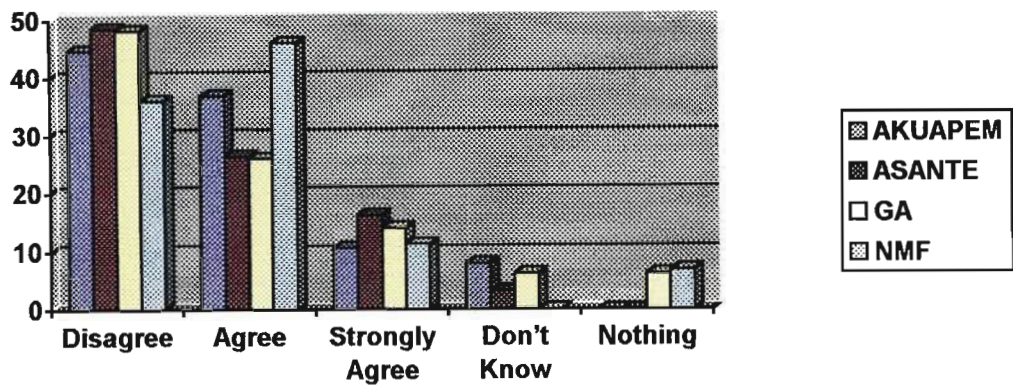
A difference of about 17 percent exists between the NMF (57 percent) and the Ga Presbytery with the least percentage (40 percent) of respondents agreeing that ethnicity influences Church recruitment. It is also noteworthy that, the percentage differences among respondents agreeing from the three southern presbyteries (Ga – 40 percent, Asante – 42 percent, Akuapem – 47 percent) are not great.

The average percentage of the respondents of the PCG's presbyteries who disagreed with the statement that, "ethnicity influences the recruitment of the Church's Agents" was on the high side. About 47 percent however agreed with the statement and those who did not know or have failed to provide answers is about 8 percent.

When we compare the responses between the Akan presbyteries (about 56 percent) and the Ga (about 42 percent) in Chart 5, there is a difference of about 8 percent. A higher percentage of the Akan presbyteries' membership did not agree that ethnicity influences the Church's recruitment of her Agents.

A graphical representation of the scores of ethnic groups to the statement that ethnicity influences elections at the presbytery level is shown in chart 6 below. Similarly a difference exists between the responses of the southern ethnic groups on the one hand and their northern counterparts on the other hand. About 52 percent of the former did not agree to

the statement as against about 41 percent of the latter. With respect to those who agreed that ethnicity influences recruitment at the presbyterial level, the northern ethnic groups scored a higher percentage than the southern ones, that is, about 53 percent for the Northerners and about 39 percent for the Southerners. There were however, no sharp differences amongst the different ethnic groups in their responses to the issue of recruitment as was the case involving tribalism. The reason might be that the church's recruitment procedures have improved over the years to address allegations of tribalism.

Chart 6 – Recruitment: Ethnic Group
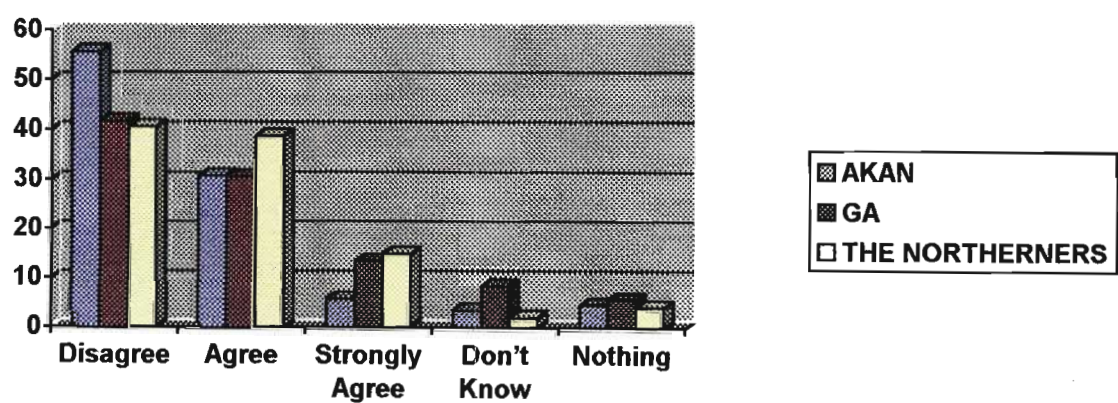
Those interviewed also acknowledged that ethnicity plays a role at the recruitment of church workers. This is usually done to ensure ethnic balance. Unfortunately, this is not always the reason, but "it is done to give one's ethnic group an unfair advantage over other ethnic groups" (Akrong, 1999 interviewed).

It came to light during our interviews that some church leaders recruited persons from their ethnic group to support them during elections and also to carry out their policies in the church. The rationale note is that one can expect to win the sympathy and loyalty of one's ethnic group (Antwi, 1996:8). One respondent told us that, a past Moderator enticed many persons from his ethnic group into the church's pastoral ministry for this reason. He was often heard appealing to members of his ethnic group as follows, *"bra be di ɔsɔfo"* (that is, come and be a pastor in Twi language). In this way he enticed many into the church, some of whom might not have had a "real call" (Questionnaire 27, 1999).

The consequence of his action was acknowledged at his handing over when he broke down and confessed he did wrong. It was explained that many teachers, security personnel who were about to go on retirement found their way into the church and this brought financial

strain to the church, because of their pensions that the church had not planned for. A more serious problem was an unprecedented indiscipline among some of these pastors, because the usual rigorous screening of persons preceding their recruitment was sacrificed on the altar of ethnicity, that is tribalism.

Presbyterial Elections

Elections to offices in the PCG is an area where ethnicity or tribalism in this case, is most likely to manifest itself; for the strong allegiance associated with tribalism would influence people to vote for people who are of the same ethnic group. The statement to which the respondents were invited to answer is: "Ethnicity influences the election of Church Officers at the presbytery level". The data are analysed from three angles: first, from the point of view of the Status of Respondents, Presbytery and then their Ethnic groups.

TABLE 4.1 - Presbyterial Election Status of Respondent

STATUS	%	%	%	%	%
	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Nothing
Ordinary Church members	22.64	51.89	19.81	3.77	1.88
Presbyters	26.98	44.44	11.11	7.94	9.52
Presbyterial Committee members	27.27	54.54	18.18	0	0
Synod Committee members	51.61	41.94	6.45	0	0
Other (pastors/church agents	27.54	42.03	23.19	4.35	2.90
TOTAL	28.21	46.79	17.14	4.29	3.57

About 23 percent of the 106 Ordinary Church members who filled the questionnaire did not agree that ethnicity influences the election of Presbyterial officers. When we put together the percentages of those who agreed and strongly agreed, we get a high figure of about 72 percent. It can therefore be concluded from this that, a marked difference exists between those who agreed and those who did not. About 5 percent of the Ordinary Church members either did not know or failed to answer whether ethnicity influences the election of church officers at the presbytery level or not.

Of the 63 Presbyters who responded, about 27 percent of them did not agree that ethnicity influences presbyterial elections, but about 55 percent agreed and strongly agreed it does. That is, about twice the percentage of the former. About 17 percent of them, however, did not either know or did not respond.

Whereas about 27 percent of the Presbyterial Committee members did not agree that ethnicity influences presbyterial elections, about 73 percent agreed and strongly agreed that is the case. It is of critical importance to note this high percentage from the presbyterial officers themselves. About 52 percent of the Synod Committee members did not agree that presbyterial elections are influenced by the ethnic factor whilst about 48 percent did.

Only approximately 27 percent of the "Other", consisting of different categories of PCG workers, did not agree that ethnicity influences the election of presbyterial officers. However, about 65 percent of them agreed and strongly agreed it does.

From the data analysed above, we can conclude that **tribalism influences presbyterial elections.** Apart from the Synod Committee members, all the other categories of respondents agreed that ethnicity influences elections at the presbytery level. The current Moderator is aware of this fact, hence during our interview with him, his prayer was that tribalism will give way one day so that, for an example, a non-Ga and non -Akuapem would be voted as Presbytery Chairmen of these presbyteries. The influence of tribalism during presbyterial elections is not a problem of only these two presbyteries just cited. It is a canker that is eating into the body politic of the PCG's presbyteries.

The responses of the various presbyteries have been presented in chart 7 below.

Chart 7 – Presbyterial Election: Presbytery
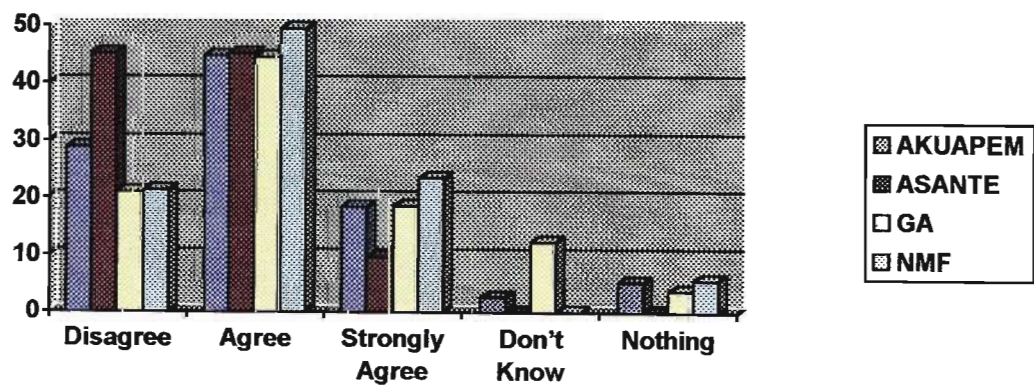
The Asante Presbytery has the highest percentage of respondents who disagreed that ethnicity or tribalism influences presbyterial elections. About 45 percent disagreed that ethnicity influences presbyterial elections. The lowest scores of about 21 percent each came from the Ga Presbytery and the NMF. Of those who agreed or strongly agreed, the highest score of about 73 percent came from the NMF, followed by the Ga and Akuapem

presbyteries with about 63 percent each. The Asante Presbytery had the lowest score of about 55 percent. It can be seen from the chart above that, differences in response are more marked between the NMF and the other southern presbyteries than among the southerners.

It is for the above reason that this section seeks to find out whether there would be any noticeable differences amongst the Akan, Ga and the Northern ethnic groups with regard to the question of the influence of ethnicity or tribalism on presbyterial elections. From chart 8 below the following scores are graphically presented.

About 38 percent of the Akan, 19 percent of the Ga and 17 percent of the Northerners did not agree that presbyterial elections are ethnically influenced. The Akan scored twice the percentage of that of the Northerners'. The scores of the Ga and the Northerners are close. About 55 percent of the Akan, 67 percent of the Ga, and 77 percent of Northerners agreed and strongly agreed that ethnicity influences elections at the presbytery level.

From the chart 8 below we can deduce that the Akan did not feel the effect of ethnicity like the ethnic minorities such as the Ga and the northern ethnic groups. Minorities are greater victims of ethnic abuse, hence they are very sensitive to its presence.

Chart 8 – Presbyterial Election: Ethnic Group
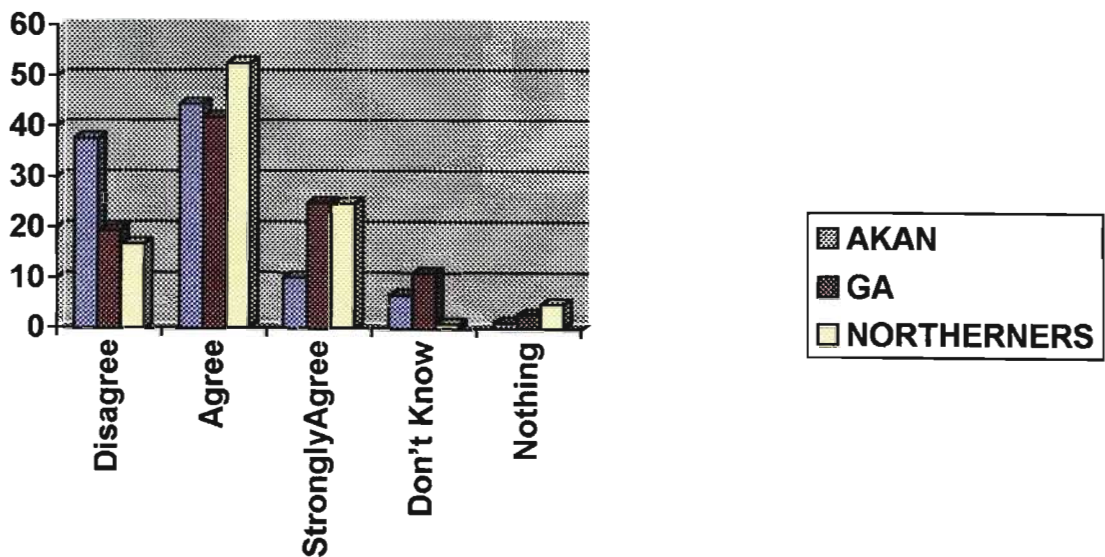
The Creation of Presbyteries and Mission Fields

Language and other ethnic factors are some of the reasons advanced for the creation of presbyteries and mission fields in the PCG. The responses of different categories of Church members concerning the extent to which ethnicity influences the creation of presbyteries and mission fields are tabulated below for analysis.

TABLE 5 - Creation of Pr and Mf: Status of Respondent

STATUS	% Disagree	% Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Don't Know	% Nothing
Ordinary Church members	31.13	43.40	17.92	3.78	3.78
Presbyters	34.92	38.09	15.87	3.17	7.94
Presbyterial Committee members	45.45	36.36	9.09	0	9.09
Synod Committee members	45.16	48.39	3.22	0	3.22
Other (pastors/church agents)	26.09	49.38	14.49	4.35	5.79
Not Applicable	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	32.86	43.93	14.64	3.21	5.36

About 31 percent of the 106 Ordinary Church members did not agree that ethnicity influences the creation of Presbyteries and Mission Fields, but 61 percent agreed and strongly agreed. The percentage of those who agreed with the statement is about twice those who disagreed. About 7 percent did not either know or failed to answer.

Whilst about 35 percent of Presbyters did not agree that ethnicity influences the creation of Presbyteries or Mission Fields, about 54 percent agreed with this view. About 11 percent however did not know if this is the case or left the space blank. Whereas 45 percent of the Presbyterial Committee members did not agree that ethnicity influences the creation of Presbyteries and Mission Fields, about 45 percent agreed, with 10 percent failing to provide any reasons or claiming ignorance.

In the case of the Synod Committee, about 45 percent did not agree with the statement, with about 51 percent answering in the affirmative whilst the rest claimed ignorance or left the answer space blank. Of those in the Other category, only about 26 percent of them did not agree. About 64 percent agreed and strongly agreed and about 10 percent failed to answer or claimed ignorance.

The average scores of respondents are: about 33 percent did not agree, whilst about 59 percent agreed and about 8 percent did not either know or left a blank space. The difference in percentage between those who did not agree and those who agreed is great.

In the analysis, the four presbyteries responded to the statement, "Presbyteries and Mission Fields are created along ethnic lines". We have grouped the Akan presbyteries in order to make comparisons between them and the Ga and then the NMF in chart 9.

Chart 9 – Creation of Pr and Mf: Presbytery
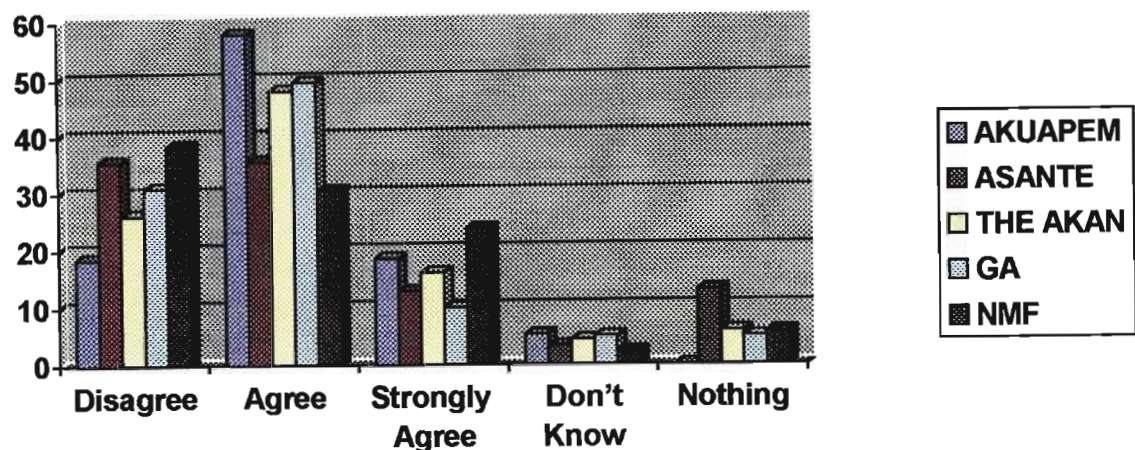
Whereas about 26 percent of the Akan presbyteries, 31 percent of the Ga Presbytery and 38 percent of the Northern Mission Field did not agree to the statement, about 64 percent, 59 percent and 54 percent respectively did. The highest percentage which disagreed with the statement came from the NMF. This could be attributed to their experience as being the most multi-ethnic of all the PCG's presbyteries. There are 37 ethnic groups in Northern Ghana (Barker, 1986:1).

Though the three southern presbyteries are named after Akuapem, Asante and Ga ethnic groups, one cannot do that with the NMF because of its many ethnic groups. It is an open secret that, though the presbyteries often say what the PCG wants to hear (that is for the promotion of evangelism and supervision) when requesting for the creation of presbyteries, the chief motivation perhaps is the ethnic factor. The acceptable pious reasons usually given are: "For effective evangelism, efficient administration and effective pastoral care." The discussions behind the scenes, however, are usually ethnically motivated. It is chiefly because one ethnic group does not want to be under another. This is seen in the way chiefs and their people throw their weight behind the church in the event of the creation of presbyteries or in the elevation of pastoral stations to districts. In such cases, lands, animals and pledges of

community support are given (Gyang-Duah 1988:116). There may be ethnic differences in response to the following statement: "Ethnicity influences the creation of Presbyteries and Mission Fields".

Chart 10 has three divisions – the Akan, Ga and seven ethnic groups of the NMF. In an ascending order, of those who disagreed, the Northerners scored about 26 percent, the Ga about 31 percent, and the Akan about 39 percent. Similarly, of those who agreed, that is those who agreed and strongly agreed, the Akan scored 53 percent, the Ga 61 percent and the Northerners about 66 percent. Whereas the Akan scored the highest of those who disagreed with the statement, they had the least percentage of those who agreed. The opposite is the case for the Northerners: they had the least percentage of those who disagreed and the highest of those who agreed. The Northerners' scores point to the fact that, those who are in the minority tend to be more aware of tribalism than those who are in the majority. The Ga maintain the second place in both because they are the second largest ethnic group in the PCG.

In conclusion, we have a strong reason to agree with the statement that **ethnicity plays a role in the creation of PCG's Presbyteries and Mission Fields.** The evidence can be found in the first erection of the earlier presbyteries: *Ga and Adangme, Akuapem and Anum, Agona-Kotoku, Akyem and Okwahu, Asante and Asante Akyem.* They all had ethnic labels (Kwansa, 1999, interviewed).

Chart 10 – Creation of Pr. and Mf.: Ethnic Group
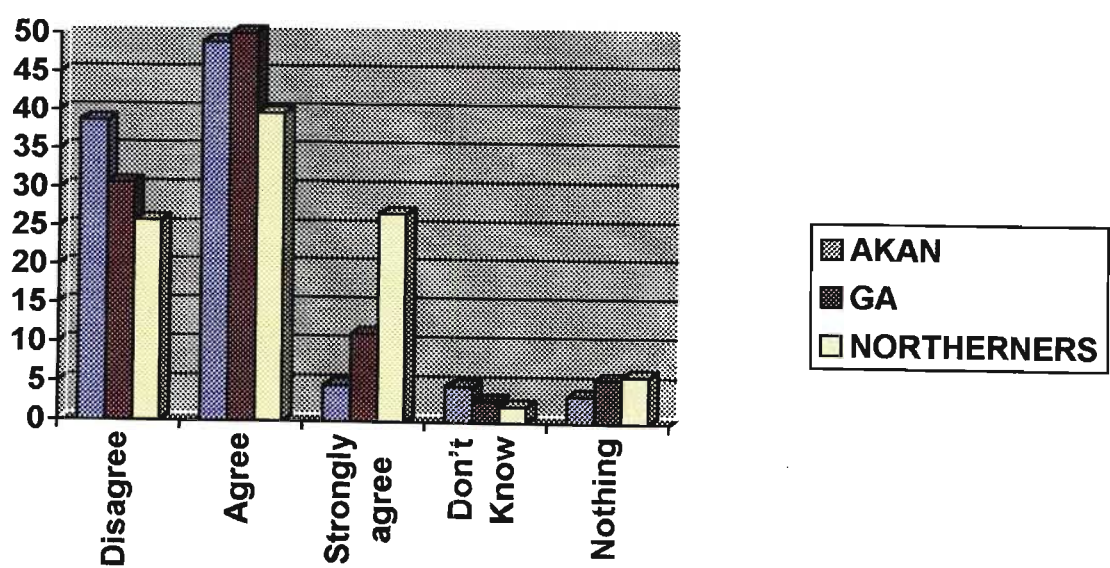
Synodal Elections

Elections constitute one area of complaint about ethnicity at the national level. It is for this reason that respondents were asked to respond to the statement: "Ethnicity influences the election of church officers at the synod level." The responses are presented below in table 6.

TABLE 6 - Synodal Election: Status of Respondent

STATUS	% Disagree	% Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Don't Know	% Nothing
Ordinary Church members	23.58	40.57	32.07	0.94	2.83
Presbyters	19.04	46.03	20.63	4.76	9.52
Presbyterial Committee members	18.18	54.54	27.27	0	0
Synod Committee members	38.78	54.83	6.45	0	0
Other (pastors/church agents)	17.39	50.72	21.74	7.25	2.89
Not applicable	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	22.50	46.42	23.93	3.21	3.93

It can be deduced from the scores that over 60 percent of each category of respondents agreed that ethnicity influences elections at the Synod level. The average score of all the respondents to the statement is about 70 percent. This indicates that, **more than two-thirds of PCG members feel the influence of ethnicity or tribalism on elections at the national level is great.**

The perceptions of the selected presbyteries on the relationship between ethnicity and Synodal elections are represented in Chart 11 accordingly.

Chart 11 – Synodal Election: Presbytery
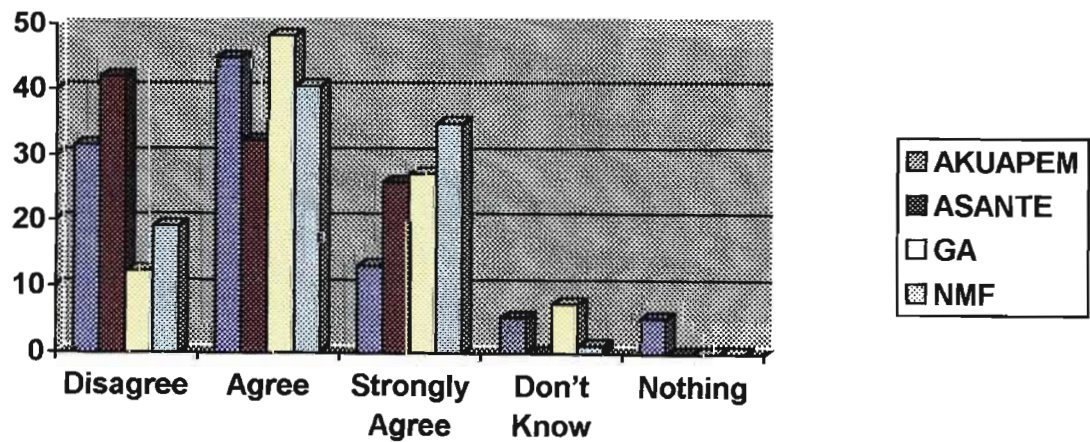
The scores reveal that Akuapem and Asante Presbyteries scored higher (32 percent and 42 percent respectively) in disagreeing that ethnicity influences elections at the Synodal level. These two presbyteries also scored lower in the affirmative compared to the Ga and NMF. Respondents in the NMF and the Ga Presbytery who disagreed that ethnicity influences Synodal elections scored about 19 percent and 12 percent respectively.

About the same figure of 58 percent of respondents in Akuapem and Asante agreed and strongly agreed that ethnicity plays a major role in elections of Synodal officers. Incidentally, about the same figure of about 75 percent was scored by respondents from the NMF and the Ga Presbytery. This again underscores the point that **ethnic minorities tend to feel the effects of ethnicity more than those from majority ethnic groups.**

The ethnic group of respondents to the question as to whether ethnicity influences elections at the Synodal level is shown in Chart 12.

Chart 12 – Synodal Election: Ethnic Group
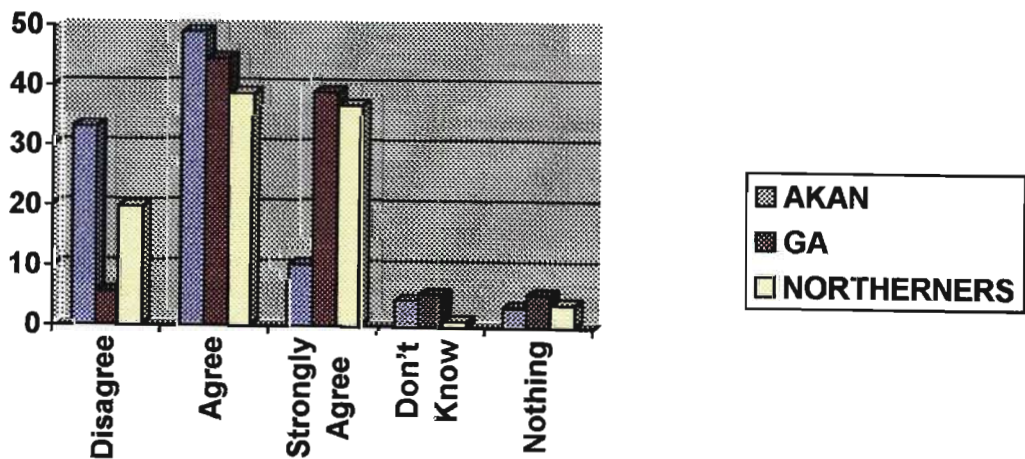
The responses of our respondents according to their ethnic groups are under consideration. As to whether ethnicity influences synodal elections, the responses are arranged in an ascending order: about 5 percent of the Ga, 20 percent of Northerners and 33 percent of the Akan did not agree that ethnicity influences synodal elections. Those who agreed and strongly agreed that it did, scored as follows: 59 percent of the Akan, 76 percent

of Northerners and 83 percent of the Ga. It can be inferred from the above that *Northerners and the Ga feel the effects of tribalism more than the Akan who are in the majority* as we pointed out earlier. We have listed below the Moderators and their ethnic groups for analysis:

Past Moderators and their ethnic groups

1. Very Rev. Peter Hall 1918-1922 (West Indian)

2. Very Rev. Nathanel Asare 1923-1924 (Guan, Akuapem from Adukrom)

3. Very Rev. William Augustus Quartey 1925-1929 (Ga-Dangme, Ga)

4. Very Rev. L. L. Richter 1930-1931 (Ga-Dangme, Ga)

5. Very Rev. E. C. Martinson 1932-1938 (Guan, Akuapem from Larteh)

6. Very Rev. S. S. Odonkor 1939-1950 (Ga-Dangme, Krobo)

7. Very Rev. E. V. Asihene 1951-1954 (Guan, Akuapem from Boso/Anum)

8. Very Rev. E. Max Dodu 1955-1958 (Ga-Dangme, Ga)

9. Very Rev. E. M. L. Odjidja 1959-1966 (Ga-Dangme, Krobo/Ga)

10. Very Rev. G. K. Sintim Misa, B.D. 1967-1978 (Akan, Akyem)

11. Very Rev. I. H. Frimpong 1979-1986 (Akan, Akyem)

12. Very Rev. D. A. Koranteng, B.D. 1987-1995 (Akan, Kwahu)

13. Very Rev. A. A. Beeko, B.A. 1995-1999 (Akan, Akyem)

14. Rt. Rev. Dr. Samuel Prempeh 1999- (Akan, Asante)

From 1967 to the present time, the Akan have monopolised the moderatorship. This development could be a case of manifest tribalism or a true picture of the church's relative strength among the various ethnic groupings. Tribalism cannot be ruled out in this development. That is, the Akan may be using their majority status to monopolise the Moderatorship.

Another way of interpreting the succession to PCG's Moderatorship, is to see it as revealing the fact that the centre of gravity of the Church has shifted from the Ga-Dangme area to the Akan area. Even among the Akan the centre has further shifted from the Akuapem to the Akyem, Kwahu and Asante peoples. Some of those interviewed predicted that in not a distant future the centre and leadership will be among the Northern ethnic groups (Frempong and Prempeh, 1999, interviewed). The election of Moderators usually brings about celebration of their ethnic groups.

Two cases are cited here to illustrate this assertion. At the 58th Synod of the PCG in August 1987, the newly elected Moderator in his maiden address to Synod said:

My choice was so much welcomed with much pride by my kinsmen, for it recorded the first time ever citizen of the 'Asaase Aban' the Okwahu traditional area to be Moderator of no mean a church as the PCG. We thank Synod (Koranteng D. A., 1987).

In a similar vein, the South Odorkor-Sakaman Presbyterian Church's magazine carried as its front page, *"First Asante-born Presbyterian Moderator in 80 years"*(July-September, 1999). Seven pages out of the magazine's twelve pages were devoted to the above headline story!

Winning an election at the Synodal level is not just an individual affair but an ethnic one. Thus the larger or bigger your ethnic group in the church, the more support you are likely to get. A list of past Synod Clerks is also given for the same purpose of analysis.

Past Synod Clerks and their ethnic groups

1. Rev. N. T. Clerk, 1918-1932, (West Indian)
2. Rev D. E. Akwa, 1933-1940 (Fante, Akan from Agona)
3. Rev M. A. Obeng 1941-1949, (Akan, Akuapem)
4. Rev C. H. Clerk, 1950-1954, (Ga-Dangme/West Indian)
5. Rev A. L. Kwansa, B.D., 1955-1969, (Akwamu, Akuapem)
6. Rev T. A. Osei, B.D., 1970-1974, (Guan, Akuapem)
7. Rev A. K. Sah, B.D., 1975-1985, (Akan, Asante)
8. Rev E. S. Mate-Kodjo B.D., 1985-1995, (Ga-Dangme, Krobo)
9. Rev Dr. Ofosu Adutwum, 1995-1997, (Brong, Akan) – was removed
10. Rev Nii Teiko Dagadu, 1997-1999, (Ga-Dangme, Ga) acting Synod Clerk
11. Rev Dr. Charles Gyan-Duah, 1999-, (Akan, Brong)

An examination of the succession of the positions of the Moderators and Synod Clerks reveals there has been conscious efforts to ensure ethnic balance in the past. For example when a Ga-Adangme was Moderator, the Synod Clerk was an Akan and vice versa. The exceptions have been where there were overlaps. The other exceptions were during the 1994 and1998 elections when both the Moderators Synod Clerks were Akans. The Guan have also played a significant role in the leadership succession of the PCG. The assertion that no one ethnic group dominates in the PCG's leadership is therefore credible to some extent (Frempong, and Prempeh, 1999, interviewed).

Views of those Interviewed on Synodal Elections

When it comes to election of church officers, the first consideration is ethnicity, "why don't I select someone from my ethnic group so that he can give me favours" (Akrong, 1999 interviewed). Akrong thinks this kind of reasoning is a reflection of the ethnic bias in the modern state. He notes that:

> In our nation building process, we have to bring together many ethnic groups from different backgrounds. Unfortunately, bitter history before the amalgamation – both pre and post colonial times affect relations. People still look at each other on the basis of that history and this tends to create problems for nation building and the church. People have not yet developed what I call national consciousness or a universal church consciousness (Akrong, 1999, interviewed).

Thus most people look at the state and the church from the parochial perspective of their ethnic groups. The church therefore has in her mission, the obligation of addressing the histories of her members' ethnic groups, so as to achieve inter-ethnic reconciliation. This task is central as the church is both the fruit and agent of God's reconciliation.

Prejudice and Ethnic Rivalry in PCG

The respondents were asked to react to the statement: " Prejudices and ethnic rivalries exist among the different ethnic groups in the PCG". Prejudice and ethnic rivalry in a church are indicators of the presence of tribalism within her. The responses to the questionnaire generated these data.

TABLE 7 - Prejudice/ Ethnic Rivalry: Status of Respondent

STATUS	% Disagree	% Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Don't Know	% Nothing
Ordinary Church members	18.87	44.34	22.64	2.83	11.32
Presbyters	19.05	52.38	15.87	3.17	9.52
Presbyterial Committee members	18.18	27.27	27.27	9.09	18.18
Synod Committee members	45.16	48.39	6.45	0	0
Other (pastors/church agents	30.43	37.68	13.04	2.90	15.94
Not Applicable	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	24.64	44.29	17.14	2.86	11.07

About 18 percent of Presbyterial Committee Members, 19 percent of the Ordinary Church members, 19 percent of Presbyters, 45 percent of Synod Committee members and 30 percent of the Others did not agree that prejudices and ethnic rivalries exist in the PCG. However, those who agreed that they exist scored higher: about 67 percent of the Ordinary Member, 68 percent of Presbyters, 55 percent of the Synod Committee Members, 54 percent of Presbyterial Committee Members and 51 percent of the Other category.

The average score of the respondents is about 61 percent. It is the Ordinary Church members and Presbyters who scored higher than this average, and this may suggest that they are more likely to notice it than the others. The various presbyteries have different scores on their views of prejudice/ethnic rivalry as captured in chart 13 below.

Chart 13 – Prejudice/ Ethnic Rivalry: Presbytery
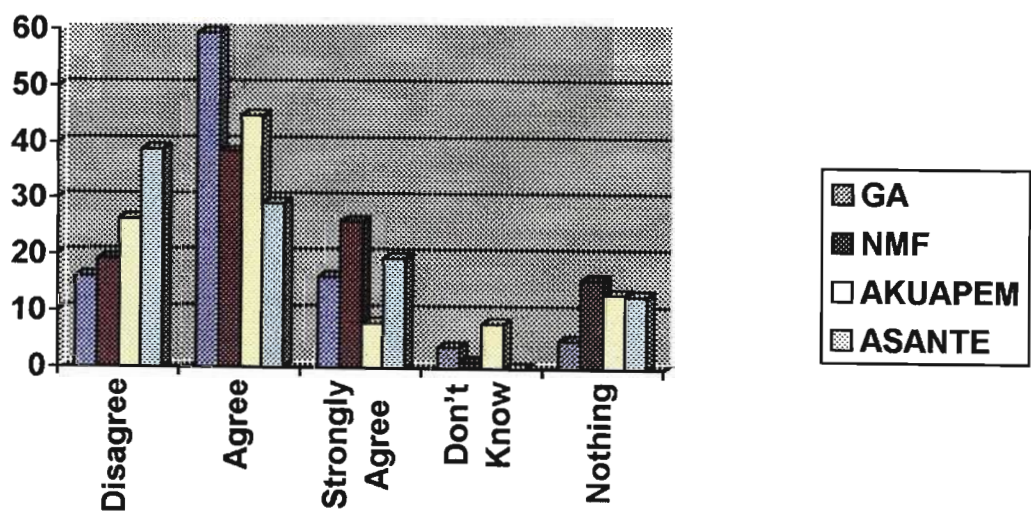
Asante Presbytery has the highest percentage of respondents denying the existence of inter-ethnic prejudices and rivalries. Consequently, it has the least percentage of those agreeing with the statement. Though this presbytery is heterogeneous ethnically as the other presbyteries, assimilation of other ethnic groups by the Akan is very strong. Paradoxically, the Akan seem to be impervious to assimilation from other ethnic groups.

The Akan, Ga and Northern ethnic groups are hereby focused on to ascertain if there would be any marked differences amongst them in terms of their perceptions in chart 14.

Chart 14 – Prejudice/Ethnic Rivalry: Ethnic Group
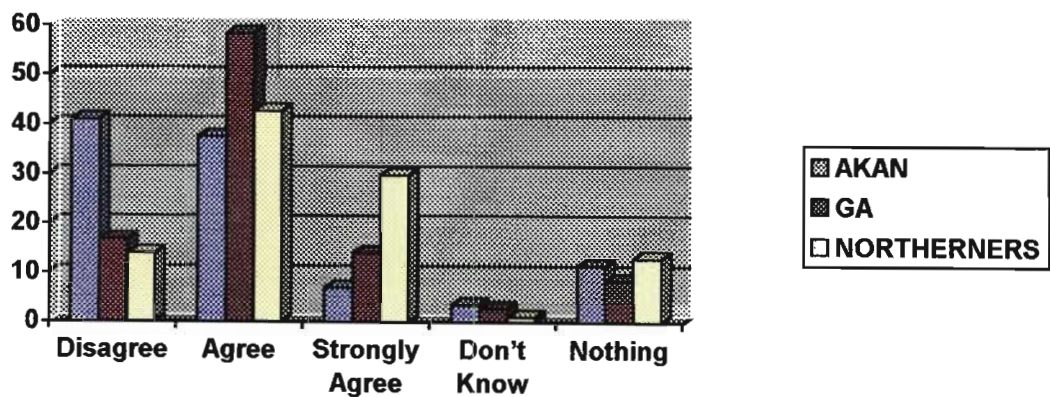
Whereas about 41 percent of the Akan did not agree that the inter-ethnic prejudices and rivalries exist in the PCG, only about 14 percent of Northerners and about 17 percent of the Ga hold this perception. Of those who agreed and strongly agreed that these exist, the Akan constitute only about 44 percent in contrast to about 70 percent for the Ga and 72 percent for the Northerners. There is a marked difference between the Akan on the one hand as against the Ga and the Northerners on the other.

Prejudices and ethnic rivalries cannot be dismissed as non-existent in the PCG historically. Two examples cited below indicate that prejudices and ethnic rivalries exist in the PCG. The Reverend S. K. Aboa cites the first example to illustrate how prejudice and ethnic rivalries have affected the PCG in the past. He explained that:

> When the office of the Moderator of the Synod of the PCG and that of Synod Clerk were created as full time office in the late forties and a site for residences and offices was being considered, it was a tussle between Akan and Ga-Adangme speakers. Eventually a compromise was found. It was decided that the Moderator would stay in Osu and his office would be sited there while the residence of the Synod Clerk

would be in Akropong-Akuapem. Later, however, the residences and offices of the two were moved to Accra (Aboa S. K., 1999, interviewed).

The second example is in connection with the formation of Akan congregations in the Ga Presbytery. The Adabraka Official Town Presbyterian Church (AOTPC) on the occasion of her elevation to district status on 11th March 1990 wrote:

> Nineteen years ago, the idea of having a congregation comprising people of Akan stock in the centre of Accra, to some people, was like a bad dread that ought not to be remembered for its 'obscenity'. Today, it is a laudable venture, for 'by their fruit ye shall know them' and in like manner, Official Town has been made known (AOTPC Anniversary brochure, 1990:7).

Citing an incident preceding the formation of this Akan congregation, the Anniversary brochure wrote:

> On 9th August, 1971, at 5.15 p.m. this group of men and women that formed the nucleus of the Official Town Presbyterian Church met to prepare their resolution on the formation of a new congregation. At 6.00pm, they had five visitors whose mission was to summon the group to appear before a joint session of the Adabraka and Accra Central (Resurrection) Presbyterian Churches [both of which were mainly Ga-speaking, (AOTPC Anniversary brochure, 1990:7f)].

The Adabraka Official Town is a pastoral district of Accra just like Adabraka and Accra Central. The initial members to form the AOPTC were drawn from the Adabraka and Accra Central (Resurrection) congregations.

Prejudice and ethnic rivalries are mostly evident in the urban centres whose populations are usually heterogeneous. Fear and suspicion of other ethnic groups can rob the church of peace and unity. The current Synod Clerk recalled how this crept into the PCG and threatened its unity between 1997 and 1999. The relationship between the Akan and the Ga was at its lowest ebb. The immediate cause was a misunderstanding between two senior officers who happened to be Akan and Ga. The trend of the discussions was shifted from the real issue of resolving the impasse between the officers to accusation of the Akan against the Ga and the vice versa. The current administration of the PCG has taken measures to normalise the relation between these two dominant ethnic groups.

Prejudices and ethnic rivalries are not issues restricted to the Akan-Ga relationship. It is also an issue between Southerners and Northerners. It is even amazing to discover that these prejudices and rivalries exist amongst the various Akan groups. A respondent confirmed the intra-Akan rivalries by citing tensions within PCG's congregations in London and Toronto. Apart from these intra-Akan rivalries, the non-Akan PCG members feel marginalised. For this reason there are some non-Akan PCG members who rather worship in other denominations other than the PCG (Questionnaire 30,1999). Ethnicity affects appointments.

Appointments in PCG

The responses to this statement: "Church appointments are also influenced by the ethnic factor" are represented in chart 15. The Appointments here refer to church offices that are not elected positions. From the chart below, we can infer that: Of the 106 Ordinary members, about 32 percent did not agree with the statement above whilst about 59 percent agreed and strongly agreed with the statement. Whilst about 44 percent of the Presbyters disagreed with the statement, only about 38 percent agreed. Similarly, most Presbyterial and Synod Committee members, that is, about 64 percent and 71 percent respectively, disagreed with the statement.

Chart 15 - Appointments: Status of Respondent
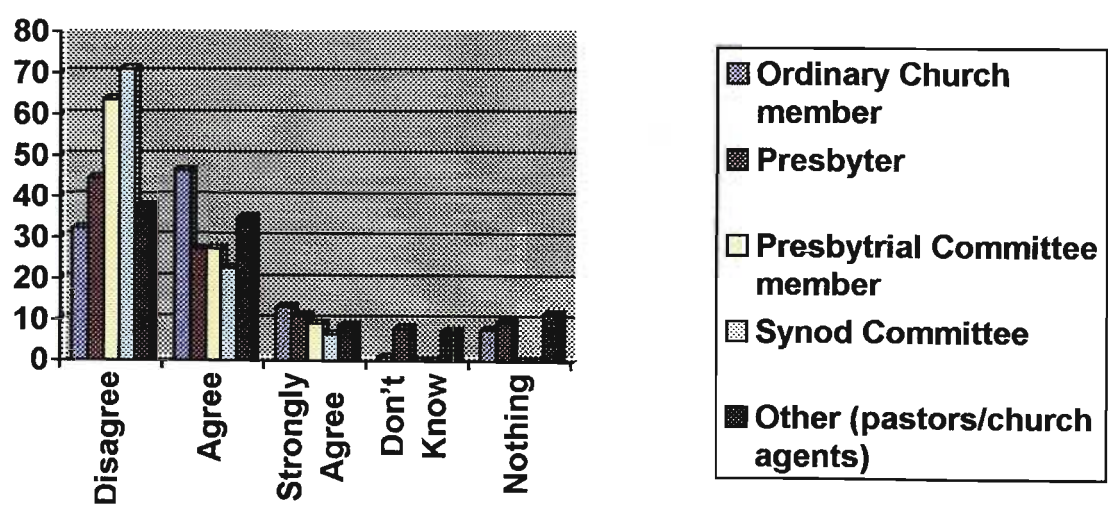
Of those in the Other category consisting of Church Agents, about 38 percent of them disagreed with the statement whilst about 43 percent agreed. The average percentages of the

scores stand as follows: about 42 percent did not agree, 46 percent agreed and strongly agreed and about 12 percent did not know or had not answered.

The high scores of the Presbyterial and Synod Committees cannot be allowed to pass without comment. Two reasons might be advanced for this: first, it might be a case of self-defence on the part of the Synod Committee or that, there is genuine impartiality of the various committees of the Church handling appointments. The percentage difference between those who agreed with the statement and those who disagreed is marginal for both.

The responses of our sampled Presbyteries to the statement: "Church appointments are also influenced by the ethnic factor" are recorded and then analysed in chart 16 accordingly. The scores below in an ascending order stands as: about 26 percent of the NMF, 43 percent of the Ga, 47 percent of the Akuapem and 51 percent of the Asante Presbyteries did not agree that the ethnic factor influences PCG's appointments. The scores in an ascending order for those who agreed that, the ethnic factor influences church appointments are 39 percent for Asante, 41 percent for Ga, 45 percent for Akuapem Presbyteries, and 62 percent for the NMF. The Northern Mission Field's high score is understandable for its agents seem to be least considered for Church appointments. One of the respondents noted that until recently even the Chairman of the NMF was not a Northerner. Could it have been the case that in the earlier times a credible Northerner was not available or was it a case of deliberate marginalisation?

Chart16-Appointments:Presbytery
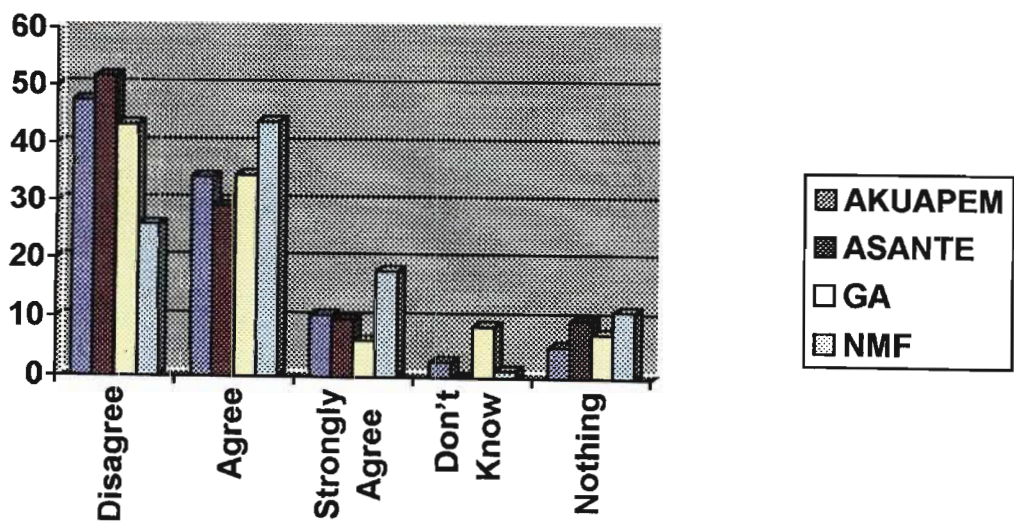
This section seeks to investigate if there are any differences in the responses of the Akan, the Ga and Northerners. Chart 17 gives the graphic representation of the scores below.

Chart 17 – Appointments: Ethnic Group
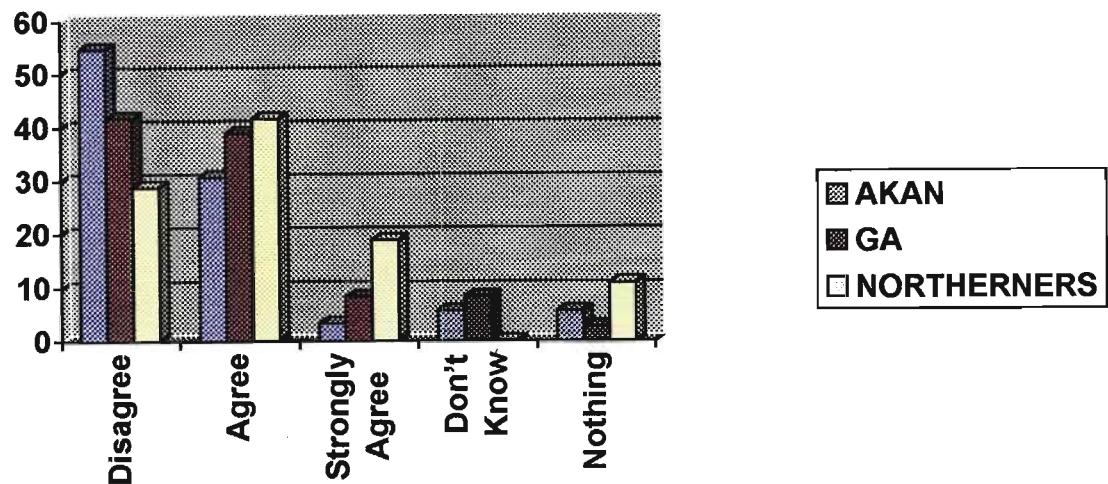
Whereas about 55 percent of Akans did not agree that PCG's appointments are influenced by the ethnic factor, about 60 percent of Northerners agreed that the ethnic factor does influence church appointments. The Ga are second on both sides of the statement.

The Northern members of the PCG generally feel they are marginalised hence their perception of the PCG as "Kanbonga" that is, Akan Church. They noted that even the Ga who are the second largest ethnic group in PCG are marginalised. A case cited to buttress this perception is the composition of the current Synod Committee. The composition suggests that the Akan have monopolised all the appointments with none given the Ga. This observation has been supported by the fact that, not even a single Ga is on the Synod Committee.

If the reason for the non-inclusion of the Ga on the current Synod Committee is due to their unsuitability, then it is understandable. However, if the reason is because of ethnic struggle and "the winner takes all" it should give us cause to worry.

Dissatisfaction of Language Use in the PCG

In this section, the respondents provided answers to this statement: "There is dissatisfaction among some ethnic groups because of the language(s) used in Church

services". Where tribalism exists, there is bound to be dissatisfaction with the language(s) used in Church services These responses have been tabulated and analysed in table 8 below.

TABLE 8 - Language Use Dissatisfaction: Status of Respondent

STATUS	% Disagree	% Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Don't Know	% Nothing
Ordinary Church members	13.21	41.51	42.45	0	2.83
Presbyters	11.11	53.97	30.15	0	4.76
Presbyterial Committee members	9.09	36.36	45.45	9.09	0
Synod Committee members	25.81	48.39	22.58	0	3.22
Others (pastors/church members	15.94	47.83	28.98	4.35	2.90
Not Applicable	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	14.64	46.43	34.28	1.43	3.21

The scores of the different categories of respondents who did not agree with the statement are presented in an ascending order: about 9 percent of Presbyterial Committee members, 11 percent of Presbyters, 13 percent of Ordinary Church members, 16 percent of those in Other category and 26 percent of the Synod Committee members.

However, the percentages of respondents who agreed and strongly agreed with the statement are high for all the different categories of respondents. Seven-one percent of the Synod Committee members, 77 percent of those in the Other category, 82 percent of the Presbyterial Committee members and 84 percent of the Presbyters as well as the Ordinary Church members. The average score of all the respondents is about 80 percent.

The high scores of the different categories of the respondents present an unequivocal message that **language use is a big problem facing the PCG.** The way language is used in church services tends to exclude some ethnic groups and this might be motivated by tribalism. This motive might not actually be recognised, but rather revealed in a subliminal response. This particular problem has led to the splitting up of congregations, and then leaving bitterness and suspicion in those partings.

The Presbyteries' views on the language issue are tabulated and analysed according to the four presbyteries in Chart 18 below. About 7 percent of the NMF, 12 percent of the Ga, 18 percent of Akuapem and 26 percent Asante showed dissatisfaction with language use in church service. Those who agreed or strongly agreed that, there is dissatisfaction with the use of language in Church services far outstrips those who disagreed as the percentages in an ascending order show: about 71 percent of Akuapem, 77 percent of Asante, 85 percent of Ga and 88 percent of the NMF.

From the scores of the Presbyteries, the Ga Presbytery and the Northern Mission Field have high figures confirming dissatisfaction with language(s) used in the Church services. Their ethnic heterogeneity could account for this picture. Therefore the high scores are not surprising given the heterogeneity of the populations of these areas.

The average score of the Presbyteries stands as follows: about 14 percent did not agree whilst as high as 81 agreed that there is dissatisfaction in the use of language in Church services. PCG Agents and their congregation may have to scientifically assess the language needs of their members in order cater for all their multi-ethnic membership. The present migratory nature of Ghanaian population challenges the old assumptions that the church in a particular geographical location is homogenous. Most PCG congregations are heterogeneous and therefore call for multi-lingual services, so that all members can feel at home. Though this is not an easy task, the hard work and creativity needed from church Agents to realise this dream is worth it.

Chart 18 – Language Use Dissatisfaction: Presbytery
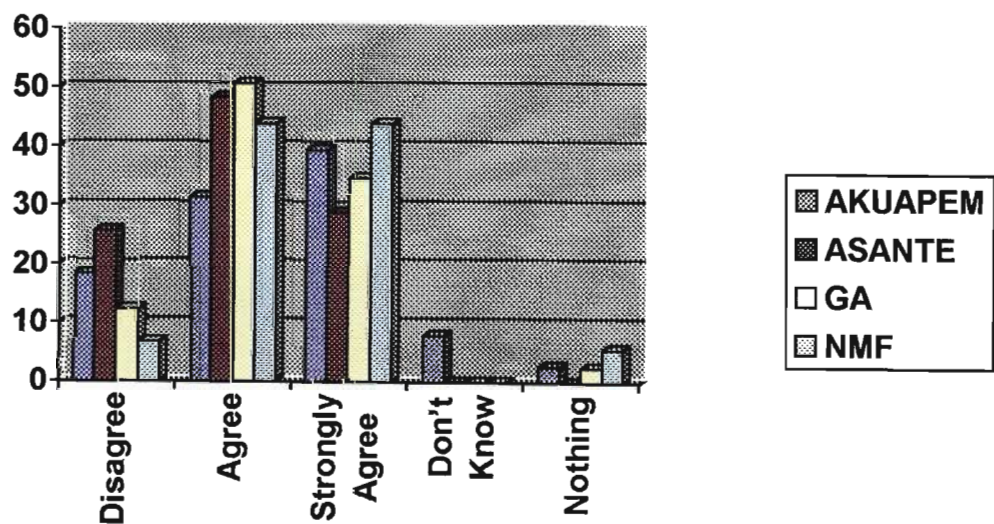
When analysed by ethnic groups as in chart 19; it reveals the following findings below. The Akan recorded the highest percentage (about 22 percent), followed by the Ga (about 17 percent) and then Northerners (about 6 percent) respondents' disagreement that there is dissatisfaction. An overwhelming majority of the respondents acknowledged dissatisfaction with language usage in the PCG.

As high as about 90 percent of the Northern ethnic groups agreed there is a great dissatisfaction in the use of language in the PCG Church services. The language coupled with cultural differences between Northerners and Southerners have been the two main obstacles to the evangelisation of Northerners by Southerners (The Task 1989:2f).

Although the dissatisfaction with the language used in church services is acute with regard to Northerners, it is a national problem. It was this problem which led to the formation of "Twi" and "Ewe" congregations (Dovlo, 1993:41f and Ohene-Adu, 1982:1ff). Both writers refer to an incident that inevitably led to the establishment of "Ewe" and "Akan" congregations which hitherto were worshipping with the "Ga" at Adabraka in Accra. It is alleged that the then Moderator, the Rt. Rev. E. Max Dodu, vehemently objected to the practice of translating the sermon into "Ewe" and "Twi" (Dovlo, 1993:41f and Ohene-Adu, 1982:1ff). It was the same reason, that is the language barrier, which accounted for the unwillingness of most Northerners to attend church in southern Ghana prior to the emergence of the Northern Outreach Programme. The Northern Outreach Programme seeks to present the Gospel to Northerners in their mother-tongue.

Chart 19 – Language Use Dissatisfaction: Ethnic Group
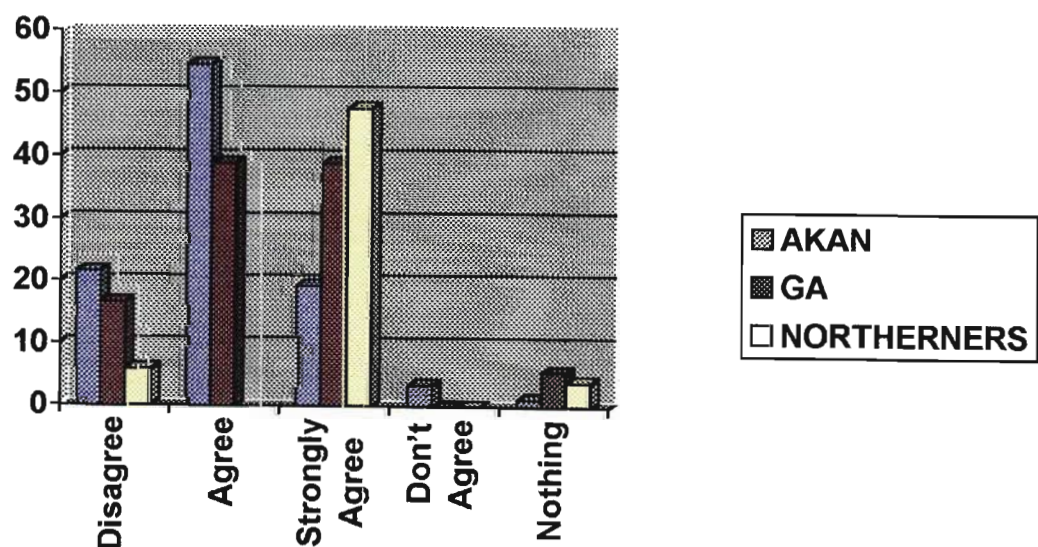
The church leaders who negotiated the aborted Church Union acknowledged the issue of language use in services. In the PCG's 40th Synod Minutes held at Osu in 1969, there is a document (please refer to appendix D) on satisfying or responding to the language needs of

all peoples. This has been summarised below to show the meticulous way these leaders provided a helpful guide which, if it were followed, might not have given rise to the numerous "tribal churches" now in the Ga Presbytery.

The church leaders advised that if there is a minority of members of another church attached to one's congregation, "special care should be taken to avoid friction and to make the minority feel as much at home as possible". The motivation for this caution stemmed from the fact that God called Christians "to demonstrate a unity that is stronger than human differences" (PCG's 40th Synod Minutes, 1969).

In a case where different language groups exist in one's congregation, the church leaders are called upon to promote peaceful co-existence between them. They argued this way because to them,

> ...every congregation of Christ's people is a fellowship in which differences of tribe, language, class and politics have been overcome by the cross of Christ. This is vitally important at a time when we hear on all sides about the danger of "tribalism" in the life of Ghana. The best contribution of Christians to fighting that evil is to demonstrate within our congregations a unity that is stronger than language or tribal differences (PCG's 40th Synod Minutes, 1969).

Some of the practical ways of achieving Christian unity as a way of combating tribalism in the church include among others:

> announcing hymn numbers for different languages, Bible readings and interpretation in different languages, inviting occasionally preachers of minority language, encouraging singing bands of different language to contribute to the worship (PCG's Synod Minutes, 1969).

The Church leaders did not rule out the possibility of holding separate services for different language groups which remains part of one congregation. They advised the different language groups however to avoid setting up different congregations to serve their different language groups. The leaders also acknowledged the fact that there might be some situations in which "a new congregation using a different language is really needed for the evangelisation and instruction of a large group of people in town". Even in that situation, the leaders still admonished that such a congregation should realise that "it is a congregation for Jesus Christ, open to all and it is not the exclusive preserve of one language group or tribe. So the name of a new congregation of this kind should not include any reference to language or tribe"(PCG's Synod Minutes, 1969).

The leaders advocated further that "any new single language congregation in a mixed community should see that it joins from time to time in activities with congregations using other languages". It is hoped that this move would keep its members from "forgetting that the unity in Christ must overcome language divisions" (PCG's Synod Minutes, 1969).

Conclusion

From the evidence gathered from the literature and research, we can conclude that *there is tribalism in the PCG*. The research also has revealed that the Synod Committee, (an Akan majority) and the Akan presbyteries that is, the Akuapem and Asante, tend to play it down. The other categories of respondents especially the *ethnic groups in the North unequivocally agree that there is tribalism in the PCG*.

Tribalism is seen to be more evident in elections than in the Church's recruitment and appointments of members. There is unanimous perception that the language(s) used in the PCG's services cause dissatisfaction among some ethnic groups, especially the minority ones. The front-page picture of the PCG's 150th Anniversary Celebration Brochure on page 106 shows how ethnicity is unconsciously displayed to exclude ethnic minorities especially those from the northern Ghana.

Generally, the issues of tribalism and ethnic expressions have been acknowledged even in the Church's recruitment and appointments. Even where the ethnic majorities want to deny or play it down they have not been successful because a higher percentage of their membership admits its reality.
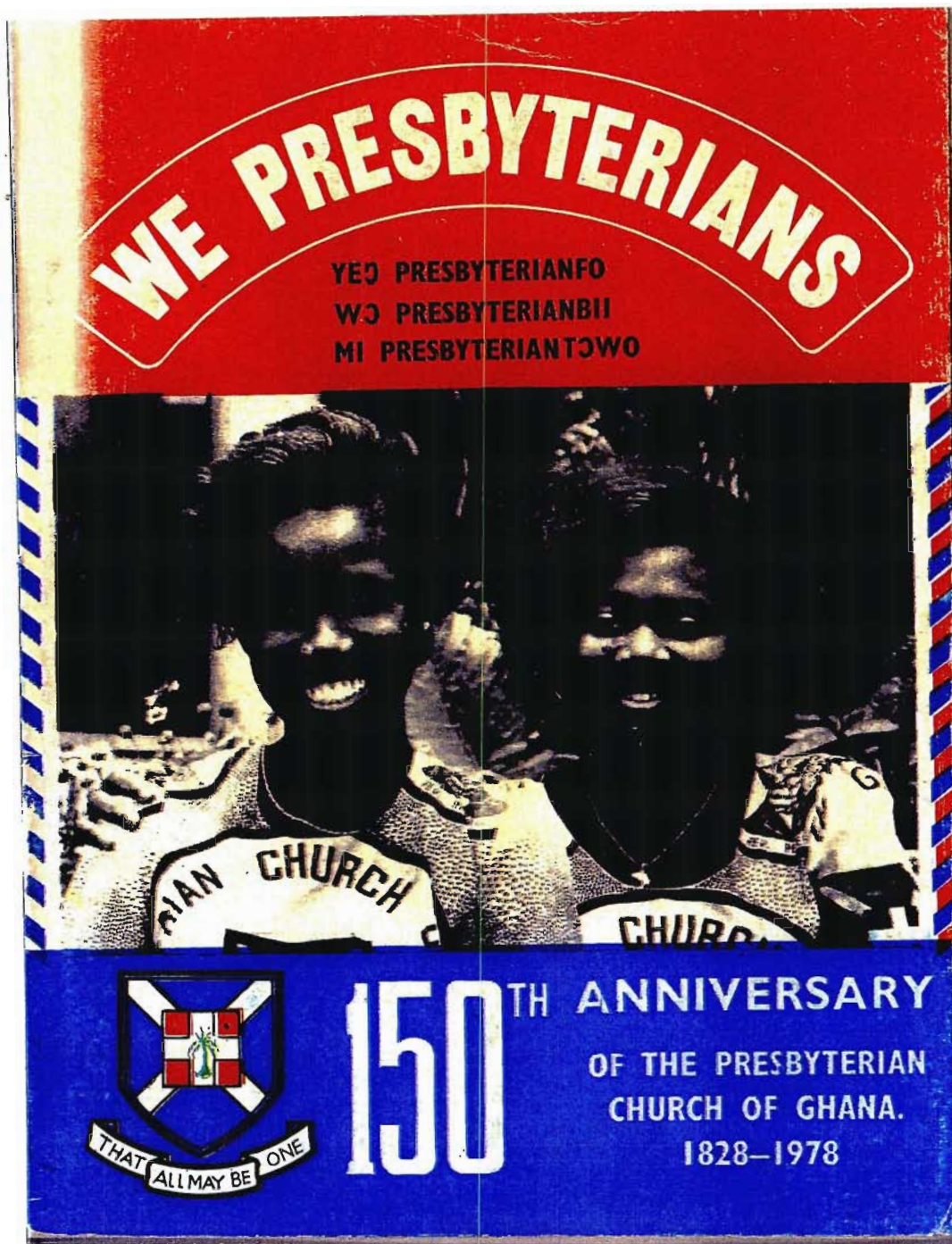
The PCG's Emblem on her 150th Anniversary. Note that "We Presbyterians" has been translated into only Southern languages (Twi, Ga and Ewe). Where were the northern Ghanaian languages?

CHAPTER FIVE

ETHNICITY AND CHRISTIAN IDENTITY

Introduction

In chapter four we examined how ethnicity manifests itself in the life and work of the PCG. The negative form of it, ethnocentrism or tribalism, contradicts the Christian faith. Whereas the Christian faith expects Christians to consider people of other ethnic groups as belonging to the same family as themselves (Bennett, 1993:73,76), tribalism or ethnocentrism does not (O' Donovan 1996:268ff). Tribalism tends only to embrace those who are perceived to share family or blood ties as true brothers and sisters (Rattray, 1923:41f). This chapter seeks to examine how ethnicity and Christian identity relate to the Christian life. This topic will be approached from the psychosocial and theological angles, because this study employs the multi-disciplinary approach to ensure comprehension of the phenomenon under discussion.

Human beings as they grow and develop have a task of defining who they are (their present), where they have come from (their past) and where they are going (their future). This is what psychologists term *identity* (Newman and Newman, 1983:82f). All humans aspire to attain a unique identity. Failure to achieve this is what the psychologist Erik Erikson terms *identity crisis* (Newman and Newman, 1983:82f). The identity we bear makes it possible for us to identify one another even in a world with over six billion people. The fact is that no two individuals are the same, no matter how closely they resemble each other. Hence we are able to identify even identical twins from each other.

We each have something unique about us but at the same time we share many things in common with others. Those characteristics we possess, the perception people hold about us, as well as our own perception of ourselves give us our identity (Newman and Newman, 1983:82f). Identity is not only limited to the realm of the psychosocial. It equally comes under the purview of theology. This is so because *our true identity comes from God* (Aboagye-Mensah, 1997:13). It is for this reason that Mbiti argues that, "Christianity has the terrible responsibility of pointing the way to that ultimate identity foundation and source of security" (Mbiti, 1992:277).

Ethnicity and its related concepts are the principal means by which one usually defines oneself. We can also acquire an identity from a theological point of view, that is, from what our religious tradition says we are. The Christian is identified anthropologically through ethnicity and theologically through a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. The *Christian therefore has a dual identity.* It is by Christ's abiding presence through the Holy Spirit that the dual identity is integrated.

The Christian's Dual Identity

The Christian's dual identity has been made possible because of his dual citizenship – of being in the world but belonging to the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God has a composite meaning. It stands for God's kingship, His rule, His authority and His reign (Ladd, G.E., 1987: 21f). We are given a *spiritual identity* as citizens of this kingdom at the time we submit to Christ's rule over our lives at conversion.

In the light of the above, the Christian's identity might be understood both in the physical and in the spiritual sense. The Christian is in the world but not of the world (John 8:23). Like all other people, Christians are subject to all the earthly laws and circumstances. Thus the laws of nature, custom and tradition, societal norms and social pressure equally affect Christians and non-Christians (Kudadjie, J. N. and R.K. Aboagye-Mensah, 1991: 1-4). Yet the position of the Christian demands that he lives a different lifestyle befitting a citizen of God's Kingdom (John 17:16, Colossians 3: 2-3).

The *Christian on earth lives on two planes concurrently.* As a Christian one is born into a physical or social environment involving levels of social relations. He is also born into a spiritual realm. The natural laws in operation in the physical world affect all creatures including Christians. They are born and grow old like all other creatures, are subjected to the law of gravity and the impact of the physical environment. The second century Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus captures this fact. He argues that:

> ...Christians are distinguished from other men neither by country, nor language, nor the customs which they observe. For they neither inhabit cities of their own, nor employ a peculiar form of speech, nor lead a life which is marked out by any singularity (Mathetes 1989: 26).

The cultural values and ethical standards which have been laid down are meant to be obeyed as a mark of loyalty. The fear of societal sanction in the form of societal pressure or

force ensures conformity. All these aspects of the Christian's socio-cultural life contribute to the making of the person's physical identity. This physical identity comprises the social, cultural and political dimensions. The other aspect of the Christian's identity is a spiritual one which we noted earlier.

The Christian's spiritual identity issues from the fact of his adoption into the family of God. In this connection he participates in the covenant God made with the people of Israel because he has inherited Israel's history and theology (Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah, 1991: 6). The Christian's life begins with Christ's deliverance of human beings from sin and Satan through his sacrificial death and resurrection. A new ethical standard is thus required of the Christian as a citizen of God's Kingdom. This identity and role of the Christian is not an easy one because of the differences in values between this world and that of God's Kingdom.

The physical and spiritual identities mentioned above are inseparable. There are no fixed boundaries. As John H. Yoder observes,

> Our first need has been to deny a dualism, to reject the splitting apart
> of territories from the nonpolitical. The duality which is real instead is
> a difference of responses separating obedience from rebellion (Yoder,
> 1997: 233).

Ethnicity and Identity

"Ethnicity is a social identification based on perceived cultural differences of a group" (Calhoun et al, 1994:265). From the above definition we can deduce that ethnicity gives us our identity. It helps us to define ourselves in relation to others: who we are, where we come from and where we are going. Our ethnic group determines our particular culture, which in turn informs our worldview, that is, how we perceive and relate to our world.

Ethnicity provides us with the symbols that define us. These symbols include land, language, history and sometimes religion (Akrong, 1999, interviewed). The identity of an ethnic group is tied to their territory. Land differentiates a native from an alien. Language is not only for communication but it is a means of identification. That is why some people are called by the languages they speak. People are further identified by their history. History answers the question about origins. Religion is another source of ethnic identification.

Ethnic groups guarantee solidarity among their members. They serve as extended families. This explains the emotional bond associated with ethnicity. There is good reason for this emotional attachment, in the sense that members generally perceive that their destinies

are inextricably tied together. The need for solidarity is more keenly felt in an alien environment.

It is in this light that Prah argues, that the establishment of the "Zongos" in southern Ghana by Northerners and West African immigrant groups was to mitigate economic deprivation and the social ostracism faced by them in the south (Prah, 1975:310). The term "Zongo" is a Hausa word meaning "strangers' quarters" (Dovlo and Sule-Saa, 1999:112). The settlement patterns in these "Zongos" reveal that Northern Ghanaians form their own communities along ethnic lines or according to their tribes to provide mutual support to one another. Another reason for these "Zongos" might just have to do with the ward system in the towns in Ghana. The earliest "Zongos were formed by the Hausa traders from northern Nigeria who settled in Ghanaian towns to trade. They are also closely associated with Islam (Nukunya, 1992:133f and Pellow, 1985:419).

Ethnic Groups' Interrelationship

Ethnic groups' interrelationships are diverse and complex. They may be harmonious or conflict-ridden. Where there are harmonious interrelations, assimilation or integration results. **Assimilation** results where a minority ethnic group is absorbed by a dominant one into its culture and social life (Calhoun et al, 1994:266). Assimilation of smaller ethnic groups by stronger or bigger ones in the past seems to be declining as democracy grows in Ghana. It seems that with increased personal freedom and improvement of human rights there has been a *revival of ethnic consciousness, especially among the Tribal Youth Associations.* Many ethnic groups that were under powerful kingdoms have gained their autonomy or are still engaged in a struggle to attain it. Most of the ethnic wars we have had in Ghana had to do with the pursuit of freedom from previous assimilation by dominant or stronger ethnic groups. The degree of ethnic consciousness may give rise to a conflict-ridden environment depending on the inter-group relations. The inter-ethnic relationship could therefore provoke tension, intolerance, hostility or a violent atmosphere.

Though there are no overt hostilities in the form of violence among the ethnic groups in the PCG, their interrelationships are not ideal. The presence of ethnic rivalries and bickering among the different ethnic groups in the Church has been of serious concern to the PCG. As Aboagye-Mensah rightly notes, " in the past problems posed by ethnicity had been swept under the carpet, as if by ignoring the conflicts and tensions the problems will disappear" (Aboagye-Mensah, 1997:2). The interviewees of this study, all distinguished

leaders in the PCG, are unanimous in their call on the Church to face the ethnic problems without hesitation. The challenge for the Church, if she wants to be redemptive and show the secular world the way to a multicultural society, is for her to get to the root of these problems.

Ethnic conflicts are caused by past grudges. Grudges are nurseries for conflicts or disharmonious relations which take time to burst into the open. According to MC Onyango,

> Actions of men and women include certain actions that have planted grudges resulting in a situation where to a large extent the differences between peoples in language, customs, location – which are caused by historical and natural evolution, also include some very bitter memories that sit as wedges between peoples that are already different in colour, in religion, in living standards, in ideology – in their personalities (MC Onyango in Ogot, Ed., 1996:57).

In Ghana the impact of slave raids and trade produced grudges amongst Northerners and also between Northerners and Southerners (Howell, 1999:11). Some ethnic groups are still seen and treated as slaves. Some of the victims still nurse grudges towards the former slave raiders or masters and traders. Another reason why Northerners may bear grudges against Southerners is because of the way they have been exploited economically (Prah, 1975:311f). Ethnocentrism or tribalism could capitalise on these grudges and this might result in conflicts.

Ethnocentrism

In this study, ethnocentrism is used in the sense of tribalism, where the *strong loyalty one has for one's tribe or ethnic group results in members regarding outsiders as inferior.* Ethnocentrism is severally defined. According to Aboagye-Mensah:

> Ethnocentrism is an intellectual, emotional, and cultural attitude of a particular group of people who regard the identities and values of other groups of people as false, inferior, or immoral as compared to their own (Aboagye-Mensah, 1993: 130).

Thus the ethnocentric person thinks, feels and believes that the values and norms of his/her ethnic group or tribe should serve as the criteria for measuring other people. Ethnocentrism is thus **an overestimation of one's ethnic group** above others. This perception promotes unquestionable loyalty to one's group.

A particular type of socialisation can produce ethnocentrism. For instance, the images that are passed on to young children during their socialisation count very much in how they will perceive themselves and others. Stereotyping or generalised misconceptions of other ethnic groups often occur during socialisation. Florence Dolphyne explains vividly how this might happen:

> Remarks such as 'don't shout like a Ga fisherman' or 'You are behaving like a typical arrogant Ashanti'; or 'Don't go to that house, the Nzema people there are witches', may be said as a joke, but they make an impression on a child, and he will grow up stereotyping all Gas as loud and noisy, Ashantis as arrogant and Nzemas as witches (Dolphyne, 1995:45).

Children's minds can be likened to computers; whatever we put into them is what we shall get from them. This tendency is not peculiar to children. Adults alike are the products of their thoughts resulting from the information they receive. *Stereotypes once acquired are hard to eradicate.* Dolphyne thinks inter-marriages can help to minimise this tendency to stereotype other ethnic groups. This may not always turn out to do that. In fact the opposite may be the case, that is, inter-marriage could also reinforce certain inter-ethnic prejudices especially when they are exceptionally successful or fail. However, adequate knowledge coupled with objectivity can mitigate the problem. Even though education can help to mitigate them, stereotypes are not alien to the educated. Philosophically and theologically *ethnocentrism could be an enemy to the human quest for unity.* In the next section we critique the concept of ethnocentrism with the view to promoting harmonious inter-ethnic relations.

A Critique of Ethnocentrism/Tribalism

The principles working in racism and tribalism/ethnocentrism are the same. The practice of ethnocentrism/tribalism can be shown to have philosophical, ethical and theological roots. We hope to show that the philosophical basis of ethnocentrism/tribalism that interprets the differences amongst people in terms of superiority and inferiority is false. It is false because of the commonality of characteristics and values shared by humanity. Its practices also legitimise discrimination and thwart efforts towards unity, hence showing it to be ethically wrong. Similarly the basis of *ethnocentrism may be seen theologically as an affront to God's revealed will* which is universal brotherhood/sisterhood. It is an affront

because it is God's will to create a new humanity in Christ. According to Paul, one of the things Christ accomplished by his redemption was the creation of a new humanity (Ephesians 2 and Galatians 3: 28). In this new humanity, "the walls of hostility" are broken down. These "walls of hostility" include all the prejudices and perceptions that make ethnic groups treat other ethnic groups as enemies or sub-human. *If all humans are made in God's image, then they are equal in worth and dignity.* A critique of ethnocentrism will be made from the philosophical, ethical and theological dimensions.

From the Philosophical perspective, the practice of ethnocentrism or tribalism involves a certain cultural mindset that regards one's culture as superior to that of others'. In a public lecture on the theme, *The Emptiness of Ethnocentrism*, Gyekye, a Ghanaian philosopher, made these pertinent comments about the ethnocentric person:

> He/She is unprepared to look beyond his/her cultural walls. He/She fails to recognise the negative aspects of his/her culture but rather over- dwells on the positive ones. He is reluctant to recognise the positive elements of other cultures and the fact, that cultural borrowing is a historical phenomenon. In short, appreciation of other cultures does not come easily to the ethnocentric person (Gyekye, 1999).

Ethnocentrism or tribalism like racism suffers from cultural myopia. It is not wholly objective and tends to exclude those who are different. In doing this, those who practise it forfeit the benefits that they could have reaped from the other ethnic group(s) or race which they lack. The ethnocentric person ignores the positive things from other groups and by so doing impoverishes himself/herself. The principal reason for this is the fact that all cultures are not wholly self-sufficient. They all need the riches of other cultures to complement their own. It is for this reason that Bosch admonishes us, "To regard our cultural differences as mutual enrichment, as aids to a broadening of our horizons, as object lessons on the richness of the unfolding of God's works among people (Bosch, 1982:26).

Gyekye argued in his lecture that every culture has some attraction and that no one human culture can fully satisfy humankind. Furthermore, no human culture has been impervious to the influence of other cultures. *The practice of ethnocentrism works against the morality of a shared humanity.* The presumption underlying ethnocentrism/tribalism is that one's ethnic group is the perfect standard against which all others are evaluated. Consequently, it produces exclusivist tendencies.

Ethically, ethnocentrism is problematic as it has a tendency to tolerate injustice towards 'the other'. Wherever it is practised, it does not promote justice in the sense of

ensuring equal treatment, equal access to power and resources (Akrong, 1999, interviewed). The premise from which it operates does not regard people on an equal basis. If people are not perceived to be equal, then it seems acceptable if they are not treated equally. Consequently, injustice meted out to 'the other' is accepted as normal. Thus discriminative laws, accessibility to power and resources are ethnocentrically motivated. What is ethically wrong with it is the fact that it induces its perpetrators to treat those who are different as sub-human (Stott, 1984:205).

Ethnocentrism, unfortunately appeals to theology to justify its existence. For example, the racism practised during the Apatheid era in South Africa appealed to Christian Scripture. The White racists appropriated theologically for themselves "the significance of the symbol of Israel"(Maimela S., 1987:25). Paul helps, however, to debunk any appeal to theology to legitimise any segregation of one group of people on the basis of cultural or ethnic diversity. **Ethnocentrism is alien to the biblical vision of humanity,** which is a multi-racial or *multi-ethnic* society (Stott, 19984: 205). Stott bases his discussions of this issue on Paul's sermon to the Athenian philosophers (in Acts 17: 22-31).

Paul made four affirmations in the light of the prevailing multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious context of Athens. The first is the unity of the human race, the diversity of ethnic cultures, the finality of Jesus Christ and the glory of the Christian Church (Stott, 1984: 205-209).

Paul proclaimed that from one man God made every nation. If God is acknowledged as the Creator, Sustainer and Father of mankind, it implies that *all humanity has a common destiny.* Stott argues that from this portrayal of God and his relationship with humankind, we could deduce the folly and evil of racism and *ethnocentrism.* Since we are all "equally created by him and like him", Stott argues, "we are equal in his sight in worth and dignity, and therefore have equal right to respect and justice". All human beings have a common ancestry and their blood is the same in every respect (Stott, 1984: 206). Not only are human beings created alike in God's image and therefore of equal dignity but they also possess diverse cultures.

Commenting on Paul's statement, that God "determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live" Stott writes:

> Such dispersal under God's blessing inevitably resulted in the development of distinctive cultures, quite apart from the larger confusing of languages and the scattering under his judgement at Babel (Stott, 1984: 206).

God permitted the diversity to emerge among human beings. The different languages are the result of God's judgement on man's rebellion against His Will, which was "to scatter and to fill the whole earth". Diversity of culture consequently emerged. These cultures possess good aspects and evil ones as well because man is God's creature but also a sinner. Hence, Stott advocates:

> We need to ensure, therefore, that a multi-racial society is not a mono-cultural society. We must simultaneously assert both the unity of the human race and the diversity of ethnic cultures (Stott, 1984: 207).

Our human unity ought to reflect cultural diversity concurrently. The cultural diversity does not warrant segregation. It must engender complementarity. The vision of the human race before the throne of God in Revelation 7: 9 reflects this reality. Paul's sermon touched on the fact of the "the finality of Jesus Christ". Through him God's final revelation is given. God's universal call to all human beings to repent from their sin (rebellion against God's will) is known. Refusal of God's mercy and grace will result in judgement. In the light of Christ's judgement, Stott cautions that the acceptance of cultural diversity does not imply the acceptance of idolatry within it (Stott, 1984:208). The Church is meant to model the multi-racial/multi-ethnic nature of the human society.

The final affirmation of Paul has to do with the glory of the Christian Church or the redemption of God. The Church which is a new and reconciled community of believers has come about because of Jesus' death and resurrection. In this light, Stott argues that, the new community comprising men and women of all ages, and of all racial, cultural and social origins find their unity in Christ. The argument that Christ has brought into being this new unity, is that, "...in Christ we have found even deeper roots, and an even stronger security and identity, for through him God has called us into a new and wider unity" (Stott, 1984: 208).

The above statement is not meant to deny the fact that our ethnic background provides us with security and a sense of identity. Rather, it is arguing and rightly so, that *our true security and identity lie in the fact of Christ's death and resurrection.* It is this event which secures the reconciliation between humanity and God and among fellow men and women, that human beings have always longed for. From the critique above *a theological solution holds the key to combating ethnocentrism or tribalism.* It is the Gospel that provides the tool for this.

The nature of the Gospel

David Bosch argues and rightly so that, "The breaking down of barriers that separate people is an intrinsic part of the Gospel" (Bosch, 1982:27). Thus the promotion of unity among people is an integral part of Christian mission not an accidental additional. The inherent power of the Gospel to break down "walls of hostility" is attested to in the Acts of the Apostles. A classical example being the one that separated traditional enemies such as Jews and Samaritans as well as Jews and Gentiles (Bediako G. M., 1980:29ff and Bosch, 1982:21).

The Gospel has great power to save. Wherever it has been faithfully proclaimed and lived, lives of individuals as well as communities have been transformed radically. The Gospel frees peoples of every ethnic group and unlocks God's manifold blessings to them. Paul thus, saw the Gospel to be too precious to be tampered with by the Judaisers who wanted to make it a monopoly of the Jews. For Paul, the Gospel is all-sufficient for the salvation of all peoples. His whole argument is to the effect that, it was not the taking on of Jewish identity that made one a Christian. It was by God's grace through the working of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:1-6).

What is the Gospel?

The Gospel is the Good News from God, with the central message being that, human beings are reconciled to Him because of Christ. Thus Christ's sacrificial death brought peace between human beings and God. The Gospel is essentially Christ. Kwame Bediako holds this view and therefore explains that: The Gospel is in fact not an idea, not a concept, not a custom, but a person, Jesus Christ (Bediako, 1997:4). The Gospel is therefore complete for our salvation. John Mbiti grasps this point well when he notes that:

> We can add nothing to the Gospel, for this is an eternal gift of God but Christianity is always a beggar seeking food and drink, cover and shelter from the cultures it encounters in its never ending journeys and wanderings (Mbiti, 1970:438).

From Mbiti's argument therefore, the Christian Gospel has no permanent cultural domicile. It is meant to fit into every culture in order to effect transformation from within. In arguing this way Mbiti agrees with Walls' and Sanneh's thesis (Sanneh, 1989:30) that all cultures are potential receptacles of the Gospel. There is therefore no justification whatsoever for cultural imperialism. The nature of *the Gospel rejects cultural imperialism.*

The Gospel as the Breaker of the Ethnic Divide

The Gospel is the breaker of ethnic barriers or the dividing wall created by ethnocentrism. Paul's letter to the Galatians, especially chapter three, will form the basis of our discussion.

The epistle to the Galatians is about Paul's fight with the Judaisers. These Judaisers were Jewish Christians who wanted the Gentiles to conform to their kind of Christianity i.e. observing the Law and Jewish customs. Paul saw the danger in such a move because it undermined the Gospel that welcomes to all people irrespective of their ethnic background. For the Judaisers, it was not enough to just believe in the Lord Jesus. Believers in Christ were required to observe the Jewish rite of circumcision as well as keeping the Law. In other words, to become a Christian one had first to become a Jew. Paul strongly disagreed with them. He therefore mustered all the knowledge and logic he could, to combat the Judaisers. It is precisely in the light of this that the NIV STUDY BIBLE states:

> Galatians reads like a dramatic court trial. On one side of the courtroom stand Paul's accusers…On the other side sits the jury, the Galatians…Paul acting in his own self-defense…uses a variety of debating styles: tight logic, historical reviews, and personal outrage. His integrity, and ultimately Jesus Christ's integrity, is at stake (The Devotional Study Bible, NIV, 1987:1004f).

Paul claimed he was defending the Gospel or the Good news of Jesus Christ which alone was the means of enjoying salvation by all peoples.

The Gift of the Holy Spirit is based on Grace

Paul argues that if it was by simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that they became Christians and received the gift of the Holy Spirit, how could they now doubt the all-sufficiency of Christ? (Galatians 3:2-5). The Good News of Christ was to be received by all humanity through faith alone. Paul's argument points to the fact that God's Grace and gift of the Holy Spirit transcend cultural or ethnic barriers.

Abraham was accepted on the basis of faith

Using the story of Abraham, Paul argues that God's love preceded the Law. It was through faith that God accepted Abraham and not by the observance of the Law. It was as if God was saying: "this is how I am going to put human beings right with me". His Son Jesus Christ was to be the means of this grace.

Paul arguing like a Rabbi, asserts that, the Law is unable to save. In fact, it is seen to enslave rather than set free. It was precisely because of this that Christ came. For the Law brought us under bondage and curse. The Gospel is called Good News because Christ delivers all those who believe in him from this bondage and curse which have come as a result of our inability to fully keep the Law (Galatians 3:6-14).

The purpose of the Law

Paul argues that God's grace preceded the Law. The Law was not meant to earn us salvation. It was given to reveal our need for a Saviour, the Promised Seed of Abraham. The Law was given as a "house help" but the real "mother" is Christ Himself. Paul's understanding of the purpose of the Law makes him wonder what on earth could have entered the heads of the Galatians to want to come under the yoke of the Law! No wonder, Paul asked them who had bewitched them (Galatians 3: 15-20).

The Jew and Gentile stand condemned before the Law.

The Law was given to show that all the peoples of the world are sinners. All are guilty, for we have failed to measure up to God's standard. By arguing this way Paul was in effect saying to the Judaisers that they had no business whatsoever to trouble the Galatians with the Law. For the Law had already done its work in revealing that stark truth of our sinfulness and our desperate need for Christ. Gillian Bediako agrees with Paul when she argues that, "...the basis of salvation for Jewish Christians is the same as for Gentiles and rests not in the Law but in Jesus (Bediako G. M., 1980:35).

It is for this fact that one can assert that *inter-ethnic group reconciliation can be achieved at the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ.* Inter-ethnic group reconciliation is a gift mediated by grace alone. Having this at the back of his mind Paul argues that Christ has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, therefore creating a new humanity (Ephesians 2:10). The removal, by Christ, of the barriers erected by humanity is real. God has reconciled humanity to Himself, and in turn calls on all who have experienced this reconciliation to preach it. Christians are therefore required to work with Christ, to remove ethnic or social barricades that we often erect to protect ourselves and lock out others.

Christ removes Ethnic and Social Barriers.

John Pobee noted rightly that, "The world is plagued by sectionalism, be it racism or tribalism" (Pobee, 1974:77). This assertion can be substantiated from the following historical antecedents:

a. The history of the relationship between Jews and Gentiles.

The Jews regarded the Gentiles as unclean people and therefore sub-human. As such they were to be denied aid in time of need (Edersheim A., 1987: 90-92). The term "dog" was even used contemptuously for a Gentile by Jews (Barclay W., 1975: 178f and Edersheim A., 1987: 41ff). However Christ's healing of the gentile woman's daughter, spoke for itself that he did not mean any harm when he used that term (Matthew 15:21-28).

b. The history of slavery. The slave was the property of the master and therefore did not have an independent identity or rights (1987: 949f).

c. The historical relationship between males and females. Generally, women were not perceived and treated as equals by men as depicted in the Jewish practice of divorce especially the Hillel school which justified the divorce of a woman by her husband if she spoiled his dinner, or if a man found another woman more attractive than his wife (Edersheim, 1987:332-335).

d. The history of the relationship between Europeans and Africans. Europeans saw themselves as the superior race and Africans as the inferior one (Bediako K., 1995:5f). Dr. Harold Kurtz, a one-time missionary in Ethiopia, recounted his experience to illustrate the mutual prejudice between Whites and Blacks. According to him, whereas, white Americans regard Blacks as monkeys, the Ethopian children he worked among used to feel his hair and say that he was just like a monkey (Kurtz, 1992, in a conversation).

e. The relationship between Northerners and Southerners in Ghana as analysed by Anquandah impedes the evangelisation of the latter. He notes that:

> The actual outreach to indigenous northerners is largely neglected because of the language barrier and because of southerners' feeling of ethnic, social and economic superiority compared with the northerners. Urban congregations in the north tend to be almost exclusively for southerners. Worse still, northerners who move to the south receive little welcome from the churches...(Anquandah, 1979:81).

This fact was thrown as a challenge to the Christian churches in Ghana in 1989 by the Ghana Evangelism Committee. Thus the determination to change the perception that Christianity was for Southerners alone stimulated the emergence of the Northern Outreach Programme (NOP). The NOP's main task has been the evangelisation and integration of Northerners in Southern Ghana into the rest of the PCG's family.

The good news about the Christian faith is that Jesus the Christ brings about healing and reconciliation to ethnic groups which hitherto were considered irreconcilable. Not only are people reconciled but they are also made equal in worth in the sight of God (Bediako G. M., 1980:32).

Christ and our new identity

In Christ we assume a new identity that is inclusive. Salvation includes all the cultural identification elements. It is in the light of this fact that, Bediako claims:

> The task of the Gospel is not the salvation of something called our 'souls' apart from the cultural embodiment of our lives. Rather, the purpose, the end and goal of the Gospel is the redemption of cultures, and the cleansing of all our cultural forms of life and expression, so that they come to express praise and adoration of the one living God and of our Lord Jesus Christ (Bediako K., 1997:4).

This Gospel is universal. To suggest or act as if the Gospel is a monopoly of a particular ethnic group is contrary to the essential nature of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is on this basis that Bediako argues elsewhere: "once this basic, universal relevance of Jesus Christ is granted, it is no longer a question of trying to accommodate the Gospel in our culture; we learn to read and accept the Good News as our story" (Bediako K., 1990:14f).

It is paradoxical to note that, even though the Church preaches that in Christ we are a new creation with a new identity, she often finds it difficult to translate this into the contexts of new mission fields. G. M. Bediako argues that, the book of Acts is not only about the physical expansion of the Church but also it is about the discovery of the Christian's unique identity (Bediako, G. M.,1980:12). This Christian identity, Bediako explains, " lies not in race, culture or ritual perfection and purity, but in Jesus, who through the Holy Spirit and His witness on earth, is drawing all men to Himself" (Bediako G. M., 1980:33).

Ethnicity and Integration

The fact that we are of different ethnic groups sometimes creates problems and opportunities. When there is no mutual respect and tolerance there can be confrontation and violence among different ethnic groups. However when they are willing to accommodate each other, integration can take place (Calhoun et al, 1994: 265). Often some kind of confusion exists between the meaning of assimilation and integration. But as Stott notes "...integration is not the same as assimilation, and does not necessarily lead to it" (Stott, 1984: 207).

There is a world of difference between assimilation and integration. *Integration is not a flattening process of assimilation, but an equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance* (R. Jenkins in Stott, 1984: 194-195).

In our anxious quest to be one, we run the risk of confusing uniformity with integration. The attempt to make all the different peoples uniform is more of assimilation rather than integration. Assimilation is defined as:

> The incorporation of a minority group into the culture and social life of the dominant group so that the minority eventually disappears as a separate identifiable unit (Calhoun et al, 1994: 266).

Assimilation is not the ultimate vision of the Church for it can lead to gross injustice as in the case of the of the Aborigines in Australia (Howell, 2000:86f). The goal of the Church is rather to incorporate all the different ethnic groups into a community reflecting their diversities. Integration on the other hand is defined as:

> The unimpeded interaction of and contact between different racial and ethnic groups. This is sometimes termed as 'social' integration to distinguish it from functional integration (Calhoun et al, 1994: 266).

Integration is the preferred option to assimilation because it is biblical and more natural. Integration is also preferred because it does not dislocate people or alienate them and cause identity crisis. The famous speech of the late Martin Luther King Jr. graphically describes what integration consists of:

> 'I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. 'I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice … and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. 'I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character…'I have a dream that one day in Alabama with its vicious racists … little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers…'With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. 'With this faith we will be able to work together to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day…(Stott, 1984: 194).

The biblical vision is broader than King's. Whereas King's vision is localised (USA) and limited to the relationship between "blacks" and "whites", the biblical vision is universal and involves all peoples.

Integration essentially affirms the differences whilst at the same time encourages harmonious co-existence among different peoples. *This multi-racial or multi-ethnic dream is not just an earthly dream but a heavenly vision as well.* The Gospel as the breaker of ethnic barriers is seen in the vision of John which portrays,"...a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne" (Revelation 7: 9).

How far is the PCG working to integrate the non- Akan and non-Ga into her family? What steps is she taking to broaden her liturgy, hymns and attitudes to accommodate the newer ethnic groups? Perhaps integration in the PCG might have to begin the Akan and Ga.

To achieve a truly multi- ethnic or multi-cultural Church, Stott expects her (the Church) "to renounce cultural imperialism and seek to preserve all those riches of inter-racial, or in our particular case inter-ethnic culture which are compatible with Christ's lordship" (Stott, 1984: 209). The Reverend Dr. David Kpobi, a past Inter-Church and Ecumenical Relations Secretary of the PCG examined the PCG's mission in the mission fields, especially in the Northern Mission Field, and concluded that it is one of cultural imperialism. The Very Reverend Frempong also hinted at that, with specific reference to the Twi hymnbook as mentioned earlier (Frempong, 1974: 61). Is the PCG ready to embark on the process of integrating the ethnic groups from the mission fields, especially the northern communities, with her predominantly Akan and Ga congregations?

The Gospel is the ultimate breaker of ethnic barriers and therefore enhances integration. The Gospel informs the Church on how to model integration that is on God's heart. When the Church succeeds in modeling integration, the following expectation will find fulfillment in Dakin's words that:

> The totality of perfect light is made up of the different colours of the visible spectrum. They exist within it but are indistinguishable when they merge together. Each colour has its own identity within the whole, but unites to gain a nature which is even more splendid. When we contemplate the age to come, we know from scripture that every people group will be distinctly represented. The ultimate expression of praise and worship is when we join together united as the one body before Jesus (Dakin P. 1994: 92).

The Gospel does not only break the ethnic barriers it also serves as the cohesive force that concurrently affirms the unity and diversity among ethnic groups. This is not God's "plan B" but it is his original intention. This argument has been advanced by Stephen A. Rhodes that.

> God's creational design is not exactly what one would call uniform. In the melodious *me'lange* of Genesis 1, it seems apparent that God delights in creating opposites – but opposites that complement, not clash, opposites that harmonize, not antagonize following each day of the creational activity of pairing thesis with antithesis, God pronounces the benediction of synthesis: 'And God saw that it was good' (Rhodes, Stephen, 1998: 20).

Diversity in God's creation is not accidental but the purposive design of God. **Diversity in creation is not meant for chaos but for enrichment.** Perhaps sin has dulled our senses to an extent that we cannot tolerate diversity especially among human beings. For whereas we cherish a flower garden with different species of flowers, we cannot stand it when it comes to dealing with people who are different from us. It is our inability to deal with these human differences that prompts us to seek to assimilate other people. It is often hoped that through assimilation differences will be minimised, if not eliminated, as was in the case between Australians and the Aboriginal people (Howell, 2000:86).

The way to gain back God's sense of positive aspects of diversity among human beings is through the cross of Christ. It is through the cross that we can achieve reconciliation with God and with those who differ from us. Through the cross we are embraced by God and are enabled to also embrace those who are not like us (Volf, 1996:131). The PCG can only hope to achieve genuine integration when she is willing to participate in what Volf calls "the drama of embrace" (Volf, 1996:140ff). He explains the four acts that take place during an embrace and their significance:

In Act one: there is the opening of the arms, which according to Volf, signifies reaching out for the other. He explains that, the open arms "are a sign of discontent with my own self-enclosed identity, a code of *desire* for the other." In addition, he notes it is "a sign that I have *created space* in myself for the other to come in and that I have made a movement out of myself so as to enter the space created by the other". He continues with the explanation of the significance of the open arms that, they suggest, "a fissure in the self". Thus "they signify an aperture on the boundary of the self through which the other can come in". Finally

he sees the open arms as a gesture of invitation. He equates them to "an open door for an expected friend to come in" (Volf, 1996:141-142).

In Act two of embrace, there is *Waiting*. Volf explains that:

> After creating space in itself and coming out of itself, the self has "postponed" desire and halted at the boundary of the other. Before it can proceed, it must wait for desire to arise in the other and for the arms to of the other to open (Volf, 1996:142).

It is in Act three: that there is the closing of the arms. Volf sees this act as the goal of embrace, "the proper embrace which is unthinkable without *reciprocity*". He makes an insightful observation that "it takes two pairs of arms for one embrace". He notes that, "for such free and mutual giving and receiving to take place, in addition to reciprocity, a soft touch is necessary. At no point in the process may the self deny either the other or itself. Thus in an embrace the identity of the self is both preserved and transformed (Volf 1996:143).

Finally in Act four, there is the opening of the arms again. Volf's explication of this act is rich in meaning. He notes that, as the final act of embrace,

> the opening of the arms underlines that, though the other may be inscribed into the self, the alterity of the other may not be neutralized by merging both into an undifferentiated "we"...The other must be let to go, so that her alteriy - her genuine dynamic identity – may be preserved; and the self must take itself back into itself so that its own identity, enriched by the traces that the presence of the other has left, may be preserved (Volf, 1996:144-145).

Conclusion

In conclusion, ethnic identity and Christian identity are crucial for the Christian to fulfil God's mission. As a person of dual identity, the Christian needs the Gospel to shape his/her identity. We have noted that a certain type of socialisation of persons could promote ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism is an enemy of human unity and advance. A proper understanding of *God's vision to integrate the various ethnic groups into one worshipping family is the solution to ethnocentric/tribalistic tendencies.*

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS ON ETHNICITY IN THE PCG

It has been established in the preceding chapters that ethnocentrism or tribalism is present in the PCG. This is an unhealthy picture for a Christian church that preaches universal brotherhood or sisterhood. Using Walls' three tests of the church in mission, we shall discuss the characteristics of a healthy church and how the PCG could attain that state of health.

The implications of the findings would be discussed from a missiological point of view. As we noted in chapter two, missiology is multi-disciplinary hence the discussion will reflect this. Ethnicity has played a positive role in the expansion of the PCG following the homogeneous unit principle of church growth. This principle operates with the understanding that, "People like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers" (McGavran, 1970:163). Thus the Basel Missionaries found that, planting churches among people who share things in common much easier. These could be shared language, culture, occupation just to mention a few. PCG congregations sprang up initially among the Akan and the Ga-Adangme peoples. The PCG which began as a mission church is now a missionary church engaged in church planting among other ethnic groups besides the earlier two (the Akan and Ga-Adangme) that the Basel and Scottish missionaries worked with. Recognising and working along ethnic lines is however not without its problems (Prempeh, Akrong, Gyan-Duah and Nketia, 1999, interviewed).

A negative expression of *Ethnicity* in the form of *Tribalism* or *Ethnocentrism* seems to be working against the mission of the PCG, gnawing at the fabric of the church. It shows itself sometimes in the recruitment of Church Agents and in the appointment and election of Officers. Ethnic discrimination, rivalries, and the insensitivity to language sensibilities of minority groups in worship indicate the presence of *Tribalism* or *Ethnocentrism.*

Most of the questionnaire respondents and the interviewees agreed that *Tribalism or Ethnocentrism* exists in the PCG and that it is creating problems such as ethnic rivalries, suspicion, bickering and disunity. On the other hand, they were unanimous in their responses that *Ethnicity* has helped in the expansion of the Church from one ethnic group to another.

The two areas in which the respondents perceive *tribalism* to be actively working against PCG's mission are in the election of Church Officers and in the use of Language in Church Services. The minority ethnic groups are disenchanted with the domination of the

PCG's election process by the majority ethnic groups because they (minority) feel they can never have the chance to be elected because of their numerical inferiority.

Though a majority of Synod Committee members agreed that there is tribalism in the PCG, a sizable percentage of them denied it. Until PCG is able to shed her image as a "Kanbonga" Church (Northerners' name for an Akan) or "Ahɔhɔ Asɔre" (church for immigrants), in the Western Region of Ghana, she will have to live with the image of a tribalistic Church.

The Christian Church is expected to witness to Jesus Christ in the society in which she functions. She is meant to be the "light" and "salt" in society. As "light" this means she is expected to lead society in the right way to God and then to be the conscience of society. The Church is also meant to preserve society from moral decay. Though uniformity is lacking in the models of Church in society they at least try to fulfill these functions. The differences can be attributed to the theological persuasion and the different cultural milieu the Church finds herself in (Allen Roland, 1979:147ff).

The analysis of the Church models should afford the Church the opportunity to assess herself and be inspired to be more redemptive. A brief analysis will be made of a number of South African church models but it is Walls' model that will be our focus in this study.

Church Models

What kind of Church is the PCG? Several models of the Christian church exist according to the theological persuasions of the proponents and their socio-political and cultural situation. In South Africa several models of the Church existed in the apartheid era

The Church in that era, found herself in a polarised multi-racial and multi-ethnic context and had the burden of really defining herself. The challenge for the Church was either to support the revolution of the African National Congress and its allies or to support the Apartheid regime in meting out oppression and discrimination. Some Christians sought a neutral position out of the moral quandary the Church found herself in. The result was the birth of the *Third Way Theology* with its different strands. Anthony Balcomb explains that "*The Third Way* was offered in conscious reaction to theologies that were perceived either to be legitimating revolution or repression" (Balcomb, 1993: 63). The first model of *The Third Way Theology* sees the Church as *the alternative community* or the ideal "community". This model is informed by Anabaptist theology championed by John Yoder (Balcomb, 1993: 131).

It should be immediately pointed out that, there was no consensus between *The Third Way* and *Anabptist Theologies*. What united them: "… was the vision of the Church as the *alternative community* with a pacifist ethic and a reconciliatory function that was the basic inspiration of the Third Way" (Balcomb, 1993:131).

The second model of the Church championed by the Lutheran theologian, Klaus Nürnberger, denies the notion that the Church is the ideal model for society. In his view, the Church is not the *alternative community* but rather "consists of people spread throughout the spectrum of society where all the ideologies and interests continue to exist". In other words he sees the Church as a community that reflects the society at large and can only overcome the evils of the wider society through Christ's Cross (Balcomb, 1993: 68).

The third model of the *Third Way Theology* perceives "the Church as bipartisan mediator between the conflicting groups" (1993:68ff) The main function of the Church is therefore "peace keeping" or promoting the role of reconciliation.

The above models were relevant to the South African situation given the socio-cultural, historical and political contexts in which they were born. Given the Ghanaian socio-cultural context, however, a more embracing model will be more fruitful. In Ghana, the relation between whites and blacks was not marked by mistrust and hostility as in Apartheid South Africa. Whites did not use force to take land from the blacks (Reindorf, 1966: 38). In contrast to South Africa, Ghanaians never lost control of their land prior to independence. In Ghana whites negotiated with the chiefs and formed alliances with them in the interest of trade (Reindorf, 1966: 162ff). Some European nations, for instance aided the chiefs of the coast in their quest for freedom from the powerful Asante people (Kwamena-Poh, in Brokensha 1972: 45). Ghana's road to independence was much more peaceful than South Africa's experience. In addition Ghanaians did not suffer dehumanisation at the hands of Whites as was the case of Blacks in South Africa.

Andrew Walls' model of the Three Tests of the influence of Christ on society seems to hold a better prospect for this thesis. Walls' model acknowledges the sovereignty of God in mission worldwide with the Church only functioning as an instrument.

The Church, Kingdom and Gospel Tests Applied to the PCG

The model chosen to serve as our interpretative key is what Walls calls The Three Tests- *"the Church, the Kingdom and the Gospel Tests"*. With God's intervention in human

history through the incarnation of the Lord Jesus, human society has increasingly come under Christ's influence. From Jerusalem, to Judaea, to Samaria and to the ends of the World, (Acts 1:8) Christ's influence has been permeating every fabric of society. The influence of Christ on society is the subject of Christian Mission History. The Church historian, Kenneth Scott Latourette, has contributed in no small way to our understanding of this influence.

Andrew Walls has identified the controlling theme of Latourette's work as Christian expansion from one place to another and from one age to the other. According to him, "Latourette...proposes a three-fold means for measuring the influence of Christ – that influence which is the source of Christian expansion". Walls enumerates them below:

> The first is the spread of Christian profession in particular areas. The second is the number and strength of new movements owing their origin to Christ. The third is what he calls "the effect of Christianity on mankind as a whole" (Walls, 1995: 8).

Walls adds another dimension to Latourette's three-fold analysis of Christian expansion, namely: "the expansion of the Christian faith by its interaction with different cultures and languages, so that by cross-cultural diffusion it becomes a progressively richer entity". Walls' point tallies with Lamin Sanneh's argument that all cultures are equally capable of serving as receptacles of the Gospel (Sanneh, 1989:29-30). As we saw earlier in chapter 5, Mbiti views "Christianity as a beggar, seeking shelter, food and drink in its never ending journey".

Walls simplifies Latourette's test by restating them as: *"The Church Test, The Kingdom Test,* and *The Gospel Test"* (Walls 1995: 9,13& 20). These three tests serve as the ideal model of the Christian Church for the purposes of this study. Walls' analysis serves as a paradigm for what the Church should be like and should be doing, hence these tests will be used to evaluate the PCG.

The Church Test

As a missionary Church, the PCG is engaged in the expansion of Christianity. The three tests can therefore be applied to her work of Christian expansion. The tests when applied to the PCG will reveal the quality of the Christianity being spread by her. In addition, they will provide an opportunity for the PCG to improve upon her work.

Walls explains the *Church Test* as "the spread of the Christian profession in particular areas" (Walls 1995: 9). The *Church Test* implies the fruit of Christian Mission, which is, the bringing into being of the people of God or the community of worshipping Christians. Thus, the Church Test is that quantifiable element of Christ's presence in the form of Churches of worshipping believers. As Walls notes, "...the first effect of Christian expansion is not the production of saved or enlightened individuals, but of congregations" (Walls 1995:9).

Furthermore, Walls notes that, "The influence of Jesus not only produces group response; it works by means of groups, and is expressed in groups. The influence of Jesus operates in terms of social relations". By this assertion, Walls does not deny the worth of the individual vis-à-vis group conversion. Rather, he seeks to restore the communal nature of the Christian faith that unfortunately has been reduced to individual faith. By this analysis, Walls re-echoes Latourette's view that:

> More and more we must dream in terms of winning groups, not merely individuals. Too often with our Protestant, nineteenth-century individualism, we have torn men and women one by one out of the family, village or clan with the result that they have been permanently de-racinated and maladjusted ...Experience shows that it is much better if an entire natural group – a family, village, caste or tribe – can come rapidly over into the faith. That gives reinforcement to the individual Christian and makes easier the christianization of the entire life of the community (Latourette, quoted by Robb, 1989:27).

Could this explain partially why Christianity took a long time to take roots in the Ghanaian soil? Was it the case that the early missionaries failed to recognise the above principle? As we saw earlier, the Salems served a useful purpose but the alienation they brought between the convert and his wider society has drawn criticisms from many African scholars. They saw them as disruptive of tradition and social order (1998:218f).

Walls also brings to the fore, Latourette's fundamental theme concerning the expansion of the Christian faith. He categorises the process of spreading Christianity as one of **"Advance and Recession"**. The Christian story is unlike Islam's; it is not one of triumphalism but rather one of vulnerability. It is a sobering realisation that Christianity is like a pilgrim without a permanent home on earth. It is in this light that Walls explains:

> Whereas the Jerusalem of the Apostles has fallen, the Mecca of the Prophet remains inviolable. When it comes to sustaining congregations

of the faith, Christianity does not appear to possess the same resilience as Islam. It decays and withers in its very heartlands, in the areas where it appears to have had the profoundest cultural effects. Crossing cultural boundaries it then takes root anew on the margins of those areas, and beyond. Islamic expansion is progressive; Christian expansion is serial (Walls, 1995: 12).

Thus, in the case of Islam, it can boast of a permanent Centre, but that is lacking in Christianity. The latter has no abiding centre of gravity. Not only is the centre always shifting, it has no fixed culture. Walls expresses this succinctly:

> Christianity has no culturally fixed element, as provided by the Qur'an fixed in heaven, closed traditions on earth, perfection of law in shari'a, single shrine in Mecca, and true word everywhere in Arabic (Walls, 1995:12).

The fact, that Christianity has no fixed cultural elements might account for the diversity of Christianity we have on earth. This is so because in the words of Kwame Bediako, "Christianity, unlike say Islam, rejects the notion of a special, sacred language for its Scriptures" (Bediako, 1995:60f). Islam is identical everywhere but that can not be said of Christianity. For example, all Muslims everywhere in the world recite the same Arabic words, which are considered sacred. *It is the nature of Christianity to embrace cultural adaptation otherwise known as inculturation.* Failure to achieve inculturation is therefore an aberration in Christianity but not so in Islam.

As a missionary Church, is the PCG willing to allow the new ethnic groups that are now in the PCG to deviate from the Twi and Ga models? Or is she going to insist on uniformity of hymns, liturgy and church structure as Islam requires of its adherents?

Walls works towards his conclusion of the Church Test by stressing the fact that, "the process of cultural translation is endless". **The Gospel ought not to cease putting on flesh in every community it enters.** Diversity enriches the Church and glorifies God who created it. Therefore, "rather than discouraging diversity, the Church should praise God for it and encourage its flowering into fullness" (Romero F. Daniel, (1996:199).

There are areas in which the PCG passes the test but there are others in which it is found wanting. The Basel and Scottish Missions brought the PCG into being, and with it, worshipping communities. The PCG passes the test by continuing through her evangelism to create congregations of Christians. It has also experienced *advance and withering in some of her erstwhile heartlands* like Akuapem. Vibrant Christianity in the form of active practising

of Christian values is not mostly found in the pioneering mission stations but rather in the newer areas.

The PCG's attempt at cultural translation of the Gospel has been partially successful. She has attempted to penetrate the Akan and Ga ethnic groups. The translation of the Bible, the composition of hymns and liturgy in Twi and Ga were attempts in this direction. One would have expected the Ghanaian leadership to pursued this more vigorously but unfortunately this has not been the case. The PCG in Northern Ghana is still largely a southern-dominated Church because it is a replica of the Church of the south. The indigenous northern cultures are still untouched by the Gospel. Consequently most Northerners still perceive the PCG as clothed in a southern garb. Some southern ethnic groups in the Western Region also see the PCG as alien because it does not reflect their indigenous culture in her worship and outlook.

In an interview with the Rev. Dr. Isaac Fokuo, the Western Presbytery Chairman, it came to light that the PCG in his Presbytery is perceived as *"Ahɔhɔ Asɔre"* (Fanti, the dominant language in Western Region) that is, Church for migrants or aliens. The Western Region of Ghana is endowed with rich mineral deposits, timber, vast rich lands for the cultivation of cash crops and a harbour. Consequently, this region has attracted migrants especially from the eastern and northern parts of Ghana. The ethnic groups in the eastern part of Ghana which has been the PCG's traditional strong hold brought the Presbyterian Church with them. They have, however, failed to learn the indigenous languages and adapt the Church to reflect the indigenous culture of the Western Region.

While we can see the process of cultural translation among the Akan and Ga taking place more and more in the form of production of hymnbooks, liturgy and literature in these two languages, there seems to be very little happening among the other ethnic groups in the PCG. The PCG seems to be so preoccupied with meeting the needs of its two dominant ethnic groups that, she has not really seriously bothered about cross-cultural translation of the Gospel. Cross-cultural translation of the Gospel is not an option in mission. As John Mbiti notes and rightly so, "… the relation between culture and the Gospel demands that no single culture should imprison the Gospel…We have no right to imagine that we can monopolize the Gospel or keep it only to ourselves" (Mbiti, 1978:275). There is consensus between Mbiti's argument and Sanneh's which is our operating theoretical framework and elaborated in chapter 1. Thus *the Christian Gospel by nature can find "a home" in all cultures.*

It is even doubtful if we are not magnifying the cultural translation among the Akan and Ga peoples. For instance, the Akan and Ga cultures are still far from being brought under

Christ's discipleship. The legacy of the European missionaries' general perception of African culture as evil still hampers the full cultural translation of the Gospel in Ghana (Asamoa, 1955:297 Atiemo, 1995: 136f). K. A. Busia thinks the Western Europeans have not adequately presented Christianity to Africans. He is of the conviction that it was their lack of sufficient engagement with African cosmology that brought about this state of affairs (Busia, 1961:86ff).

The Kingdom Test

The Church Test alone, according to Walls is not a satisfactory measure of Christ's influence. It is to be seen in relation to the other Tests. The second Test in Walls' model is the Kingdom Test. The Kingdom Test has to do with *Movements* or institutions generated within or outside the Church, but under Christ, which bring vitality to the Church as an institution. Vitality is used here to refer to liveliness, revivalism or dynamism that helps to meet people's needs while drawing them closer to God. Kingdom signs, in the form of transformed lives of Church members and the overthrow of Satan's kingdom, that is evil, in the society where the Church serves would be evident. The depth of Christian expansion is measured here by the number and strength of these *Movements*.

The *Movements* display Kingdom signs that are redemptive and as such can produce radical discipleship. Thus, in Walls' words, "they bring the Spirit of Christ to bear more widely within their society - penetrating that society's culture more deeply, translating Christ into that society more perfectly, making the Word flesh within it" (Walls, 1995:14). Thus all the movements and activities of the Church that bring Christ's presence to bear upon society in the form of "his acts of mercy and power". Some examples in Christian history include the *Monasteries, Hospitals, Renewal Movements* and others. In the PCG the Bible Study and Prayer Group that is devoted to Bible Studies and prayer seems to fall into the category of these *Movements*. They have brought revival to many a dying PCG congregation and halted the exodus of PCG members to the "Spiritual Churches" or the "African Instituted churches". However Movements which arise as Kingdom signs are liable to lose their vitality and initial vision.

Walls notes that when movements lose their vitality or redemptive nature, or their initial vision, they become "counter-signs" or forces of negation opposing the Kingdom of God. The Monasteries which in their inceptions bore signs of the Kingdom, for example, became "counter-signs". Initially the Monasteries set out to be a sanctuary for the promotion

of holiness but they degenerated into worldly and exploitative institutions (Walls, 1995: 16f). Applying this to the PCG, can we say that the schools, hospitals, agricultural stations have become counter-signs? In what ways are they promoting radical discipleship? Could it also be said that the PCG itself has passed through a period of being a counter-sign, hence causing the exodus of her members to the "Spiritual" or "African Independent" Churches. Is the PCG holding on to a form of religion without power? Is she bound to tradition to the extent that she is deaf to the voice of the Holy Spirit? Thankfully, the PCG's acceptance of the Bible Study and Prayer Group has helped to check the drift of PCG members to other churches that were deemed more spiritual (Omenyo, 1994: 176, 178f). The Bible and Prayer Group as the name suggests, lays much emphasis on Bible studies and prayer which are the means towards a spiritually vibrant Church.

As Walls has rightly observed, the "Spiritual Churches", otherwise known as African Instituted Churches, which served as Kingdom signs are now perceived by the Charismatic Churches as counter-signs of the Kingdom (Walls, 1995:20). Like the proverbial Sampson, when the Church is out of touch with God she may still be in a fool's paradise thinking she will rise up and shake off her "Philistines"(Demonic powers). She may then be shocked to realise that God has left her (Judges 16:20). The Kingdom Test in Walls' view is also not satisfactory on its own to assess Christ's influence in society. The Gospel Test must be included.

The Gospel Test

By the *Gospel Test*, Walls means "the effect of Christ on people and on culture" (Walls 1995:20). "The application of the Good News is greater than anyone's experience of it", argues Walls. Walls here acknowledges God's sovereignty in the world which transcends the Church.

The Gospel or the Good News is about Christ's ultimate victory over the evil forces that oppose God and spoil the world. Wherever the Gospel is preached faithfully there ought to be freedom from fear, promotion of truth, justice, love and goodwill in society. The Gospel in effect ought to be redemptive in every sphere of human endeavour. The Gospel proclaims that the resurrection makes a positive difference in human life here and now as well as in the future. This is done when people are transformed and work to combat injustice, crime and other forms of vices. Similarly, the resurrection of Christ, which is the central theme of the

Gospel, makes it possible for all things to be reconciled to God (Walls, 1995:21). The reconciliation is not only limited to God but it extends to human beings and their environment.

The Gospel breaks down ethnic barriers and changes our perception of reality. It is for this reason that Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:16ff that " we do not have to regard people from the human point of view because in Christ, we become a new creation". We must not assume that our religious experience is the only yardstick for measuring others. The PCG has not come to terms with this yet, hence her insistence on the use of Twi/Ga hymns, liturgy and others. As Sanneh notes, "Missions ought to be cross-cultural and should therefore dissolve the barriers of cultural exclusiveness" (Sanneh, 1989:30). The PCG has failed the Gospel Test as long as people still perceive it as "Kanbonga" Church in northern Ghana and as "Ahɔhɔ Asɔrɛ" in the Western Presbytery.

Though there is only one Gospel for all, we should not expect uniformity in people's experiences of its impact. Perhaps, Walls had this in mind when he wrote:

> And since the application of the Good News is greater than anyone's experience of it, we may well proclaim the Good News in anticipation of a response reflecting our own experience, we find others responding in quite another way – but nevertheless hearing Good News. For at every level the Good News is heard, it corresponds with reality; with a real victory secured by Christ over the forces of evil and death (Walls, 1995:22).

There is no uniformity in the way people respond to the Gospel. Peoples' experiences and disposition go a long way to determine how they respond to the Gospel. It is a mystery. The Apostle John seems to have understood this well when he said "the wind blows where it wills" (John 3:8).

Perhaps the PCG will have to allow the Holy Spirit a free hand to bring the different ethnic groups to Christ in His own way. The temptation has been great for PCG's bearers of the Good News not to allow the non-Akan and non-Ga to respond to the Gospel on their own terms. In the PCG's quest for uniformity she is tempted to assimilate the minority ethnic groups rather than allow the diversity they bring with them. If the motive for PCG's mission, is to "canonise" Akan and Ga Christianity as "the Christianity" then it negates God's authentic mission which is essentially cross-cultural.

It seems the PCG's expansion among the various ethnic groups, reveals that she has not effectively communicated the Gospel. Her impact on the ethnic groups in her mission

fields is negligible because she does not reflect their indigenous cultures. Mbiti's exhortation is helpful to the PCG in re-examining her missionary task. He cautions that, " Cultural imperialism must terminate first, in order to allow the indigenous culture to relate more effectively to the Gospel, on its own terms and without pressure from outside" (Mbiti, 1978: 276). The crux of this argument is based on Walls' argument that:

> Conversion to Christ does not isolate the convert from his or her community; it begins the conversion of that community. Conversion to Christ does not produce a bland universal citizenship: it produces distinctive discipleships, as diverse and variegated as human life itself (Walls, 1996: 51).

Is the PCG as a missionary Church propagating the Gospel of Christ in the way Mbiti and Walls are advocating? The PCG transports whole sale the Akan and Ga experience and expects the other tribes to conform. Some church members have occasionally raised questions about the PCG's missionary strategy of insisting on uniformity among all the ethnic groups.

In his paper to the 12th PCG Mission Fields conference, the Rev. Dr. Kpobi touched on the PCG's motivation for missions. He noted that the PCG has been practising "Cultural Mission" and "Ecclesiastical Colonialism". The former refers to the kind of mission whereby the Gospel is clothed in the "missionary's culture" as if the two were the same. Kpobi explains:

> This kind of mission often presents the Gospel clothed in the missionary's own culture and given the name 'Christian culture'. Sadly, this has happened sometimes in our mission fields, particularly in the North where the Gospel was often clothed in the culture of southern Ghana (Kpobi, 1999).

Kpobi explains further how the PCG also engages in "ecclesiastical colonialism" by which he means that:

> the denomination imports and imposes its particular church order and liturgy on the objects of mission. This kind of mission results in the creation of a carbon copy of the church in the mission field, thereby creating a colony. This has been practised by the PCG in not a few instances (Kpobi, 1999).

This issue has been very well expressed by one of the past Moderators of the PCG. He sees how the hymnbook can be an obstacle. Presenting a paper on the topic, "Schism and division –help or hindrance to Mission?" he noted:

> That great asset of the Presbyterian Church, the Twi hymnbook, while making the Church more indigenous to the Akans, becomes an impediment as soon as tribal and language barriers are crossed (Frempong, 1974:61).

The PCG should critically evaluate her missionary methods and bring them in line with the Gospel Test. That is, she should have the faith that the Holy Spirit is willing and able to transform people's lives as she faithfully proclaims the Gospel.

Towards an Authentic Multi-ethnic Missionary Church

This thesis builds on some recommendations made at the end of an international workshop held under the auspices of Hendrick Kraemer Institute, the Netherlands, in conjunction with the Akrofi-Christaller Memorial Centre, Ghana, in 1995 and 1997 as part of a " Workshop on Church and Society in Africa". Of the six recommendations that were made, four of them, relevant to this study, are considered. The delegates were of the opinion that God's definition of who we are should be uppermost in any discussions on our humanity rather than ethnic or racial origin. They called for:

Defining people in terms of God

> The Bible says that, 'God created man in his own image and likeness' (Genesis 1:26-27). This means that every human being bears the image of God as a stamp. Therefore people should be seen first in terms of who they are in relation to God before thinking of their ethnic or racial origins. It is the duty of the Church as the new society of God to lead the way.

The above recommendation postulates that the starting point for defining people or ethnicity should be theological not anthropological. That is, how God defines us should take precedence over the identity human beings give us. Our true identity therefore is what God says we are – people made in His own image. Thus all human beings are of equal dignity and

deserve respect and love irrespective of their ethnic background. The implication of this fact is addressed by the following recommendation:

Re-examining the church's life and mission

> This is a call for the church to truly assert its identity. The leadership of the Church should constantly be reminded that the 'Church is not a place where People come to.' Rather the Church is the people of God moving out to people reaching out to others until all the nations become the disciples of Christ. So there is an urgent need for the Church to deal with the ethnocentric (tribalism) spirit which has prevented the church from fulfilling its divine commission. There is every need to move with the Spirit of God, to give birth to new communities and to stop making people feel that the Gospel begins and ends with them.

This recommendation calls upon the Church to curb ethnocentrism or tribalism. If the Church fails to do this she would be guilty of working against God's Will which is to make disciples of all ethnic groups. The church therefore has a task to ensure that the earlier and bigger ethnic groups embark upon cross-cultural mission rather than a mission of cultural imperialism. It is for this reason that the next recommendation is relevant:

Taking education seriously:

> It behoves the Church in Africa to consider seriously a method in local theology that is not only meaningful to the professional theologian but also practicable to the pastor and members of the congregation. Africans need the Gospel. But the presence of the Gospel can only be felt as a living reality when it is incarnated in a concrete context and it is allowed to partake of the ambiguities and limitations of human experience and world history. Let theological colleges and Bible study groups be fora in training people who approach the questions of Christian life and leadership as expression of their faith. This can help us deal with the problem of ethnicity.

The remedy for the problems associated with ethnicity can best be achieved through education. The kind of education being called for is not dry and detached theological education that is not accessible to the majority of Church members. The Workshop further advocated that:

Ethnic identities should not be sacralised:

> Neither should ethnicity be seen to be rewarded politically. Instead, ethnic identity should be protected culturally. By so doing we shall be discouraging ethnocentrism.

Ethnicity that affirms our identity and that of those who are different from us is crucial for Christian mission, for it embraces multi-cultural or multi-ethnic communities. Ethnocentrism, however, is an enemy to Christian mission because of its divisive tendency. The Workshop's recommendation that ethnocentrism should be discouraged is therefore timely, because ethnocentrism is anti-mission.

Recommendations and the Conclusion

Ethnicity can be a good instrument in the hands of God for the building of his Church based on the principle of homogenous unit that ensures that the Gospel travels on natural lines of communication with few barriers. If the vision of God is a multi-cultural, multi-racial and multi-ethnic Church, then this principle of Church planting among homogenous people is deficient and could produce a Church which does not reflect unity in diversity. Christian theology ought to take seriously the "other" who is different. For we are incomplete without the "other". Intolerance of the "other" militates against the eschatological vision depicted by Revelation 7:9,10:

> After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb!'

This is God's ultimate goal for His Church. The PCG should begin aiming at this ultimate vision of the Church. "Tribalism" or "Ethnocentrism" is in the words of the late Very Reverend Sintim-Misa, "the enemy of the Church" (Christian Messenger, 1982, vol. No. p).

The late Reverend F.J. Dankwa's, assertion that tribalism exists in the PCG has been confirmed by most of the Respondents. He analysed the evil of tribalism calling it "triple Baalism", an idol which seeks to dislodge Christ from the centre of his Church. Tribalism or Ethnocentrism is a counter-sign of the Kingdom of God. To combat Tribalism in the PCG, I make the following recommendations:

- There should be open discussion of tribalism in the Church coupled with intensive

education from the Bible. Most of the respondents agreed that sound teaching of the Gospel is the answer to Tribalism. In pursuance of this objective, cross-cultural training should be provided by PCG for her Agents.

- The PCG should provide facilities for language learning as well as encourage all her members to learn other Ghanaian languages in addition to their own. If her fraternal workers are required to learn German, Dutch and others in order to minister abroad, is it too much to ask her members to learn other languages to minister in Ghana? The Church's mission in Ghana involves cross-cultural communication of the Gospel. For instance Northerners have to overcome cross cultural and language barriers just like Europeans if they want to minister to the Akan in southern Ghana.

- The PCG as a matter of policy, will have to aim at making her congregations multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and even multi-racial Churches. The Church should sensitize her Agents to offer inclusive church services to the communities in which they minister. The Agents should be made aware of the heterogeneous nature of the urban congregations. The church could also embark upon several services in other languages to meet the language needs of her members. The need for more than one service cannot be totally ruled out because some rural areas also attract other ethnic groups. For example, there are numerous Northerners who live and work in southern villages and will need the Gospel in their languages too.

- The PCG can create a new Presbyterian Hymnbook including hymns and songs in Twi, Ga, Dagbani, Frafra and other languages; to make her non-Akan and non-Ga members know that they are also valued in the Church. The Twi and Ga hymnbooks tend to exclude many members of the Church. As the Very Reverend Frempong noted, the Twi and Ga hymnbooks are stumbling blocks to PCG' members of other tribes. The Church might therefore consider a project aimed at encouraging her Mission Fields members to produce their own Christian music. For this project to be successful adequate funding and committed personnel would have to be provided by the PCG.

- To minimise the ethnic rivalries and ethnic-based campaigns during Church elections, it would be helpful, as suggested by one of the interviewees, if the offices of Moderator and Synod Clerk could be rotated among the Presbyteries. This suggestion might be one of a mixed blessing. The inherent danger in the proposal is that the interests of the Church could be sacrificed on the altar of expediency. The reality on the ground is that, the presbyteries are not equally endowed with human resources. A scenario could be created in which a particular presbytery might not be able to present a suitable candidate when it is their turn to provide one. If such a presbytery however insisted on its right a crisis might result. This inherent danger however, should not nullify the wisdom in the suggestion. All good proposals entail risks as well as opportunities.

- The PCG should take an affirmative action to reverse what minority ethnic groups perceive as their marginalisation by the larger ethnic groups. To do this, the leadership should be sensitive when appointing officers for the various desks so as not to offend the sensibilities of particular ethnic groups. The appointments should reflect a deliberate policy of ethnic balance.

- To truly reflect her national character, the PCG should promote partnership among the Presbyteries. The Ga and Brong Ahafo Presbyteries have blazed this trail by paying each other visits. This exercise has the advantage of changing Presbyteries' ethnically based perceptions of themselves. Prejudices are also minimised when people get to know each other better in a friendly atmosphere such as fraternal visits among Presbyteries.

Conclusion

In conclusion, *the PCG is urged to become a Church for all ethnic groups.* If she is to be a truly missionary Church, then she has to be proactive by being sensitive to the warning signs of *Tribalism* or *Ethnocentrism*. The vision of a multi-ethnic Church should not just be an idea but should be concretised. Thus the PCG needs to come to the realisation that her:

> ... adoption into Israel becomes a 'universalizing' factor, bringing Christians of all cultures and ages together through a common inheritance, lest any of us make the Christian faith such a place to feel at home that no one else can live there; and bringing into everyone's society some sort of outside reference (Walls, 1997:9).

The PCG as a missionary Church engaged in Christ's mission will be incomplete if she remains the monopoly of the Akan and the Ga. The riches of the cultural heritage of the other smaller ethnic groups are waiting to be brought into the Church; for God desires to reveal his wonders to all other ethnic groups, not only to predominant ethnic cultures but also to the smaller ethnic cultures. Certainly God intends that when the roll is called at the end of time, all ethnic groups will be present. It is also His plan that no one ethnic group claims supremacy over others. In this way the limitations found in each ethnic group will be compensated for in others. Hence no ethnic group can claim self-sufficiency. This realisation then obliges all ethnic groups to co-operate and to cultivate a relationship of inter-dependence, for the cultures of all ethnic groups are equal in worth before God. *Ipso facto,* they are deemed fit to carry the Gospel of God's kingdom to their peoples and beyond.

We could not have concluded on a better note than Bosch's admonition that:

> People must be able to feel at home in the church, and this includes culturally. But this should never be regarded as something that militates against, let alone excludes, the indestructible unity of the Church...neither should the argument in favour of unity be employed to bulldoze Christians into an amorphous sameness. This was the mistake made in times past by Rome. Rather, let us strive for a gentle yet dynamic tension between the particular and the universal, to the mutual enrichment of all and to the glory of Him who is the Head of his *one* body, which is the Church (Bosch, 1982:28).

When a Church attains the goal spelt out by Bosch, we can conclude she has experienced Pentecost. Such a church is muti-ethnic in membership and yet united under the same Lord. Hence her members are free to be their true selves. It means the church has really been equipped with all the resources necessary to embark on Christ's mission to the world. Such a church is truly reconciled to Christ and her members are at peace amongst themselves. The life and witness of such a Church will be redemptive and relevant, because she would have passed all the Three Tests Walls talks about.

In the light of our survey, we can conclude that the Presbyterian Church of Ghana is yet to experience "Pentecost". For where there are still strong ethnic prejudices, rivalries and

ethnocentrism in the PCG, and point to the fact that, the PCG is unwell and needs healing. Thus, the PCG has to come to this realisation and then make a choice by waiting for a genuine "Pentecost" before she becomes a witness in her Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth. "Pentecost" is the answer to the PCG's quest for a Church for all peoples; that is, a Church where there is genuine confession of "ethnic sins" and receiving Christ's reconciliation and in turn being his ambassadors of reconciliation. When this is achieved then we shall experience what Volf calls "embrace" (Volf, 1996:104ff). In the light of Volf's analysis of the journey towards genuine reconciliation, the PCG has no choice but to embark on the same journey. It is a painful and humbling journey, but it makes those who embark upon it richer. The Akan, and the Ga as well as the Northerners must embark upon this journey as equals. They must sincerely open up to embrace and to be embraced. When this is done, then we would have experienced our own "Pentecost" and become the multi-cultural Church God intends us to be. We will then appreciate our distinct identities and harness them to enrich the Church.

Appendix A

"There is Tribalism in Ghana." *The Ghanaian Chronicle*, Vol. No.386, 1997: 12.

"Big Tribal Plot Out." *The Weekend Statesman.* Vol. 3 No. 4, 1997:1.

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"Tribalism Exists in Ghana, Let's Discuss It Openly." *The Ghana Chronicle,* Vol.5 No. 425, 1997: 6&7.

"This Tribalism is Real." *The Weekend Statesman,* 1997: 9.

"Confronting the Tribal Question...After Awoonor's 'Alarm Bells'." *The Ghanaian Chronicle,* Vol.1 No.16, 1997:7.

"Anti-Ewe Campaign". *The Ghanaian Chronicle*, Vol.6 No. 24, 1997: 9.

"Are The Bonos Ewes Or Akans." *The Ghanaian Chronicle*, 1997:2.

"War Clouds Gather again in the North... Konkomba Mass For Battle With "Nchumurus and Others." *The Ghanaian Chronicle*, Vol. No. 1997: 1.

"Don't Resurrect Ethnic Conflicts – Rawlings." (*Daily Graphic*, No. 14575, 1997:1).

"Co-Exist, Please! President intercedes on behalf of Konkombas." *Daily Graphic* No. 14576 1997:1.

"Re-Integration After 1994 Ethnic Conflict." *The Ghanaian Chronicle,* December,1997: 6.

Appendix B

"Tribal Clouds Loom over Ghana; Tribalism Haunts Ghana." *Christian Messenger,* Vol.10 No. 2 1997:1&3.

"Avoid Tribalism." *Christian Messenger,*Vol.Iv Nos.10 &11, 1979:1.

"Don't Form Tribal Parties – Moderator." *Christian Messenger*, May 1992: 8.

"Don't Vote on Tribal Basis". *The Presbyterian*, Vol. No. 1998:1 and

"Professor Smells Tribalism ...in PCG." *The Presbyterian*, Vol. No. 3,997:12.

"Tribalism is the Church's Enemy- Very Rev. Sintim Misa." *Christian Messenger,* December1982: 8.

"Presby Church is Not for any Tribe." *The Presbyterian*, Vol.6 No. 1, 1999:1.

Appendix C

A few of the responses across the ethnic groups in support of or against the statement that: "Ethnicity influences the election of church officers at the Synodal level" are hereby tabulated:

THOSE WHO DISAGREED	THOSE WHO AGREED
1. "Members look to God for direction".	1." The unhealthy campaigns are the evidence".
2. "Elections are based on commitment, and qualification".	2. "Electorates lobby on basis of tribalism".
3. "Decision of one ethnic group can't influence Synodal elections".	3. "Bigger ethnic groups do influence Synodal elections".
4. "Those elected are the ones most known to delegates".	4. "Every ethnic group wants to elect their own".
5. " Elections are based on academic, intellectual, and spiritual might of candidates".	5. "People of small tribes do not get voted".
6. "They are democratically elected".	6. "Ethnic bickering characterise elections".
7. "Members depend on the Holy Spirit".	7. "We campaign rather than pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance".

Appendix D

Christian Unity in Your Town

(A call to local church leaders issued by the Church Negotiation Union)

Members of Other Churches Attend to Your Congregation.

If there is a minority of members of another church attached to your congregation, because their own church has no congregation in town, you need to take special care to avoid friction and to make the minority feel as much at home as possible. Remember God is calling you to demonstrate a unity that is stronger than human differences.

1. Visit them and take a pastoral interest in them as if they were members of your own church.
2. Arrange occasionally for a pastor or preacher from their own church to conduct worship and to preach at your normal services; Use the new "united" forms of services sometimes to help meet their needs; wherever possible, give out the hymn numbers in their book as well as in your own, and choose some of their favourites. At the same time don't give any impression of trying to get them to leave their own church altogether and join yours.
3. If the minority grew in number and if your town is large enough to need another centre of Christian worship and witness, it may be the right thing to encourage the minority to begin holding services in a different area of the town where there is no other chapel, and eventually to put up a new chapel to serve the people of that area. Discuss this matter fully and pray about it. Don't let it be a case of the minority "breaking away" with bad feeling on both sides, rather send them out with your good will and assistance to do God's work in another part of the town. If however, there is some "zoning" agreement between your church and another church which affects your part of the country (e.g. the north, or new suburbs zoned as suggested in VII below), this must be taken into account and there should be consultation between the authorities of the churches concerned if some change is proposed.
4. The points in 1,2,and 3 above have been addressed mainly to the leaders of the "majority" in the congregation. But we want to say something to the leaders of the "minority" too. You must keep the call to unity in Christ before your members, especially to new members coming to from other congregations where they have always been part of the "majority" and now find it hard to accept the minority position. You should not encourage your minority group to take an attitude of waiting impatiently for the day when they can "break away" to form a separate congregation. Unless and until it is clear that God's work in the town needs a separate congregation, the minority must take part heartily in the work and fellowship of the existing congregation.

II. Different Language Groups in Your Congregation.

1. We are also called to show Christian Unity between different language groups within our congregations; for in principle every congregation of Christ's people is a fellowship in which differences of tribe, language, class and politics have been overcome by the cross of Christ. This is vitally important at a time when we hear on

sides about the danger of "tribalism" in the life of Ghana. The best contribution of Christians to fighting that evil is to demonstrate within our congregations a unity that is stronger than language or tribal differences.

2. For this reason we urge you who are local church leaders to try to provide for the needs of different language groups within the life of the congregation. You must help different language groups to see each other as brothers and sisters in Christ and to consider always the needs and feelings of the other group (even if it is a small minority), not just what suits their own group (even if it is a big majority).

3. The practical step to be taken varies from congregation to congregation. You already know the obvious ones, like announcing hymn numbers for different languages, Bible readings and interpretation in different languages, inviting occasionally preachers of minority language, encouraging singing bands of different language to contribute to the worship, etc.

4. But have you considered the possibility of holding separate services for different language groups which remains part of one congregation? This could be once a month, or it could be regularly every Sunday, with the hours of services adjusted to make it possible. If you try this, make the different groups realise they are part of one congregation by joining together for all special occasions and activities, and by occasionally having Holy Communion and Baptism services for all groups together. For the sacrament speak especially clearly of the unity of the body of Christ. And you will of course continue to have one leaders' meeting (or session or P.C.P) for the whole congregation, with people of different groups in it.

5. With the arrangement suggested in 4 above, we may be able to avoid setting up different congregations to serve different language groups. But there may be some situation in which a new congregation using a different language is really needed for the evangelisation and instruction of a large group of people in town. (sometimes members of different denomination may join in the new congregation). Where a new congregation of this kind is set up, it should still realise that it is a congregation for Jesus Christ, open to all and it is not the exclusive preserve of one language group or tribe. It may soon find that it has to serve people of other languages who live near its chapel. So the name of a new congregation of this kind should not include any reference to language or tribe. And any new single language congregation in a mixed community should see that it joins from time to time in activities with congregations using other languages. This will keep its members from forgetting that the unity in Christ must overcome language divisions.

Appendix E

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,
I should be grateful if you could spare some of your precious time to fill this questionnaire for me. I am going to use the information for my Masters in Theology thesis. This work seeks to contribute to the missionary task of the PCG. The work therefore hopes to critically evaluate the PCG's missionary strategies and how they can be modified to reflect the multi-ethnic composition of the church.

Please tick the box which honestly expresses your opinion.

1. Status: a. Ordinary church member ☐   d. Synod Committee member ☐

   b. Presbyter ☐   c. Presbyterial Committee member ☐   e. Other ☐

2. Congregation ....   3. District.................................

4. Presbytery...   5.Region...

6. Ethnic Group.................................

7. Age: a. 18-35 years ☐   b. 36-55 years ☐   c. 56 and over ☐.

8. Gender   Male☐   Female☐

9. Educational Level   Elementary☐   Secondary☐   Commercial☐

   Tertiary☐   Any other☐   None☐

1a. There is tribalism in the PCG.   a. I disagree ☐   b. I agree ☐   c. I strongly agree

☐   d. I do not know. ☐

1b. Give reasons

....

....

2a. The bigger ethnic groups tend to dominate the smaller ones.

   a. I disagree ☐   b. I agree ☐   c. I strongly agree☐   d. I do not know. ☐

2b. Give reasons

....

....

3a. Recruitment of church Agents is influenced by the ethnic factor.

    a. I disagree ☐   b. I agree ☐ c. I strongly agree ☐ d. I do not know☐

3b. Give reasons ....

....

4a. Ethnicity influences the election of church officers at the Presbytery level.

    a. I disagree ☐   b. I agree ☐ c. I strongly agree ☐ .d. I do not know ☐

4b. Give reasons

....

....

5a. Presbyteries and Mission Fields are created along ethnic lines.

    a. I disagree ☐   b. I agree ☐ c. I strongly agree ☐. d. I do not know☐

5b. Give reasons ....

....

6a. Ethnicity influences the election of church officers at the synodal level.

    a. I disagree ☐   b. I agree ☐ c. I strongly agree ☐. d. I do not know. ☐

6b. Give reasons ....

....

7a. Prejudices and ethnic rivalries exist among the different ethnic groups in the PCG.

    a. I disagree☐   b. I agree☐ c. I strongly agree☐. d. I do not know. ☐

7b. Give reasons ....

....

8a. Church appointments are also influenced by the ethnic factor .

a. I disagree ☐   b. I agree ☐   c. I strongly agree ☐. d. I do not know. ☐

8b. Give reasons ……………...……………………………………………………………………………

………

9a. There is dissatisfaction among some ethnic groups because of the language(s) used in church services.

a. I disagree   ☐   b. I agree ☐   c. I strongly agree ☐   d. I do not know. ☐

9b. Give reasons …………………………………………………………………………………………

……

10a. Posting of church agents is influenced by the ethnic factor.

    a. I disagree ☐   b. I agree ☐   c. I strongly agree ☐.   d. I do not know. ☐

10b. Give reasons ……………...…………………………………………………………………………

……

11a. The ethnic factor influences Church discipline.

    a. I disagree ☐   b. I agree ☐   c. I strongly agree ☐. d. I do not know. ☐

11b. Give reasons ……...……………………………………………………………………………………

……

12a. Scholarship for further studies abroad and fraternal work are also influenced by the ethnic factor.

    a. I disagree ☐   b. I agree ☐   c. I strongly agree ☐. d. I do not know. ☐

12b. Give reasons …………………………...……………………………………………………………

……

13. How do you regard yourself/ identify yourself? Rank in order of importance (1, 2, 3, 4).

    a. My ethnic group ☐ b. Ghanaian ☐   c. Christian ☐   d. African ☐

14a. Cultural and social prejudices among the ethnic groups in the PCG can be overcome through sound teaching of the Gospel

a. I disagree ☐   b. I agree   ☐   I strongly agree.☐   d. I do not know. ☐

14b.Give reason...

....

15a. Some languages are used in the church to exclude some ethnic groups from fully benefiting from God's blessings for the church.

a. I disagree   ☐   b. I agree ☐   c.I strongly agree☐   d. I do not know. ☐

15b Give reasons..

....

16a. Most people in the church see themselves first as members of their ethnic group and second as Christians.

a.I disagree ☐   b.I agree ☐   c.I strongly agree☐   d. I do not know. ☐

16b.Give.reasons...

....

17a. Ethnic considerations account for the siting of church projects

a.I disagree ☐   b.I agree ☐   c.I strongly agree☐   d. I do not know. ☐

17b. Give reason..

....

18a. The ethnic factor determines the destination of fraternal visits.

a.I disagree ☐   b.I agree ☐   c.I strongly agree☐   d. I do not know. ☐

18b. Give reasons..

....

Thank you for taking the time to fill the questionnaire.

Rev. Solomon Sule-Saa.

Appendix F

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of ethnic consciousness in the PCG?

2. What role has ethnicity played in the expansion of the PCG?

3. What challenge does ethnicity pose to the PCG?

4. How has ethnicity been a threat to the PCG?

5. In what ways can ethnicity pose as a threat to the church? Do you have any examples fron

   the PCG?

6. How can the PCG affirm every ethnic group and retain the unity of the Church?

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