A SURVEY AND THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE SPIRITUAL AND PENTECOSTAL-EVANGELICAL CHURCHES IN FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE INFLUENCES OF THE INDIGENOUS RELIGIOUS PNEUMATOLOGY (VOL. 1)

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The thesis, A Survey and Theological Analysis of the Spiritual and Pentecostal-evangelical Churches in Freetown, Sierra Leone, with Special Emphasis on the Influences of the Indigenous Religious Pneumatology, presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the University of Edinburgh has been composed by the candidate Mr. Donald Robert Morrison Smith. This work has not been accepted in any previous application for a degree. The work has been done by the candidate. All quotations have been distinguished and the sources of information acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

Experiencing and obtaining Spiritual power is the primary goal of indigenous religious activity. The failure of evangelical missionaries to recognise and make use of this primal *praeparatio evangelica*, led to the development of an educated and elitist Church in Freetown from 1815 onwards. Krio Christianity failed to make accommodation for the African spiritual heritage and thus produced a very alien and exclusive form of African Christianity.

The first form of Christianity to take root in Freetown was that carried across the Atlantic by the Nova Scotians in 1792. Their Christianity, born in the Great Evangelical Awakening of the seventeenth century, developed independent of White control. Enthusiasm, emotion and pneumatological manifestations were major features of their worship. Nova Scotian Christianity eventually lost its revivalistic fervour and was eventually taken over by Krio Christianity and British missionary control. Krio Christianity failed, however, to meet the Krios' own existential needs for spiritual power. Problem-solving power was sought along indigenous lines. This produced in Krio Christianity a religious dualism and an identity crises.

In 1947, the Nigerian Church of the Lord (Aladura) arrived in Freetown. The "Adejobis" challenged the Krio Christian community, but by and large, having taken the evangelical Christianity of the Victorian era as their own traditional religion, they did not receive it. The Spiritual churches appealed more to the non-Krio residents of the city, and particularly to the illiterate. The style of Christianity introduced was highly indigenised. In many aspects it appeared as the indigenous pneumatology expressed in Christian forms and terms. Its main attractions lay in the areas of healing, problem-solving, and fortune-telling revelations.

The Pentecostal-evangelical movement arrived in Freetown as early as 1905. The first Pentecostal church was planted among the Kru in the early 1920s. After World War 2 Pentecostal-evangelical churches were begun by AOG missionaries among the Temne and Limba. However, it was not until Pentecostal-evangelicalism took root in Krio society in the late 60s and 70s with the formation of the "English-speaking Church", Bethel Temple, that general growth on a large scale began to take place in Freetown. This Krio Pentecostal-evangelical church became the model church for other Freetown Pentecostal-evangelicals.

In the present expansion of Pentecostal-evangelicalism in Freetown - now a non-Krio movement in which the Limba are front-runners - an increasingly indigenised form of pneumatic Christianity is developing. The interaction between the evangelical Gospel and the indigenous pneumatology is producing a dynamic church that appeals to the whole spectrum of Freetown society, rich and poor, literate and illiterate, Krio and Provincials. It is apparent that as the evangelical churches need the indigenous pneumatology to enliven, revive and make relevant their worship, the indigenous pneumatology itself needs Apostolic doctrine and evangelical teaching to transform its chaotic unruly elements into powerful forces for good and the Gospel. From a positive and balanced interaction, the light of Christ and His Cross shines into the shadowy, darker side of the indigenous spirituality's pneumatic nature and subjects its turbulent powers to the yoke of Christ and then redirects them to the benefit and blessing of society. It is at this point that Krio Christianity with its heritage of evangelical teaching on the nature and character of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, have a significant part to play in bringing its own deep insights of a *theologia crucis* to bear on the popular *theologia pneumatica*. Krio Christianity with its unique history, African roots and evangelical heritage is well placed for making a stabilising and salutary contribution towards the New Testament, Apostolic development of the present dynamic Sierra Leonean Church.

ABBREVIATIONS

AACC	All Africa Conference of Churches
AEAM	Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagasgar
AMEC	African Methodist Episcopal Church
AOG	Assemblies of God
APC	All Peoples' Congress
BCSL	Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone
CAC	Christ Apostolic Church
CCSL	Christian Council of Sierra Leone
CfaN	Christ for all Nations
CinA	Christians in Action
CMA	Christian Missionary Alliance
CMS	Church Missionary Society
ECWA	Evangelical Church of West Africa
EFSL	Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone
EUB	Evangelical United Brethren
FAOGBC	Freetown Assemblies of God Bible College
FBC	Fourah Bay College
ICI	International Correspondence Institute
IFL	International Friendship League
NDMC	National Diamond Mining Company
SCM	Student Christian Movement
SLBC	Sierra Leone Bible College
SLBR	***Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion***
SLBS	Sierra Leone Broadcasting Services
SLPP	Sierra Leone Peoples' Party
SLS	***Sierra Leone Studies***
SLWN	***Sierra Leone Weekly News***
SU	Scripture Union
TEE	Theological Education by Extension
UBC	United Brethren in Christ
UCC	United Christian Council
UPM	United Pentecostal Mission
YFC	Youth for Christ
YWAM	Youth with a Mission

PREFACE

The following investigations intend to pursue the course of four streams of Christianity as they have encountered and affected the Freetown Christian community and as they relate to and interact with each other. These streams may be provisionally designated Black Evangelical Revivalism, British Evangelicalism, African Spiritual Christianity, and Pentecostal-evangelicalism. The older typologies, formulated under the shadow of the period of colonial and missionary dominance, are not appropriate to the present situation. The main concentration of this study is on the dynamic pneumatological element, tracing its origins and fortunes throughout the whole Christian period in Freetown. The work has itself dictated that it be done in four main sections, each covering the course of a spiritual stream. A fifth section, the Roman Catholic stream, is well worth investigating, but due to its own special features and the constraints of the present study, regrettably it has not been possible to devote a major section to it in the present work. A major up-to-date study of Islam in Freetown has also been found to be over-due. The unpublished raw research material has been excavated by the author in what Turner has called "encounter at the personal level" which goes "beyond academic enquiry" and becomes a "personal discovery". It has also been dug up in what he terms "the establishment of a joint venture" where informants, especially members and ex-members of the churches studied, and also Fourah Bay College research students, have shared their knowledge, insights, and the fruit of their own labours.

The first section surveys the indigenous religious scene with some attention being given to the significant growth and presence of Islam. The indigenous pneumatology is then focused on and the power structure underlying the indigenous religious activity is analysed (chapter one). The second section traces the formation and assesses the nature and character of Nova Scotian Christianity from its roots in the American plantations to its demise in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Recaptive and missionary period is then covered. The successes of CMS and Wesleyan missions are investigated, and the ebbing fortunes of Black Evangelical Revivalism, as Krio society developed and assumed classical form towards the end of the nineteenth century, are observed (chapter 2). Krio Christianity in the twentieth century and its dual European evangelical and African traditional aspects are then analysed (chapter three). These two sections are essential background for a proper treatment of the main investigations, the Spiritual and Pentecostal-evangelical movements and the influences of the indigenous religious pneumatology. Together they form Part One.

Part Two comprises the third section, African Spiritual Christianity. First the Nigerian origins and the history of the Aladura movement prior to its arrival in 1947 in Freetown are covered (chapter four). Attention is given to Nigerian Christianity's early connections with Sierra Leone, the discontent with missionary control which led to African Independent churches coming into existence towards the end of last century, the Garrick Braide movement, and the rise of the Aladura movement during the 1918 influenza epidemic. Two distinct streams in the movement are distinguished, the Pentecostal-evangelical represented by the Christ Apostolic Church, and the Spiritual represented by the Church of the Lord (Aladura). The arrival of Church of the Lord (Aladura) missionary Adeleke Adejobi in Freetown in 1947, the planting of the first Spiritual church and the reactions of the Krio to it, are recorded (chapter five). The origins and development of indigenous Spiritual churches like Church of Salvation and Saint Peter's Healing Temple are also recorded. This is followed by an analysis of the beliefs and practices of the Spiritual churches (chapter six).

Part Three, the fourth section, deals with the Pentecostal-evangelicalism stream. The arrival of the Pentecostal movement in Freetown in 1905 is recorded and the history of the movement as it becomes an Assemblies of God mission field is followed up (chapter seven). The growth of the Pentecostal-evangelical movement among the Kru is recorded and also the development of tribal Pentecostal-evangelical churches among the Temne, Limba, Loko, Kissi and Mende. The origins of the Pentecostal-evangelical movement among the Krio is put on record and the breakdown of the Bethel Temple and AOG missionary relationship is examined carefully. The following chapter (chapter eight) looks at breakaways from AOG such as the Limba and Loko Pentecostal churches and the Krio Pentecostals, Bethel Temple. The indigenous independent God is Our Light Church is studied and more recently established non-AOG Pentecostal-evangelical churches, such as New Testament Church, Christians in Action, and Deeper Life Bible Church, are also explored. The final chapter (chapter nine) examines the present state of Pentecostal-evangelicalism in Freetown. This is now undergoing revival and significant expansion. Special attention is given to Jesus is Lord Ministries which is experiencing phenomenal growth, mainly among women from an indigenous and Muslim background. Recent mass "evangelism and healing" crusades led by Western Pentecostal evangelists are examined, particularly the Reinhard Bonnke December 1991 Freetown Crusade, and their contribution to the revival assessed. With that, the present investigations into the various streams that have contributed to the variety and complexity of Freetown Christianity and which have highlighted its spiritual vitality and pneumatological dynamism, come to a conclusion. However, the spiritual river flows ever onwards.

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PART 1

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CHAPTER ONE

LAYING THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS: THE NATURE AND CHARACTER OF THE INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS OF SIERRA LEONE

Any assessment of the historic development and present significant expansion of Christianity in Freetown needs to take account of the powerful and deeply rooted influences exerted by the indigenous religious background.[1] This religious heritage is not a thing of the past, but is the ontological *grundschrift* for the new generation of modern Sierra Leoneans, still influencing and often determining their reactions and responses to the Gospel. John Mbiti points out that African religions have been a crucial factor in the rapid spread of Christianity among African peoples:

Christianity is spreading rapidly in the areas of Africa where African religion has been most predominant. At one time overseas missionaries and African converts condemned African religion in the worst terms possible. But it is becoming clear that Christianity and African Religion have many features which do not conflict. It is upon these that Christianity seems to be building, in its rapid spread in Africa. African Religion and Christianity have become allies, at least unofficially. One has prepared the ground for the accommodation of the other.
African Christians seem to accommodate Christianity readily into their traditional world-view. This is taking place particularly round the notion of God. They give up certain ideas, beliefs and practices in their traditional life, and assimilate newer understand of God's dealing with men as proclaimed in Christianity.[2]

Professor Idowu has pointed out that "African Traditional Religion is the master key to the understanding of Africans who in all things are religious."[3] In his introduction to ***African Traditional Religion: a Definition***, he declares:

The world outside Africa still has to wake up to the fact that African Traditional Religion is the religion which resulted from the sustaining faith held by the forebears of the present Africans, which is being practised today by the majority of Africans in various forms and various shades and intensities, nakedly in most cases; but also, in some cases, under the veneers supplied by Westernism and Arabism; it is also a religion which is receiving a new vitality in certain areas in consequence of nationalism plus inspiration by other religions.[4]

Although carried along by the intoxicating nationalism of Nigeria in the 1960s, Idowu has made a valid point which still holds in the less optimistic atmosphere of the 1990s.[5]

At this point it is necessary to mention the impressive growth and influence of Islam.[6] Islamic presence has been long standing among the northern and western peoples, the Yalunka, Kuranko, Temne (the second largest ethnic group), and the Susu.[7] Islam spread gradually southwards during the nineteenth century along the trade routes through Mandinka, Fula and Kuranko traders from the north.[8] Frequently the trading parties included *karamoko*, "learned men", who conducted prayers, taught the Koran, and acted as wandering imams.[9] The Muslim medicine-men, *alpha*, teachers who specialised in medicine, gained a reputation as successful healers. Arabic writings, washed off their writing boards, gave an added dimension of power to their healing potions. Their *sebe* charms could ward off witchcraft, bullets, and bad luck.[10] Their fortune-tellers and soothsayers, *mori,* who guided the trading parties and predicted the outcome of their ventures and skirmishes, impressed local chiefs with their accurate predictions. For assisting warring chiefs with their armed caravan bodyguards, Muslim traders were given land and allowed to settle, trade, and become wealthy. The *karamoko* founded Koranic schools, *karanthe* ("learning fire" - teaching took place around the evening fires), and mosques. They introduced Islamic rituals and beliefs to the local populations. Some became important ruling families; for example, the Sesay, Swarray, Dumbuya, Sankoh, Mansaray, Turay, Fofana, Kamara and the Koroma. They assimilated the local culture as well as altered it. Local peoples attached themselves to these elite families and took their names and religion. The *alpha* and the *mori* became the supreme spiritual power dispensers. Skinner writes:

The cultures of Sierra Leone were affected by Islam in a variety of ways, some of them direct and obvious, others more subtle. The karanthe and the mosque with their respective elites provided an alternative to traditional institutions and elites. The Friday midday prayers, the Ramadan month of fasting, and the feast day celebrations provided public worship and fellowship which assisted in forming a cohesive Muslim community. Islam began to compete with traditional religions by providing spiritual services for the indigenous communities. The making of Arabic charms by the alfa was a reflection of his influence. Charms composed of bits of hair, leaves, sticks, or cowrie shells were originally made by traditional priests. The alfa or mori, on the other hand, made them by writing a sura or verse from the Quran on paper and enclosing it in a leather pouch. The charms were used by warriors, farmers, traders,

and chiefs to bring prosperity or victory and to ward off evil spirits.... Professor A. K. Turay, a Muslim Temne and a linguistics specialist, identifies charm-making as a key function of the integration of Islam with traditional culture:

> **More than anything else, the power of using the Koran and knowledge of the Arabic script helped to entrench the position of Manding, Susu, and more latterly Fula marabouts among the Temne. Traditional forms of divination and charm-making existed among the Temne.... The arrival of the marabouts did not basically alter the belief of the Temne in the power of charms; if anything, the marabouts had everything to gain by not discouraging these beliefs, merely replacing the traditional forms of divining and charms by new ones based on the Koran.**

In addition to making charms, Muslim holy men used prayer, divination, magic potions (nasi), and magic tablets to identify wrongdoers and to protect and cure people.... The concept of sathka or saraka seems to be present among all the peoples of northern Sierra Leone, and among the Temne it comprises a complex of rites which involve sacrifice, the blessing of an object for its usefulness, and ancestral offerings. In many of these rites the Muslim cleric is an important participant.[11]

The influence of Islam on the Mende to the east, while not so penetrative because of historical reasons and the strength of the *Poro* society, is nonetheless significant and increasing.[12] Sierra Leone Islam, especially Mende Islam, has been classed as "Folk Islam", an Islamic veneer over the basic indigenous ontology, because as Skinner points out:

Islam was brought into areas which already had fully developed religious institutions and beliefs, and simply substituting Islam for the host religion was impossible. In Sierra Leone, Islam had to compete with established institutions and priests, and the process of Islamization was slow and the result partial.[13]

Reeck distinguishes between "Stranger" Islam, brought in by Mandinka, Fula and Susu traders, and "Mende" Islam.[14] In Mende Islam the basic Mende world-view remains in place to a great extent, whereas the much smaller "Stranger" Islam has been "orientated towards the Koran and Islamic culture and has maintained a certain autonomy from Mende cultural life and institutions."[15] Reeck observes that:

Stranger Muslims have played a valued role in linking the Mende agricultural consumer-producers and the modernizing forces impinging upon the chiefdom from the outside, but have not succeeded in winning large numbers of converts. Mende Islam, the second type, has won many adherents and operates within the Mende world-view as a means for the acquisition and channelling of *halei* or "force" in addition to or in some cases even in place of means heretofore possessed by the Mende people. It may be inaccurate to conclude that Mende traditional religion is disintegrating before a Muslim onset. Rather, it may be that the Mende have been able to limit the influence of Islam to certain valued interposal functions between needs and sources of satisfaction, and that Mende Islam is best to be understood as a form of Mende traditional religion with technical aspects of Islam added for practical purposes.[16]

However, through teaching and mission, both Sunni and Ahmadiyya Islam are progressively deepening their Islamic foundations throughout Sierra Leone.[17] The Ahmedis, who stress education and deliberately imitate Christian mission techniques, have been particularly influential in this regard since the 1950s. According to Fisher, the Ahmadiyyas in Sierra Leone were more "orthodox" than the "orthodox" clerics who made "coppo" (money) out of magical practices.[18] "Today [1960] Ahmedis and orthodox call each other *kafir,* unbeliever: an Ahmedi will not pray behind a non-Ahmedi imam."[19] Islam, with its missionary zeal and attractiveness to the indigenous peoples, has always menaced Christian missions. Spreading through the clan, trade and political networks during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Islam has now grown to become the dominant religion both in Sierra Leone and "The Christian City of Freetown". Islam claims the allegiance of at least fifty percent of the population.[20] This compares with a Christian population of around five percent. In 1991 President Momoh attended in Dakkar, Senegal, the first Islamic Conference Organisation meetings held south of the Sahara. He pledged to bring Sierra Leone into the Oragisation of Islamic States. The religious domination of Sierra Leone by Islam during this century has not been seriously challenged by Krio Christianity. The Pentecostal-evangelical churches, emphasisising spiritual power, miracles, healing and the various spiritual *charismata*, are now facing up to the situation and making quite dramatic headway in Muslim evangelism.

The Krio community itself was always composed of Muslims and Christians. Many of the liberated Yoruba landed at Freetown as Muslims. They associated closely with their Fula and Mandinka co-religionists at Fula Town and many settled there. Fula and Mandinka *karamoko* and *alpha* instructed the Liberated Muslim in Koranic schools at Fula Town and neighbouring Fourah Bay. By the end of the nineteenth century Fula Town and Fourah Bay were predominantly Aku, or Krio Muslim, communities, each boasting an impressive mosque.[21] The growth and development of the Krio Muslim community, which is now slightly larger than the Christian Krio community, its relation to other Sierra Leonean Muslims, and the divisions that arose among them, are touched on by Proudfoot, Peterson, and Sanneh.[22]

In Freetown in the early 1970s, an Islamic fundamentalist reformation movement got underway which, particularly its counter-culture stance, parallels and rivals the growing Pentecostal-evangelical movement. The Basharia Movement, spearheaded by Imam Basharr, former Chief Imam of the Old Field Street Temne Central Mosque, denounces Muslim involvement in sacrifices to the dead during the third and fortieth day burial rituals, secret society participation, and the use of all charms. In the early 1950s the Freetown Temne Muslims procured land at Old Field Street and began the construction of the Temne Central Mosque, financed entirely by themselves. The mosque was completed in 1961 and Sheikh Gibril Sesay was appointed the first Chief Imam of the mosque and the Temne Muslims. Imam Sesay took the normal Temne Muslim approach to indigenous practices such as consulting soothsayers and sacrificing to the dead. Secret societies which emphasise respect for elders were not regarded as incompatible with Islamic faith. In sacrificing to the dead, Temne Muslims were to be distinguished from traditionalists only by their refusal to pour out libations of rum and other alcoholic drinks. In 1969 Sheikh Sesay went to Cairo as Sierra Leone's ambassador to Egypt.

Imam Sesay's replacement, Imam Basharr, represented a new fundamentalist approach. He was born into the Sankoh clan in 1930, at Robart, a village in Magbema chiefdom, Kambia District, and named Sankoh Yilla. After training from Mauritanian Islamic teachers in Port Loko, he moved to Freetown in 1956 for further Koranic studies. He attended the Old Field Street mosque, then under construction, and started his own Koranic school. In 1960 he received a scholarship to study Islamic theology and literature in Saudi Arabia at the Madinatu Munawarr University. On his eventual return to Freetown in 1970, he was appointed Chief Imam of the Temne Central Mosque, replacing Imam Sesay, and took the title Sheikh Imam Basharia Sankoh Yilla. Imam Basharr's appointment marks an important watershed in the development of Islam in Sierra Leone in general, and among the Freetown Temne in particular. He immediately reformed the *zakat*, the distribution of charity to the poor, which under Imam Sesay had mostly gone to the collectors. The *zakat* was now

publicly distributed. Imam Basharr relinquished his own share and condemned former corruption. Comparisons with Imam Sesay resulted in Imam Basharr winning the allegiance of the poorer members. The old leadership, however, disassociated themselves from the new imam and formed a new, anti-Basharr, *jamaat*.

Imam Basharr's reforms affected the worship of the faithful. He read and interpreted the Koran in the mosque every evening after *magreb* prayers, and exhorted Temne Muslims to discard non-Islamic practices, especially sacrificing to the ancestors. Besides being contrary to Koranic teaching, he maintained this was a waste of time and food and too heavy a burden on the poor. Consulting *alpha*, wearing amulets, and participation in secret societies were likewise denounced. Faced with the question of retaining indigenous practices or becoming more orthodox, divisions emerged within the Temne Muslim community which resulted in rivalries, accusations of nepotism and regionalism, and violence.[23] On 24th May 1978, Sheikh Gibril Sesay - his appointment in Cairo terminated - returned to Freetown as a missionary of the World Islamic League with headquarters in Saudi Arabia. The following day, Sesay and his followers marched to the Temne Central Mosque armed with sticks, stones and shouting slogans; "Abuses which in the final analysis ended in provoking Sheikh Imam Basharr's supporters."[24] With over three thousand Temne Muslims present, fighting broke out between the supporters of Imam Basharr - dressed in gowns and caps - and the followers of Sheikh Sesay. A human shield protected Imam Basharr, whose life was threatened. Twenty four "Basharias" and six Sesay followers were wounded in the skirmishes.[25] The Government closed the mosque down until the dispute were settled. After a year Imam Gbassay Kamara from the Limba mosque was appointed on a temporary basis and the mosque reopened. Sheikh Sesay claimed that he, as founder of the Temne Central Mosque, should be re-appointed Chief Imam. Chief Imam Basharr refused to pray at the mosque because blood had been shed there. A power struggle that divided the Temne Muslim community both in Freetown and in Temneland, and was was presented by Imam Basharr as a purge and purification of Islam, was engaged.

Imam Basharr's main support came from the Temne of Kambia District, especially the Sankoh and Kamara clans. As Basharr's following grew, four Basharia *jamaat* were founded in Freetown, the Muslim Youngmen Jamaat, Jamaat Birri, Jamaat Jalil which concentrates on teaching children the Koran, and Jamaat Nur al Islam (the Light of Islam assembly). The new movement existed in tension with the larger Temne community. It attracted the poor and also educated and progressive youth zealous for a new radical Islam. A Koranic school was opened at the Bombay Street mosque and Basharia teachers were sent out to spread the Basharia doctrines. Student researcher Ahmed Timbo records and comments:

In the Port Loko District, they sent seven teachers in 1980 to preach against the performance of the forty days ceremony. One of these teachers was severely beaten in the Temne village of Gbinti and the remaining six had to flee for their lives. These teachers were seen as Arabs disguised as Temne who intended to inject Arab culture into Temne culture. This is the first time in Sierra Leone that Temne have regarded their own tribesmen as foreigners. In a bid to promote Islamic consciousness, the Basharia Movement has succeeded in bringing about separation within the Temne tribe.[26]

Despite resistance and opposition, a central branch was opened in Port Loko in 1981. This soon divided into five *jamaat*, each with a president, secretary-general and a women's wing. By the end of 1982 there were branches in eleven villages around Port Loko. Also in 1981, at Lunsar, a stronghold of the *Ojeh* secret society, a Basharia group, on their way to Friday prayers, encountered an *Ojeh* procession. The Basharias unmasked the dancing "devil". Several days of serious fighting ensued. The Government intervened and ordered the Basharias to leave Lunsar. In Kambia District, the movement took hold in Magbema chiefdom; Imam Basharr's home area. Kambia District now has over a hundred branches. The Kambia Muslims accepted the Basharia teaching because, "It is the religion of their son and brother."[27] In Makeni, in Bombali District, conflict arose between the Basharias and the *Poro* society after only one week in the town. The Basharias refused to stay indoors when the *Poro* devil came out to perform. They were chased out of the town, and have managed to open only one branch in Bombali District. In 1986 in Tonkolili District, however, the Basharias were warmly welcomed by the paramount chief of Magburaka, who had just had a political disagreement with the local *Poro* and was happy to see its authority undermined.

Fifty-five branches have been established in the Magburaka area. In Koinadugu District the Basharias have gained successes and now have opened sixty branches. By 1991, there were 250 branches of the Basharia Movement in the country, with forty in Freetown, four in Eastern Province, and four in Southern Province. Timbo gives the number of Basharias as around 300,000.[28] This figure does not represent full members of the movement, rather it indicates the major split which has taken place in the Temne Muslim community, mainly along kinship and regional lines, as a result of the power struggle between Imam Basharr and Sheikh Sesay.

The aims of the growing Basharia movement are to raise Islamic consciousness in Sierra Leone, to foster friendship and brotherhood among all members by settling disputes and providing special funds for sickness and burial expenses, to promote Islamic culture according to the Holy Koran and the teaching of Mohammed, and to seek and protect the welfare of its Chief Imam.[29] The movement's financial support comes mainly from the Kamara family. This has led to conflict with the Sankoh family which was only resolved by Imam Basharr delegating administrative authority to the Kamaras and spiritual authority to the Sankohs. J. S. Kamara, secretary-general, of the Basharias claims:

The Basharia Movement is a movement of people who follow the teaching of Imam Basharr, namely the literal interpretation of the Quran. It preaches an Islam devoid of traditional African beliefs. It shares the beliefs, norms, and values of Imam Basharr, and dresses like him. It does not question the Imam's faith and teaching.[30]

In Freetown, at the Fourah Bay mosque on Kennedy Street, Sheikh Mohammed Mujtaba has led a fundamentalist reformation. According to an article entitled "Islam and 'Ojeh'; Fourah Bay Divided", which appeared in the ***Weekend Spark*** on 31st January 1992, this has led to a "serious rift among the traditionally united Fourah Bay people." The article mentions a fire which engulfed Sheikh Mutjaba's house on January 15th. Bystanders refused to help put out the fire and one declared gleefully, "Let God now descend to help him put out the fire. He provokes and teaches against our culture." Since his return from Pakistan early in 1991, the

young cleric has preached on "Satanism", citing the *Ojeh*, *Hunting*, and *Geledeh* secret societies as the work of Satan. He declared, "True Muslims should refrain from taking part in all such devilish and satanic works on earth."[31] Beside being Satanic, they were frivolous, extravagant and totally against the tenets of Islam. Mutjaba's sermons attracted large crowds and his following increased. Confrontations with the three societies took place prior to his house being burned down. A society leader, Salami Coker, told the ***Weekend Spark***:

We are all brothers, and INDEED we sympathise with him. We confess that what we do not like about him is his Islamic approach to our cultural heritage.... This confusion has been a long standing grievance between us, but did not warrant the burning of his house.

In March, Coker led a delegation to the area chief which demanded a ban on the continuing assaults on traditional practices by Sheikh Mujtaba. They claimed the once cohesive and closely knit community, "which had boasted of religious and social tranquillity since its establishment was now being threatened by the provocative sermons of Sheikh Mujtaba."[32] They complained to the ***People*** reporter:

The Sheikh is threatening the social status quo and only three Fridays ago this young religious upstart changed the ladami who calls prayers, for a member of his own group. This provoked a show of fists. Of late, the Sheikh's house was gutted by a mysterious fire and razed to the ground. He was also recently drenched in beer and wherever the Ojeh performs nowadays, they will make sure the devil dances first at the open place where the Sheikh conducts prayers for us.[33]

Sheikh Mujtaba himself claimed Islam was a peaceful religion which abhorred violence:

We are trying to combat the forces of Satan which are entrenched in this community. My sermons are for the common good. Prophet Mohammed Puh suffered the same fate at the advent of Islam, but we will not stop until the Devil is put under lock and key.[34]

Such divisions now surfacing among the Fourah Bay Aku indicate that Islam in Sierra Leone is passing through a reforming and fairly turbulent phase.

Far-reaching changes are taking place in all aspects of African life today as a result of modernisation and urbanisation. The movement of peoples from the interior into Freetown, which resulted in the Krio becoming a minority in their own city at the turn of the century, has eventually led to their demise as the country's ruling elite in the post-independence period.[35]

The Christian community in Freetown today can no longer to be identified with Christian Krio society, but is mainly composed of non-Krio with indigenous and Islamic spiritual heritages. Even Christian Krio roots go down into similar religious heritages - mainly Yoruba, Igbo and Ashanti - and despite disparaging Krio attitudes towards the up-country peoples, especially after the Hut Tax War of 1896 when many Krio traders and catechists were massacred, there has always been much interaction between the Colony Krio, Muslim and Christian, and the hinterland natives, both Muslim and traditionalists. The place of indigenous religion in Krio society and culture, and in Krio Christianity, will be examined later.

Before moving on to survey and theologically assess Freetown Christianity it is necessary to investigate the essential nature of the indigenous religious heritage whose primary concerns are pneumatological and the search for supernatural spiritual power. The major sources are Little, Harris, Sawyerr, Reeck, Cabbage and Gittins, for the majority Mende group.[36] Parsons deals with Kono religion and Jackson with the Kuranko.[37] Finnegan has investigated the Limba.[38] The main Christian advances outside Freetown and the Western Area have been among the Mende, Kissi and Kono in the east.[39] At present there is significant church growth among the Limba and Loko in Freetown, and also to a certain extent among the Temne.[40] This is in turn affecting the present penetration of the Church into the Limba, Loko and Temne areas to the north. While the indigenous religions as entities are obviously in a state of terminal decline as far as their former pre-eminence is concerned, the fundamental perceptions of the indigenous systems remain formative for present day spiritual understanding. The old ontology is proving immensely adaptable and is ready to come forward in Islamicised and Christianised versions of the old spirituality, or to coexist in dualistic relationship with these newer religions. Mbiti states that most Africans are followers of two religions, and Kwame Bediako has demonstrated that where Christianity has been transplanted into Africa in a basically Western form, a profound identity crisis within African Christian communities resulted.[41] However, Christianity with a distinctive pneumatological emphasis, such as is encountered in the Pentecostal-evangelical and

Spiritual churches does not suffer from this existential dilemma.[42] In Freetown today, the Gospel is engaged in dynamic, pneumatological encounter both with the African religious past and the present African realities.

THE NATURE AND CHARACTER OF GOD AS REVEALED THROUGH THE INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS

Fundamental to the perception of the person and work of the Holy Spirit is an understanding of the nature and character of God. In Sierra Leone, as in Africa generally - unlike the West - the existence of God is unquestioned. The Ashanti explain man's instinctive knowledge of God with the proverb, "No one shows the child the sky."[43] Since cults of the Supreme Deity were not common in West Africa, although there were some, as for example the cult of *Onyame* among the Akan, it became commonplace to refer to West Africans as pagans and atheists, and their religion as animism, fetish and ju-ju.[44] In Sierra Leone evidences of a Supreme Deity cult are hard to find, yet there are possible vestiges of its former existence. Mende priests called *Moimui* give out amulets which promise the protection of *Ngewoh* the Mende Supreme Deity. A similar group among the neighbouring Kissi perform the same function and are actually known as the priests of *Puku*, the Kissi Supreme Deity. The Kono *Bengene* priests cleanse the land of taboo breaking pollutions and intercede with *Yataa*, their Supreme Deity, for the fertility of the land. Parsons writes:

The office of Bengene is a sacred one in which people believe a man is endowed with a special purity, *kasimanyina* (a spirit against which there is no accusation). He is therefore qualified to plead with Yataa (God) and the ancestral spirits, on behalf of the people. He is recognised as having certain power to help the chief and ruling men of the chiefdom. He is thought to have power to increase the crops. If there is a general loss of crops, or a pestilence ... or if there has been a series of accidents, the Bengene is summoned to purify the land and anything in the village that is impure.... In his hand he carries a bamboo stick, to which a green vine is tied by a bush rope, as a sign of his vocation. A small boy may carry his medicine bag which holds stone images, sand, leaves and bird feathers. People are fearful of the bag, for they believe that if anyone touches it or the rope, they will contract a serious illness and die.[45]

Among the Mende, another possible trace of a former Supreme Deity cult is the direct appeal

appeal to *Ngewoh* to come down for his chicken when a dispute reaches the cursing stage. Also the rite of "show hands", where in desperate circumstances a man may go direct to *Ngewoh*, may be another indication. A very lonely place is selected, the palms are raised heavenwards and the suppliant whispers, "*Ngewoh*, I leave all to you." Possibly, in Sierra Leone, as in West Africa generally, a Supreme Deity cult has for one reason or another gone into decline.[46] Nevertheless, belief in the Supreme Being is fundamental and his existence is constantly acknowledged. He is the ultimate source of power and the final arbiter in all disputes. When prayers and sacrifices are offered to the ancestors and other spirits, God's name is invariably invoked. By being ignorant of the African concept of God, most Western missionaries were unable to build on this primal *praeparatio evangelica*. The axe having been laid to the roots of their indigenous ontology, many African Christians were forced to live in two spiritual worlds, that of the white man and that of the black man. Krio Christianity is a classic case of this religious dualism.

In a Mende "Paradise" myth, *Ngewoh* removes himself to his sky home to get relief from the constant demands of his children.[47] Withdrawn as he is, he is nevertheless no *deus otiosus* or *deus absconditus*. Idowu in his trenchant criticism of Western attitudes towards African culture and religion points out that it is the West, with its Deistic philosophy and secular society, rather than Africa, that has a *deus absconditus*:

Recent publications in Europe and America have come to indicate how much confusion there is in the minds even of the enlightened Westerners about God. If we take for example some of the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the writings of Paul Tillich, and "Honest to God" of Dr. J. A. T. Robinson, we shall see at least two facts clearly emerging: the fact that the masses of Westerners appear to be losing their sense of God, and Western theology is in conflict because it has become too theoretical: God according to it has become largely an intellectual concept.[48]

In the Mende myth, although *Ngewoh* retires to the sky he continues to be the source of the *force vitale* upon which people depend. He demonstrates his power in the phenomena of nature. The thunder indicates his annoyance with his wife, *Maa Ndoh*, Mother Earth. Lightning bolts are his hurled axe-heads. He causes children to be born, plants to grow, and nature to be renewed. *Ngewoh* is a force to be reckoned with, powerful, dangerous, puzzling,

and to be treated with great care and due respect. According to Little, the Mende are "uncertain of the way to handle him".[49] When troubles come they believe the ultimate source of their misfortunes must be God. Yet they are careful not to apportion blame, and will declare, "There is no complaint against God", or "If God says I shall perish, I shall perish."[50] The Mende regard *Ngewoh* as the "great Force", a being "charged with power both beneficent and dangerous".[51]

Mbiti perceives African religion to be essentially anthropocentric.[52] Men don't seek after God "for his own sake" or thirst after God "as the pure and absolute expression of being."[53] Man's turning to God is "pragmatic and utilitarian rather than spiritual or mystical."[54] God is recognised as the supplier of man's daily existential requirements, the source of life and blessing. God is the Great Provider. As a good chief provides for his people so God cares for his children. The benevolent yet aloof figure of the chief, according to Sawyerr, is how the Mende pre-eminently perceive *Ngewoh*, their Supreme Deity.[55] To the Mende, God is *Maha-wa* (the great chief), *Maha-yilei* (the only chief), and *Maha-Ngewoh* (God the chief). The Loko name for God, *Geboh* (cf. *Ngewoh*), means the heavens.[56] The Temne call God *Kuru-masaba* (the sky chief), *kuru* being the common word for the sky. *Kuru*, according to a Temne myth, withdrew to the sky because of undue familiarity by a woman.[57] Sawyerr suggests that *Kuru* is cognate with *kur* which means old.[58] This makes *Kuru* is the Old Chief in the sky. The Limba call him *Kanu Masala* (the sky chief). A. K. Turay points out that both *masaba* and *masala* are derivatives of the Mandinka *mansa ba* (the big chief).[59] Harris observed, "I have come to the conclusion that no matter by what name the Mende people call God, their real attitude is `He is the Chief'." However, protocol demanded that the chief be approached through the eldership hierarchy, and that the chief's response should be given through his *lavalie* (speaker).[60] Theologically, the chief model makes God personally remote, and accessible only through select intermediaries.

By contrast, Walter Eichrodt, in his classic work ***Theology of the Old Testament***, makes the

intimate and personal covenant relationship the core of Israelite theology. He argues that Israel's Sinai Covenant with *Yahweh* gave her a comprehensive understanding of the nature, character and will of God, that was absent from the revelation of God in the other religions of the Ancient Near East.[61] The Covenant revealed that *Yahweh*, who had redeemed a people out of slavery in Egypt, has established an exclusive personal relationship with Israel. By ratifying the covenant, they were His people and He was their God. They were put under oath to deal with no other divinities except *Yahweh*. No substitute deities, no supplementary divinities, and no spiritual intermediaries, were to be tolerated by this "Jealous" God. His ancient title was *El Shaddai,* the God of the heavenly shining mountain. He was *El,* that is "The Powerful One". Professor George Anderson claims this element of personal exclusive relationship is the most persistent feature of Israelite religion:

It is clear that the religion of the patriarchs ... has a personal character in both its individual and communal aspects ... which marks it off as different from agriculture cults and also from the state cults of the great powers. This personal character remains an obstinate feature of Old Testament religion throughout its entire development.[62]

Other religions did have a personal dimension, but the personal relationship was primarily with the tutelary divinities who acted as intermediaries between the worshipper and a remote, transcendent Supreme Deity.[63] This exactly describes the indigenous religions of Sierra Leone where personal relationship exists with the ancestor spirits and not with the Supreme Being who cannot be directly approached. The issue of the exclusive demands of the Gospel will be raised particularly when theologically assessing the Spiritual churches.

THE POWER STRUCTURE UNDERLYING THE INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS

In Sierra Leone the basic religious framework has been constructed to best meet people's needs by channelling divine power into their circumstances in the form of health, fertility, protection, and success in life's ventures. The end in view is a life of goodness, a life of quality as that is comprehended by one's society and culture. God, the Great Provider Chief,

must be kept at a safe distance, but spirits, especially ancestral spirits, act as intermediaries. Men and women, specially called by a spirit, usually in a dream or vision, or by spirit possession manifestation, are the go-betweens who relay the spirits' messages to the people and the peoples' problems to the spirits. The divine power which solves problems (*halei* in Mende) is generally released through sacred objects, charms, and herb and leaf concoctions. Collections of cowries, feathers, ribbons, human nails, etc. may be tied up in cloth bundles or put in an animal's horn. Leaf concoctions, after being spiritually energised by a fetish or charm and incantations, are used to purify from witchcraft contamination and to impart the dynamism of the associated spirits. All these are also called medicine since they store and release *halei.* Mende medicine-men are the *halemoi.* Medicines can operate defensively and aggressively. The most powerful medicines are normally in the custody of the regulative societies which have sanctions to maintain secrecy. These medicines are used for "swearing", that is oath taking and cursing, (*sondu* in Mende). Among the Limba the most feared swears are performed by blacksmiths over pieces of iron which have been passed on from one generation of smiths to another.[64] Blacksmiths have traditionally formed an elite corps in Limba secret societies. These power regulating societies are organised socio-political institutions with religious secrets. While maintaining their own power base, they claim to represent the spirits of the founding fathers and clan heroes. Their social, political and religious importance in Sierra Leonean life even today can hardly be overestimated. In the post-Colonial period they have reasserted their traditional role as the power source behind the political representatives. There have been attempts under Momoh's presidency to bring in a law making it compulsory for every Sierra Leonean to be a member of a cult association.

Sierra Leonean indigenous religions operate a five tier power system. At the top, and most inaccessible, is the God of power. Next come the spirits of power, the most powerful being the remote ancestors and the most approachable being the recently departed. After them come the institutions of power, followed by the men and women of power, and finally there

are the objects and words of power.[65] The purpose of this structure is to obtain God's spiritual power, which produces health, fertility, and success, maintain social harmony and avoid evil. According to Sawyerr, "Evil is thought of as the diminution of one's power-force".[66] In this enfeebled state the curses of sickness, barrenness, and misfortune will "catch" one. These curses can strike directly from God, but more commonly they strike because the ancestor spirits turn off the divine flow of *force vitale* as a corrective discipline on those who violate taboos and neglect traditional customs. The removal of ancestral protection allows witchcraft, the ultimate manifestation of evil, to encroach. The five tier structure facilitates the operation of complex and comprehensive religious systems geared towards the protection and sustenance of an enjoyable life within a spirit-filled, dynamic environment. For the ethnic groups in Sierra Leone they are, as Placide Tempels recognised for the Bantu, systems with, "deeply held indigenous, religious and ethical concepts within a coherent philosophy and world view."[67] These are all-inclusive systems which demand conformity from all the members of the group. At the same time they are exclusive systems in that their membership is normally restricted to blood and kin groups. A Temne student described her indigenous faith:

It originates from the peoples' environment and on their soil. It had not been preached to them or imported by the Temne. They were not converted into it. Each person is born into it, practices it and is proud to make it his own. It is handed down from generation to generation, and although changes occur the core is what makes it worthwhile and that remains unchangeable.[68]

Such all-embracing systems demand submission, commitment, enthusiasm and whole-hearted obedience from their communities of faith, no less than primitive Yahwehism, New Testament Christianity, fundamentalist Islam, or Pentecostal-evangelicalism.

THE GOD OF POWER

Danquah has observed that for the Akan *Onyame* was the primogenitor of the human race, the "Great Ancestor" and "man-like ancestor of the first man."[69] Sawyerr confesses to have

been so "completely bewildered" by Danquah's remark that he read ***The Akan Doctrine of God*** at least twenty times in three years.[70] What particularly challenged Sawyerr was Danquah's discussion on *Onyame* being the sum total of all the ancestors, and that Akan worship was essentially the worship of the race. In ***God: Creator or Ancestor?*** Sawyerr notes the similarity between the Mende words for egg and moon, *ngawu*, and *Ngewoh*.[71] The egg, he contends, is "the symbol of fertility par excellence", and hatches the chicken which has a special role in oath swearing and sacrifices.[72] He notes that smashing an egg against a stone upon which a curse has been sworn ensures the complete destruction of the victim. A sorcerer casts a spell of barrenness by burying an egg in an ant-hill. The egg functions as a symbol of life and fertility. Sawyerr investigates why the moon stimulates such religious fervour among the Mende. He discovers that "water reflecting the moon is imbued with the presence of the ancestors" and that the Mende pray when they see the moon reflected on the surface of water.[73] Attempting to identify *Ngewoh* with the moon, and in the process finding so many ancestor associations, Sawyerr drives on to ask whether *Ngewoh* is in fact the sum total of the ancestors, "a crystallisation of their understanding of the role of the ancestors. In other words is *Ngewoh* the sum total of the ancestors?"[74]

Harris and Sawyerr propose the theory that *Ngewoh* came to be regarded as the Great Ancestor when the role of the remote ancestors, the *ndeblaa*, became "metamorphosed into that of a universal ancestor, Ngewoh."[75] Thus the spirit of the tribe merged and fused with the attributes of the ultimate being, the ultimate power and the ultimate good. In Sierra Leone today, whatever the primordium may have been, a primordium which Evans-Pritchard maintained was useless to seek, the inflow into the perception of God from Islamic and Christian sources is altering and transcending the traditional concept of the Supreme Deity. Ancestral and human aspects are being submerged and eliminated, while the attributes of Allah and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ are being increasingly assimilated. However, underlying all this, perceptions of God based on traditional concepts of the nature and character of the Great Chief and the Great Ancestor remain strong. To discover how

God is perceived one needs to investigate what the traditional folklore reveals.

God as the Great Provider

Although myths cannot be taken at face value, meaningful perceptions of God can be gleaned from them.[76] Harris and Sawyerr record an old Mende cosmogonic myth. *Ngewoh* made the earth and everything in it. He finished his creative work by making a man and a woman. This primal pair called *Ngewoh*, *"Maada"* (Grandfather). Whenever they needed anything they went to *Ngewoh* and said, "Grandfather give me this." *Ngewoh* always responded with, "*In ngee*" (Yes, take it!) They thought his name was *Maada ngee* (Grandfather - take it). *Ngewoh*, weary of their constant demands, one night went up into the sky. The next morning the pair couldn't see him or find him. They looked up and saw him in the sky. They exclaimed, *Ngee wo luga wa le* (Take it - wide-spread - great is). This descriptive title became shortened to *Ngewoh*.[77] The myth shows Islamic and Christian influence and is obviously aetiological, seeking to explain a name already in existence. However, concerning the nature and character of the Supreme Being, *Ngewoh* is a person, not a force or neutral power. Formerly, *Ngewoh* was benevolent and generous, like a grand-father, but now, wearied by incessant demands, he has removed himself to his sky house and is no longer directly accessible.

Another myth recounts when *Ngewoh*, who used to be called *Leve*, lived in a cave and was so powerful that all he said was immediately effected.[78] Desiring company, he went to the entrance of the cave and said, "I want all kinds of animals to live with me in this cave." The animals came in pairs and he shut the door. Christian influences, *creatio per verbum* and the Noah narrative, are obvious. *Leve* gave them the rules of the cave, they could have everything they wanted except his own sweet smelling food. On this he was very strict. *Leve* was so big that all the animals together could not move one of his legs. One day one of the animals came to greet him. This animal could not resist eating the sweet smelling food. He broke the taboo and was immediately confronted by *Leve* and thrown out of the cave. Other

animals and eventually man also broke the taboo and were thrown out of the cave. As each species was thrown out it was given a name; cow, monkey, man. The animals and man are still wandering around looking for the sweet smelling food. Harris and Sawyerr observe, "there is the poignant note that men are still looking for the lost bliss which was once theirs."[79] *Leve* ascended far above the earth. There he sits watching who will eat his food. His name is now *Ngewoh*.[80] This time his celestial elevation is due to taboo breaking rather than people pestering. Taboo breaking was, and still is, an act with grim consequences. Another myth tells how death came into the world. This myth, with variations, is widespread in Africa. *Ngewoh* sent two messengers to a town, one, a dog, carried the message that people would not die, the other, a toad, was to announce that death was coming. The two messengers set out together, but the dog saw a woman cooking food, so he lay down until the food was cooked and the woman gave him some. The toad did not stop and reached the town first. He entered the town crying, "Death is come! Death is come!" The dog ran in later crying, "Life is come! Life is come!" He was too late, the toad had already brought death.[81] In the Kono equivalent the part of the toad is take by a snake.[82] Again, certain perceptions of God and man's existence are observable. First, God has the power of life and death, the power to bless and to curse. Second, God cannot be blamed for misfortune or accused of malice. Third, man is not directly responsible for his death, a third party and negligence may be to blame. Fourth, the toad and the snake indicate that witchcraft and evil spirits are involved.

Finally, there is a myth which teaches that while God has ultimate control over man's affairs, man's carelessness and neglect to honour God are what open his life to troubles. A man and his wife were hoeing their farm. The evening came and the man said he would complete the work next morning. The woman said, "You must say `*Ngewoh jahun*'." (that is "under God's protection" or "God willing"), but the man refused. Next morning as he started to hoe, a deer ran into his farm. He chased it and after a while got close enough to throw his hoe at the deer. The hoe caught in the horns. The man spent all day trying to catch the deer and

retrieve his hoe, but in vain. He returned late in the day to his wife and admitted he had lost his hoe and had not been able to complete the task. The woman responded, "It is because you would not say, `*Ngewoh jahun*'".[83] God has the power to bless or to curse. Even when the centre of the religious focus is not on God himself directly, but on ancestors, other spirits and medicines, this must still be acknowledged.

The primary perception of God's nature and character the myths transmit is that God is the Great Ancestor Chief and the Great Provider, even although he is now personally remote and can only be approached indirectly. As Great Provider, his most valued provisions are life and health. The withdrawal of His *force vitale* and blessing results in the curses of death, sickness, barrenness, and misfortune coming in. Although these enter through the activities of third parties, ultimately it is one's own failure to acknowledge God that causes the witholding of His blessing and the intrusion of malevolent powers.

God as the Supreme Procreator

According to Cabbage, when older Mende are asked if God is a person, they reply that he must be because he has a wife. The wife of God in Mende tradition is *Maa Ndoh*, (Mother Earth). Another name for her, popular among women who weave, is *Maa Fande* (Mother Cotton). Among the Kono the wife of *Yataa* is *Dugbo* (Earth), or *Yataa Dugbo*. Parsons writes:

The Earth, "Dugbo," in their conception is the wife of God, and gives birth to all vegetation and sustains all animals and men. The Earth contains great power by which the luxuriant vegetation is made possible. The life of the people is so deeply rooted in the soil that the Earth is held in great respect. The people believe that their conduct affects the fertility of the earth for they endeavour each year to maintain the favour of the spirit of the earth, so that it may yield a good harvest.[84]

An old Mende chief pointed out the mediatorial role of *Maa Ndoh* by saying, "nothing escapes Mother Earth, the blood of every sacrifice is poured into her bosom, and her ears catch every oath. In this way all we do is communicated to Ngewoh."[85] Sawyerr observes that on oath taking Mende people lay hands on the ground and swear by *Maa Ndoh*. On more solemn

occasions they swear to *Maa Ngewoh*.[86] Being close and compassionate, like the Virgin Mary, she can act as a powerful intermediary. The Kono invoke *Yataa Dugbo* in the agricultural rituals and in emergency prayers when one is in desperate need. Mother Earth receives the dead and absorbs the libations to the dead that are poured upon her. The dead are sometimes referred to by the Mende as the *ndohbla* (earth people). The existence of consorts for deities and divinities is a well known feature of Ancient Near East fertility religions. Elat, or Athirat of the Sea, was the wife of the Canaanite Supreme Deity El, and the mother of many lesser gods. In the Old Testament, Athirat is referred to as Asherah, whose carved poles were anathema to the Yahwehists, whose rigorous monotheism was inimical to the fertility cults of their neighbours.[87] Mbiti claims the Ashanti consider Mother Earth, "the great-breasted goddess Asase Yaa", to be second only to *Onyame* in power.[88] Younger Sierra Leoneans are uncomfortable with the concept of God having a wife due to the changing perception of God's character that is taking place under Islamic influence.

In Mende cosmogony, "the overarching sky and the underpinning earth", *Ngewoh* and *Maa Ndoh*, interact in hierogamy to produce life on earth.[89] The *Hieros Gamos* is a way of explaining the marvel of plant production and the even greater marvel of human reproduction. The hierogamy is a continuous procreative process which demonstrates the procreative power of God. Procreation, rather than creation *per se*, is what the peoples of Sierra Leone, like the cultures of the Ancient Near East, are concerned about. God, the Great Ancestor, "the man-like ancestor of man", is the Supreme Procreator. God's power has in the past been understood in terms of human reproduction. Sawyerr talks of the "sky-god who pours rain down upon earth as if in a process of copulation."[90] The God of power manifests his power marvellously and mysteriously in the generation of life. The Mende:

... observe that when you plant a grain of rice, after six months it comes up with more grain. They conclude that there is a powerful being behind these activities. Also with the birth of a child.[91]

Those who procreate have divinely imparted status which derives from the Procreator God. Man contributes to the continuing flow of *force vitale*. Mother Earth who seems to play a

passive role in nature, receiving the life giving rain, mysteriously generating life within her womb, and later bringing forth the new plants, becomes the role model for women in the reproductive process. The procreative power of God needed to be controlled through various restraints and taboos. Controls were strictly enforced in the past, with severe punishments for taboo-breaders. Incest was the greatest social crime. The Kono punished this crime by an ordeal called *wu-gbasi* (flogging the dog). The guilty pair had dogs tied to their backs. They then ran through two lines of men who flogged the dogs as scapegoats. Afterwards, the offenders, whipped all the way, ran naked to the river for cleansing.[92] Nowadays, these severe punishments have been discontinued, and this, along with mission Christianity, has been blamed for the decline of the old moral order.

To accommodate for, and provide a release from, the social emotional pressures that build up in a polygamous society where a few "big men" possess a disproportionate number of the eligible women, celebrations take place where the taboos and social restraints are suspended and even reversed. The celebrations emphasise fertility and sexuality, the songs and actions tend to be bluntly suggestive and crudely erotic.[93] In the normal and abnormal social situations, sexual power is always treated as a divinely initiated and sanctified force, and the fathering and bearing of many children gives honour, respect and social status to both men and women. Only when this is understood and appreciated can the moral problems facing a church in a polygynous culture be seriously addressed. In an essay entitled "Christianity and Islam in Freetown", Professor E. W. Fashole-Luke observes that even Freetown Christians, with all their Christian heritage, "do not seem to relate their religious beliefs to their daily life."[94] He points out that although the Church teaches the Christian virtues of monogamy and fidelity, "Illegitimacy is rife in Freetown and many children are produced from adulterous relationships."[95] The Anglican Church's "dubious practice" was to charge more for baptising children born out of wedlock. Sometimes Church Officers openly bring their illegitimate children to be baptised.[96] To be aware that sexuality is regarded as the divine power to procreate entrusted to man by God and that barrenness is a divine curse helps in one's

approach to the moral problems that arise in the churches. In line with this Idowu remarks:

Our present embarrassment with regard to Christian practice in Nigeria is due to our confusion at this vital point. The church in Nigeria is baffled by the dilemma consequent upon her demanding Christian moral values from people who do not really understand what she is talking about; that is, we have no clearly defined basic theology of Christian living.[97]

Influenced by the ethical monotheism of Islam and Christianity the concept of God as Ancestor Procreator, and of the hierogamy of God and Mother Earth, is being transformed. God the Procreator is being replaced by God the Artificer who makes things and who even creates *ex nihilo*. In the Mende Bible, the word *kapate* (to make), a word free from procreative implications, is used to translate the Hebrew words *bara* (to create), *`asa* (to make) and *yatzar* (to fashion). Sawyerr has been criticised by Mbiti for interpreting God and Jesus Christ as founders of the great family which is the Church.[98] The founder has ancestral and procreator associations. The translators of the Mende Bible used the word *ndemoh* (owner, master, begetter, benefactor), which has obvious procreator connotations, to translate both LORD (*Yahweh*) and lord (*adoni*). Jesus Christ is LORD (*ndemoh*) in Philippians 2:11 and 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 5:28.[99] The word *ndemoh* carries implications more applicable to Baal than to Yahweh or Jesus. To suggest that Jesus Christ be presented as the Great Ancestor of the church may seem good contextualisation, but one needs to be aware of the cultural baggage words and ideas carry. Because Yahweh is "The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob", this does not mean that he is a Great Ancestor of Israel, it only means that He is the God of Israel's ancestors. However, the perceptions of the nature and character of God are changing, and words used in religious contexts are also experiencing semantic shifts as Islamic and Christian teachings exert their influences.

The Healing Power of God

Healing is another great manifestation of God's power and provision. As healer He is the sustainer of his own creation. Sickness can be from natural causes and treated as such. However, it is frequently perceived, usually through the diagnosis of a diviner, to have a

psychic dimension resulting from some transgression which has irritated an ancestral spirit. Dreams interpreted by diviners identify the root-causes of illness and disease. While the sickness derives directly from the ancestral spirits or from witchcraft, the ultimate source of the malady is God himself. As in the theodicy of the Old Testament, sickness and barrenness are due to a restriction or cessation of the flow of divine *force vitale*. Even when witchcraft is involved, the witch-spirit can only operate if divine taboos, which have been lowered down from heaven, have been broken. Perhaps, as Job's comforters claimed, there is a secret hidden sin, a sin one might not even be aware of, but which can be discerned by the diviners and witch-finders. For this reason a full confession of sin must first be made to the diviner before a healing can take place. Afterwards, the pollutions of witchcraft are ritually washed away, followed by restitution to the offended spirit in the form of a sacrifice. With the spirit's anger appeased, the healing power of God can again flow, health is restored and curses like impotence and barrenness are removed. There are great pressure on the sick to confess any misdemeanours. Pregnant women generally confess adulterous affairs so as to ensure delivery of a healthy child. Those under suspicion of being witches - jealous wives, single or barren women, widows, social misfits, sufferers from mental or psychological disorders - may also confess, just in case they really are witches; the birth of a healthy baby being more important than social stigma. While the procreator image of God is in decline, the perception of God as healer is experiencing an upsurge. This is primarily due to the healing ministries conducted by the Spiritual and Pentecostal churches. Of all the perceptions of God, that of *Jehovah Rapha* (The Lord who heals), is the most dynamic and popular in Sierra Leone at the present time, both inside and outside the Christian community.

God as the Great Protector

Another major indigenous perception of God is that He is protector. He protects from enemies threatening the community from without, especially the malevolent spirits that inhabit the area outside the village environment. Jackson observes the cosmological differentiation made by the Kuranko between the security of the village and the dangerous

bush beyond where the autochthonous spirits dwell; the *nyenne*, quasi-human creatures believed to have originally cultivated the land.[100] The *nyenne* have their own villages and farms in the bush. By using a special eye-wash medicine one can see these beings and communicate with them. However, this can be dangerous. When the Kuranko go into the bush to farm or to hunt, they sacrifice to the *nyenne* in order to appease them and to maintain "a respectful distance and boundary between the two different worlds".[101] God also protects from enemies within the community, the anti-social members who cause disharmony, disturb the social equilibrium and spoil the efficacy of the local medicines. The most dangerous and fearful of the enemies within are the witch-spirits who can, wittingly or unwittingly, gain possession of a person through whom they then do their malevolent work.

God protects the poor from injustice, and when all else fails he is invoked directly to curse. In such circumstances the Mende call to him to come down and take his chicken. *Ngewoh's* intervention is a fearful prospect and is rarely resorted to. God as the ultimate Protector is constantly acknowledged. The most commonly used God-phrase among the Mende is *Ngewoh jahun* (under God's protection).[102] The word *jahun* carries implications of sacrifice, and for any prayer to the spirits to be efficacious it must be accompanied by the phrase *Ngewoh jahun*. Cabbage observes that Mende Christians have altered the phrase to *Yesu Kristi jahun* (under the sacrificial protection of Jesus Christ).[103] When a person is blessed, *Ngewoh* is at his back. When travelling along the narrow bush paths, the women and children go on ahead while the men-folk take up the rear keeping a protective eye on those in front. When someone is seen to be prospering through criminal means people say, "O God, come away from his back." When misfortune strikes they say, "God has come away from his back."[104] However, *Ngewoh* tends towards neutrality in morality, perhaps partiality is a better term to use. He protects the criminal as well as the honest man, since as a benevolent Grandfather he desires the good of all his children, "even to the point of condonation".[105] Above all, He is the Great Protector of the community and is "always felt to be near when the well being of the society is threatened."[106] He is more the protector of the community, and

the customs and institutions he himself founded, than the direct protector of the individual. For individual protection against sickness, misfortune, witchcraft, barrenness, and injustice, approach has to be made through the lower levels of the hierarchy of spiritual power; spirits, diviners and the medicines and charms of the medicine-men.

SPIRITS OF POWER

Spirits are generally divided into four broad categories. First, there are the benevolent ancestral spirits, the recently departed who continue to be involved with their families and concerned about their welfare. John Mbiti has called these the "living dead". Not all the departed become ancestors. The ancestor must have lived an exemplary life, produced offspring, and been innocent of witchcraft or at least ritually cleansed from all witchcraft contamination before death. Finally, they must have been welcomed into the ancestral community by the family members who had gone before. Secondly, there are the spirits of the clan founders and heroes who have not disappeared over the horizon into Mbiti's "Zamani" time of forgetfulness, but remain as community rather than family ancestral spirits. They are more distant, nearer to God and therefore more powerful than the recently deceased. In larger, more politically complex societies, such as the Akan and the Yoruba, these community "living dead" become the divinities that make up the national pantheons. Only the select few possessing the necessary esoteric knowledge can approach such powerful beings directly. A third category of spirits, which Jackson calls the "bush spirits", and Gittins calls "non-ancestral" and "anomalous spirits", are spirits who have connections with the aboriginal owners of the land or with groups outside the present community.[107] Community spirits who lose their historical connection within the group memory, but whose spiritual power is still invoked, merge into this group. These spirits are highly dangerous, but their power can be tapped through trickery in order to obtain success and wealth. Great caution must be exercised, because if the trick fails they demand terrible compensations.

The fourth category are the witch-spirits. These are spirits who, because of wickedness and involvement in witchcraft when alive, were refused entry into the ancestral community. They seek to return to their families and communities and inhabit hosts who will receive them. Because of their supernatural powers they can provide their hosts with many benefits, but their nature is utterly vindictive and destructive and they epitomise evil in indigenous societies. No one knows for sure who is hosting a witch-spirit until the witch, usually a female, confesses. To accuse or even suspect a person of being a witch exposes one to witch-spirit attack. Witch spirits are believed to be able to transmigrate while the witch sleeps normally. They can appear in the form of animals, birds or reptiles. In their spirit bodies they have been seen, it is claimed, to travel through the air on the leafy branch of a tree, or riding in the shell of an egg or peanut. Alternatively they can indwell animals, the odd looking nocturnal bats and owls are believed to be their favourite vehicles for their night-time forays. Being the enemy within and difficult to detect, one must use every means of spiritual protection at one's disposal.

The Ancestor Spirits

Mbiti has observed that "African religious activities are chiefly focused on the relationship between human beings and the departed."[108] Dr. Baeta, at a United Christian Council conference in Accra in 1955, declared, "Whatever others may do in their own countries, our people live with their dead."[109] A Temne informant claimed, "They have supernatural powers and they do have the means of communicating our problems to the Supreme Deity." Their mediatorial role follows the normal social pattern for approaching higher authorities. Now wielding supernatural power, power to cause sickness, barrenness, misfortune as well as blessing, they are treated circumspectly and with a certain amount of dread. Nevertheless, the ancestors are generally favourably regarded and reverenced with filial piety. They link one with the family's past, encourage and enforce family and community harmony, and they provide existential security in a dangerous and changing world.

The question of whether ancestors are worshipped or merely revered has generated much debate.[110] Canon Sawyerr maintains that ancestors are worshipped, while his former Fourah Bay College colleague, Professor Fashole-Luke disagrees, claiming they are only venerated.[111] Fashole-Luke maintains there are various levels of worship and the veneration level of worship which is offered to the ancestors is different to the type of worship accorded to God himself:

Sawyerr fails to prove his case, because he does not distinguish various levels of worship.... It is not surprising therefore, that in his book *Creative Evangelism*, he declares that "ancestor worship" falls short of Christian worship. I agree with Sawyerr on this point, but my contention is that he should have taken this distinction further back, since non-Christian Africans make a similar distinction between ancestor veneration and worship of the Supreme Being. In other words, the term worship could only be applied to the ancestors, even deified ancestors, in a metaphorical sense.[112]

Cabbage observes that among the Mende:

Ancestors are feared, respected and possible even revered. Yet despite the overt attention received and supra-human power at their disposal, ancestors do not displace the supremacy of Ngewoh.[113]

While these are mere truisms, Sawyerr's deeper theological insights lead him to conclude:

Africans do worship their ancestors as they do their divinities. This worship consists of prayers, sacrifices, and divination on communal occasions or prayers and divinations on private occasions.... All such forms of worship are built around certain ritual acts, which themselves demand certain preliminary requirements.... The prayers themselves consist of petitions related to the welfare of the worshippers, their children, their harvests, peace and goodwill in the country. Dare we say that these rites we have been discussing do not constitute worship?[114]

Harris and Sawyerr point out that, "up to a point the ancestors can and do answer prayers on their own."[115] Concerning the Temne, A. K. Turay writes:

Although they take oaths to *kuru (gbingka kuru)* and attribute many of their fortunes and misfortunes to God *(yakuru pa)*, the Temne will nevertheless offer sacrifice to his ancestors or the *korfi*, when in trouble. For a good harvest, they thank the "dead ones"; when they undertake any project, they invoke the "dead".... So far as worshipping goes, *kuru* is never worshipped directly. The ancestors and the *korfi* seem to receive more attention here. *Kuru* created man and after that he seems to have little to do with him directly except through his "agents" the ancestors.... These are the controllers of man's destiny.[116]

The *korfi,* "the old dead people", are a special group of distant ancestors who existed before the advent of Islam. Islamic teaching has succeeded in severing these from the present body of ancestors and they now occupy an ambiguous position between the general corpus

of ancestors and the "bush" spirits.[117] Sawyerr interprets Krio graveside libations as goodwill offerings and therefore acts of worship.[118] This view is supported by Pobee who writes:

The idea is that the ancestors are not worshipped, but are rather venerated as elder brothers of the living. Much as I am most sympathetic to this theory as a method of missionary strategy, I am yet reluctant to accept it as a description of fact, because for all *practical* purposes the ancestors are treated as ends in themselves, as the real givers of those good things of life.[119]

All of this raises the issue of what is worship. If as Mbiti suggests, worship is going to some power greater than oneself for help, then ancestors are worshipped. If worship is to be defined in terms of pietistic adoration, then they are definitely not worshipped. Whatever one's definition of worship, what is beyond dispute is the fact that Sierra Leoneans have an undeniable religious pre-occupation with their ancestors. The Freetown Christian community is presently having to assess the mediatorial role of the ancestors. Sawyerr's suggestion that they be incorporated into the Eucharistic *sanctorum communionem* to "make intercession to God for us", and so that "the prayers of African Christians might in the providence of God lead to the salvation of their pagan ancestors", has not received much consideration either in the Spiritual churches, where the Lord's Supper does not normally play a significant role, or in the Pentecostal-evangelical churches, where the ancestors are increasingly perceived as the mainstay of an incompatible religious system.[120] Professor Fashole-Luke laments:

Christianity in Freetown seems to have taken little account of the significant fact that Africans live with their dead. In spite of the fact that the Church believes in the Communion of Saints, yet she has failed to develop this doctrine in Freetown, primarily because the manifestations of Christianity in Freetown have been of the Protestant type, which have undervalued the doctrine and frowned upon prayers for the dead.[121]

The Nature of the Relationship with the Ancestors

The relationship with the ancestors, like the relationship with God, is an ambivalent one. This is related to their sometimes unpredictable use of their enhanced supernatural powers. The element of fear is glossed over by those who see the ancestor relationship merely as an extension of the old social relationships that existed before decease. Among his students at

FBC, Harry Sawyerr discovered that when the ancestors appear to them in dreams they more often scold and complain of neglect than congratulate the students on their successes.[122] The Mende distinguish between the recently departed whose memory is fresh and with whom there is a feeling of rapport and familiarity - the *kekeni* - and those who are remembered only through the tradition - the *ndebla*. According to Gittins the term *kekeni* is made up of the suffix *-ni* which can be taken to mean "companions" or "those of the same group", and *keke* which "refers to one's father and in a classificatory sense to males of the same generation."[123] Recent Temne ancestors are known as the *wunifi,* "the dead ones". The role of the *kekeni* and the *wunifi* parallels that of the *teraphim* and the *raphaim* of the Old Testament, the deceased who have the power to heal (Heb. *rapha*). The *ndebla*, on the other hand, are those who were according to Gittins:

... ancestors prior to the compass of living memory and are regarded as important figures of yore rather than people remembered for any specific deeds or words, the *ndebla* are those who produce the tribe and clan, including the founders of one's own lineage.[124]

Gittins takes *ndebla* as a shortened form of *ndehubla* which is composed of *ndehu* which is the "largest kin group", and *bla*, the plural indefinite suffix. He understands the word to mean "those from whose stock a clan has risen".[125] The Temne equivalent are the *korfi.* Turay notes that although linguistic evidence indicates the word formerly meant "a dead man", now it means a "devil" which in turn means the society spirit represented by the dancing masquerader.[126] The *ndebla* and the *korfi* are the equivalent of the Old Testament *giborim*, the man of renown, the heroes of old.[127] They are closer to the Supreme Deity and have more power than the family spirits, but are personally remote and therefore are only resorted to on special, community-encompassing occasions, or in emergencies when the family spirits seem unable or unwilling to help. Usually the family spirits are asked to pass the requests on to the community spirits who will in turn pass them on to God. In the Spiritual churches the community spirits are being transformed into angels who perform specialist ministries and the same high-ranking intermediary function. The family spirits, however, are able to meet most of the normal family needs.

There is some ambiguity as to where the ancestors dwell, behind the door, in the grave, in a tree, on a hill, beyond the river, or in an ancestor town some distance away.[128] Under the influence of Islamic and Christian teaching the notion of their going to heaven is increasing. They have the power to travel around and are frequently asked to protect and help family members in distant places like England. Diviners see them moving among the living. They can be invoked at their grave sites and summoned to be present there and elsewhere for personal encounter and communication on a specific day. Initially, the spirit remains close to the grave and the home, but the permanent resting place of the dead is thought of as being quite far away and starts with the journey across a wide river. A Sherbro custom is to place in the coffin a paddle and some food for this initial stage of the journey. The Yoruba, from whom the Krio derive their *awujoh* ceremony, popularly called "Big Cook", believe the deceased has to eat the food offered during the funeral ceremonies so as to have the strength for the journey to the ancestral abode.[129] The Mende traditionally held *tenjamei* ceremonies on the third day after the burial of a woman, and the fourth day after the burial of a man. The word is made up from *te* (to pass or cross), *nja* (water, river or stream), and *ma* (on or over), and means to cross over the river.[130] It parallels crossing over the River Jordan in Negro spirituals and crossing the river Styx in Greek mythology. At the *tenjamei* a chicken is killed and its blood is poured out on the grave. The chicken is cooked and portions placed on the grave along with a *mbagboli,* a "red rice" offering; rice with palm oil and salt. Pepper is taboo as the spirits choke when they inhale it. A libation is poured with the words, "Here is water, wash your hands, eat your rice, drink your water."[131] The family hold a communal and communion meal, called "Big Pot", at the graveside with the deceased's spirit present. The ceremony ends with the valediction:

We are leaving you as we have finished your last ceremony. We want you, from now on, to look after your children. May no bad thing fall on them.[132]

After crossing the river the deceased is met by the ancestors. At this meeting a separation of the good from the wicked takes place. Judgment is according to the deceased's standing in the eyes of the ancestral community. This corresponds to the Old Testament understanding

of the separation of the righteous from the wicked which is accomplished not on the moral and ethical terms of Western philosophy, but on one's standing *vis a vis* the covenant agreement. The power to judge is vested in the ancestors and it is up to them to welcome or reject the new arrival. Much depends on how generously the new arrival had offered them sacrifices and contributed towards their own burial rituals. The role of *Ngehoh* as the ultimate judge must not be underestimated. He has the final say, but it is unthinkable that he would act contrary to the traditions he himself established.

The *tenjamei* sets the ongoing relationship with the deceased on a secure basis. Having been safely incorporated into the ancestral community the departed becomes a powerful force for good for the family. However, if subsequent rites and duties are neglected the ancestor's irritation, and that of the whole ancestral group, is made known through dreams, sickness, misfortune and even death. Further graveside ceremonies are arranged. On the evening before, a visit is made to the grave of the most recently departed giving notice of a "Big Pot". A kola nut, leaf tobacco, and some food are deposited. The family, carrying any who are sick, come to the grave next morning bearing the cooked chicken and red rice. Around seven in the morning and five in the evening are the normal times for sacrifices and grave visiting. If the matter is serious sheep and goats may be slaughtered and cooked. The protocol demands that the whole genealogy of ancestors be addressed, starting with the most recently departed at whose grave the ceremony usually takes place. Sawyerr records that at Freetown graveside rituals up to twenty ancestors may be invoked. The group then eat the communion meal in fellowship with the ancestor spirits, particularly conscious of the ancestor at whose grave the ceremony is taking place. By casting two split kola nuts the mood of the spirits is discerned. If the valves turn up two concave and two convex the sacrifice has been accepted and healing and blessing will follow. If another pattern turns up the sacrifice has not been accepted and must be repeated. A more private rendezvous with a spirit can be held at special praying places, sacred spots beside large stones, by river banks, in forest clearings, somewhere with some unusual feature or atmosphere. The most popular location

is at the foot of a large cotton tree. The cotton tree near the Central Police Station in Freetown is the residence of the guardian spirit of the city. "Many who wish to be popular in the city or the nation go there at midnight and perform some charity [*i.e.* sacrifice] ceremony."[133] Under Islamic influence, plus economic constraints, the *tenjamei* is now predominantly a fortieth day ceremony. The Krio equivalent, the *awujoh*, is also a fortieth day celebration. The Aku Krio have partially reinterpreted the ceremony in the light of Islamic teaching. The Christian Krios have done likewise where suitable Christian connections were available. For example, the entry into the ancestor community on the fortieth day is paralleled by Jesus' ascension to heaven on the fortieth day. According to Sawyerr maintains that in the *awujoh*, "The two lines of pagan belief and Christian teaching seemed to have crossed and the distinctions have become completely blurred."[134]

Provided the burial rituals, including washings which remove all trace of witchcraft, are properly performed, the departed spirit crosses the river and is welcomed into *nganga golehun* (the place of clean white sand). White sand symbolises the absence of witchcraft. White sand spread over the grave testifies to a deceased person's innocence of any witchcraft involvement. Mende found guilty of witchcraft and not ritually cleansed and atoned for, go to *ngombime hun* "the place of eating one's knees". For the Kono it is also "the knee-eating place", *kumbai gbo dauma*. Here they suffer extreme hunger and thirst and rejection from the ancestral community. This motif also occurs in Yoruba and Akan belief. Islamic and Christian eschatology is gradually altering the indigenous after-life perceptions. The abode of the wicked is increasingly being called *Jahana* (Gehenna) in Mende, *ro yanama* in Temne. The wicked, that is those guilty of witchcraft, now having increased powers and liberated from bodily restrictions, are more threatening than ever. They will harass those who have harmed them and impeded their entry into the ancestral community. The *mokopillar* of the Limba are such a group. There is therefore tremendous pressure to obtain confessions from suspected witches so that they can be ritually cleansed and atoned for before death and their witch-spirits neutralised. Sawyerr notes the emphasis placed on confession, cleansing,

atonement, and the restoration of social harmony, in the indigenous religious systems. A non-neutralised witch-spirit becomes a vengeful demon who is immune to all but the most powerful curse or "swear" medicines. Until fairly recent times, the Mende *nguamoi,* "the probing man", would cut into the abdomen and remove the spleen. This was put in a pot with water and crushed leaves. If the spleen sank, the deceased had been a witch. To facilitate the entry into the ancestral community and defend the family from attack, the witch-spirit was neutralised by cutting up the spleen into small bits and burying them with the body.[135] The birth of deformed babies was seen as an attempt by a spirit who was refused entry into the ancestor community to return to its family to wreck havoc and extract vengeance.[136]

Community encompassing ceremonies where the primary focus is on the distant and more powerful ancestors, the clan founders and past heroes, the *ndebla* and *korfi,* are held at significant times in the farming cycle. Their aid in procuring God's fertility and blessing is entreated. The ceremonies normally take place on a hillside or some elevated spot near the cultivated areas where the ancestors traditionally gather. A popular Mende harvest festival is held at the hill *Mamva* at Kailahun, the town founded by the great Kailondo. *Kumba*, the guardian spirit of the Limba, assembles the departed on the sacred hill *Kaboia.* Riverside locations are common among the Mende. The rites take cognisance of river spirits and past heroes who now live under the water. Libations and food are offered with words such as:

We have come here today, as we had promised, to offer you gifts in food and wine. We believe you are still alive and therefore need food as we do. Eat the food and drink the wine we offer, not for what they are, but because of the sincerity with which we offer them to you. We respectfully acknowledge the fact that it is you who gave us the food to eat. You have taken care of us, spared our lives, provided good harvests ... saved us from quarrels and diseases, and given us healthy children during the past year. We pray you to continue to do the same throughout the coming year.[137]

The harvest-ingathering is the pre-eminent festival. Depending on the importance of the occasion, sheep, goats and even cows may be sacrificed. At the Kamakwie harvest festival, five cows are sacrificed, along with sheep and goats, and the blood poured into a hole. During the festivities the normal sex taboos may be suspended. Community solidarity demands that every male takes part or suffer ostracism. Prayers often end with words like:

Guide us all against danger and reveal to us those in our number who harbour evil thoughts against our chief and our chiefdom, village or town. Let such treacherous persons die disgraceful deaths.[138]

Dedicated Christians and Muslims who refuse to participate in the fertility celebrations are put in a difficult position as they become suspected of harbouring witch-spirits. These planting, first-fruits and harvest thanksgiving festivals do not directly affect the Freetown churches, and even in the rural areas their significance has seriously declined in the new socio-agrarian order. However, since most Christians in Freetown today have up-country roots, these festivals are part of their religio-cultural heritage and reinforce the traditional approach to God via the spirit intermediaries. Communication with the ancestors and demonstrations of respect and submission are not confined to ceremonial occasions, they take place daily in a whole variety of ways; the first drink from a glass or bottle is tipped out to the dead, the first puff of a cigarette is directed upwards, at meal times small portions of rice are set aside. Only a few drops of whiskey are poured as alcohol can "get into their head".[139] A sneeze when eating indicates the ancestors want food. A morsel is thrown on the ground with the words, "Old people, here is yours."[140]

Bush, Hill and River Spirits

Beyond the community spirits are the bush, hill and river spirits. Bush and river spirits are the most common, however there are powerful hill spirits in the north. The Limbas have *Ninkinaka*, a thunder spirit, *Koyande*, a wind spirit who gives success at football matches, and *Kakiecoumba*, a hill spirit that causes accidents. Mention has already been made of the Kuranko bush spirits, *nyenne*.[141] Mende folklore is full of tales about these bush spirits, many of whom are wandering community spirits who did not attain ancestorhood. Known as *jinanga* (jinii) by the Mende and *wali* (devils) by the Limba, they are dangerous and unpredictable, but possess supernatural power expertise. Harris and Sawyerr describe two groups of Mende bush spirits, the *temuisia* (sing. *temui)*, and the *ndogbojusui*.[142] The *temuisia* are the autochthones who now inhabit forest clearings and hill-sides. They appear as agile dwarfs who can foretell the future. The Temne equivalents are the *ronshoh* and the

bantas. The Limba have the *sogoro*. Their farming expertise and fertility prowess are acknowledged during farming festivals when food offerings are thrown into the bush where they are watching the festivities. Herbalists seek them out for help with difficult cases.

They will then stop to talk to him and prescribe the required curative. After such an encounter they generally become subject to his will and take orders from him. Often they return with him to his home and he may be over-heard holding conversations with them in a closed room. Others, not herbalists, also encounter them and if an association is established, they are taught various arts. They are also credited with the ability of knowing where some riches lie hidden and may pass on the information.[143]

Ndogbojusui, from *ndogbo* "bush" and *jusui* "deep", appear as hairy humans with "exaggerated" physical attributes, sometimes white-skinned with long white hair, who prowl the forest at night making eerie whistling sounds.[144] Little, observing that many *jinanga* are white, connects them with Europeans, particularly the Portuguese.[145] Hunters who go insane or die in the forest are their victims. To have this spirit's assistance its questions must be answered in a shrewd and obscure way. The *nomoli* soap-stone carvings, which farmers dig up, are the work of the *ndogbojusui* and are used to obtain good harvests.[146] One may enter a Faustian pact with the *ndogbojusui* which can produce fame and riches; however, if they are offended the *ndogbojusui* will afflict with disaster and can only be appeased with costly sacrifices. Children have been sacrificed to them.[147] The *ndogbojusui* may fall in love with women and bring them money and presents. They become "night husbands". They threaten to beat their lovers if they disclose their secret nocturnal affairs. Harris and Sawyerr note that these encounters take place in dreams.[148]

River spirits are called *Mami Wata* spirits in Krio. The foremost Mende *Mami Wata* spirits are the *tingoi, jowei, njaloi,* and *tikpoi.*[149] Harris and Sawyerr record that the Mende along the Moa River annually sacrificed three living girls, weighted with stones, to the river spirits. They were offered first to the *ndebla* living in the river who presented them to the spirits who owned the river so that nobody would get drowned that year.[150] The *tingoi* are spirits like the *temui,* but live in rivers and take the form of snakes or a fish with a white woman's head. On moonlight nights they sit, siren-like, on rocks, combing their long hair with a golden comb.

When anyone approaches they slip into the water leaving the golden comb on the rock. If one takes home the comb, the *tingoi* will appear in dreams pleading for its return. At this point a crafty bargain can be struck with the *tingoi* which will make one rich. However, the comb must never be returned or poverty and even death will follow. If a *tingoi* takes a liking to a man a sexual relationship may develop. The *tingoi* becomes a "night wife". If her partner breaks this exclusive and binding relationship he will either drown or lose all his wealth and become extremely poor. *Jowei* are also seen on rocks. They have a woman's head, but the body is a chain which rattles as they dive into the water. Like the *tingoi* they enter into marital contracts and can make one very rich. The *njaloi* are particularly cruel river spirits. They wear a shining gem-stone on their foreheads to attract men and appear in dreams to seduce their male partners and reveal the location of secret treasure-troves. The *tikpoi* (stick) are other female spirits who appear as logs floating in the river. Those who see these *Mami Wata* spirits from the shore may go mad. The Mende believe only those with witch-spirits can see *Mami Wata* spirits and so they keep their relations with them secret.

Witch Spirits as the Enemy within Krio Society

While ancestors use and channel God's power for the good of the family and community, even when that power chastens an individual, and while bush and water spirits can be for or against one, witch-spirits use God's power in an almost totally anti-social and evil manner.[151] Already their connection with deformed babies has been noted.[152] They are insidious and vindictive, "familiar" and hard to detect. The horror felt within a community at these clandestine former members and their evil intent is profound. They are "believed to be sustained by the fresh blood of infants, pre- or neo-natal."[153] Thus pregnant women and young mothers are in a very precarious position and need special anti-witch protections. Besides that, women who lose their children, before or after birth, or produce deformed infants, are suspected of hosting witch-spirits. During labour, women are put under great pressure to confess any involvement, passive or active, in witch-spirit operations. The child of an unexposed and un-neutralised witch is a potential threat to the community.

Certainly until twenty or thirty years ago, it was a frequent occurrence for women to be brought to a Mission hospital suffering a difficult labour: having been unable to deliver quickly, they had been beaten ("to drive the 'devil' out") and were bruised from neck to ankles. Failing to give birth even after beating, they were taken to the hospital as a last resort.[154]

In most cases barrenness is attributed to witchcraft. A witch enemy is at work or the barren woman is herself a witch and "sucks up her womb". Barren women are scorned and molested. They are believed to have given up their wombs to wandering spirits, familiar or bush, in exchange for riches and power. To escape the stigma barren women wash with a "holy water" concoction supplied by the witch-doctor and make appropriate sacrifices. Among the Loko, women suspected of witchcraft have - on the chief's permission - their heads shaved and are publicly beaten, tied with ropes and made to sing and dance in the street declaring that they are witches. These are known as "the lucky set" as many would prefer to have them poisoned.[155] There is a general belief, however, that a witch who confesses will not die from poison.[156] Nowadays, many young women suspected of witchcraft run away to Freetown with the intention of becoming market or business women. Those who join the Spiritual churches find that the psychic disposition which may have brought witch accusations against them in the villages, here becomes a prestigious spirituality which can be used to their advantage.

The witch-spirit dwells in the abdomen and moves out at night while the witch, who may be unaware of what is going on, remains fast asleep. Gittens notes that Mende make a distinction between witch-spirit disposition (*honei),* a potential witch, and the active witch person (*honamoi),* one who willingly co-operates with the spirit she or he hosts and practices witchcraft.[157] The Limba believe the witch-spirit is transferred along the female line.[158] Active witches make use of narcotic leaves to assist spirit transmigration.[159] Witch spirits may operate individually or in groups. They cause sickness, lingering illness, and eventually death through spiritual cannibalism while their victim sleeps. Foetuses, the bowels, and fresh blood, are their favourite food and drink. Witches assume the form of cats, rats, bats, owls, snakes, and other unusual or nocturnal birds and animals. They draw out the spirit blood of

their victims through small imperceptible wounds. On the mundane level, snakes that bite and kill, and rats that bite and cause infection, were "sent" by witches. "Sent" by witches is the normal explanation of accident, serious illness and misfortune. When an owl was discovered in President Momoh's office at State House, it was caught and ritually burned. Many saw this as an ill-omen for his presidency which ended soon afterwards with the military coup of April 1992. Witch-spirits can assume human form. They can be sexually seductive and operate as night husbands and night wives. The "wet dreams" of adolescent males and the hormone secretions of adolescent girls are generally taken to be the result of witch-spirit seduction, where the witch-spirit becomes a "night-husband" or "night-wife".[160] Sierra Leone's high infant mortality rate, "one of the highest infant mortality rates in the world" according to a 1986 UNICEF report which called Sierra Leone "The Children's Graveyard" and where one in five infants die before they reach their first birthday, is popularly attributed to witchcraft.[161] A distinction is made between witchcraft and sorcery. While witchcraft is essentially a psychic phenomenon, sorcery, which is also psychic in dynamic, employs practical magical means, particularly poison, to achieve its desired ends. The sorcerer can use his or her powers to counteract witchcraft and the wicked. The sorcerer can be a socially acceptable spiritual professional, the witch can never be.

Charms of various sorts, including *sebe* containing Koranic texts, are worn to protect against witch-spirit attacks. Medicines of various sorts, "super-power" charms, are also used. The Mende set *nomoli,* one of their most powerful medicines, on ant-hills to protect their farms from witches. A bag of medicines tied to the body acts as a trap for the witch-spirit who comes too near. Net and basket traps hung over doorways catch witch-spirits entering houses. When the witch-spirit is caught, the witch falls ill or dies. If a diviner or witch-finder identifies a sick person as a witch, she or he is strongly urged to confess practising witchcraft and being "caught" by the witch-finder's medicine. The witch who denies the accusation must swear over powerful medicine, "If I ate the child let me die quickly, quickly, quickly."[162] Uncertain of reality in the murky subconscious and the dream world in which witchcraft

operates, and fearful of the swear medicines, many accused of witchcraft confess as the easier option. Harris and Sawyerr observe:

The confessions made by witches are usually the result of social duress. If a woman has lost several children she is suspected of having been responsible for their deaths and communal indignation may break forth against her. In the anxiety which overcomes her, she may admit to having been a witch. Or again, if a woman threatens someone in the neighbourhood during a quarrel, say, with some form of revenge, and the threatened person's child falls ill and dies, communal suspicion falls on the former and she may be so molested that she confesses to having caused the illness or death of the child.[163]

Upon confession, ritual cleansing takes place, sacrifice is offered, social harmony is restored and the healing process begins. The prophet-healers of the Spiritual churches perform their therapy along similar lines. Pobee comments on the Ghana situation:

After decades of denunciation of witchcraft beliefs, it remains a serious concern for a large section of African societies. The popularity of the independent churches is largely based on the claim of such movements to eradicate and successfully destroy witchcraft. Hence their other name, "Witchcraft Eradication Movement".[164]

Manifestations of psychic heat and sex hostility, resentment, suppressed anger, hatred, envy, jealousy, hatred - emotions easily generated among women in polygamous, male dominated societies - are commonly interpreted as witch behaviour. John Taylor describes witchcraft as "the active embodiment of that brooding anger which in Africa is the essence of sin" and which causes one to fear their own anger "almost as deeply as the anger of others".[165] Anger brooded over becomes hate which leads one to believe he or she is a witch and hosting a witch-spirit. Among the Mende, Gittins observed:

Witchcraft experiences are real, but since people do not make a clear distinction between the reality of experiences during sleeping or waking periods, there is no need for them to distinguish as relevant, physical anthropophagy [cannibalism] **and psychic or dream-experience anthropophagy. What to us might be dismissed as a dream or nightmare.... to the Mende ... the experience of meeting the witches and being given human flesh was "real"....**
There are numerous cases of confessions being made by people who admitted to having eaten human flesh. On the basis of such confessions they were deemed guilty and executed (cf. Kalous 1974; K. J. Beatty 1915) by agents of the British government who would never have thought to ask the self-confessed cannibals if they happened to be asleep in bed at the time.[166]

Confession can be seen by witch suspects as providing a last gasp avenue of escape when one's situation becomes unbearable. Amara records a case he personally observed:

I have seen a young lady of probably between twenty and twenty-five years of age who had always been regarded as being queer and had contracted tuberculosis of the dorsal spine for several months. She was neglected, malnourished and emaciated. She had developed Kyphosis (backward curvature of the spine) as a result of the disease. During the terminal stages of her illness, she was told that she had been known to be a witch (apparently identified by a witch-finder) and must confess if she was to be saved. She confessed that she had been responsible for the death of an infant that occurred five weeks before her confession, adding that she had in fact killed the child several months before and that the shape of her back was due to the fact that the child's bones got stuck in her stomach. She died a few weeks later.[167]

According to Taylor, to show one is not a witch one avoids all expression of anger and resentment, and projects the image of a chatty, friendly, cheerful person; "This is the ultimate horror and darkness of the primal-world view, that beneath the smiling face may lurk the hating heart."[168] However, to express suspicion that someone is a witch is to expose oneself to witch-spirit attack and almost certain death. Thus the socially marginalised, the emotionally disturbed, the mentally imbalanced, megalomaniacs, and those who feel they have no other recourse for redressing wrongs, may find advantage in giving the impression they are witches who can bring terrible vengeance upon their adversaries. Phrases like, "We shall see," and "I shall visit you at night," are thinly veiled threats of witchcraft attack. Formerly, the post-mortem spleen test could clearly identify a witch. If the spleen - a soft, pulpy, blood-modifying organ - was engorged with blood, this was proof the person had been a witch and had been drinking the blood of infants. Nowadays, with the practice of spleen tests being officially discouraged, identification is much more difficult. Witch-finders, diviners endowed with special witch-viewing eyes and possessing very strong protective medicines, can point out witches, but confession is still necessary, through voluntary or forced ordeals. Among the Limba, the accused is wrapped in a white cloth and shut in a room. The witch-finder then puts some drops of a special medicine into the left eye of a cock. The fowl is kept for twenty-four hours. If the eye is then clear the accused is innocent and must be compensated. If the eye is cloudy the accused really is a witch and is expected make a full confession and name accomplices. The witch-hunters themselves possess witch potential, and through this inherent psychic power they can confront the destroying witch-spirits and

negotiate a sacrificial exchange-of-life offering for their victim. Exchange-of-life animal sacrifices will be examined later in connection with this practice in the Spiritual churches.

Sierra Leone Customary Family Law makes witchcraft grounds for divorce. Evidence includes the death of young children, impotence of the husband, his poverty and ill-health. Witchcraft may be proved by dreams, confession of guilt, or by detection through "medicine" men commonly called *ariogbo*. Witchcraft cases regularly appear in the national press. ***The Vision*** reported in April 1990:

Peace was disturbed in that community [Ropolon Section, Makeni] for a long time following the death of a woman in January this year. The woman's name is given as Madam Fatu Turay who died at the Haja Conteh Memorial Hospital on January 17th. From the very day the deceased was buried, stones started falling on the roofs of houses, doing severe damage to some. Some of the residents are busy repairing their roofs. According to custom in the area, if such a thing happens in a village or town, the chief and the Council of Elders are required to investigate, and they may do so by seeking the services of a soothsayer. Accordingly, a soothsayer was brought who revealed that Fatu was a witch and that she was responsible for the disturbance.
On January 27, the Poro Society group known as Soko Bana, were brought in to do something about the dead witch. They exhumed the body in broad daylight which I saw myself. Her left hand was shaking. Her white burial robe was as white as ever. Her head was cut off and brought to Loya Street, Makeni.
This is now the third time that this kind of thing is happening in Makeni. The first one was in January 1987, and it involved a 33 year old Brima Kamara, alias Brizo. The second involved 32 year old Iye Conteh, alias Zangalawa, in 1989. Fatu or "Fa" was 31.
Peace returned to Ropolon the very date Fatu's head was chopped off.[169]

An article entitled "Ghost Haunts Rokupa Cemetery Residents" appeared in the ***The National*** in December 1991:

According to reports the woman, daughter of Sheik and proprietor of the defunct Ansarul Imam Khomeni School at Portee, Wellington, died shortly after giving birth to twins. It was the husband who first mentioned that a number of funny things were going on in his bedroom. According to him, he left his room dirty and the bed undone several times only to return to find the place well swept and even his bed well done. He mentioned the matter to relatives and friends but they could find no answer to this mysterious goings-on.
A few days after her burial, residents at the Rokupa Cemetery started complaining of some strange movements of a young woman around the Rokupa area. A young boy returning home to his parents who live in the heart of the cemetery came face to face with the woman. In his shock he tried several times to raise an alarm while the woman just stood quietly before him. When eventually he gained enough courage, he shouted calling the name of his parents for help. It is reported that the woman turned into a dark ally and disappeared. According to residents, a few days after a woman would be heard wailing along the streets until the early hours of the morning.
Residents have raised the matter with the woman's father ... a ceremony was

performed at the girl's graveside, but her nocturnal wanderings continue. One resident said, "We have found out that she died as a witch and steps were not taken to do the right thing before burial".... "Thousands of witches have been buried here, how can we be sure that this lady is the one haunting us?" one resident said. A prominent businessman residing at the cemetery said he was prepared to spend any amount of money to bring a top ju-juman to the Rokupa cemetery.[170]

Witchcraft stories are legion. For example a wealthy farmer in Kambia had a number of his rice stores destroyed by rats. A witch-finder was called in who identified the farmer's half-brother and some friends as witches who had changed into rats and done the havoc. An old woman in Tassoh village, Port Loko district, was identified as a witch because she smelled of urine. The witch-finder claimed she had a witch-horse which threw her off during a night raid and stood on her genitals.

That witchcraft is very much a live issue today, not just up-country, but in Freetown itself, can be seen from an incident which took place on Campbell Street on Saturday 26th October 1991. A twelve years old girl had been accused of witchcraft and a "swear" put on her. As she became sick, she declared she was not going to die alone, and began to name others involved in witchcraft. Word got around, many gathered at the compound and a commotion ensued. The section chief, a Limba, arrived and imposed several fines of 5,000 Leones. People refused to pay and a messenger was sent up to Limba country to bring down a diviner to judge the case. A city lawyer was also consulted and he advised the matter be dropped as no case could be made and private witchcraft dealings were illegal. Rev. Sankoh-Cole, the Anglican vicar at Charlotte, was involved in the dispute. On the Sunday he preached on witchcraft. While he was preaching the congregation began to accuse one another of acts of witchcraft. The uproar eventually drowned out his voice. One man took off his shoe and struck another with it - an unequivocal accusation of witchcraft. He in turn removed his shoe and struck the first man. Others did the same. Fighting broke out. Hymn books went flying. Only with the intervention of a policeman was order restored in this ancient Krio church.[171]

Ancestor Spirit Possession

One feature of the ancestor cult which needs investigation because of its influence on what is

perceived as the operations of the Holy Spirit in the Spiritual and Pentecostal-evangelical churches in Freetown, is spirit possession. If to host a wicked ancestor spirit is the ultimate evil and horror in West African communities, to host good ancestors is the acme of spiritual activity. The phenomenon of spirit possession or filling has been called the quintessence of the African religious experience and the ultimate in the spiritual quest. An ancestor spirit takes up temporary residence in a living family member who is psychically strong enough to host it. I. B. Amara, psychiatrist-in-charge of the Kissy mental-home during the 1960s, maintains that possession must be seen in its socio-cultural context. Those prone to come under spirit possession are traditionally regarded as men and women of spiritual power: in the West they are regarded as insane, psychotic, mentally disturbed, psychologically imbalanced and schizophrenic and paranoid.[172] People who behave in odd and unusual ways, spending much time living in seclusion communicating with spirits:

... are scorned and despised yet feared and revered. No one dares to touch or harm them for fear of incurring the displeasure of the gods and risking their wrathful vengeance.[173]

Although the possessed are feared they are valued for their power to bless and protect, and to act as avenues of communication for the ancestral spirits.

It is society that sees in them the supernatural power. It is society that interprets their eccentricity or insanity as being directed by spirits and gods and devils.[174]

Amara sees the spiritual essence of ancestor possession and witchcraft as being basically the same, the distinctions lying in active or passive participation and benevolent or malevolent intent. While falling down in swoon or trance is a socially approved religious act, accompanying violent aggression is discerned as a witch-spirit which is exorcised. A somewhat similar approach to the discerning of spirits is adopted by the Spiritual churches.

Methods used to induce spirit possession include drumming, dancing, vigorous exercises, drugs from narcotic leaves and roots, both stimulants and relaxants, and alcohol. During the awe-inspiring manifestations of its presence, the ancestor will use its host as a medium to reveal secrets, foretell the future, release healing power, banish barrenness and expose

witches.[175] Ancestor possession frequently takes place on the dancing grounds when dancers become ecstatic. Women in particular seek spirit possession as spirit mediums acquire power and status in the community. During the dance, those who come under the influence of ancestor spirits begin to shake and tremble, fall down and roll on the ground. They may go into trance during which they shout out spirit messages which reveal the cause of various illnesses, name witches, and make known the medicines, sacrifices and ritual procedures needed for obtaining a cure. They foretell people's future and predict the success or failure of ventures. Those who demonstrate mediumistic ability proceed to become recognised professional diviners when they are seen to experience a special call from an ancestral spirit. Professional diviners are generally male.

SOCIETIES OF POWER

Male secret societies such as *Poro* - the foremost male society in Sierra Leone which had its origins among the Mende - the Temne *Rogbenle* and the Limba *Gbangbani,* are religio-political associations with secrets concerning the operation and manipulation of ancestral spiritual power whose main aim is to maintain the socio-political *status quo*. Smaller, ruling-family societies include the Limba *Konfo*, the Temne *Gbanlay* (popular in the Tonkolili District, and functioning also among the Limba), *Ragbenle* (a Temne version of the Kuranko *Dowe* society), and *Wunde* (a traditional warrior society operating only among the Kpa-Mende).[176] When the *Wunde*, who are strong in the Moyamba area, hold their initiation ceremonies, all law and order, including the rule of the paramount chief, is suspended. Offences such as stealing and adultery cannot be reported or prosecuted. "Thousands flood to join these celebrations."[177] Powerful specialist societies exist such as the Mende *Njayie*, which deals with mental conditions, and *Humoi,* whose main function is to maintain proper relationships with the bush spirits and uphold moral standards. *Humoi* specialises in dealing with incest cases.[178]

The power source of all societies resides in their ancestral spirits and the medicines through which their medicine (spirit power) operate. These spirits are the founding fathers of the clan, tribe, and the society itself. *Gbeni* is the name of the most powerful *Poro* spirit or "devil". It only "comes out" in public on the most important occasions. The *Gbangbani* devil is called *Gbangbani,* the *Gbanlay* devil is *Manekeh* (cut nose). While the absolute power exercised by the societies in the past has gone, their influence over individual lives and local and national politics is still considerable. Little writes:

The Poro society was ... the means by which a uniform system of government and set of customs was possible among the large number of politically separate and remotely scattered communities of Mende country. The society instilled general awe of a religious kind, and derived its power entirely through the intercourse which its senior officials claimed to have with the world of spirits. They impersonated the latter with the aid of masks and other paraphernalia.
There is little doubt ... that Poro law surmounted the local administration of the chiefs in several respects.... The connection between this society and political authority has always been very strong and the two mutually reinforce each other.... No person can hope to occupy any position of authority in the chiefdom without being a Poro member and receiving Poro support.[179]

The societies provide entertainment for their communities. Masqueraders who make present the spirit of the society "come out" and parade through the streets dancing and performing acrobatics. *Mathoma* is a popular Limba masked devil who appears on festive occasions. The spirit-impersonators make gestures and speak in "strange" languages, comprehensible only to members of that particular society. These occasions provide opportunity for heavy drinking and a suspension of the normal moral standard, and are especially welcomed in Islamic areas where Sharia law is increasingly restraining openly immoral behaviour.

Poro

One of the most important functions of *Poro* and other societies is to train and prepare young men and women for the adult life of the community. Initiation into tribal societies at the age of puberty is the most important event in the life of most Sierra Leoneans. The rite of circumcision, the ceremony of being swallowed by the society spirit and reborn into the new life of maturity, and swearing the oath of allegiance and secrecy, are all crucial events in this indigenous *rite de passage*. Without initiation into the society no-one can be accepted as a

full member of the community and participate in its social and religious activities. Children are kept in ignorance of what is involved in becoming a society member, but are encouraged to look on their initiation with great expectations. Traditionally the dry season is initiation time. *Poro* officials - the *sowa* (a third born triplet) is the head - conduct the initiates into the sacred bush. Twins are regarded as having inherent psychic power and being potentially dangerous. A popular warning is, "I am a twin, you must not trifle with me."[180] They have a special relationship with the ancestors A triplet is even more psychically endued. The circumcision ceremony takes place in the sacred bush when the boys are between fifteen and nineteen. The flowing blood symbolises the mystical blending of blood, soul and life with the ancestors.[181] After circumcision, the boys have the *Poro* marks incised on the back, chest and neck, with blades and fish-hooks to show they have been swallowed by the *Poro* spirit *Gbeni,* and are able to endure pain bravely. They are then given new names. At this time the boys are taught the secret songs and dances of the society and undergo tests of pain endurance. The final ceremony is the oath ritual where, after a ritual bath, a chicken's neck is severed to impress on the boys the consequences of divulging society secrets. Discussion of society business with non-members, especially Europeans, is regarded as a serious offence and an act of disloyalty. The training used to last several years, but now it may take only two weeks during the school holidays. The period in the bush marks the transition from boyhood to manhood and he comes out reborn as a mature member of his community, a *sohini* (one entitled to procreate). Before leaving the sacred bush, the boys' toes are bound together with moss and thread in an unbroken chain by the *mabole*, the only woman officer in the society who acts as matron. The spirits of past leaders are invoked to bind the boys to *Poro*. The *mabole* then dips a white fowl into *Poro* medicine and sprinkles the boys. Their fortunes are told and the fowl is then slain and its blood sprinkled over the neophytes. This unites them with the *Poro* spirits, energises them with their power, and seals the covenant between them. The coming out celebration, Limba *mayokohn*, is the social highlight of the year for most communities.

The Krio have traditionally opposed indigenous Sierra Leonean societies like *Poro* and the female society *Sande* or *Bundu*. Krio are hesitant to allow their children marry non-Krio because they fear the grandchildren, or even their children, will be initiated and circumcised. A Krio university professor said he would even disown his sons if they married Mende women. Islam officially denounces society involvement, but only recently, through the Basharia Movement, has there been any real attempt to practically oppose it. Pentecostal-evangelicals are also taking a strong line against their members belonging to secret societies. *Poro* powerfully influences Government policies and programmes. Most Heads of State and MPs are members of *Poro*. Matters which cannot be discussed openly are taken to the *Poro* bush. President Momoh always met his *Poro* superiors prior to important Cabinet meetings. Since independence and the demise of Krio political power, *Poro* has replaced the Church as the main moral and religious authority behind the Government. Advancement in *Poro* is seen as a more effective way of wielding political power than joining the Government.

Sande or Bundu

Sande is the main indigenous association for women. Among the Temne it is called *Bundu*. Although originally a Mende society it is now widespread among most ethnic groups in Sierra Leone and Liberia. It functions through independent lodges headed by a *sowei* (the third born triplet) who must be in her post-menstruation phase of life and is normally an experienced midwife. She is supported by an inner circle of elderly women.

She is usually a prominent, well-respected, knowledgeable woman of high social status. The number of initiates depends on her skill as a circumciser, her social status in the community, and the number and support of staff she can muster for the training period. She is also the local traditional birth attendant and has considerable knowledge and experience of circumcision and other minor surgical operations. She is also very knowledgeable about local herbs, which can be used to benefit or harm the community. She is supposed to have mystical powers, and can evoke ancestral spirits using medicines and sacred objects placed in the Sande hut. Assisting her are senior members of her staff.... It is from this second grade that the main Impersonator of the Sande Spirit or Devil is chosen. Most women are honoured if asked to play this part. The Sande Devil, representing ancestral spirits, wears a large, black, wooden mask and dances before the initiates at the Coming-out Ceremony.[182]

The society meet at their *panguma*, an enclosure out of bounds to men on the pain of attack

by their powerful medicines. The tutelary spirit of *Sande*, like its head, is called *Sowei*.

The standing of a society depends on the number initiates who successfully complete its initiation and circumcision programme. The principal event in the process of initiation, the clitoridectomy, is a terrifying and traumatic experience, which is explained as a foretaste of the sufferings of womanhood.[183] A common saying is, "There is no pain greater than this one." Without this painful operation, only rarely carried out under anaesthetic, social integration and marriage is practically impossible. The practice of female circumcision is defended on the grounds of cleanliness, as it is argued that female secretions are foul smelling and unhygenic and the contamination can be transferred to food and water. Also, circumcision inhibits promiscuity and protects women from their own sexuality. On the day of the circumcision, the initiates who are usually around fourteen years old - nowadays the age limit can be lowered to four or five to counteract increasing opposition to this initiation rite - take a cold bath which serves as an anaesthetic. They are then led out to the *sowei* in the sacred bush who has each girl lie over a hole dug in the ground. While the girl's legs are held apart by the assistants, the *sowei* (Limba *barigba*) excites the clitoris with an egg, the symbol of fertility, and using a sharp blade cuts it off along with a large portion of the vaginal lips. The girl is then turned over so that the blood drips directly into the hole and is offered to Mother Earth and the ancestors.[184] If blood entered the womb the girl would become barren. Ground herbs mixed with fresh ashes are applied to the raw wound to assist healing. Women in the town or village beat drums, dance and shout to drown out the screams of the initiates. After the operation the girls are whitened with a clay wash, dressed in new clothes and given new names. They are instructed in the arts and crafts of womanhood, taught traditional songs and dances, and are given esoteric information concerning the spirits of past society leaders and of the *Sande* "devils". Witchcraft ordeals and ritual washings are performed. The girls are given a cowrie charm to wear around their necks, which makes them immune to male aggression. The girls leave the bush after about two weeks, bound together by an oath and a shared experience of suffering and joy. Their debut or "coming

out" is regarded as their being reborn into a new life. The *Sande* women, including the newly initiated, parade naked through their town or village while the men, in role reversal, remain indoors.[185] Four *Sande* officials carry the *kendu* medicine. This medicine fosters womanly character and virtue and also purifies from the effects of any lapses. The community celebrates with singing, dancing, heavy drinking and various entertainments. The emphasis is on fertility. The highlight or the final ceremony is a communal covenant meal eaten out of a large bowl of rice and gravy with a phallic symbol set in the centre. Future husbands and their parents reimburse the *sowei* for all the society expenses. The ritual of circumcision confers full social acceptance and integration on young females. Without it they would be socially ostracised and estranged from their family and kin. One student informant, however, testified that when she remembered what she went through, she "had goose pimples all over her skin". She regretted entering the *Bundu* bush, claimed the operation did little to prevent promiscuity, and vowed none of her children would ever join the society.

Sande operate as a women's solidarity and protection society, which especially safeguards women's status as procreators and children rearers. They impose fines on men and women who break their rules and can enforce their sentences through their powerful medicines and tutelary spirits. *Sande* women can withhold their fertility and possible offspring from husbands who contravene *Sande* law. Disrespect towards women not only offends the living, but also the ancestors who are the source of all secret society laws and blessing. Olayinka Koso-Thomas records the story of a paramount chief who became an imperious old fellow who used abusive language against his wives. One wife, after an especially virulent outburst, went off and returned with the *Sande* women of the town. They physically carried the chief away to the *Sande* bush. When he returned he was ever so mild.[186] Through their psychic powers *Sande* constitute an unofficial social and political authority.

Sande is not centrally organised, but exists in autonomous localised chapters, wherever a prominent woman who herself has been initiated and knows the secrets of the society can attract a following. In some villages, Lungi in Moyamba District for example, all Sande women were buried in an area within the village, the great mound being a daily reminder of their ongoing blessings and the authority of their laws....

The leaders communicate with each other and travel to other chapters to assist in initiation ceremonies, thus achieving an informal integration of the society through a wide area. Each leader has a tangible symbol of her office and can also make her position known through speech and gesture. She will be received with respect among other Sande women, even in foreign ethnic and linguistic areas.[187]

Paramount chiefs have been deposed by *Sande* for having "offended against native law and custom". To have opposed the society, or lied when asked to swear on their medicine, would have meant exposing himself and his kin to retributive sickness, impotence and even death from the *Sande* spirits. *Sande* leaders, like heads of *Poro*, *Wunde*, *Gbangbani* and other male societies, are able to use their position and power to obtain oaths of loyalty and election to Government office. Charges of "swearing voters in the bush" are frequently heard during elections. *Sande* has survived urbanisation and parliamentary democracy, and is able to stand for women's rights and represent formidable block votes in local and national elections.

The scope and influence of indigenous secret societies has declined in the face of social mobility, modern education and competition from new associations which fulfil similar social functions. *Poro* find it difficult to operate in the heterogeneous urban environment with its restrictions on the coming out of *Poro* devils and the limitations on the atmosphere of fear and dread they traditionally generated, particularly among women. However, *Sande*, with an estimated 95% of provincial women initiated, has been able to adapt more successfully to the urban situation.[188] It apparently entered the Colony villages in the 1850s. Joseph May, a Recaptive Methodist preacher, recorded the presence of *Sande* at Hastings in 1858. Seeking protection from a smallpox epidemic, several women from Hastings and Wellington entered the *Sande* bush. The society spread and eventually reached Freetown. At the present time they even perform initiations on the Fourah Bay College campus. However, while traditionalists seek the continuation of *Sande* in order to maintain old customs and group solidarity - as well as the status and income of the *Sande* officials - educated parents are increasingly reluctant to expose their children to the trauma of initiation. Complaints are being voiced concerning health hazards, tetanus infection, the dangers involved in initiation for haemophiliacs, and the problems which arise later during childbirth when the scarring at

the mouth of the womb reduces elasticity and obstructs delivery. These mutilations are increasingly being discerned as a major factor in the country's the high infant and maternal mortality rates, as well as being a major factor in the high incidence of barrenness among women. A dispenser at Senehun in Bo District complained, "Sande is an abominable practice that should be stopped as society loses a lot from it. Apart from being barbaric and socially outdated, it is an unnecessary health risk."[189] A gynaecologist claimed 90% of his problem cases was due to initiation circumcision and two out of every three infertility cases had a direct circumcision connection. On the other hand, a village Reverend declared:

Our God commanded it in his own unimpeachable wisdom so who is a mere man to query a divine injunction. Those who are against female circumcision are ignorant, they don't know what they are doing. They are advocating a permissive and promiscuous society, a society against the will of God.[190]

Islam opposes *Sande* and officially forbids Muslim becoming members, but the prohibition has been largely ignored. There are many conflicting views on *Sande* at the present time. Their strength lies in the attitude of the older members, and "big women" with vested interests. Parents' co-operation for innitiation circumcision is grudgingly given in the name of native custom and to avoid attracting witch accusations and witch-spirit attacks. The Christian Krio have traditionally frowned on *Sande* and the practice of female circumcision. The most vocal opposition to *Sande*, and secret societies generallly, comes from the Pentecostal-evangelicals, and from Krio Pentecostal-evangelicals in particular.

MEN AND WOMEN OF POWER

Only those of strong psychic disposition, who obtain a special calling from a spirit and apprenticeship training from an expert, can bargain with the spirits, become channels of their power and tap their superhuman knowledge. Little writes on the Mende men of power:

First and foremost among these specialists in supernatural power come the officials and senior graduates of the secret societies, like the Poro, Sande, Humui, etc. Then there are the individual "technicians", like the *helemui,* medicine man, and the soothsayer, diviner, and so on, down in order of respectability to "mori-men",

witches, and owners of "bad" medicine.[191]

The most powerful spirits and medicines belong to the secret societies. Little adds, "The quality of awe and respect shown towards this kind of spirit and its cult-paraphernalia is emotionally distinct from that evoked by other spirits."[192] Thus the heads of secret societies, particularly *Poro*, are the diviners and medicine-men who, by virtue of their psychic prowess and society rank, along with their expertise in the use of narcotic and toxic plants and substances, can invoke the most powerful spirits and release the most powerful *halei*. Most medicine-men, however, operate on the private, individual and specialist levels.[193] Mbiti defines diviners as medicine-men who specialise in the "living dead" communication:

Their distinction is the ability to be "possessed" or get in touch with the spirit world, but this also depends on the "willingness" of the departed or other spirits to "get into" them and communicate through them.[194]

Psychologically, the experience of possession derives from a submerging of the personality which results in a state of altered consciousness and mental dissociation. While this is not an exclusively religious phenomenon, and can be induced mechanically, hypnotically, or through drugs; here the overwhelming power is taken to be an ancestor spirit.

Diviners and Divination

The primary function of diviners is to reveal and expose the criminal and the witch. The ability to receive meaningful dreams and visions, through inherent and developed talents, spiritual techniques, and the use of hallucinatory drugs, and to interpret these dreams and visions accurately, is an essential part of the diviner's calling. Most villages in Sierra Leone have several practising diviners. Dorjahn, while agreeing that the most frequent usage of divination among the Temne is to identify thieves, witches and other evil-doers, points out that it is, "... commonplace also to divine why one is ill, what should be done to cure illness and why a death has occurred."[195] People consult diviners also for information on the future and the outcome of their plans and ventures. A Loko informant claimed:

Most Loko people either do not pray to the Supreme Being or believe in destiny. To them divination is so important in their lives that a diviner in a village is looked upon as a god, a god who can reveal the truth, determine what is bad and what is good, and pass on good luck. A mother needs a diviner to tell her if the husband-to-be of her

daughter is the right choice. Farmers need to know if they will get a good yield or not. Traders need to know what type of goods they should buy and sell. Travellers need to know if they will encounter ill luck on the way. Men consult diviners to find out if their wives are guilty of adultery. Most Loko villages have five or more diviners. They do not give out charms or medicine for a better fate, but they tell the type of sacrifice one should offer, like a hen or a goat or plenty of food. The diviner acts as a prophet. People pay to see them. There is always keen competition among them. Popular diviners get a lot of money. Some diviners are so popular that nearby villages will travel to consult them.

Diviners must maintain their psychic power through fasting, power enhancing exercises and the use of potent leaves and herbs. They abstain from various foods and casual sex. They must protect themselves from rivals and produce supernatural results to gain popularity. Unsuccessful diviners lose the respect of the community, are socially ostracised and usually forced to leave the village.

Diviners specialise in different divination techniques.[196] In Loko *yele musa* divination the diviner covers himself with a white cloth and invokes his own spirits and his clients' dead relatives. The diviner himself need not be the person under the white cloth, an assistant can substitute. The spirits and ancestors appear one after the other and the covered person acts as mediator between the spirits and the diviner. The spirits reveal the cause of sicknesses and troubles, and the sacrifices to be offered to effect cures and solutions. While the medium is communicating with the spirits, the diviner sprinkles him with a liquid concoction until he declares that all the spirits have gone. If the mediator screams and collapses, as is often the case, it means communication with the spirits cannot take place on that day. Throwing kola nuts is is the popular method of ascertaining if a sacrifice has been accepted by the ancestors. Another oracular method of divination has fifteen stones placed on a mat. A handful is grabbed and the remainder, if odd or even, reveals a part of the answer. This old method is not so popular nowadays because of misuse by frauds and charlatans. A popular Muslim divination technique is to recite the Koran while gazing into a basin of water and medicine until ancestral spirits appear to answer the questions. Another is to look into a mirror with the edge embroidered with cowrie shells until the *jinna Musa* (spirit of Moses) reveals the culprit. The diviner will also write Koranic verses on a slip of paper which lies

under his head as he sleeps. In his dreams his questions are answered and the following morning he reveals what he has dreamed.[197] Muslim diviners float a blank sheet of white paper in a basin of water until the name of the witch or thief appears in Arabic. There are many "ordeal" methods of divination. One technique employs a bundle of sticks treated with a herbal concoction. Suspects are lined up and the diviner points the sticks at each in turn. The sticks will begin to beat the guilty person. Another method of ordeal divining is to pass a needle and thread through the skin of the forearm parallel to the long bones. "The innocent feels nothing: the guilty screams with pain."[198] Other ordeals include the boiling oil and ring ordeal where the innocent can pick the iron ring out of the boiling palm oil without being burned, and the fish-hook ordeal where the suspect drinks a medicine concoction and swallows a fish-hook. The diviner draws out the hook on a string. If the hook catches the throat, the person is guilty.[199] Poison medicines made from leaves and the bark of trees are common. When drops are put into a suspect's eye, the eye of the guilty is burned, but the innocent feels nothing. When the poison medicine is drunk, the innocent vomits it up and the guilty perishes.[200] A popular Mende ordeal is to have the diviner's chicken peck at rice (usually the diviner's rice and probably doctored) placed either on the suspect's hand or tongue. If it pecks, the person is innocent, if it doesn't, the person is guilty.[201] Among the Temne the *angbaibul* divination technique makes use of the Bible. A large key is inserted in the middle of the Bible and the Bible is bound fast with part of the key sticking out. The Bible is suspended by the key while the diviner calls out, "By the word of Saint Paul and Saint Peter, by the word of God, if it was this person that stole ... let this Bible turn three times and fall."[202] Another method is to open the Bible at Acts 5. The suspects tap the page with their finger while declaring their innocence. If one lies, one dies like Ananias died when he lied against the Holy Ghost.[203]

When a sickness does not respond to normal herb treatment the diviner is called in. He diagnoses the root-cause of the sickness - normally an angry ancestor spirit, or a malevolent witch-spirit, attacking as a consequence of some taboo being broken - and prescribes a cure.

He frequently combines the functions of the medicine-man and will compose and vitalise the curative medicine and consecrate the necessary leaf concoction. The diviner acts as a guardian of the community's mores. If a diviner accuses a woman of adultery, she, even if innocent, will find it expedient to admit the accusation and name an innocent man as her partner. Whatever the case may be, the named man is always guilty and compelled to pay the customary fine to the husband. Diviners can "swear" people. A swear is not just abuse, or merely taking an oath, although that is included; it is pre-eminently a curse which releases a destroying spirit.[204] These destroying spirits are now commonly called "angels of death". The Angel of Death is a powerful destroying spirit actively engaged by the Spiritual churches in their exchange-of-life animal sacrifices. Swearing is a dangerous business as swears can come back and destroy a careless swearer. The chief's permission must be obtained even before a public announcement of the proposed swearing can be made. This gives the guilty party - thief, adulterer, witch or other criminal - the chance to confess and be ritually cleansed. If a confession is not forthcoming a medicine-man, who could be the diviner himself, prepares the swear medicine. Some swears may be purely verbal, using words of power or "abusive languages", terms normally forbidden and strictly taboo.[205] However, the usual procedure is for the medicine-man to wake up the spirit of his medicine and make it "hot and energetic".[206] This is done through feeding the spirit with sacrifices and stirring it up with special incantations. Once released, the spirit, which is more powerful than any witch-spirit, relentlessly hounds its victim. In the *tamba* swear of the Kono, the *tamba* is beaten to awaken the spirit which is then entreated to make the criminal sick.[207] A Temne swear is uttered over an *okrifi* stone placed in a cup and covered with the blood of a chicken.[208] In Mende swears, *Ngewoh* is invoked to help the medicine and come down for his chicken.[209] Some of the medicine is burnt and the poisonous ashes strewn. When the victim stands on the ashes the swear-spirit recognises and pursues its quarry, helped of course by any cuts or cracks in the skin. It can also enter the stomach, causing swelling and death. It can cause mothers to die in childbirth and death by accident. It hunts down family members, even down several generations. A victim or family members can have a swear revoked, "pulled",

at great expense. When a person falls ill the diviner can discern that the cause is a swear in the past which has caused the trouble and it must be pulled.[210] The blood of a sacrificial fowl or animal is smeared on the medicine and the medicine-man's instruments; this feeds the swear-spirit and makes atonement. The person pulling the swear bathes ritually in a "holy water" medicine made with special leaves. Community encompassing swears are often made on sacred stones, against which eggs are smashed symbolising the destruction of the victim's life.[211] Women frequently have recourse to private swears to redress ill-treatment by their husbands. Objects which have come in contact with the female genitalia are considered very powerful and harmful. A Mende woman will bury a bottle of urine near a well or river-bank while swearing, "I am uttering a curse on him by this bottle ... let him die by this bottle. *Ngewoh jahun.*"[212] The husband, unable to urinate, should die of uraemia. These swears are not considered very powerful. Finnegan sees swears as "good socially" and acting as a deterrent on crime where there is no effective police force.[213]

Because the diviner can see beyond as well as behind the present, he is in great demand as a fortune-teller who can predict the success of an enterprise. In order that the good fortune predicted will materialise the diviner will demand a "sacrifice for fame". Whatever is demanded is brought. The person lays hands on the sacrifice and the diviner declares to the spirits:

We have looked concerning this man. Fame is coming to him, we are offering this sacrifice so that the fame may not stop on the way. Let it reach him.[214]

Some diviners have a special gift for seeing into a person and can spot the witch-spirits and identify witches. In this role they operate as witch-hunters or witch-finders, (*kemamoi* in Mende, "one who shows"). When a victim's relatives realise witchcraft is behind a sickness and that a witch-spirit is devouring the blood, intestines and internal organs, they call in the services of a witch-hunter who will name and swear the witch. Once the witch is exposed and dealt with, the heart and blood should then return to the victim and recovery take place.[215] In all their roles and functions the successful diviners are reverenced and held in

awe by their communities. The *mori* works mainly with Islamic paraphernalia including Koranic texts, beads and Arabic writing.[216] The *mori* is especially respected because of his association with Islam, but is more involved in harmful, anti-social "business" than the indigenous diviner and medicine-man, and tends to be regarded more as a diviner *cum* sorcerer. A popular diviner attracts clients from a wide area and amasses considerable wealth through fees, gifts and the sacrifices demanded. It is reported that former president of Sierra Leone, Siaka Stevens, regularly consulted a powerful lady medium at Lunsar, and his successor Joseph Momoh continued the same practice.[217] The medium lives near Iron Mountain and a track leads from her house to the mountain where her familiar spirit dwells. According to a sociology student:

Most of them are feared because they are considered as having more than human powers, which emanate from their association with spirits (*jinii*), knowledge of herbs, and in the case of acclaimed Muslims, even proclaiming to have a link with some super-being. They curse and it is expected to have the desired effect.... They make people sacrifice their belongings in the hope of gaining more. Some have ended in poverty while others swear their good fortune, the birth of a son or the rise to political power, is due to the advice of the diviner and the sacrifice. Diviners have caused families to split up and to be plagued by poverty. They have attributed poverty, failure and the death of babies to witchery by a close relative, a sister, a mother, or a father. The afflicted henceforth regards such a person as an enemy.[218]

Diviners are able to adapt to the urban situation and streamline their techniques to suit. One is employed at Eastern Police Station to track down criminals and trace stolen property.[219] Those having an inclination towards divination find scope to develop their abilities within a Christian context as prophets in the Spiritual churches.

Medicine-men and Sorcerers

Medicine-men are the healers and medical-practitioners of indigenous societies. They understand the potent properties of leaves, herbs, roots and other substances. Their concoctions, which may be used to bathe or smear the body, or which may be drunk, have the power to cleanse from witchcraft pollutions, protect from evil spirits, and energise with the curative and euphoric powers of benevolent spirits. Their charms and fetish can, when properly activated with appropriate sacrifices and incantations, release spirits which bless

and which curse, which heal and inflict sickness. Their poison medicines, liquid or powder, which they leave in suitable places, "catch" and "hold" criminals, especially witches. They also provide antidotes, "strong medicine" to counteract the poison medicines of sorcerers. The *sukei* medicine of the Mende medicine-man is poured into a short piece of animal horn which is embedded in a lump of cooked cassava root and swallowed whole.[220] They offer propitiatory sacrifices for the sick and prepare concoctions for the bewitched to wash with and drink. The sacrifices offered by diviners and medicine-men appease the anger of aggrieved ancestors and propitiate destroying bush spirits, the "angels of death". By smearing the blood of slaughtered animals on the sick, the animal's virtue is transferred to the patient while its spiritual essence goes to the spirits as food, or as spiritual animals for their spiritual farms. Treatment may last several days and takes place at the healer's shrine. Sacrifices are offered to the ancestral and cult spirits so that they will empower the medicines being prepared. Patients are sometimes put to sleep by a strong potion so as not to see what goes on around them. If one dies or goes insane during treatment, the ancestors are angry and have rejected the existence of this person.[221] For the treatment of child malnutrition, the Limba medicine-man will ask the mother to sacrifice something very precious to her and dress the child in special black, red and white cloth. The diarrhoea caused by the herb medicine is interpreted as the child excreting all the witch food it has been given. Muslim medicine-men are called *alpha*. One of their potent concoctions is *lasmami*, a "holy water" with the added ingredient of Arabic writing washed from a board. *Lasmami* is a popular treatment for barrenness. The patient bathes in it and drinks some before retiring to bed.

The medicine-man's most important function, apart from healing and providing antidotes for witchcraft, is to swear their medicines to "catch" and destroy witches. Swears release destroying spirits. On paying the statutory swearing fee, the medicine-man publicly heralds his intention to swear and calls on the guilty to reveal themselves. If there is no response he proceeds to invoke the ancestors and the previous owners of the swear medicine. After ritually energising and activating his medicine he releases the spirit to destroy through

sickness or accident. Husbands swear wives who run away without repaying the bride-price. This makes them too dangerous for others in the area to take over. With all this power to heal and destroy at their disposal, medicine-men command great respect in rural communities and become wealthy. While their influence has declined with the advance of modern, more efficient, and less time-consuming and uncomfortable treatments, they remain the principal medical practitioners of the rural poor. In Freetown, healers with a reputation for treating particular sicknesses such as barrenness, impotence, smallpox, TB, leprosy, epilepsy, etc., are in some demand. However, there they have suffered severely from the competition of the healers of the Spiritual churches, and more recently from the even simpler and less expensive faith and miracle healings of the Pentecostal-evangelical churches.

Sorcerers, or "ju-jumen", are different to witches in that they operate consciously and deliberately and use "means" to achieve their ends rather than unconscious or sub-conscious psychic power. They are also different to diviners and medicine-men in that while those leave room in their operations for confession and the social rehabilitation of criminals, the sorcerers' intention is simply to destroy. Sorcerers are mainly male and are the "bad medicine-men" of the community. They release their destructive psychic power through magical "means". They collect parts of the bodies of famous warriors and chiefs - hair, teeth, nails - so as to absorb their powers. The sorcerers' "medicine" contains poison from herbs and roots, chameleons, scorpions, centipedes, wasps and poisonous snakes. Their work is made easier if parts from the body of the intended victims can be included in the medicine. This is normally burned and the ashes sprinkled on the path along which the victims walk, or by their beds, or on their food. Once poisoned and "held" by the medicine, the antidote is to go to another sorcerer or a medicine-man who can provide a more powerful medicine. The Limba call their sorcerers *ba tonko* (one who eats cunning). Sorcerers provide protective medicine for those who are being attacked by another sorcerer's "bad medicine". This can be a liquid concoction which is smeared over the body, or drunk, or a charm. Sorcerers are consulted by those who want to illegally attract partners from the opposite sex. Their potions

may include human parts. Businessmen and politicians who are engaged in dubious practices consult sorcerers.[222] Daily recital of secret incantations accompany these medicines to make them an effective defence against bad medicine or witchcraft. Various rituals must be performed and taboos kept. In the Spiritual churches certain Psalms are recited in similar fashion while one baths in "holy water" and performs various "spiritual exercises". Successful sorcerers, like medicine-men, train apprentices who will eventually start in business on their own; parallels exist with the training of prophets in the Spiritual churches. Harris and Sawyerr write:

"Medicine-men" and sorcerers have two characteristics in common. One, they seek to maintain the good-will of their predecessors now dead - the professional ancestors. So the regularly offer red palm-oil-rice to them and pray for their assistance in all they do, both good and bad....
Two, the strive to ensure that their pupils, and so their successors, are properly equipped in their profession. The latter are accordingly given a sound knowledge of the healing and poisonous properties of various herbs and plants. No one becomes a "medicine-man" (good or bad) without a long apprenticeship. This is referred to as "learning the leaves".[223]

OBJECTS AND WORDS OF POWER

Amulets and charms tied around the waist, neck, arms and legs, or hung on door-posts and other significant locations, are protective counter-measures against witchcraft and "bad medicine". Swears made over these charms, as with medicines, will eventually catch up on the witch and cause its death. The incantations made over charms and medicines are so closely associated with them that they are regarded as being in themselves verbal charms and words loaded with divine power. As already noted, swears can be made without reference to any fetish. Idowu notes the connection between words of power and personality force, and also the means used - fasting, abstention from sex, etc. - to generate the inner strength necessary before effectively uttering these powerful words.[224] Words taken from the Koran, particularly the power Sura, "The Overshadowed", are popular inserts in Temne and Kuranko amulets.[225] Sometimes Bible verses are used, especially portions from the

Psalms. Reciting these words of power a certain number of times releases their dynamism. The use of the Psalms in the prayers of the Spiritual churches will be examined later. Some of the more common Mende charms, which can be found in use among all the indigenous groups, are given as examples. *Gbanyei,* a short strip of bamboo which serves as a gun, is a witch protection charm. It is hung over a child's bed. The intruding witch is shot by the gun. *Fomii* a bag of various charms, usually Koranic texts, to which a cane is attached. It is usually hung on the main door of the house. The entering witch-spirit is flogged by the cane. The witch will afterwards bleed to death. *Manii* is a net trap hung over the doorway to catch witches. *Bolei* is a bag of charms. When the witch-spirit enters the bag, the witch dies, leaving an empty shell on its bed in the morning.

Ndilei

Some powerful Mende fetish medicines, "super-charms", are used and feared throughout Sierra Leone. The most potent and efficacious are *ndilei* and *bofima.*[226] *Ndilei* is a sorcerer's medicine consisting of a bundle of charms and herbs with needles stuck to the outside. The medicine can be transformed into an invisible python or vampire bat which feeds on human blood during the night. The antidote is a charm made from one or two python vertebrae hung around the child's neck or waist. Anyone caught in possession is condemned as a witch. It paralyses children (cases of infantile paralysis and poliomyelitis) if it is unable to kill them. The *ndilei* is acquired from a sorcerer by someone seeking revenge. It can be transformed by its owner into an attractive member of the opposite sex. Its fetish spirit must be "fed" with human blood and fat. Marginalised, anti-social females are frequently accused of practising *ndilei* and are obvious targets for witch-finders during witch hunts. Most *ndilei* found in witch hunts are, as observed by Gittins, cleverly "planted" by witch-finders. With *ndilei* medicine, the boundary line between witchcraft and sorcery confusingly overlaps.

Bofima

Bofima is a medicine made from human flesh. Especially potent are the palms of hands,

soles of feet, foreheads, breasts of young girls, and private parts. Internal organs are sometimes used and female menses. The items are put into a bag which is anointed with oil from the fat of internal organs. Little writes:

Renewal of the *Bofima* requires, of course, a fresh human victim. Before setting out to obtain one, the *Bofima* is consulted, and if all is well its owners proceed.... After killing the victim the required parts and fat are taken from the body and the corpse is buried in the swamp. The fat must be turned into oil by a woman who is not allowed to touch food until her work is completed. She must wash her hands very thoroughly before eating.[227]

If the *bofima* is not fed regularly and sufficiently it will turn on the sorcerer and destroy him. This expensive medicine, which ensures good luck and increases the strength of one's personality, is in great demand during local and national elections. "Big men" from Freetown and other places pay high prices for this medicine. In June 1990 a murder trial was held in the High Court in Freetown. Popular Kenema diamond dealer, Alhaji Mustapha "Fufafu" Tokowa, one of his wives, and other accomplices, including Vandi Koroma, a teacher at the Ahmadiyya School at Segbwema, Patrick Komeh, town chief of Lahai Ndomawa, and Alhaji Duramani Kabba, a "sorcerer", were accused of the ritual murder of a young pregnant woman, Sao "Adami" Bockarie, at Kebiwama village in Lower Bambara Chiefdom, Kenema District. Alhaji Tokowa wanted his diamond plot to produce more wealth. Alphaman, Alhaji Kabba, suggested a human sacrifice should be made. The ***We Yone*** of June 23rd reported how Sao Bockarie was lured into the bush, grabbed, and after the Sura ***Al Fatiha*** was read, she had been sacrificed:

Alhaji Tokowa described how he cut off the breast of his niece, Sao Bockarie, after offering her as a sacrifice, and then proceeded to cut other parts of her body with a sharp knife, while she was still alive.... "I scraped all the hair from her head. The deceased pleaded with me, 'Is this why you asked me to come and assist your wives?' I started to cut off her breast and she shouted, 'oyea, oyea' (meaning 'oh my mother.) I stuffed some cloth into her mouth. As I cut off her breast she excreted. I tore off her dress and her green pants. I cut off her vagina and anus and gave them to Alhaji Abdul Rahman Kabba. Sao Bockarie eventually died in our hands. We drained her blood into a red coloured enamel pan.

The parts of the victim were used to prepare the *bofima* medicine. This was no isolated case. The ***We Yone*** of 3rd February had earlier reported the ritual slaughter of thirteen years old Bama Kparka, at Katta village in Kagboro Chiefdom, Moyamba District, for "vital organs including the intestines, the head and the hands". The accused included "Alphaman"

Muctaru Kabba, and Sorie Conteh, "an aspirant for the election to Town Chief of Katta village". In November 18th 1989, ***We Yone*** reported:

There was pandemonium at a nursery school in Freetown on Monday as an attempt was made to kidnap one of the pupils - a three years old girl. The drama took place at the J. S. Momoh Pre-Primary School ... in the wake of persistent rumours of young children being abducted not only in Freetown but also elsewhere in the country.
In Moyamba District, for instance, police are presently investigating the case of a 20-month old baby abducted from a farmhouse and slaughtered in the presence of her aunt, in another cold-blooded ritual murder.

President Momoh, addressing Parliament in January 1990 concerning that year's chieftaincy and parliamentary elections:

... took the opportunity to condemn the frequent occurrences of ritual murder in parts of the country and said this is not only criminal but also ashameful and heathenish practice for a nation with a reputable civilisation. He expressed the hope that such practices will not be connected with the forthcoming general elections.[228]

THE AUTHORITY OF TRADITION AND THE EFFECTS OF URBANISATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Indigenous groups, like the peoples of the Ancient Near East, put their ancient laws within the creation context.[229] When one asks a Mende how such and such a law or custom came into being, the invariable response is *Ngewoh njeini,* "*Ngewoh* sent it down," or "*Ngewoh* made it." The Limba claim God, *Kanu*, came down and showed them how to grow rice, tap palm-wine, make sacrifice, exercise their strength and cook food. He travelled round to find a wise and hard man to be the first chief. Through him *Kanu* instituted the values and powers of chiefship. *Kanu* is therefore behind all the institutions and values of Limba society. In societies that respect the elderly and venerate the departed, ancient customs and practices are sacrosanct. The traditional wisdom has until recent times been passed on orally from generation to generation in stories, myths, proverbs, songs and dances. Insight on how God and the spiritual dimension are perceived is to be found in the folklore and myths of a community. Marion Kilson has collected some Mende tales.[230] Jackson describes the way

the Kuranko children learn about the *nyenne*, the bush spirits:

From a very early age, Kuranko children are told about bush spirits. Various *nyenne* figure prominently in folktales told to children and I have often overheard parents admonishing a grizzling or ill-tempered child with the words, "Stop, a *tutu* is coming". The *tutu, tutuwe* (the big *tutu*), or *tutufingbe* (the black white *tutu*) as this *nyenne* is variously called, is a cannibalistic "bogey-man" which adults admit is imaginary, but which young children often fear as real. It is no exaggeration to say that the *nyenne* dominate the imaginative life of children, holding the same fascination as fairies, ogres, hobgoblins, ghosts and witches hold for European children. I have on many occasions, observed groups of small children drawing with sticks in the dust of a village path, sketching the bizarre outlines of some bush spirit and gleefully pretending that they have seen or heard it. And I have watched children dancing long into the dry season nights, ceaselessly chanting the names of certain bush spirits and, in their play, imitating what they believe to be the ritual actions of the cult masters.[231]

Parsons describes old women telling the children around the evening fire in a Kono village, "dreadful stories of the spirits that harm children, that swallow them along the roads if they walk alone, stories of witch people," stories of *Fimba* the dread monster who takes disobedient children away.[232] Childhood equivalents of the secret societies help prepare the young for entry into the adult cults and familiarise them with the practices of secrecy, mystic power, submission to elders and group loyalty. The Kuranko have two important male childhood associations, the *Gbongbokode*, which boys aged eight to ten may join, and the *Tulbare*, which boys of ten or over join. Here they start the process of learning about powerful medicines and "making contact with powerful extra-social forces."[233] By participating in the religious drama of the community, Sierra Leoneans from an indigenous religious background receive their concept of God and learn the methods and techniques for accessing spiritual power.

Not all Sierra Leoneans are devoutly religious, or even religiously active nowadays. The impact of modernisation and secularisation needs to be noted. According to Professor Walls:

For most peoples, the universe has been permanently enlarged. Religious thinking can no longer be conditioned by purely local and ethnic factors; it must take account of other peoples and of national, not to say international factors.[234]

Mechanisation, education and the money economy have profoundly changed the old agrarian order. The post-War migration into Freetown of young men and women from the Provinces

has brought into existence a large body of urban dwellers having a fairly tenuous connection with the old ancestral land holdings and the religious rites involved in cultivating the farms.

Millions of people whose religious world, or whose parents' religious world, was formed in small agricultural communities recognising common origin have been brought into vast modern cities of diverse population and subject to stresses, problems and alienation lying far outside the scope of the traditional religious conception and its apparatus.[235]

In these circumstances ethnic groups in Freetown, such as the Limba and Loko, have responded particularly positively to the Gospel, particularly the Pentecostal-evangelical form. Kenneth Little notes that an important two-way interchange process is involved:

Migration ... creates a far-stretching network of social and other ties between the town and the hinterland. It does not necessarily mean a permanent separation between those who have moved and their rural kin. On the contrary ... there is a constant coming and going of traders; and as well as the movement of migrants, townspeople frequently visit or are visited by rural relatives. This happens because migrants frequently return home for ceremonies or to find a wife; others send their daughters to the bush to be educated rather than allow them to grow up in the "corrupting" influence of the town.... New ideas and practices acquired by the migrants are transmitted to the countryside. Instead of being confined to the town they are diffused over a much wider area, making the town itself a pace-maker for the larger society.[236]

In the new social order, non-Krio women are slowly gaining emancipation from male domination. Krio women have always had a degree of liberty in marriage which others envied. Women in Sierra Leone traditionally asserted their social and economic rights through cult associations like *Sande* and *Humui,* whose powerful medicines could, as a last resort, inflict fearful diseases, like impotence and inflammation of the testicles. Since female labour has traditionally been so vital for the rural economy, the movement towards the economic emancipation of women is of momentous significance. Young women are moving in large numbers into Freetown in search of work opportunities. In the harsh economic realities of the city, they may find help in women's voluntary associations which can provide loans for petty trading and other business ventures.[237] Illiterate women generally join societies belonging to their own ethnic group. The effects are nowadays being especially felt in the religious realm as large numbers are joining the Spiritual and Pentecostal-evangelical churches looking for practical and spiritual support. They frequently constitute the largest

single socio-economic group in these congregations. Conservative male reaction to women's liberation is one reason for the increasing popularity of Islam, as Islam helps a man control his wives and daughters.

Today the socio-political and economic situation is in flux. In the area of religious practices, adaptations and alterations are taking place. Costly, time-consuming rituals are being modified, especially those involved in initiation ceremonies. Others connected with agriculture and medicine are being abandoned as technology demystifies the sacral domain. Desacralisation and secularisation are powerful forces sweeping across the continent and filtering down to the grass-roots. However, the basic building blocks of the traditional religious world-view remain in place. Among the Mende, Cabbage observes that, "Rites, institutions and customs reputed to have come down from antiquity continue to provide paradigms for behaviour even if only in an increasingly nostalgic sense."[238] Gittins notes the existence of an educated Mende elite with scanty knowledge of their foregathers' beliefs, but who have not completely escaped from their traditions. While professing scorn for "primitive" beliefs, they are "caught up in them and in the social behaviour they produce."[239] However, further changes in outlook are on the way. While explanations based on traditional concepts which function within a framework which incorporates witchcraft, magic and sorcery, can still satisfy intellectually and emotionally, and help find a solution to certain pressing problems, the operation of a non-progressive element has been observed. A sociology student, who noted that "even educated natives when faced with very serious problems find themselves falling back on traditional means of solving them", commented:

The belief in witchcraft, magic and sorcery leaves the people in a self-defeated state in the face of problems. When faced with problems they cannot easily comprehend, their actions are dictated by their belief systems, leaving little room for reasoning. Very few people are ready to take up the challenges of their times without mixing it up with their belief in witchcraft, magic and sorcery. They are afraid to excel for fear that they will become the targets of witches and evil magicians, or be suspected of themselves being involved in witchcraft. This makes them very lax. Such attitudes do not favour development and must be changed.[240]

In this gradual ontological transformation, while secularism dominates the philosophical agenda in the West, Islam and Christianity are playing an increasingly assertive role. In this respect, the case of the Limba who have generally held aloof first from Islam and later from Christianity, is worth noting, although the same applies to the Loko also, and to a lesser extent to the Mende and Temne. The Limba, who have a reputation for retaining much of their traditional culture and having very powerful secret societies and native medicines, were relative latecomers to the benefits of modern education and communications. However, they have, in the post-War period, made significant progress, particularly the Safroko Limba - chiefdom headquarters at Binkolo - who have produced the greatest number of educated Limba. Limba now hold many of the top positions in the government and armed forces. Former presidents Siaka Stevens and Joseph Momoh were both Limba. Christian teaching by the Wesleyans, and more recently the Roman Catholics, in the Limba homeland, and the Limba Pentecostal-evangelicals in Freetown, has significantly altered the Limba perception of *Kanu Masala*. One Limba student declared:

The effect of this can be seen in the change of attitude of the local people towards some of their traditional beliefs like sorcery and divination. The majority of the people do not now consult the sorcerers, diviners and magicians for any calamity that may befall them. *Kanu Masala* is the causation of everything on earth so why not take your problems to him. There is no house in Binkolo where you will not find one or two Christians or Muslims. My own father, Pa Yassah, has categorically stated that everybody in his household should choose where to belong, either you become a Christian or a Muslim. He declared that anybody who does not become either a Christian or a Muslim, when he or she dies no proper funeral arrangement is going to be made for that person. The influence of education on these people, especially on the younger generation, has tremendous consequences.[241]

In the new circumstances affecting the Limba, choices concerning new religious allegiences are being made. The history of the Spiritual and Pentecostal-evangelical churches of Freetown, including the Limba Pentecostal churches, demonstrates in a dynamic way the present fluid and developing interaction between indigenous religions and cultures and the Christian Gospel.

[1] It is preferable when referring specifically to the religion to speak of indigenous religions rather than traditional religion. This avoids the implication that other religions like Christianity, Judaism and Islam are not traditional. Also, using the plural form indicates the diversity that exists in African religions, while the word "indigenous" emphasises the ethnic character of these religions.

[2] John S. Mbiti, ***Introduction to African Religion***, (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1975), p.190; "The Encounter between Christianity and African Religion" in ***Temenos***, 12, 1976, pp.125-35.
Walls points out that primal religions have been "the most fertile soil for the gospel." Andrew F Walls, "Africa and Christian Identity" in ***Mission Focus***, 4(7), November 1978, p.11.

[3] Kwame Bediako, ***Identity and Integration: an Enquiry into the Nature and Problems of Theological Indigenization in Selected Early Hellenistic and Modern African Christian Writers***, (PhD diss., University of Aberdeen, 1983-a), p.352.

[4] E. Bolaji Idowu, ***African Traditional Religion: a Definition***, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1973), p.x.

[5] For an African critique of Western control over the development of the African Church see, John S. Mbiti, ***African Religions and Philosophy***, (London: Heinemann, 1969a), pp.6-14: Idowu, ***ibid.***, (London: S.C.M. Press Ltd., 1973), pp.86-102. Mbiti, although not uncritical of Western prejudices and missionary mistakes in the transmission of the Gospel to Africans, avoids Idowu's strident nationalism.

[6] For the spread and development of Islam in Sierra Leone see, J. Spenser Trimingham & Christopher Fyfe, "The Early Expansion of Islam in Sierra Leone" in ***SLBR***, 2(2), December 1960, pp.33-40: Christopber Fyfe, ***Sierra Leone Inheritance***, (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp.78-88: David E. Skinner, ***Islam in Sierra Leone during the 19th Century***, (PhD diss., University of California, 1971); "Islam and Education in the Colony and Hinterland of Sierra Leone (1750-1914) in ***Canadian Journal of African Studies***, 10(3), 1976, pp.499-520: C. Magbaily Fyle, ***The History of Sierra Leone: a Concise Introduction***, (London: Evans Brothers Ltd., 1981), pp.27-33. On Islam in West African see, J. Spenser Trimingham, ***Islam in West Africa***, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959): Geoffrey Parrinder, ***West African Religion: a Study of the Beliefs and Practices of Akan, Ewe, Yoruba, Ibo and Kindred Peoples***, (London: Epworth Press, 1961), pp.189-95: J. Humphrey Fisher, "Some Reflections on Islam in Independent West Africa" in ***The Clergy Review***, March 1968, pp.1-13: I. M. Lewis (ed.), ***Islam in Tropical Africa***, (London: Hutchinson, 1980, second edition, first edition published in 1968): Lamin O. Sanneh, "The Origins of Clericalism in West African Islam" in ***Journal of African History***, 17(1), 1976: Louis Brenner, ***West African Sufi: the Religious Heritage and Spiritual Search of Cerno Bokar Saalif Taal***, (London: C. Hurst, 1984). See, Mbiti, ***ibid.***, pp.242ff. for a good survey of Islam in Africa generally which notes its urban character and its doubling under British colonialism. See also, J. D. Y. Peel & C. C. Stewart (eds.), ***Popular Islam South of the Sahara***, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985). For a penetrating and sensitive treatment of Islamic belief and practice see, Kenneth Cragg, ***The Call of the Minaret***, (New York: Orbis Books, 1985, revised and enlarged second edition). For Asian Christian and Muslim interraction see, Phil Parshall, ***Beyond the Mosque: Christians within Muslim Community***, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985); ***Bridges to Islam: a Christian Perspective on Folk Islam***, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983).

[7] The Temne inhabit the western coastal and central areas of Sierra Leone which includes the Port Loko, Bombali, Tonkolili and Kambia Districts. This encompasses about 43 chiefdoms. The Temne are divided into twenty-five patrilineal clans, each with its own animal, bird or fish totem, which represents the founding ancestor. They are closely related to the Baga, Nalav and Landouma of Guinea. They migrated into Sierra Leone from the Futa Jallon plateau area of Guinea. They were firmly established in Sierra Leone by the early 18th century. The Peninsula region was in the hands of the Temne at the time the founding of Freetown and the Colony. Temne chiefdoms increased in size under the leadership of powerfull kin groups. They absorbed the Bullom people whom they met around the

coast. They now number 960,000 and are almost as numerous as Mende, the largest ethnic group in Sierra leone. There are two main dialect groupings, the Sanda Temne of the north and the Yonni Temne of the south. They make up 29.8% of the population. The Temne are the lagest ethnic group in Freetown. For more background informantion see, M. McCulloch, ***Western Africa Part II: Peoples of Sierra Leone Protectorate***, (London: International African Institute, 1950, reprinted 1964 by Stone & Cox Ltd.), pp.47-74: E. A. Ijagbemi, ***A History of the Temne***, (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1968).

[8] David E. Skinner, "Mande Settlement and the Development of Islamic Institutions in Sierra Leone" in ***The International Journal of African Historical Studies***, 11(1), 1978, pp.32-62.

The Mandinka (Madingo) are scattered in groups through out the north-central and mid-eastern areas of Sierra Leone. There are 75,000 Mandinka in Sierra Leone. They entered the country from the Sankaran region of Guinea as traders, using the rivers which ran from north-east to south-west. In the 17th century, a group of Mandinka settled among the Yalunka in the north and eventually became a ruling house. One of the ruling Mandinka families later settled in Tonko Limba territory, and other Muslim Mandinka moved into different areas of Limba territory. They also settled among the Kono and Mende. As a reward for help in war and for providing powerful medicines and charms using Koranic texts and Arabic writings, they were well received. They became traders and farmers and established ruling families. There is a sizeable concentration of Mandinka in the Bo area.

The Fula (Fulani) began entering the northern area of Sierra Leone (Yalunka territory) in the 15th century. These first settlers were not Muslim. In the 17th century Muslim Fula from Futa Jalon began to actively spread Islam among the Yalunka. The Fula aquired wealth from cattle trading and in 1727 they conducted a crusade to convert the Yalunka to Islam by force. They succeeded and set up their own government. They then imposed their control and religion on the Kuranko and attempted, with limited success, to also dominate and convert the Limba. In the early 18th century, Fula cattle traders began to move into Yoni Temne territory where they became culturally integrated and were made a ruling aristocracy as a reward for their help in defending the Yoni Temne against Mende invasions.
Fula concentrations are found mainly in the Koinadugu, Bombali, Kono, Bo and Kenema districts, and also in Freetown. In the first decades of the nineteenth century a Fula settlement was established just outside the Freetown boundary. It became known as Fula Town. Fula Town was later settled by the Aku or Krio Muslim and the original Fula residents absorbed through intermarriage. Other Fula concentrations in Freetown developed around Kissy Road and Fourah Bay. Many Fula came to Freetown in the post-War period looking for work. Many became small-scale shopkeepers, traders, tailors and domestic workers. They have continued to keep close links with their Futa Jalon homeland. The Fula have greatly contributed to the spread of Islam in the Colony. There are presently about 148,000 Fula in Sierra Leone with around 8,000 in Freetown.

[9] The term *karamoko*, is a Temne adaptation from the words "Koran" and *mogo*, Mandinka for "man". It means a "learned man", one who has some working knowledge of Arabic and could recite the Koran.

[10] Fyle, ***ibid.***, p.29.

[11] Skinner, ***ibid.***, pp.57-60.

[12] See, Kenneth Little, ***The Mende of Sierra Leone: a West African People in Transition***, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967 revised edition), pp.273-80: Darrell Reeck, ***Deep Mende: Religious Interactions in a Changing African Rural Society***, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), pp.77-88.

[13] Skinner, ***ibid.***, p.34.

[14] Cf. Trimingham who distinguishes between "Traditional" and "Neo-Islam", and Fisher who distinguishes between "Reforming" and "Acclimatised" Islam.

[15] Reeck, ***ibid.***, p.88.

[16] ***Ibid.***

[18] Fisher, (***1960***), p.7.
[19] ***Ibid.***, p.2.
[20] Trimmingham noted the rapid growth of Islam in Sierra Leone. In 1891 the Muslim population was estimated at 10%. In 1911 it was 14%. In 1931 it was 26%. By the end of the 1950s the Muslims constituted over 33% of the population.
[21] Aku was a term used originally for the Yoruba Recaptives in general, but early on came to designate Muslim Yoruba and Hausa who banded together because of their common faith. Their largest early community in Freetown was at Fourah Bay. The word Aku is a derivative from the Yoruba greeting *okushe* which means "Welcome!". "Kushe" is the most common and popular form of greeting among the Krio.
[22] Leslie Proudfoot, "Mosque-Building and Tribal Separatism in Freetown" in ***Africa***, 29(4), 1959; "Muslim Attitudes to Education in Sierra Leone" in ***The Muslim World***, 50(1), January 1960; "Ahmed Alhadi and the Ahmadiyya in Sierra Leone" in ***Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion***, 2(2), December 1960, pp.66-68; "Towards Muslim Solidarity in Freetown" in ***Africa***, 31, 1961; "The Fourah Bay Dispute: an Aku Factional Fight in East Freetown" in ***SLBR***, 4(2), 1962, pp.75-88: John Peterson, ***Province of Freedom: a History of Sierra Leone 1787-1870***, (London: Faber & Faber, 1969), pp.238-50: Lamin O. Sanneh, "Modern Education among Freetown Muslims & the Christian Stimulus" in ***Christianity in Independent Africa***, eds. E. W. Fashole-Luke, *et al.*, (London: Rex Collings, 1978), pp.316-33.
[23] Ahmed Timbo, ***The Basharia Movement in Relation to Temne Unity***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1992, pp.1-3.
[24] ***Ibid.***, p.26.
[25] ***Ibid.***
[26] ***Ibid.***, p.29.
[27] ***Ibid.***, p.41.
[28] ***Ibid.***, pp.39-43.
[29] ***Ibid.***, pp.28-29.
[30] ***Ibid.***, p.4.
[31] ***Weekend Spark***, 31st January 1992, p.3.
[32] ***For di People***, 13th March 1992, p.1.
[33] ***Ibid.***
[34] ***Ibid.***
[35] Christopher Fyfe & Eldred Jones (eds.), ***Freetown: a Symposium***, (Freetown: Sierra Leone University Press, 1968): Kenneth Little, ***West African Urbanization: a Study of Voluntary Associations in Social Change***, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965): Michael Banton, ***West African City: a Study of Tribal Life in Freetown***, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957).
[36] Little, ***ibid.***: W.T. Harris and Harry Sawyerr, ***The Springs of Mende Belief and Conduct: a Discussion of the Influence of the Belief in the Supernatural among the Mende***, (Freetown: Sierra Leone University Press, 1968): Harry Sawyerr, ***God: Ancestor or Creator? Aspects of Traditional Belief in Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone***, (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1970): Darrell Reeck, (***1976***): James R. Cabbage, ***Order and Chaos with Special Reference to Mende Religion***, (PhD diss., University of Aberdeen, 1982; N/B the Cabbage references in this work come from a preliminary copy kept at the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World, Edinburgh): Anthony J. Gittins, ***Mende Religion: Aspects of Belief and Thought in Sierra Leone***, (Nettetal: Steyler Verlag - Wort und Werk, 1987).

The Mende are the largest ethnic group in Sierra Leone, just slightly more numerous than the Temne, with a population of around 1,000,000. They make up 30% of the national population. The Mende homeland is in eastern and central Sierra Leone, including the adjacent western corner of Liberia. The rivers Jong, Sewa and Moa run through Mende

country roughly from north to south. There are three main Mende dialects, Kpa Mende, Sewa Mende and Ko Mende. Their roots trace back to the Mande speaking peoples of Guinea. They migrated from the highlands of Guinea some 400 years ago as bands of hunters. They possess a national consciousness based on their language, military traditions, religious customs, and folklore. The main rural occupations are rice farming and fishing. Considerable Mende migration to Freetown has taken place. The Mende were the first people beyond the Colony to receive the benefits of missionary education. Both the United Methodist Church and the Roman Catholic Church have made significant inroads into Mende society. Islam has had even greater success.
The Mende are concentrated in the southern interior plains of the country. They constitute the majority of the population of the Bo, Moyamba, Pujehun, and Bonthe Districts of the Southern Province, and the Kenema and Kailahun Districts of the Eastern Province.

[37] Robert T. Parsons, ***Religion in an African Society: a Study of the Kono People of Sierra Leone in its Social Environment with Special Reference to the Function of Religion in that Society***, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1964): Michael Jackson, ***The Kuranko: Dimensions of Social Reality in a West African Society***, (London: C. Hurst and Co., 1977).

The Kono inhabit the north eastern area of Sierra Leone on the Guinea border. Small outlying groups are found in the hinterland of Guinea and Liberia. One of their traditional homes is in the Leli area of Guinea where there is a hill called "Kono su" (the burial place of an early Kono chief). The Kono were thought to have immigrated into Sierra Leone with the Vai as one tribe. Their population numbers 125,000.

The Kuranko inhabit northern Sierra Leone near the Guinea border and occupy most of Koinadugu District. A large portion of the Kuranko population live just over the border in Guinea. The Kuranko, who were part of the Mandinka peoples, entered Sierra Leone from Guinea some time after the Limba (whom they drove east) and the Loko. The Yalunka arrived after the Kuranko and drove them some distance south. The Temne pushed them back from their southern territory. The Koranko population today is 162,000. It comprises a mixture of several ethnic groups; this is a result of the immigration of slaves (most of them Kissi) into their territory during times of tribal warfare. The Kuranko are one of the tribes that has had little contact with Europeans as the railway did not extend into their territory during the colonial period.

[38] Ruth H. Finnegan, ***A Survey of the Limba Tribe of Northern Sierra Leone***, (London: HMSO, 1965); "'Swears' among the Limba" in ***SLBR***, 6(1), June 1964, pp.8-26. See also M. McCulloch, ***ibid.***

The Youth with a Mission (YWAM) Development Resource Centre in Freetown gives the total Limba population in 1990 as 268,000. Following the Mende and Temne, the Limba constitute the third largest ethnic group in the country, comprising about 10% of the population. The Limba homeland is the central region of Northern Province from Makeni north to the Guinea border. Their main concentrations are in Bombali, Kambia, Koinadugu, and Port Loko Districts. They have no tradition of immigration to Sierra Leone, although they were known in the Futa Jallon in the 18th century. Magbaily Fyle maintains that the Limba are among the oldest inhabitants of present day Sierra Leone. C. Magbaily Fyle, ***History and Socio-Economic Development in Sierra Leone***, (Freetown: Sierra Leone Adult Education Association, 1988), p.125. The Limba formerly occupied a large area in the north of Sierra Leone, but were pushed aside by the Temne, Koranko, and Yalunka. Most of their chiefs belong to non-Limba invading tribes. Their "traditional" home is in the Wara Wara chiefdoms where there is a hill believed to be inhabited by the guardian spirits of the Limba. Dead chiefs are believed to return to that spot. Their main occupation is rice farming with a special concentration on various palm products including palm wine. There are at least nine distinct Limba dialects. The influence of their neighbours, the Kuranko, Temne, Susu, and

also the Fula and Mandinka, accounts for the linguistic diversity. However, they regard themselves as one people, and are considered the oldest inhabitants of the country.
The Limba have traditionally been looked down on by the other groups, but in recent times this attitude has changed considerably. As they tended to focus their commercial interests towards the north rather than towards the Colony, as was the case with the Temne and Mende, modern communications and educational development came late to the Limba. They have a reputation for still retaining many of the old customs and beliefs. The Limba have migrated to Freetown in large numbers in recent decades. Their main areas of settlement have been Wellington, Kissy, George Brook, Congo Market, Brookfields and Tengbe Town.

[39] The Kissi are located in the Eastern Province, in the Kailahun and Kono Districts, and spread over into Guinea and Liberia. The Kailahun Kissi, whose headquarters is he border town of Koindu, have been strongly influenced by the Mende and Liberia, while the Kono Kissi have been influenced by the Kono and Guinea. The total Kissi population is 126,000.

[40] The Loko are one of the smaller groups in the country. They are believed to have been a war party of Mende who moved west and became separated from the main body. They are mostly settled in the Northern Province in areas such as the Gbendembu and Ngowahun Chiefdom whose centre is at Kalangba, Kanialo and Batkanu. Because of their contact with Temne they have developed their own distinctive dialect. As a group they have recently tended to adopt Islam as their relilgion, but they still continue most of their indigenous practices. They have a high level of illiteracy. Since the 1960s there has been a significant turning to Christianity among the Loko in Freetown, especially among the Loko Pentecostals who in 1985 became the Loko Baptists.

[41] On the adaptability of indigenous religion in the present environment of change see, Terrance O. Ranger, "The Churches, the National State, and African Religion" in ***Christianity in Independent Africa***, eds. E. W. Fashole-Luke, *et al.*, (London: Rex Collings, 1978), pp.479-502.
For an in depth treatment of the African Christian's identity crisis see, Bediako, ***ibid.*** Also Kwame Bediako, "Biblical Christologies in the Context of African Traditional Religions" in ***Sharing Jesus in The Two Thirds World***, eds. V. Samuel and C. Sugden, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983-**b**), pp.81-121; ***Theology and Identity: the Impact of Culture on Christian Thought in the Second Century and Modern Africa***, (Oxford: Regnum, 1991).

[42] Spiritual churches refer to those churches which emphasise the Holy Spirit and his manifestations and operations in the local church. They differ in particular from the Pentecostal-evangelical churches in that they would, in practice although not in doctrinal statement, generally elevate spiritual operations such as prophetic utterances, visions and dreams, above the Scriptural revelation, as the ultimate authority over faith and conduct. While Turner found the term causing confusion in the Nigerian context - calling the Spiritual churches Pentecostal is even more confusing - and Dickson maintains it is "going out of use" in Ghana, it is essential to use it in Sierra Leone so as to distinguish this movement from the Pentecostal-evangelicals. Kwesi A. Dickson, ***Theology in Africa***, (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1984), p.9.

[43] John S. Mbiti, ***Concepts of God in Africa***, (London: SPCK, 1970), p.219.

[44] Investigating Ashanti religion in the early twentieth century, Rattray discovered the existence of a cult of Onyame, the Supreme Deity of the Akan, with its shrines, priesthood and sacrifices. R. S. Rattray, ***Ashanti***, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1923), p.219. Danquah takes issue with Rattray on points of origin and etymology, but confirms that the Supreme Deity is worshipped by the Akan and is of major religious significance. In fact he calls all else besides the worship of the Supreme Deity "superstition" and denounces fetishism as a superstitious practice that should be abolished. Danquah is critical of the notion that Onyame is a "sky god" and translates Onyame as "the one who satisfies". His treatment of the subject is highly speculative as he seeks parallels with Egyptian, Hebrew and Christian religious conceptions. See, J. B. Danquah, ***The Akan Doctrine of God***,

(London: Lutterworth Press, 1944). The cult of Onyame has declined considerably since Rattray wrote and is not much in evidence today. Parrinder notes the existence of a cult of their Supreme Deity, Mawu, among the Ewe, but acknowledged that the cult was not general and that by 1950 many Ewe were ignorant of the existence of such a cult. Geoffrey Parrinder, "Theistic Beliefs of the Yoruba and Ewe People of West Africa" in ***African Ideas of God: a Symposium***, ed. Edwin W. Smith, (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1950), p.235.

It is important to note that the decline and disappearance of a Supreme Deity cult does not mean a diminution of the belief in a Supreme Deity. Parrinder writes, "Even though many of the household forked branches are no longer to be seen and old temples have crumbled away ... the faith in the old Supreme Being is preserved in the God of the new religion." Parrinder, (***1961***), p.15.

Adubofuor observes that although in Ghana there has been a decline in the cult of Onyame, belief in Onyame has been enlarged and expanded due to the "extensive and intensive Christian missionary activity in Akan society." Samuel Brefo Adubofuor, ***Akan Cosmology and Akan Christianity in Contemporary Ghana***, (M.Th. thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1987), p.74.

[45] Robert T. Parsons, "Religion in Kono Village Life" in ***SLBR***, 1(2), December 1959, pp.40-41. For the role and functions the Bengene priests see, Parsons, (***1964***), pp. 71-75.

[46] On the *Mwerri* cult among the Shona of East Africa, and the reasons for its decline see, M. L. Daneel, ***Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches - Vol.1: Background and Rise of the Major Movements***, (The Hague: Moulton and Co., 1971).

[47] Most Mende believe the name *Ngewoh* derives from an elision of the words *ngele* (sky) and *woh* (long ago). This gives the interpretation "The Old One of the Sky", or "The One who went to the Sky Long Ago." "The Ancient Sky" would not be accepted today since the Supreme Creator Deity although associated with the sky is not to be identified with it. However, Cabbage, who lists six possible etymologies, commends this one as having "substantial credibility".

[48] E. Bolaji Idowu, "God" in ***Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs***, eds. K. Dickson & P. Ellingworth, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1969), p.21.

[49] Little, (***1967***), p.227.

[50] Gittins, ***ibid.***, p.47: W. T. Harris, "The Idea of God among the Mende" in ***African Ideas of God: a Symposium***, ed. Edwin W.Smith, (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1950), p.280.

[51] Sawyerr, (***1970***), p.101.

[52] Mbiti, (***1969-a***), p.15.

[53] ***Ibid.***, p.98.

[54] ***Ibid.***, p.5.

[55] Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, pp.62-66. For a criticism of Sawyerr's view of the inaccessibility of the Mende chief see, Gittins, ***ibid.***, pp.48-49.

Harry Alphonse Ebunolorun Sawyerr was born on 16th October, 1909 in Freetown. His father, an Anglican catechist, was transferred to Pujehun District. Sawyerr started attending the CMS school in Bomu village in 1914. Later he attended the Prince of Wales School in Freetown. He entered the Christian Institution at Cline Town in 1929. A relentless academic and High Churchman, he was awarded the MBE in 1954. He was appointed Vice-Principle of Fourah Bay College in 1956. In 1963 he was awarded the CBE, and from 1968-74 he was Principle of FBC. Canon Sawyerr died in the Connaught Hospital on 22nd August, 1986, aged 77.

[56] Elizabeth Hirst, "Some Religious Practices of the Lokos of Kalangba" in ***Ghana Bulletin of Theology***, 1(5), December 1958, p.4. The Loko are believed to have been an offshoot from the main Mende group.

[57] A. K. Turay, "Temne Supernatural Terminology", ***SLBR***, 9(2), December 1967, p.50.

[58] Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.8.

[59] Turay, ***ibid.***, pp.50-51.

[60] On the proposition that state-formation in Mendeland is a relatively recent phenomenon

see, Arthur Abraham, "Some Suggestions on the Origins of Mende Chiefdoms" in ***Sierra Leone Studies***, 25, July 1969, p.35.

[61] Walter Eichrodt, ***Theology of the Old Testament - Vol. 1***, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1961). For his comparison of pagan and Israelite revelation and the superior character of Israel's revelation and knowledge of God see, ***ibid.***, pp.36-45.

[62] George W. Anderson, ***The History and Religion of Israel***, (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p.20.

[63] T. C. Vriezen, ***The Religion of Ancient Israel***, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1967), p.27.

[64] Finnegan, (***1964***), pp.13-14.

[65] Harris and Sawyerr see the structure as pyramidal with *Ngewoh* at the vortex, "and the ancestral spirits next to Him, indeed, sometimes almost merging into Him." Then comes man, animals and at the base of the triangle trees and stones. Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.2. Also Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, pp.13-14.

Cabbage offers a triadic arrangement of Supreme Being, spirits and medicine. For the wider African scene Mbiti gives a structure of five categories: (1) God as the ultimate explanation of the genesis and sustenance of both man and all things: (2) Spirits being made up of super-human beings and the spirits of men who died a long time ago: (3) Man including human beings who are alive, and those about to be born: (4) Animals and plants, or the remainder of biological life: (5) Phenomena and objects without biological life. Mbiti adds, "In addition to the five categories, there seems to be a force, power or energy permeating the whole universe." Mbiti, ***ibid.***, pp. 15-16.

[66] Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.21.

[67] Bediako, (***1983-a***), p.426. Concerning Idowu, Bediako comments:

What Idowu has done is to draw out the full implications of the intuition which had motivated his former teacher and mentor, Geoffrey Parrinder, to the effect that the way African societies apprehend spiritual realities possesses a coherence and a consistency which argued for its recognition as a religious tradition alongside the other so-called world religions. Bediako, ***ibid.***, p.353.

[68] Fatu Yaya Kargbo, Intermediate year B.A. student at Fourah Bay College, Freetown. Class essay, presented on 16th.January 1989.

[69] Danquah, ***ibid.***, p.27.

[70] Sawyerr, (***1970***), p.10.

[71] ***Ibid.***, pp.68-69.

[72] ***Ibid.***, p.68.

[73] ***Ibid.***, p.69. Stimulated by Eva Meyerowitz's work on the Akan, and her contention that *Onyame* was a female lunar divinity, Sawyerr postulates a pilgrimage wandering period for the Mende and seeks to discover whether *Ngewoh* was a lunar deity. See, Eva Meyerowitz, ***The Akan of Ghana***, (London: Faber & Faber, 1958).

[74] Sawyerr, ***ibid.***

[75] Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, pp.29-30.

[76] For a good general discussion of the nature of myth with particular reference to the myths of the Mende people, see Edward W. Fashole-Luke, "The Theme of Myths: Their Status and Right Appraisal in West African Religion" in ***SLBR***, 7(2), December, 1965, pp. 33-41. Myths are not fixed unchanging memories passed down from time immemorial, as suggested by Sundkler who wrote that African myths, "constitute an `original revelation' which is re-enacted in annually recurrent festivals, in a rhythm which forms the cosmic framework of space and time." Bengt Sundkler, ***The Christian Ministry in Africa***, (London: S.C.M. Press, 1960), p.281.

G. S. Kirk claims that the problem of mythic origins has, in the past, seriously hindered the study of the nature of religion, and maintains, "it is certain that how a myth originates in a non-literate culture can never be determined, and doubtful if, in any case, all myths originate in the same manner." G. S. Kirk, ***Myth: its Meaning and Function in Ancient and Other Cultures***, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p.280. On the vexed question of myth origins see, ***ibid.***, pp.280-285. For a good treatment of myth in the Old Testament see,

Benedict Otzen, ***Myths in the Old Testament***, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1980). On myth and primal cultures see, H. Frankfort, ***Before Philosophy: the Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man, an Essay on Speculative Thought in the Ancient Near East***, (Harmondsworth: Pelican Books, 1949): B. Malinowski, ***Myth in Primitive Psychology***, (Westport, Conn.: Negro Universities Press, 1971).
Myths indicate reflection on fundamental life issues. Unless they are fixed in writing, myths are being continually created and recreated, formed and reformed, according to present concerns and popular themes and taste in story telling. Daryll Forde in his introduction to ***African Worlds***, while dealing with the phenomenon of change in traditional communities, talks of "new mythological justifications." Daryll Forde (ed.), ***African Worlds: Studies in the Cosmological Ideas and Social Values of African Peoples***, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), p.vii.

[77] Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.6.

[78] A Mende informant remembered his father telling that when his own grandfather was "strong", the old name for God, *Leve*, was being changed to *Ngewoh*. *Leve*, he said, meant "the Highest". When the Mende seek to justify an ancient custom or practice they say "*Leve njeini*", *Leve* made it, or *Leve* sent it down. Sawyerr notes the use of *Leve* in oath swearing and curse formulae when one says, "O *Leve*, come down I wish to give you your chicken." He suggests the name is made up from *le* (take) and *ve* (chicken). Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.8. In ***God: Ancestor or Creator***, Sawyerr offers an interesting alternative etymology. He suggests *Leve* as being derivative of the word *Levui,* which means life. Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.86. Thus *Leve* would be the primo genitor, the life giver of the race, the source of its life, power, and fertility.

[79] ***Ibid.***, p.9.

[80] Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.8-9.

[81] ***Ibid.***

[82] Parsons, ***ibid.***, p.110.

[83] Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.9.

[84] Parsons, ***ibid.***, pp.166-167.

[85] Cabbage notes, chapter 5, p.9. Cabbage quotes from Brown, ***The Indigenous Mende Church***. p.6.

[86] Sawyerr, (***1970***), p.81.

[87] Helmer Ringgren, ***Religions of the Ancient Near East***, (London: SPCK, 1973), pp.140-141, 158: Walter Eichrodt, ***Theology of the Old Testament - Vol. 1***, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1961), pp.116-117: John C. L. Gibson, ***Canaanite Myths and Legends***, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., 1977), p.4. While Gibson accepts that the Asherahs of the Old Testament are generally accepted by Old Testament schollars as sacred poles and trees, reflecting the Athirat, Mother Goddess fertility cult, he himself favours Lipinski's opinion that the Asherahs are holy places or shrines, and is somewhat reticent about associating them with Athirat of the Ugarit texts. See E. Lipinski, "The Goddess Athirat in Ancient Arabia, in Babylon and in Ugarit", in ***Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica***, 3, 1972, pp.101-119: R. Patai, "The Goddess Asherah", in ***Journal of Near Eastern Studies***, 24(1965), pp.37-52.

[88] Mbiti, (***1970***), p.144. For a description of old rituals involving Asaase Yaa see, Rattray, ***ibid.***, pp.214ff., and Edwin W. Smith, ***The Secret of the African***, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1929), pp.128-129. According to Adubofuor, there was no organised cult of *Asaasa Yaa* as there was of *Onyame*. However food offerings were thrown onto the ground to the earth spirit, and on the special agricultural fertility rituals, mashed yam and plantain along with fowl were offered. Before a grave was dug permission was sought from *Asaasa Yaa* and libations poured. Adubofuor, ***ibid.***, p.20. Traditionally Thursday was the special day of the earth goddess and there was no tilling of the soil on that day. This is still observed in some rural communities, in reverence to *Asaasa Yaa*, and has been the cause of conflict between Christians and the local religious and political authorities. ***Ibid.***, pp.74-75.

[89] Cabbage, ***ibid.***, p.1.

[90] Harry Sawyerr, "Ngewoh and Ngawu: an Essay in Detection of the Origins of the Mende

Concept of God"", ***SLBR***, 9(2), December 1967, p.70: Sawyerr, (***1970***), p.73: Cabbage, ***ibid.***, p.27.

[91]

[92] Parsons, ***ibid.***, pp.34-35. For more information on sex taboos and prohibitions among the Kono see, ***ibid.***, pp.34-36. Also see, Robert T. Parsons, "Kono Religion and Marriage and Procreation", in ***SLBR***, 2(1), June 1960, pp.11-17. For the Kuranko see, Jackson, ***ibid.***, pp.83-84. For the Mende see, Little, ***ibid.***, pp.145-147.
These taboos are basically concerned with the following areas. Firstly, there should be no intercourse during a woman's menstruation period as this is a time when power is flowing out of the woman in association with the blood, and a breech of this taboo will result in barrenness or leprosy. Secondly, intercourse should not occur in the bush because of the danger of polluting Mother Earth. A child born this way could have an evil spirit or be deformed. Thirdly, sexual relations with close relatives, especially consanguines, is normally prohibited, and various penalties and redemption prices are imposed for infringements of the rules. Fourthly, adultery is a criminal offence, penalties varying with the particular circumstances of the case. Much of the Chiefdom court proceedings is taken up with this "woman palavah". Fifthly, a man should not have intercourse with a girl unless proper arrangements are made with the girl's family. Sixthly, there must be no sexual relationships before initiation into the secret societies, this applies especially to girls.

[93] Malcolm McVeigh, ***God in Africa: Conceptions of God in African Traditional Religion and Christianity***, (Cape Cod: Claude Stark, 1974), pp.87-89. McVeigh writes concerning East Africa, but according to Mende informant Andrew Kalon of SU Sierra Leone, a similar situation exists in Sierra Leone. See also Pearce Gervis, ***Sierra Leone Story***, (London: Cassell & Co. Ltd., 1952).

[94] Edward W. Fashole-Luke, "Christianity and Islam in Freetown", ***SLBR***, 9(1), June 1967, p.14.

[95] ***Ibid.***

[96] ***Ibid.*** The Church, according to Professor Fashole-Luke, is apparently powerless to deal with this problem, a problem which he properly points out is not confined to Freetown, or Africa, but is world-wide, "The problem of sexual morality in urban areas is a world-wide one and even the Church in the Western World is yet to produce an adequate answer to this vast problem." ***Ibid.***

[97] E. Bolaji Idowu, ***Towards an Indigenous Church***, (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p.24.

[98] Harry Sawyerr, ***Creative Evangelism: Towards a New Christian Encounter with Africa***, (London: Lutterworth Press,1968), pp.80, 83: John Mbiti, ***Journal of Religion in Africa***, 2, (***1969-b***).

[99] Cabbage, ***ibid.***, p.31.

[100] Jackson, 1977, pp.34-41.

[101] ***Ibid.***, p.37.

[102] Cabbage, ***ibid.***, pp.10-13: Sawyerr, (***1970***), p.67.

[103] Cabbage, ***ibid.***, pp.11-12.

[104] Sawyerr, (***1968***), p.15.

[105] Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.11: Sawyerr, ***ibid.***

[106] Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.12. Harris and Sawyerr take issue with Dietrich Westermann who wrote in ***The African Today and Tomorrow***, "Belief in God is a philosophy rather than a living faith. He is a God who is neither loved nor feared." Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.12.

[107] For the spatial distinctions that are made by the Kuranko between the village and the bush, and ancestor spirits and bush spirits, see Jackson, ***ibid.***, pp.34-41.

[108] Mbiti, (***1969-a***), p.27.

[109] Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.94.

[110] See, Myer Fortes, "Some Reflections on Ancestor Worship in Africa" in ***African Systems of Thought***, eds. M. Fortes & G. Dieterlan, (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp.122-42: Peter Beyerhaus, "The Christian Approach to Ancestor Worship" in

Ministry, 6(4), 1966, pp.137-45: Hans Haselbarth, "The place of the Ancestors in a Christian Theology for Africa" in ***Ministry***, 7(4), 1967, pp.170-77: Aylward Shorter, "Conflicting Attitudes to Ancestor Veneration" in ***Afer***, 11(1), 1969, pp.27-37: Peter K. Sarpong, "A Theology of the Ancestors" in ***Insight and Opinion***, 6(2), 1970, pp.1-9: M. L. Daneel, "The Christian Gospel and the Ancestral Cult" in ***Missionalia***, 1(2), August 1973, pp.46-73. For a discussion on ancestor worship in the Sierra Leone and Freetown context see Harry Sawyerr, "Ancestor Worship - the Mechanics" in ***SLBR***, 6(2), December 1964, pp.25-33; "Ancestor Worship II - the Rationale" in ***SLBR***, 8(2), December 1966, pp.33-39. Sawyerr compares Mende and Krio practices in communicating with the ancestors.

111 Sawyerr, (***1966***), pp.33-39: Edward W. Fashole-Luke, "The Ancestors: Worship or Veneration - Introduction" in ***SLBR***, NS(1), December 1980, pp.37-50; "Ancestor Veneration and the Communion of Saints" in ***New Testament Christianity for Africa and the World***, E. Fashole-Luke and M. E. Glasswell (eds.), (London: SPCK, 1974), pp.209-21.

112 Fashole-Luke, (***1980***), p.45.

113 Cabbage, ***ibid.***, chapter 6, pp.7-8.

114 Harry Sawyerr, "Ancestor Worship II - its Rationale" in ***SLBR***, 8(2), December 1966, p.39.

115 Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.16.

116 A. K. Turay, "Temne Supernatural Terminology" in ***SLBR***, 9(2), December 1967, pp.51-52.

117 For a treatment of the Temne *korfi* see, ***ibid.***, pp.50-55.

118 Harry Sawyerr, "Sacrifice" in ***Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs***, eds. Dickson and Ellingworth, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1969), p.68; "Graveside Libations in and near Freetown" in ***SLBR***, 7(2), December 1965, pp.48-55; "More Graveside Libations in and round Freetown" in ***SLBR***, 8(2), December 1966, pp.57-59; "Two Short Libations" in ***SLBR***, 9(1), June 1967, pp.34-37; "A Sunday Graveside Libation in Freetown after a Bereavement"in ***SLBR***, 9(2), December 1967, pp.41-49.

119 Pobee, ***ibid.***, p.66.

120 Sawyerr, (***1968***), pp.111, 95. While advocating the incorporation of the ancestors into the Eucharist so that they can make intercession for their descendents and experience the love of God and his salvation, Sawerr asserts:

This belief in their existence is based primarily on dreams and not on any empirical or theological grounds. (We may here observe that dreams, so far as we can tell, are purely subconscious commentaries on the dreamers.) Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.94.

121 Edward W. Fashole-Luke, (**1967**), 9(1), June 1967, pp.11-12.

122 Harry Sawyerr, (***1964***), p.25.

123 Gittins, ***ibid.***, p.62.

124 ***Ibid.***

125 ***Ibid.***

126 Turay, ***ibid.***, p.52.

127 Little seems to have been unaware of the distinction between the *kekeni* and the *ndebla*, saying, "Usually the ancestors do not consist of individuals beyond two generations previous to the eldest members of the present family." Little, ***ibid.***, p.219.

128 For a description of how the Yoruba understand the location of the hereafter and the ancestors see, Awolalu, ***ibid.***, pp.31-32.

129 ***Ibid.***, p.31.

130 Gittins, ***ibid.***, p.57.

131 Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, pp.32-33.

132 ***Ibid.***, p.33.

133 Abdul Karim Ghazali, "Sierra Leone Muslims and Sacrificial Rituals" in ***SLBR***, 2(1), June 1960, p.28.

134 Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.27.

135 ***Ibid.***, pp.31-32.

136 For a gruesome eve-witness account of how the Mende in the 1920s dealt with deformed

babies see, Gittins, ***ibid.***, p.94-97.

[137] Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.28.

[138] ***Ibid.***

[139] Harry Sawyerr, "Two Short Libations" in ***SLBR***, 9(1), June 1967, p.34.
John Pobee notes that in Ghana:
Christians have been notorious for attacking the practice of libation. And yet once when I was visiting a Methodist clergyman who had been denouncing libation, I observed him before every drink pour some of it to the ground. After two weeks the clergyman was confronted with the question, "Why do you always pour some of your drink to the ground befor you take a drink?" He quickly came back at me: "Because a fly was getting into the glass." Pobee, ***ibid.***, p.45.

[140] Henry M. Fefegulah, ***Beliefs Customs and Practices among the Temnes***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1983, p.13.

[141] Ref. pp.21-22 above. See Jackson, ***ibid.***, pp.34-41.

[142] Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, pp.44-53: Little, ***ibid.***, 223-7.

[143] Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.44.

[144] Gittins, ***ibid.***, p.76.

[145] Little, ***ibid.***, p.222.

[146] For description and details of the *nomoli* see, Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.71.

[147] Little, ***ibid.***, pp.221-2.

[148] Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.52.

[149] Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, pp.39-44.

[150] ***Ibid.***, p.39.

[151] On Mende witchcraft see, Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, pp.39-44, 73-77: Gittins, ***ibid.***, pp.158-66. For a more in-depth studies of the phenomenon see, E. E. Evans-Pritchard, ***Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande***, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, abridged version, 1976). See also, Idowu, (***1973***), pp.175-8: Parrinder, (***1953***), pp.53-56.

[152] Ref. p.34 above.

[153] Gittins, ***ibid.***, p.90.

[154] ***Ibid.***, p.91.

[155] According to Margaret Field, the majority of witches are rural women who have reached cracking point for various reasons including vitamin deficiency, pregnancy stresses, depression, malaria, anaemia, and an inability to adjust to changing life roles. See, ***Search for Security: an Ethno-Psychiatric Study of Rural Ghana***, (London: Faber & Faber, 1960): ***Religion and Medicine of the Ga People***, (London: Oxford University Press, 1937).

[156] Mabel O. Kamara, ***Witchcraft, Magic and Sorcery among the Loko***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1984, p.19.

[157] Herbert Bucher in dealing with the Shona points out that some will receive the witch spirit when they become aware that it is one, because of their fear of the fear power and destructive power they can employ against rivals and enemies. Also, they are attracted to the aura of fear and respect that suspicion of being a witch generates. Others seek to get rid of the attentions of the witch spirit by going to a diviner or witch-doctor who may transfer the spirit to an animal which is then driven out into the wild. Still others go to the prophet-healers of the Spiritual churches to have the spirit exorcised when they become aware that it is a witch spirit. Some are encouraged by other witches in their family to become a member of a covern. See, Herbert Bucher, ***Spirits and Power: an Analysis of Shona Cosmology***, (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp.106-8.

[158] Saidu D. Bangura, ***Witchcraft, Magic and Sorcery in Sierra Leone and their Implications***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1986, p.5.

[159] Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.76.

160 ***Ibid.***, p.75.
161 UNICEF, ***Report on the State of the World's Children***, 1986.
162 Finnegan, ***ibid.***, p.17.
163 Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.80.
164 Pobee, ***ibid.***, p.48.
Rosiland Hackett points out that in Nigeria churches which resist witchcraft will be popular. The British Government's laws against witch ordeals were not popular as the people generally perceived these ordeals as being very effective. The Government's "protection" of witches in this way gave rise to anxiety which was met by the emergence of many cults whose main aim was to provide protection against witchcraft and evil spirits. See, Rosiland I. J. Hackett (ed.),***New Religious Movements in Nigeria***, (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987), pp.23-25.
165 John V. Taylor, ***The Primal Vision: Christian Presence amid African Religion***, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1963), p.182.
166 Gittins, ***ibid.***, pp.165, 168.
167 I. B. Amara, "Possession - its Nature and Some Modes" in ***SLBR***, 6(2), December 1964, p.8.
168 Taylor, ***ibid.***, p.184.
169 ***The Vision***, 3rd April 1990.
170 ***The National***, 12th December 1991. Rokupa Cemetry was aquired cheaply by the present living residents "through dubious businessmen". The Freetown City Council has instituted a number of court actions to recover the land, but to no avail. Rokupa Cemetry still remains the official burial site for paupers and prisoners.
171 Conversation held with Rev. Ibrahim Sankoh-Cole at FBC, Freetown, on 1/11/91.
172 I. B. Amara, "Possession - its Nature and Some Modes" in ***SLBR***, 6(2), December 1964, pp.1-12.
173 ***Ibid.***, p.6.
174 ***Ibid.***, p.11.
175 For a description of spirit possession as experienced and narrated by a spirit medium in Kenya see, Richard J. Gehman, ***African Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective***, (Kijabe, Kenya: Kesho Publications, 1989), p.158:
During the time of possession, one loses his own being, his senses are gone, he is transformed physically and psychologically and becomes simply the tool of the spirit in him. Without his realisation he acts and speaks according to its wishes.... When a person is a medium, you can see him breathing very hard, his arm muscles stiffen considerably and he makes a beastly sound. Then the spirit shouts through him, giving out its message or judgment.
176 For detailed treatments of the origins and operations of the various Mende secret societies see, Little, ***ibid.***, pp.226-7, 240-53: Gittins, ***ibid.***, pp.137-55.
177 Conversation held with Mrs. Sonya Spenser, lecturer in Education at Njala University, at K22, FBC, Freetown, on 4/4/90.
178 Gittens, ***ibid.***, p.75: Harry Sawyerr, "Traditional Sacrificial Rituals and Christian Worship" in ***SLBR***, 2(1), June 1960, p18.
179 Little, ***ibid.***, p.184-5.
180 Harry Sawyerr, "The Dogma of Super-Size - 1" in ***SLBR***, 4(2), December 1962, pp.42.
181 On the Nandi initiation rites, Mbiti claims, "The sex organ is the symbol of life and cutting it is like unlocking the issue of life, so that thereafter there may be an unchecked flow of life". Mbiti, ***ibid.***, p.131.
182 Isata Stephens, ***The Sande Society among the Mende of Sierra Leone***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Theology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1988, p.6.
183 See, Olayinka Koso-Thomas, ***The Circumcision of Women: a Strategy for Eradication***, (London: Zed, 1987).
184 Mbiti points out that circumcision introduces young people into the past through the blood

that enters the ground which is associated with the "living dead". They are also introduced into the future by being prepared for sex, procreation, marriage and family life. He notes that among the Akamba the male and female circumcisers perform ritual sex after the operations, as do the parents of the candidates. Mbiti, ***ibid.***, pp.121-4.

185 Gittins, ***ibid.***, pp.153-3.

186 Koso-Thomas, ***ibid.***, p.19.

187 Stephens, ***ibid.***, p.2.

188 ***Ibid.***, p.1.

189 ***Ibid.***, p.23.

190 ***Ibid.***

191 Little, ***ibid.***, p.228.

192 ***Ibid.***, p.227.

193 For conflicting opinions as to the social benefits resulting from the activities of diviners and medicine men see, Mbiti, ***ibid.***, pp.166-71, whose sees them as "the greatest friends of African society", and Byang H. Kato, ***Theological Pitfalls in Africa***, (Kisumu: Evangel Publishing House, 1975), pp.71-72, who claims that "many if not most are a menace to the society". Taylor, ***ibid.***, pp.136-43, gives a general and uncritical account of the diviner medium's activities.

194 Mbiti, ***ibid.***, p.171. For Mbiti's treatment of diviners see, ***ibid.***, pp.171-8.

195 Vernon R. Dorjahn, "Some Aspects of Temne Divination" in ***SLBR***, 4(1), June 1962, pp.1-2.

196 For a good general treatment of divination in West Africa, concentrating on the Nigerian situation and looking at the Ifa system of the Yoruba see, Parrinder, (***1961***), pp.137-55. On the Ifa oracle cult see, Parrinder, (***1953***), pp.31-36. Among the Yoruba the generic title for a diviner is *babalowo*, "the father of the cult" or "the father who is versed in the mystery". The cult is that of *Orunmila* the oracle divinity. Idowu, (***1962***), p.8.

197 Dorjahn, ***ibid.***, p.7.

198 ***Ibid.***, p.5.

199 ***Ibid.***, pp.5-6: Parsons, (***1964***), pp.19-20.

200 Dorjahn lists ten common ordeals used in the Kolifa-Bonkolenken area around 1955. Dorjahn, ***ibid.***, p.5-6.

201 Sawyerr, (***1970***), p.79.

202 Dorjahn, ***ibid.***, p.5.

203 ***Ibid.***, p.6.

204 For Limba swears see, Finnegan, ***ibid.*** For Mende swears see, Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, pp.59-68; Isaac Ndanema, "The Rationale of Mende 'Swears'" in ***Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion***, 6(2), December, 1964, pp.21-25.

205 Rosalind Shaw, ***Temne Divination: the Management of Secrecy and Revelation***, (PhD diss., University of London, 1982), p.78.

206 Finnegan, ***ibid.***, p.11.

207 Parsons, ***ibid.***, p.23.

208 Conversation held with Intermediate Year Arts student Fatu Kargbo, at Fourah Bay College, Freetown, on 10/6/89.

209 Ref. pp.12, 25 above. Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, pp.60-61.

210 Finnegan, ***ibid.***, pp.12-13.

211 Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.61.

212 ***Ibid.***, p.63.

213 Finnegan, ***ibid.***, pp.23-24.

214 Little, ***ibid.***, p.58.

215 For a case-study, based on personal observation, of a Mende witch-finder operating see, Gittins, ***ibid.***, pp.183-202. This incident graphically illustrates the horror involved in witch hunts and the manipulation and exploitation of the witch-finders.

216 On Muslim diviners see, Parrinder, (***1953***), pp.80-82.

217 Conversation held with Rev. Ibrahim Sankoh-Cole, at Fourah Bay College, Freetown, on

14/11/91.

218 Peter Jon Mac-Briama, ***The Role of Diviners among the Mende***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1983, pp.12,15.

219 Information obtained from Prof. Andrew F. Walls during a visit to Fourah Bay College on 30/6/92.

220 Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.85.

221 Moses M. Gbettu, ***The Traditional Healer in a Changing Society***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1988, p.2.

222 Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, p.28.

223 ***Ibid.***, p.85.

224 Idowu, (***1973***), pp.176-7.

225 H. L. Mclure, "Religion and Disease in Sierra Leone" in ***SLBR***, 4(1), June 1962, p.33.

226 See, Little, ***ibid.***, pp.230-4: Gittins, ***ibid.***, pp.123-34: Harris and Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, pp.77-79.

227 Little, ***ibid.***, p.234.

228 ***We Yone***, 20/1/90, p.8.

229 On Marduk instituting the laws of ancient Babylon, see B. W. Anderson, ***Creation in the Old Testament***, (London: SPCK, 1984), pp104-105.

230 Marion Kislson, ***The Royal Antelope and Spider: West African Mende Tales***, (Cambridge, Mass.: The Press of the Language Institute, 1976).

231 Jackson, ***ibid.***, p.223.

232 Parsons, ***ibid.***, p.57.

233 ***Ibid.***, p.225. For treatment of Kuranko children's associations see, ***ibid.***, pp.223-25.

234 Walls, (***1987***), p.262.

235 ***Ibid.***, p.264.

236 Little, ***ibid.***, pp.20-21.

237 ***Ibid.***, chapter 7, "The Position of Women", pp.118-37.

238 Cabbage, ***ibid.***, chapter 5, p.1.

239 Gittins, ***ibid.***, p,39.

240 Desmond Shekou Koroma, ***The Belief in Witchcraft, Magic and Sorcery, and its Effects on the People of Kandu Leppima Chiefdom***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Science (Economics), 1986, p.22.

241 Augustin Sengulay Conteh, ***Belief Systems among the Limba of the Safroko Limba Chiefdom***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1987, pp.20-21.

CHAPTER TWO

LAYING THE CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS: A SURVEY OF NOVA SCOTIAN, RECAPTIVE AND KRIO CHRISTIANITY

Nova Scotian, Recaptive and Krio Christianity will now be surveyed in order to understand the cultural, social and spiritual matrix from which the Pentecostal-evangelicals and the Spirituals issued.[1] The intention is to consider the impact of Evangelical Christianity on each group, observe how the Gospel was received, and examine the differing styles of Freetown Christianity that evolved out of each group's encounter with several brands of Evangelical Christianity. The interaction of the Gospel with West African personality, culture, and the indigenous religious inheritance will be looked at closely. The existential identity crisis the Krio experienced as a result of their adopting exported British evangelicalism will then be examined in order to make comparisons with the later cultural and identity impact of Pentecostalism, imported American and African.

The origins and development of the Krio community in Freetown, the rise of Creoledom and the fluctuating fortunes of this multifaceted yet strikingly Victorian, African and Christian society, are well documented by Fyfe, Walker, Peterson and Wyse, from the historical angle.[2] Banton and Porter have written from the sociological perspective, Spitzer from the socio-political angle, and Marcus Jones has covered the legal and constitutional development.[3] Professor Walls has contributed various articles from the perspective of the church historian.[4] The works of Sibthorpe and T. S. Johnson, themselves Krio, are invaluable for their insights into the evolution of Krio society and the development of the Anglican Church of Sierra Leone.[5] Grant's doctoral work on Krio Christianity up to 1861 has recently become available.[6] The focus here will be particularly upon the aspects of manifestations of spiritual power, African religious responses, the encounter with eighteenth

and nineteenth century European evangelicalism and its spiritual consequences, and independency and dependency. The present investigations will be most appropriately conducted within an historical framework, following the development of Creoledom from its origins into its classical and Victorian form at the close of the nineteenth century, and then continuing on to the formation of the independent state of Sierra Leone in 1961. In the post-World War Two period the focus is on the Spiritual and Pentecostal-evangelical churches.

With the publication of Sundkler's ***Bantu Prophets in South Africa*** in 1948, a tremendous interest in the phenomenon described as African Independent or African Indigenous Churches has been generated.[7] The origins of this movement have been variously traced to white racism in South Africa, colonial politics in the Congo, the 1918 influenza epidemic in West Africa, and a resurgence of suppressed African spirituality throughout the continent. The William Wade Harris and Garrick Braide movements clearly demonstrate the dynamic and irrepressible nature of African spirituality and the spontaneous response of many to the Gospel when it is incarnated in the culture and communicated in the vernacular. Professor Walls has drawn attention to the significance of the disembarkation at St. George's Bay, Sierra Leone, on 7th March 1792, from fifteen sips, of 1,131 Nova Scotian Black Loyalists.[8] They came ashore singing the Isaac Watts hymn, "Awake and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb". Like the children of Israel they were coming out of bondage in Egypt, crossing the Red Sea and returning home to their own Promised Land as free, independent Christians.

There is something symbolic in the fact that the first church in tropical Africa in modern times was not a missionary creation at all. It arrived ready made, a body of people of African birth or descent who had come to faith in Christ as plantation slaves or as soldiers in the British army during the American War of Independence, or as farmers or squatters in Nova Scotia after it.... They brought their own preachers with them, and their churches had been functioning for nearly twenty years in Sierra Leone when the first missionary arrived.[9]

The Nova Scotian Black Loyalists, according to Walls, inaugurated, "The first modern Church in tropical Africa with a continuous history to the present day".[10]

The Nova Scotians absorbed a small beleaguered settlement of Africans which had been

established in 1787 by the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor - a group of British philanthropists, abolitionists and evangelical Christians headed by the abolitionist Granville Sharp - and which was on the point of collapse. The settlement had been founded in response to the distress evangelical Christians in Britain felt over the slave trade and the condition of the destitute Black Poor in London. The Black Poor were ex-slaves, black Loyalists who had served in the British army and navy during the American War of Independence, but had been left to fend for themselves on the streets of London following the defeat of the British forces in 1782. Some were also escaped slaves belonging to English gentlemen.[11] The Committee decided to transport the Black Poor to West Africa and there to establish a model black society, initially administered by the Committee and its agents, which would prosper commercially, be instrumental in the elimination of the slave trade, and become a beacon of Western civilisation and Christianity that would light up the Dark Continent. Four hundred and eleven persons, the great majority being black, set sail from Plymouth on 8th April 1787.[12] Thirty-four died at sea and 377 arrived in Sierra Leone. They disembarked on 14th May 1787 to establish Granville Town, named after the inspiration behind the venture, Granville Sharp. Among the white group was a Society for the Propagation of the Gospel chaplain, Rev. Patrick Frazer, a Scottish Presbyterian. In the desperate conditions encountered, numbers decline to one hundred and thirty by the end of the first year. Frazer, who held his services under a large tree, sick and discouraged by the colonists' lack of interest, sought refuge among the slave-traders on Bunce Island and returned to England in March 1788.[13] In 1790, to keep the colony from extinction, Granville Sharp formed the St. George's Bay Company. The Company was incorporated by Parliament on 30th May 1791 and renamed the Sierra Leone Company. According to Thomas Clarkson, a founding-member, its goals were "the abolition of the slave trade, the civilization of Africa and the introduction of the Gospel there."[14] They took over a practically deserted colony. However, it was really the arrival of the Nova Scotians in March 1792 that securely established the colony.

NOVA SCOTIAN BLACK LOYALIST CHRISTIANITY

Not all Black Loyalists journeyed to Sierra Leone seeking freedom of worship. Most had other interests, such as ownership of land and hope for a better economic future. Yet, as a group, the Nova Scotians were distinguished, above all else, by their Christian commitment and devotion. The number of black pilgrims with a meaningful church association was large. The Nova Scotian "Settlers" had, from the beginning their own mainly Christian political leadership. The Settlers were organised under denominational labels of convenience such as Methodists, Baptists, and Countess of Huntingdon Connection. Whatever fortuitous connections there may have been in the past with the parent bodies, on arrival in Sierra Leone the black congregations were totally free from denominational control and jurisdiction. The two Nova Scotian leaders who had the closest connections with white churches were John Marrant of the Countess of Huntingdon Connection and David George the leader of the Baptist congregation. Marrant, however, did not emigrate to Sierra Leone. He died in England in April 1791. His successor, Cato Perkins, had no contact with the parent body until the summer of 1793, and until then they were seemingly unaware of the migration of the Nova Scotian Huntingdonians to Sierra Leone. David George who was ordained by the Silver Bluff Baptists, an autonomous black Baptist plantation congregation, had no significant contact with any American Baptists following his flight to Nova Scotia. In Freetown, John Clarkson, the chaplain, and the Sierra Leone Company, intended to establish Anglicanism as the most appropriate and politically helpful form of Christian worship for the Settlers. Clarkson often took charge of the compulsory Sunday morning communal service - conducted with Anglican liturgy - and used it to address the Settlers and inform them of Company business, as well as encouraging Anglican worship. Their attempts at establishing Anglicanism were spectacularly unsuccessful, and brought into sharp focus the Settlers' passionate desire for ecclesiastical independency and their hostility towards any hint of a white take over of their congregations.

A Question of African Identity

It can be argued that the Nova Scotian Settlers did not initiate a genuine African Independent Church because they were not indigenes, but assimilated Africans, Afro-American expatriates, detribalised foreigners. Lamin Sanneh, discussing the Christian Krio who freely absorbed large doses of British culture, dismisses the popular accusation that they were assimilated Africans, westernised beyond their "racial nature", with the comment:

... "assimilation" usually amounted to no more than a stammering acquaintance with Western civilization, not to be compared to the infinite accumulation of millennia of cultural influence that psychologists say constitutes the collective archetype of the race. [15]

While the majority of Nova Scotian Settlers were born and brought up in the Americas, yet they were existentially and emotionally Africans despite much of the social and cultural life-style forced upon them. Also, the slave community was constantly being re-plenished and re-nourished by recent captives from the homelands. Concerning religious experience, the Nova Scotians' spiritual concerns and responses were - despite dislocation from their ancestral roots - distinctively African in nature and character.

Debating how much of African religion and culture survived the trans-Atlantic crossing, Grant considers religious enthusiasm among black Southerners and raises the question, "Was the enthusiasm a result of their African heritage or a result of their experiences of evangelical religion in the South?"[16] She points out that Frazier and Herskovits represent two opposing schools of thought.[17] Frazier maintains that, "American slavery destroyed household gods and dissolved the bonds of sympathy and affection between men of the same blood and household".[18] Unlike Latin America, where large plantations and the different attitude of the owners to indigenous religious practices allowed much African practice to continue with minimal modification, in the American colonies deculturation began on arrival and the acculturation process progressed fairly quickly. Herskovits, on the other hand, maintains that much indigenous religious practice survived the trauma of enslavement and transportation and, "in religious practices reasonable indications of revamped survivals of African traditions

are not lacking".[19] Into the debate Grant introduces Genovese who maintains, "The power of whites, the existence of small plantations and farm units, and the early closing of the slave trade crushed much of the memory that blacks had of African religion"; and Raboteau who contends that, "African theology and African ritual did not endure to the extent that they did in Cuba, Haiti, and in Brazil. In the United States the gods of Africa died."[20]

Grant also draws Bastide into the debate. He maintains that the emotionalism and ecstatic behaviour demonstrated by Negroes in the American colonies was "borrowed wholesale from North American revivalism".[21] Grant concludes her investigations by calling for a compromise solution. While seeing social status, insecurity and oppression rather than colour as being a common denominator in revivalistic enthusiasm, she maintains that:

The African culture of the slaves was not obliterated, nor was the slate wiped clean. The social basis of African religions had been removed and the religions had disintegrated as coherent systems of belief, but their underlying world views were not destroyed and it was into their world views that Christianity was absorbed.[22]

For the Nova Scotians the ancestral gods may well have died, or at least been mortally wounded, and replaced by Christ and the Holy Spirit. However, their African spirituality is clearly seen in their general pneumatological religious disposition and their enthusiasm and emotionalism in religious practice. It is likely that the Black Loyalist Nova Scotians, sailed from Halifax, Nova Scotia, more intensely conscious of their African identity than Africans who had never been carried off into bondage in strange lands and forced to labour for an alien race. The issue of African identity and the question, who is an African, has persistently challenged the Krio. Professor Fashole-Luke comments, "....the true African, as Harry Sawyerr has shown, is a mythological term, indicative of love for the continent and commitment to an ideal."[23] With that as a tentative definition, the disembarking Nova Scotians - despite certain external appearances and cultural accretions - were "true Africans".

Up to a point, the Settlers did plant a westernised form of Christianity. There were no Indigenous African Church models for them to emulate, and their encounter with Christianity took place in very proscribed circumstances. However, the type of Western Christianity that

appealed to them, which they adopted and make their own, was the North American revival type that was congenial to the communal and pneumatological instincts of indigenous African religions. For example, they easily embraced the revivalists' doctrine of regeneration, being "born again" through a struggling to obtain full assurance of faith, because of familiarity with the traditional African practice of being initiated ritually and painfully into manhood and womanhood at puberty. The revivalists' call for a soul encounter with God in a definite spiritual experience was clearly understood in the light of spirit encounter and possession in African indigenous religions. Ample evidence exists to prove that Black Christianity in the United States was heavily Africanised. The Settler churches have as much right to be called African Independent Churches as the Ethiopian type that appeared from the 1870s onward. Professor Fashole-Luke, discussing Freetown Christianity after it had lost the revivalistic enthusiasm of the Settlers and become highly Westernised and Victorian in form, comments:

If both the leaders who decide the policy of the churches and the members of the churches are Africans, it is absurd to suggest that the Freetown churches are not native churches. Even so-called Western services have a distinctive quality of their own, which is not imported from Europe.[24]

It is claimed the Settlers' language - language being intimately associated with identity - was not African, but a dialectal form of English. While language is of fundamental importance in the matter of identity, an inner loyalty to the primary spirituality of a people is even more basic. The Settlers' language was an ingenious adaptation to their particular circumstances. They utilised European vocabulary while, organising the words into "aboriginal speech patterns" and casting them into "an African grammatical mould".[25] With the influx into Freetown of large numbers of Yoruba and Igbo from 1808 onwards, and the direct influence of native languages such as Temne and Mende, the Settlers assimilated large doses of indigenous vocabulary and their language clearly develops from being an Africanised English dialect to Krio - like Swahili, an African language in its own right.[26] However, what, above all else, marked out the Christianity of the Settlers as being an authentic African form of Christianity was their doctrinal emphasis on pneumatology and their disposition towards experiencing spiritual power and the dynamic presence of the Holy Spirit in their meetings.

The Influence of George Whitefield and the Great Evangelical Awakening

In assessing the form of evangelical Christianity which penetrated the Nova Scotians' religious ontology without eradicating their basic African spirituality, and which they took with them to Sierra Leone, it is necessary to trace the roots of Freetown Christianity down into the Slave Christianity of the 18th Century American plantations.[27] George Whitefield's visit to Charlestown in the spring of 1740 and his subsequent campaigns in the South are profoundly significant.[28] Salvation to Whitefield meant an experience in the soul of the presence of God. He discovered this from reading Henry Scougal's book, ***The Life of God in the Soul of Man.*** [29] The search for "union of the soul with God" led Whitefield into strenuous strivings for a period of almost six months. During this time his body became emaciated and he was confined to bed by his physician for seven weeks. At the end of this period, and at an end of almost all of his human resources, Whitefield received the experience he desperately sought. He recorded in his Journal:

God was pleased to remove the heavy load, to enable me to lay hold of His dear Son by a living faith, and by giving me the Spirit of adoption, to seal me even to the day of everlasting redemption.
O! with what joy - joy unspeakable - even joy that was full of and big with glory, was my soul filled, when the weight of sin went off, and an abiding sense of the pardoning love of God, and a full assurance of faith, broke in upon my disconsolate soul! Surely it was the day of mine espousals - a day to be had in everlasting remembrance! At first my joys were like a spring tide, and overflowed the banks![30]

Whitefield's power encounter with God in a definite experience of soul union resulting in regeneration and consequent faith and joy became the paradigm for all his conversions. One of Whitefield's converts was John Marrant, founder of the Countess of Huntingdon Connection in Nova Scotia. Marrant records attending a Whitefield meeting in the Baptist church at Charlestown, intent on distracting the congregation's attention. When Whitefield announced his text, "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel!", Marrant fell to the ground and lay unconscious for half an hour. At the conclusion of the service Whitefield spoke to Marrant saying, "Jesus Christ has got thee at last!" For four days Marrant lay in bed in his sister's house. The Baptist minister visited and falling on his knees:

... he continued in prayer for a considerable time, and near the close of his prayer, the Lord was pleased to set my soul at perfect liberty, and being filled with joy I began to

praise the Lord immediately; my sorrows were turned into peace, and joy, and love. The minister said, "How is it now?" I answered, "All is well, all happy!"

Conversions during the evangelical revival period while not all exactly the same in every detail, do generally conform to the same basic pattern.

Whitefield emphasised not only soul salvation, but also human rights. At Charlestown he wrote a letter for publication entitled ***To the Inhabitants of Maryland, Virginia and North and South Carolina Concerning their Negroes***. In it he pronounced, "God has a quarrel with you for your cruelty to the poor negroes."[31] The letter was published for distribution throughout the Colonies by Benjamin Franklin.

Think you, your children are in any way better by nature than the poor negroes? No! In no wise! Blacks are just as much, and no more, conceived and born in sin, as white men are; and both, if born and bred up here, I am persuaded, are naturally capable of the same improvement. And as for the grown negroes, I am apt to think, that whenever the Gospel is preached with power among them, many will be brought effectually home to God.[32]

The letter provoked bitter hostility from the slave owners. Whitefield's burden to preach the Gospel to Negroes must be seen against the background of the prevailing popular philosophy which believed that the black man although not an animal was something of a sub-human species not possessing a redeemable soul and outwith the range of the Gospel. In his preaching he made it a deliberate policy to offer salvation to them and they responded gladly. While in Philadelphia he recorded in his ***Journal***, "Nearly fifty negroes came to my lodgings to give thanks for what God had done for their souls.... Some of them have been effectually wrought upon, and in an uncommon manner."[33] On his Charlestown mission he wrote, "The Word hath run and been much glorified, and many *Negroes* also are in a fair way of being brought home to God."[34] He recorded his closing appeal:

I must not forget the poor negroes. No, I must not. Jesus Christ has died for them, as well as for others. Nor do I mention you last, because I despise your souls, but because I would have what I shall say make the deeper impression upon your hearts. Oh that you would seek the Lord to be your righteousness! Who knows but that He may be found of you. For in Jesus Christ there is neither male nor female, bond nor free; even you may be the children of God, if you believe in Jesus. Did you ever read of the eunuch belonging to queen Candace? a negro like yourselves. He believed. The Lord was his righteousness. He was baptized. Do you also believe, and you shall be saved. Christ Jesus is the same now as He was yesterday, and will wash you in His own blood. Go home then, turn the words of the text into a prayer, and intreat

the Lord to be *your* righteousness. Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly into all our souls! *Amen*, Lord Jesus, *Amen* and *Amen!*[35]

Whitefield was only one among many who spread the evangelical revival in the South. New Light and Baptist evangelists were forming independent autonomous congregations. New Light preachers were particularly radical, separatistic and highly critical of the established churches which they accused of dead formalism and being led by unregenerate professors. Emotionalism and manifestations of being under the power of the Holy Spirit were common features of the revival. In a ***Journals*** entry for 10th May Whitefield records a meeting in Philadelphia, among whites, reminiscent of Peter at the house of Cornelius in Acts:

In the evening I went to a Society of young women ... As soon as I entered the room, and heard them singing, my soul was delighted. When the hymn was over, I desired to pray before I began to converse; but my soul was so carried out that I had not time to talk at all. A wonderful power was in the room, and with one accord they began to cry out and weep most bitterly for the space of half an hour. They seemed to be under the strongest convictions, and did indeed seek Jesus sorrowing. Their cries might be heard a great way off. When I had done I thought it proper to leave them at their devotions. They continued in prayer for above an hour, confessing their most secret faults; and, at length the agonies of some were so strong, that five of them seemed affected as those who are in fits.[36]

He moved on to Nottingham where, "Oh what tears were shed and poured forth before the Lord Jesus. Some fainted; and when they had got a little strength, they would hear and faint again. Others cried out in a manner as if they were in the sharpest agonies of death."[37] At another meeting:

The bitter cries and groans were enough to pierce the hardest heart. Some of the people were as pale as death; others were wringing their hands; others lying on the ground; others sinking into the arms of friends; and most lifting up their eyes to Heaven and crying to God for mercy ... They seemed like persons awakened by the last trump, and coming out of their graves to judgement.[38]

These manifestations of profound emotional stress and being "slain in the Spirit", to use popular Pentecostal jargon, caused Whitefield to search for a Scriptural explanation. He concluded that many who seemingly began in the Spirit ended up in the flesh, and that while weeping over sin and rejoicing over salvation were witnesses to the operation of the Holy Spirit, uncontrolled outcryings and fainting fits were not. He came to believe that "extreme emotional outbursts were not of God" and on several occasions remarked that "Satan begins

to drive many into fits".[39] He wrote in his ***Journals***:

Such-like bodily agonies, I believe, are from the devil; and, now the work of God is going on, he will, no doubt, endeavour by *these* to bring an evil report upon it. O Lord, for Thy mercy's sake, rebuke him; and though he may be permitted to bite Thy people's heel, fulfil Thy promise, and let the Seed of the Woman bruise his head! Amen, Amen![40]

Many Southern Blacks were converted under New Light and Baptist preaching. In the revival Gospel they experienced spiritual power, religious dynamism, *force vitale.* This emphasis on power in the black congregations becomes the feature that particularly, though by no means exclusively, distinguishes them from their white counterparts in the evangelical revival, whose focus, because of the intellectualist tradition in the white Christian ministry, was more on grace and spiritual illumination. Black Christians were not indifferent to grace and illumination. The testimonies of black converts witness to the depth of doctrinal understanding involved in their conversions. Neither, as observed above, were the highly emotional and dramatic physical manifestations of the revival movements restricted to Blacks.[41] What is claimed is not that Africans are racially more open to the Holy Spirit, as some have maintained, both white and black, but that their different cultural and religious backgrounds encouraged differing emphases, and that for the black congregations, traditionally and circumstantially, power was their main religious concern. That many slaves responded particularly enthusiastically to the perceived presence of the Holy Spirit in their meetings can be accounted for in terms of personality liberation, psychological release and religious heritage. From their inherited perception of God as being above all else a God of power, religious manifestations rather than being indications of mental disorder, as it seemed to many whites, were to most black Christians a dynamic demonstration of an immanent deity. As far as they were concerned an energetic, enthusiastic reaction to the presence and power of God was the most appropriate religious behaviour. Many of the slave converts of the evangelical revivals were to make their way to Nova Scotia. Men like David George, John Marrant, Moses Wilkinson and Boston King became outstanding leaders of the Black Loyalist churches. They were not carbon copies of white ministers, they were Africans in

heart and soul, emotional in their religion, evangelical in their Christian doctrines, revivalist in their experience and fervently independent in spirit. Of particular significance for the present day situation in Sierra Leone is not just their revivalistic zeal and emphasis on personal subjective experiences of the Holy Spirit, but the supreme importance they did actually place on the great evangelical doctrines of the Great Awakening. The doctrinal foundations laid by Whitefield and the Great Awakening evangelists were foundational to and, despite the emphasis on spiritual power, regulative of the form of Christianity lived out by the Nova Scotians in Freetown.

THE BLACK LOYALIST COMMUNITY IN NOVA SCOTIA FROM 1783 TO 1792

The story of the migrations of around three thousand Black Loyalists to Nova Scotia between the years 1777 to 1783 is well covered by Walker and Grant.[42] The bulk of the exodus northwards to Nova Scotia took place in 1783 and included hundreds from the Charlestown and Savannah regions, areas profoundly affected by Whitefield and the Evangelical Revival. Two aspects are pertinent to the current investigations. First, the bitter disillusionment suffered by the Black Loyalists during their stay in Nova Scotia through the generally hostile attitude of the whites. This profoundly affected the pattern of Christian development worked out by the Black Loyalist churches. Secondly, the Black Loyalists entered Nova Scotia during what Walker terms "the crackling atmosphere" of the late northern phase of the great New England Evangelical Awakening.[43] Instrumental in spreading the revival fires throughout Nova Scotia was the 28 year old, uneducated, Rhode Island New Lighter, Henry Alline.[44] His conversion to Christ was typically evangelical. A period of intense conviction of sin, during which he felt he had fallen into the belly of Hell, culminated in spiritual surrender to Christ and glorious liberty of soul:

At that instant of time when I gave up all to him to do with me as he pleased, and was willing God should reign in me and ride over me at his pleasure; redeeming love broke into my soul with repeated scriptures with such power, that my whole soul

seemed to be melted down with love; the burden of guilt and condemnation was gone; darkness was expelled, my heart humbled and filled with gratitude.... My whole soul, that a few minutes ago groaning under mountains of death, wading through storms of sorrow, racked with distressing fears, and crying to an unknown God for help, was now filled with immortal love, soaring on the wings of faith, freed from the chains of death and darkness, and crying out "My Lord, and My God".[45]

Upholding the common revival themes of personal experiential encounter with God, and condemnation of formal religion and unconverted, unregenerated, professional ministers, Alline attracted the socially disadvantaged, including many Black Loyalists, and founded independent New Light congregations throughout the province. He arrived in Nova Scotia in April 1776 and remained there inspiring his separatistic brand of enthusiastic evangelicalism until his untimely death in 1784. Following Alline's death there was a tendency for some of his congregations to degenerate into antinomianism. Claiming liberty in the Spirit as paramount and careless concerning Biblical teaching they gained a reputation for extreme enthusiasm and adultery. They became known as the New Dispensationalists. Most Black Loyalist New Lighters gravitated towards the more soundly based Methodists.

The Black Loyalists, with no political leverage and exploited in the labour market, suffered severe hardships in Nova Scotia. Those fortunate enough to receive grants of land obtained plots much smaller than the White Loyalists and in areas where the soil was most infertile. In 1791, still retaining hope in the good-will of the British Government, Thomas Peters sailed for England with ***The Humble Memorial and Petition of Thomas Peters a free Negro on behalf of himself and others, the Black pioneers and loyal Black refugees.***[46] While Peters did not succeed in officially presenting his petition to the British Government, he did meet Granville Sharp. As a result, he returned to Nova Scotia accompanied by John Clarkson who had a mandate from the Sierra Leone Company to enlist volunteers from the Black Loyalist community for re-settlement in Sierra Leone. Clarkson observed the conditions Black Loyalists were enduring in Nova Scotia:

The majority of those who remained in America are at this moment working upon the lands of white men in a species of slavery, for they are obliged to cultivate the ground of another man while he pays them by allowing them part of the produce, say a few bushels of potatoes half yearly when they have had more right to the land than the man who claimed it.[47]

In his memoirs, Boston King wrote of the Black Loyalists' sufferings:

The country was visited by a dreadful famine, which not only prevailed at Birchtown, but likewise at Chebucto, Annapolis, Digby, and other places. Many of the poor people were compelled to sell their best gowns for five pounds of flour, in order to support life. When they had parted with all their clothes, even to their blankets, several of them fell dead in the streets, thro' hunger, some killed and ate their dogs and cats; and poverty and distress prevailed on every side.[48]

Tensions between blacks and whites sometimes flared up into open hostility and rioting. In Shelburne in 1784 during rioting in which disbanded white soldiers attempted to force the Black Loyalists out of the town, David George was beaten up and had to flee for his life into a swamp. Within this cold unhappy matrix the diverse elements of the Nova Scotian Black Loyalist community quickly fused, conscious of its racial distinctiveness and the revivalistic evangelical Christianity to which, in a hopeless situation socially, politically and economically, they were turning *en masse*. At first the evangelists were white, but before long, black evangelists like David George, Moses Wilkinson, Boston King and John Marrant, men who had experienced profound evangelical conversions in the Charlestown and Savannah areas, were preaching with great power, communicating the Gospel to their own people in their own language and terms, and reaping spiritual harvests.

The Character and Composition of Nova Scotian Christianity

In their churches, Black Loyalists found a spiritual home, a comprehensible theology and the comforting awareness of divine power. Alline's blistering attacks on deadness, formalism and unconverted ministers within the established churches, encouraged Black Loyalists to reject white authority in Church matters and believe in their own spiritual superiority over most white Christians. This developed into an independent elitist attitude which was to characterise black and white Christian relationships in Sierra Leone for decades. Typical of this independent and confident spirit was the response of Joseph Leonard at Brindley Town to Anglican Bishop Inglis who reprimanded him for baptising new converts and administering the sacraments. "Leonard expressed a wish that his church remain entirely separate from the whites".[49] Significantly, it was not the more extreme New Light churches with their

radical independency and heady emotionalism that attracted the bulk of black Christians. This in itself is indicative of the importance they attached to orthodox evangelical doctrine. The Methodists, being less extreme, better organised and practically involved in social and educational development, attracted the majority of Black Loyalists. Independent and congregationalist, operating at grass roots group level with the class meeting, Methodism was the most acceptable expression of Christianity. Black Loyalist Methodism combined revival fervour with order, and also emphasised community and social concern.[50] Methodist societies were established in Nova Scotia by three preachers, William Black, Moses Wilkinson and Freeborn Garrettson. Black was one of a group of Yorkshire Methodists who between 1772 and 1775 settled near New Brunswick. In 1780, "without the aid of clergy", he underwent a dramatic conversion experience and immediately began holding evangelistic campaigns which resulted in 1782 in the founding of a Methodist Society in Halifax. In June 1783, while the immigrant population still lived in tents, he preached at Shelburne. Walker notes the response of the Black Loyalists who had only recently arrived in the district:

In his congregation were many eager Black Loyalists, and in fact "out of them was gathered the greater part of the Society of two hundred members in the Shelburne Circuit". William Black later visited Birchtown and Halifax, and within two years 170 of the free blacks, representing one-third of the total Methodist membership, had joined his church. In 1786 he staged a revival rally in Digby and organised a society at Brindley Town comprising 66 black Methodists.[51]

Needing help in reaping this abundant spiritual harvest Black appealed to the Baltimore Conference. They sent Freeborn Garrettson, a black evangelist converted in the Charlestown area, who conducted revival meetings throughout the province during his two years stay in Nova Scotia. His greatest successes were at Shelburne and its annex Birchtown. According to the editor of John Wesley's letters, Garrettson's influence in Nova Scotia was almost equal to that of Wesley in England.[52]

Moses Wilkinson, a blind and lame "fiery" preacher from Virginia, was very active during the 1783 revival. "Daddy" Moses's first known convert in the province was Peggy, the wife of Boston King. Wilkinson became pastor of the Birchtown Methodists. His house was their

meeting place. He was assisted by Boston King following King's conversion in 1787. King, the son of a Christian slave, came from the Charlestown area. While attending Garrettson's class meeting in the winter of 1786, King began an intense struggle for victory over the sinful nature. The struggle lasted until the first Sunday in March 1787 when he heard a voice saying, "Peace be unto thee!"

I saw by faith Heaven opened to my view and Christ and His holy angels rejoicing over me. I was now enabled to believe in the name of Jesus and my soul was dissolved into love.[53]

King's conversion fits perfectly into the evangelical revival mould. He became a key figure in the expansion of Methodism both in Nova Scotia and in Sierra Leone. Walker notes that "Even so gentle a man as Boston King considered all whites to be his enemies and was unable to trust them."[54] The Methodists quickly became the largest group in the province, a predominance they sustained for half a century in Sierra Leone. By 1790, Wilkinson's Birchtown congregation numbered over two hundred. Thomas Clarkson addressed a congregation of between three and four hundred in Wilkinson's chapel in 1791. He wrote that Moses's "feelings were so exquisite and he worked himself up into such a pitch that I was fearful something would happen to him."[55] Strong exhortatory preaching was popular and manifestations of the power of the Spirit took place. In January 1791, King recorded:

Towards the end of the evening the Divine Presence seemed to descend on the congregation. Some fell flat on the ground as if they were dead, others cried aloud for mercy.[56]

When, at Garrettson's request, the British Methodist James Wray arrived in Nova Scotia, he was rejected because "he was too rigid in his observance of things belonging to British Methodism."[57] Black Loyalist Methodism was a much more exuberant phenomenon than its English counterpart.

On their arrival in the province, many Black Loyalists had been eager to join the Anglican Church. Dr. John Breynton, the rector at Halifax reported, "They daily crowd to me for baptism and seem happy with their prospects of Religion and Freedom."[58] However, they soon experienced a painful rebuff from the white Anglicans in Halifax:

Though the blacks were welcomed in the church and could attend services, and even take communion, they were not permitted to mingle with whites in the congregation. A special gallery was fitted in St. Paul's Church in 1784, to which the blacks were confined "during divine worship". But the huge number of Loyalist Anglicans made too great demand on the limited space available, and it became impossible to admit all those wishing to attend of a Sunday. The blacks, therefore, were excluded, and as an alternative the rector advised them to gather in private homes and he commissioned "several capable Negroes who read the Instructions to the Negroes and other pious Books to as many of them as assemble for that purpose".[59]

Thus Black Loyalists with Anglican pretensions had autonomy thrust upon them. They chose Joseph Leonard to be their pastor. When Bishop Inglis visited Brindley Town in 1791:

... he was shocked to find that Leonard was not merely leading services of worship but was actually baptising children and new converts and was administering the communion sacrament to some 60 black families. When the bishop "reproved Leonard for these irregularities", the black leader asked to be ordained and stated that he and his flock wished "to be entirely independent and separate from the whites, and to have a church of their own". "He seems to lean to Methodism", the bishop noted, and refused Leonard's request, admonishing him to instruct the children and to come to church "which was his proper duty".[60]

Black Loyalists developed an almost paranoid distrust of white Anglicanism. Melville Horne, the Anglican chaplain in Freetown at the time of the Settlers arrival, talked of their "deep rooted hatred for the whites". For decades the Nova Scotians passionately resisted anything that even hinted of a white Anglican take over. Even John Clarkson, their white Moses, could not lead them into that. Anglicanism in Sierra Leone had to await the conversion of the liberated Africans before it could take root. In Freetown, Leonard and his independent Anglican flock completely abandoned their tenuous connection with Anglicanism and joined the Methodists. The Roman Catholic reception was even more discouraging. The few who gravitated to the Catholic community at Little Tracadie were accused of causing a bad odour in the church. Thus snubbed, they joined the Baptists. It was not until 1864 and the mission of Holy Ghost Fathers under Father Blanchet that a permanent Roman Catholic priestly presence was established in Freetown. There were Roman Catholics in Freetown from 1808 onwards due to the liberation of recaptives from French and Portuguese colonies, but they were unorganised and, as Fyfe points out, they were few in number and priestless.[61]

The establishment of a Countess of Huntingdon's Connection Church at Birchtown was

mainly through the efforts of John Marrant who had been pressed into the British navy during the War of Independence, wounded, and brought to England for treatment. He worshipped with the Huntingdonians and met Lady Selina.[62] In 1785 he received a letter from a brother who had migrated to Nova Scotia and settled at Birchtown. He described the revivals taking place and the enthusiastic response of the black community, but bemoaned "that they had no pastor". Marrant saw this as a Macedonian call. Lady Selina arranged for Marrant to be ordained at Bath, and shortly afterwards he sailed for Nova Scotia accompanied by another Black Loyalist, William Furmage. Marrant's chapel at Birchtown grew into a congregation of about forty families. He visited England and died there in April 1791. Before leaving Birchtown he appointed Cato Perkins as chief pastor. During this period the connection with the English Huntingdonians temporarily lapsed. They adopted the Methodist "class meeting", and although they used the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, spontaneity and divine inspiration rather than written formularies and credal confessions were the attractions of their worship. Cato Perkins was very much a preacher in the inspirational mould. Fyfe talks of the Huntingdonians' "excited services, especially when conversions took place", and that even though they retained the European forms of liturgy, they would break out into "emotional manifestations probably closer to contemporary revivalism in England and America than to worship in the later Ethiopian churches."[63]

David George, pastor of the Baptists, was born sometime in the 1740s of parents who had been brought from Africa to Virginia as slaves.[64] While working on a plantation around Silver Bluff, South Carolina, he was converted through the preaching of the black Baptist Wait Palmer. He received instruction in the faith from another black preacher, George Liele.[65] In 1773 he became a founder member of the first black church in North America, the Silver Bluff Baptists. When the war broke out and preachers could no longer visit the plantations, David George took over as the Silver Bluff Baptist pastor, the first slave known to pastor a church in North America. At the outbreak of the War of Independence he and fifty other slaves fled to Savannah. When Savannah was evacuated he moved to

Charlestown. In 1792 he was evacuated from Charlestown to Halifax, Nova Scotia. He reached Shelburne in 1784, to find it in the grip of revival fever, and immediately began holding camp meetings in the woods near the new settlement. His preaching attracted large crowds of blacks and whites. One white from Shelburne offered him a lot on which his new flock built a timber chapel. A Mr. Harding who attended a meeting in August 1791 wrote:

I found about twenty to thirty made white in the Blood of the Lamb, singing Hosannahs to the Son of David, several of them frequently were obliged to stop and rejoice soon after David began praying but he was so overcome with joy and was likewise obliged to stop and turned to me with many tears like brooks running down his cheeks desiring me to call upon that worthy name that was like ointment poured down upon the assembly.[66]

During anti-Black rioting, soldiers tore down David George's home, burst into the chapel while he was preaching, beat him with sticks and drove him into a swamp. He spent the next four months in Birchtown. Despite his harsh treatment at the hand of white racists, he remained loyal to Clarkson and the white agents of the Sierra Leone Company. He had a burning vision of life free from sin's power and social and economic bondage. He preached about a new era of liberty for black people. More than any other, David George prepared the hearts of Black Loyalists for their exodus and journey to their Promised Land. Walker writes:

His exciting sermons and rousing hymns promised to wash them white in the Blood of the Lamb, to free them forever from the shackles of sin.... Though the other black churches were to achieve a *de facto* kind of independence, even including Joseph Leonard's Anglicans at Brindley Town, only David George proclaimed it and gloried in it from the outset as a positive virtue.[67]

The social dimension, as with the Methodists, was a major concern of the Baptist community during their early decades in Freetown. Fyfe records that the Baptist church "was a focus for social and political groupings."[68] Social and political consciousness was wedded to religious enthusiasm in Nova Scotian Christianity.

CHRISTIANITY IN FREETOWN FROM 1792 TO 1824 - THE NOVA SCOTIAN PERIOD

In Nova Scotia a distinctive community was forged. The exodus to Sierra Leone welded the

various groups into a single unified community with a unique African and Christian identity. In their chapels they evolved their own political system in parallel with that of the Sierra Leone Company. The chapels were holy places where they could be vitalised by the power and presence of Christ and appropriate the power of His Holy Spirit for protection and problem-solving. The chapels were community centres, places for social interaction and entertainment. From 1792 until the Maroons arrived in 1800, the Settlers were progressively developing into an exemplary African Christian society, even if not exactly into the model black Christian community envisioned by Granville Sharp and other British evangelicals. Walls presents an extract from a 1795 report of the directors of the Sierra Leone Company:

On that day [Sunday] **they abstain entirely from work, dress themselves in very good (and some even in very gay) attire, and repair together with their children to church, where their whole deportment during the service, and their whole appearance are represented to be such as form a very striking spectacle....**
The Nova Scotians are not only punctual at their worship, but many of them profess also in other respects much regard to religion.... There are five or six black preachers among them, raised up from their own body, who are not without a considerable influence; and it is supposed that the discipline which they preserve in their little congregations has contributed materially to the maintainance of the general morals which have been spoken of.[69]

Each congregation immediately began constructing their house of God. At first very humble structures were put up, but as their economic conditions improved substantial buildings were erected. David George recorded the early days in Freetown:

I preached the first Lord's Day (it was a blessed time) under a sail, and so I did for several weeks after. We then erected a hovel for a meeting house, which is made of posts put into the ground, and poles over our heads, which are covered with grass.[70]

A few months later a permanent building was constructed and this became the first officially recognised Baptist church in West Africa. Nightly prayer meetings were held by all the Settler churches. These public worship times were supplemented by family devotions and prayers at home. Anna Maria Falconbridge recorded the Christian zeal and devotion of these pioneers who combined African dynamism, evangelical doctrine and social and political concern:

Among the Black Settlers are seven religious sects and each sect has one or more preachers attached to it, who alternatively preach throughout the whole night; indeed I never met with, heard, or read of, any set of people observing the same appearance of godliness, for I do not remember, since they first landed here, my ever awakening,

(and I have awoke at every hour of the night) without hearing preachings from some quarter or another.[71]

The Settlers' inspirational preaching and emotional outbursts worried the Company evangelicals who were unaccustomed to services with singing and clapping, inspirational preaching, spontaneous praying and shouts of "Hosannah!" and "Amen!"[72] The Europeans disapproved of such enthusiasm. Although there were times when the spiritual dynamics caused swoon, trance and shaking, these probably occurred much less frequently than they do in the Spiritual and Pentecostal churches in Freetown at the present time, due to the restraining influences of the Methodist liturgy and the control exercised by their evangelical doctrines. Moses Wilkinson continued to be the leading preacher. Methodist missionary George Warren, on his arrival in Freetown in 1811, was greatly impressed both by Wilkinson's manner and message:

Moses Wilkinson preached this evening, from Isaiah iii, 11 and 12. He gave out his hymns and text from memory. His manner was warm and animating. He seemed to strive at keeping close to his text, and made, in the course of his sermon, several useful observations. While hearing him I was led to admire the goodness and wisdom of God in the instruments which he frequently sees fit to use, to advance the interests of his kingdom. Many of the wise and learned in this world, if they were to see and hear such a man as our brother ... endeavouring to lead their fellow creatures from sin to holiness, would at once conclude it to be impossible for them to effect the object which they have in view. Experience, however, flatly contradicts such a conclusion. Numbers have been led by their means to change their lives, and are induced from day to day to pursue that conduct which conduces to their own happiness and to the welfare of those that are around them.[73]

Morality and Marriage

Accusations of immorality were repeatedly made by Company personnel, and this raised questions concerning the depth and even the genuineness of Settler Christianity. Clarkson, however, noted the affection and loyalty that was evident in Black Loyalist family relationships. From Nova Scotia, he wrote that he considered the majority of the men in the town of Preston were "better than any people in the labouring line of life in England" and that he would match them with any there for "strong sense, quick apprehension, clear reasoning, gratitude, affection for their wives and children, and friendship and goodwill towards their

neighbours."[74] Slavery has caused a disruption of the traditional African family pattern. Dislocations of family life frequently took place on the plantations. A certain casual attitude towards marriage and sexual morality was inevitable in these circumstances. Slaves were transferred at will or even sold with little regard for their marriages and families. The plantation approach to marriage and morality continued to a certain extent in the Black Loyalist and Settler societies despite the profound effects of the evangelical revivals. Governor Macaulay, a founder-director of CMS, along with the Company chaplains, were shocked by the Settlers' apparent antinomianism and moral irregularities. In an interview with Moses Wilkinson, he expressed his concern at the Methodists' moral state. He wrote of "the notoriously irreligious lives of some of their members", whom they refused to censure, and judged that "it was impossible that sincere and pious Christians could continue with them".[75] Mrs. Falconbridge, on the other hand, wrote that she had "never met with, heard, or read of, any set of people observing the same appearance of godliness".[76] The Sierra Leone Company directors considered the Nova Scotians "superior to the generality of people of the same order in England".[77] Macaulay himself had to concede in 1797 that the Nova Scotians, despite their obvious failings, were in the main genuine Christians:

In the religious opinions of all of us there are shades of differences, but in our opinions of what is essential in religion, the affected dispositions, tempers and practice which becomes a Christian we are all pretty well agreed.[78]

Nevertheless, the fluid state of marriage and sexual relationships, continued to raise problems. Walker describes the situation in 1838:

Conventional morality as enforced by the chapels could even regard common-law marriages as having precedence over legal ones. One member of the Methodist chapel, Robinson, claimed that his bride of three months had been seduced by a fellow-Methodist called Cheeseman. Cheeseman's defence was that he had lived with the woman for five years before her marriage to Robinson, and the Methodist "court" supported him and gave Cheeseman, not the legal husband, the right to continue a sexual relationship with her. In such circumstances there could be no disgrace to illegitimacy; bastards were honestly declared and listed as such in the census returns. When a lawyer in 1838 challenged a bastard's right to inherit his father's property the chief justice dismissed such a doctrine on the grounds that "it would endanger the title of two-thirds of the property of this colony".[79]

This has continued to be a major problem in the mainline churches up to the present.

Professor Fashole-Luke highlighted this in his 1968 essay, ***Religion in Freetown***:

Freetown Christians seldom seem to relate their religious beliefs to their morality. This point is exemplified chiefly in the field of sexual behaviour. The church teaches that sexual union should be limited to the marriage union and also that Christian marriage is a permanent monogamous relationship which excludes all extra-marital relationships. However, illegitimacy is rife among Freetown Christians and there are many children produced from adulterous relationships. The number of men who are faithful to their marriage vows is very few indeed and many women acquiesce in the adulterous relationships of their husbands. The Church herself recognises the problem of illegitimacy and has introduced the dubious practice of charging more for the baptism of children born out of wedlock than she does for the children born in wedlock.
The problem of sexual morality is heightened when it is known that otherwise devout Christians and even church officers are having illicit sexual relations with women other than their wives; and in some cases, married church officers bring their illegitimate children to be baptised. The Church seems powerless to do anything about this problem, except by petty, primitive measures like not allowing the mother of a child born out of wedlock to be "churched".[80]

Nova Scotian and Sierra Leone Company Relationships

Relations between the Nova Scotians the Company authorities were often acrimonious. One continuing bone of contention was the allocation and ownership of land, another was control over the chapels. Clarkson saw political advantage in the Settlers adopting official Anglicanism rather than continuing as autonomous, independent chapels. The Settlers saw the Anglican establishment as a threat to their independence. In January 1793, William Dawes, who had replaced Clarkson in December, ordered Anglican services to be conducted each day, morning and evening, at the very times chapel meetings were held. The Settlers rejected this attempt at ecumenism despite Horne's preaching on the text "Come with us and we will do you good."[81] Horne's olive branch was seen as a white Trojan horse. When Horne preached against dreams being taken as a mode of revelation equal to Scriptures, Beverhout interrupted the sermon and denounced his teaching as "the doctrine of Satan"; he compared Governor Dawes to "Pharaoh whom the just judgement of God would sooner or later overtake", and then walked out with the Methodists.[82]

A serious rift in Company and chapel relationships took place in July 1796 when Governor Macaulay, Dawes' successor, introduced a marriage law to curb what he saw as looseness in

marriage and rampant immorality. The law stipulated that only the Governor and persons "in Holy Orders", that is the chaplain, could conduct marriage ceremonies and these could only take place after banns had been proclaimed in church. The Nova Scotians were enraged at this insult and undermining of the authority of their preachers and political leaders. The Methodists wrote a defiant letter of protest to the Governor headed, "The Independent Methodist Church of Freetown". They declared:

We consider ourselves a perfect Church, having no need of the assistance of any worldly power to appoint and perform religious ceremonies for us.... We cannot persuade ourselves that politics and religion have any connection, and therefore think it not right for a Governor of the one to be meddling with the other.[83]

One hundred and twenty-seven Settlers, including ten preachers, signed the letter. Eventually the explosive confrontation was defused, but the incident demonstrates the fiercely independent spirit of the Settlers, their resentment at any hint of white interference in chapel affairs, and their confidence in their own Christian superiority.

The insurrection of 1800, though fuelled by religious tensions and having a great deal of chapel support, especially from Cato Perkins and his Huntingdonians, was in essence a political issue revolving around the election of black judges. Governor Ludlam had rejected the Settlers' appointees because, he cynically claimed, their elections were incompatible with English law. The response from the Settlers was that they were Africans, not Englishmen, and could not therefore be bound by English law. The radicals among them drew up a new constitution which was *de facto* a declaration of independence. On September 27th 1800 the revolutionaries elected Isaac Anderson their new Governor and prepared to resist Company opposition by force of arms. Just as Ludlam's men were being mustered for battle on 30th September, the transport ship *Asia* sailed into St. George's Bay carrying 550 Maroons and 47 British officers and men.[84] The revolt was quashed, two Settlers were killed, Isaac Anderson was hanged, and over thirty were banished from the colony. Also quashed was the Nova Scotian dream of possessing a Promised Land for themselves on African soil. Although their economic and cultural Golden Age still lay ahead of them, under the benign governorship of

Charles MacCarthy (1815-24), the death knell had sounded over their role as as prime players in the economic and social life of the Province of Freedom. On the 8th November the new charter making Sierra Leone into a Crown Colony was put into effect. The Governor's hand was considerably strengthened. His rule carried the full backing of the British Parliament. The land which the Settlers believed was their inheritance from God was now Crown property with the management authority vested in the Sierra Leone Company. Perhaps the most significant alteration in status for the Settlers was that with the Company now acting as the arm of the Government no provision was made for Settler representation. Professor Marcus Jones comments on the new charter:

With regard to the central government set up by the charter, it was unsuitable from the point of view of the settlers as they were not granted any right of representation. This was a retrograde step, taking into consideration the fact that the intention of the abolitionists was that the settlers should be self-governing and independent.... The charter brought to an end a short-lived, but unique experiment in the history of colonial rule. It was the first time black men anywhere in the world had enjoyed the privilege of self-government. It was the first occasion when a black community enjoyed complete equality with white men all over the world.[85]

It is doubtful if the Company ever operated with such non-racist egalitarianism, but it is equally true that Clarkson had led the Nova Scotians to believe that was how it was to be. The vision of the Black Loyalists of a land of their own was never be fulfilled. However, as the Maroons eventually merged with the Nova Scotians, and as together they fused with the various groupings that made up the Recaptives to became the Krio, they did pass on a spiritual inheritance; independent, enthusiastic, emotional, evangelical African Christianity. This inheritance the Nova Scotians themselves gradually forsook as the nineteenth century progressed and they themselves became a social and economic elite among an expanding Krio community, and as the socio-cultural phenomenon known as Creoledom developed.

Nova Scotian Mission to the Sierra Leoneans, Kru, Maroons and Recaptives

The Nova Scotians carried their evangelistic zeal across the Atlantic with them. Attempts were soon made at mission to the indigenous tribes, despite the fact that "any black man wandering among the tribes at this date was liable to be kidnapped and enslaved".[86] One of

the Nova Scotians, a Kuranko who had been sold by a Mandinka and shipped to the Americas from Bunce Island, sought out the Mandinka and gave him a present for unwittingly helping him become a Christian.[87] Boston King crossed to the Bulom shore to evangelise and start a school - according to Fyfe, "a missionary of African descent to Africans".[88] David George out-reached to the neighbouring Temne and baptised several converts in September and October of 1793. Also in 1793 Henry Beverhout, an energetic Methodist preacher, went to the Rio Pongas to evangelise the Muslims. According to Governor Zachary Macaulay he was not very successful, but on his return to Freetown he evangelised with good results among the Black Poor at Fourah Bay. Macaulay was not too happy with the enthusiastic response of his converts or with Beverhout's "roaring style of oratory":

On enquiry I found that the wildest extravagances had been committed there. Although I trust that in God's hands any instrument may be useful, yet I have my fears that evil may follow this violent spirit excited chiefly by Beverhout.[89]

Despite Macaulay's misgivings, he later had to admit that Beverhout's campaign had been successful, as was another the following year. Three years on he recorded that there were two Methodist meeting houses in that area, but demonstrates his European dislike for their African style of worship by caustically commenting that the preachers vied with each other "to see who could bawl the louder". Melville Horne also took umbrage with Methodists for over-emphasising dreams and visions and shouting out in ecstatic response during the praying and preaching.

The Settlers, conscious of their civilised superiority, introduced their culture and Christianity to their native workers, including Kru from the Cape Palmas area along the coast in present day Liberia. The Kru, mostly from the Grebo and Bassa branches, who hired themselves out to European traders as labourers and boatmen, were employed by the Nova Scotians to clear the bush and cultivate their farms. Kru women provided domestic labour. The Settlers attempted to convert and civilise the Kru just as they did the *grumettas*, their local native labourers.[90] The custom of the Kru was to work for short periods in the colony, then return home. Sibthorpe mentions that in 1809 six Krumen brought their wives and families to settle

in the Colony.[91] Fyfe records there being over 500 Kru in Freetown in 1819 when they were mainly "still transients, never bringing their wives, returning home eventually with their savings", and although valued for their labour, "they were suspect as thieves".[92] The Kru did eventually settle in large numbers at Kru Town. They were deeply committed to their traditional practices and resistant to Christianity. Grant, noting the failure of early CMS mission to the Kru, comments, "They adamantly refused to receive religious instruction. Indeed of all the different peoples who arrived into Sierra Leone, these men were the least responsive to Christianity".[93] The ancestral cult was strong among the Kru and still survives in their *dison* (eating the fowl) funeral ritual which is performed on the death of the first-born.[94] A fowl, white or preferably red, is sacrificed to *Judopleh*, the tribal spirit, and the ancestors. The parents ritually wash to purify themselves from witchcraft and bad luck. They dress in new white robes and are confined to a room for twelve hours where they have intercourse in the presence of the ancestral spirits. In the ceremony the deceased is entreated to return, and *Judopleh* and the ancestors are invoked to send back the spirit of the departed. They also perform the *sar bowe* naming ceremony. The new-born are named after the dead who are perceived to be returning to the community in the children. *Na ni* (drinking water) is another important ritual. After the coffin is closed it is passed through a window and the deceased's children, of all ages, jump over it, females three times and males four times, and then sit on the coffin and drink water. This ensures the children's protection by the deceased. Those who are not true children become sick and die. The positive response of the Kru to the Pentecostal form of Christianity, and their vital role in the planting of Pentecostal-evangelicalism in Freetown, will be dealt with in detail later.

The Nova Scotians' missionary zeal extended even to the Maroons who were resented for their intervention in the 1800 insurrection and disdained for their pagan non-Christian ways. The Maroons arrived in Freetown with a frightening reputation, built up by their detractors, of being "barbarians unaccustomed to Christian niceties", "benighted", "ignorant savages" and "cannibals".[95] The Maroon men practised polygamy and kept their womenfolk subordinate

and dependent. They had no background of Christianity and were disinclined to go to church, although those in company employment were compelled to attend Anglican services. Despite the social and cultural barriers the Nova Scotians reached out to the Maroons who responded positively. The majority converted to Methodism, some became Baptists, others Huntingdonians. John Ellis, a Maroon, succeeded Cato Perkins as the Huntingdonians' pastor. By the end of the 1820s, fusion of the Nova Scotian and Maroon communities had essentially taken place on Nova Scotian religious and cultural terms.

After 1808, Nova Scotian mission encompassed the Recaptives, first through the apprenticeship scheme and later in direct mission to their villages. The apprenticeship system which, according to Porter, "set the stage for the later fosterage or adoption of children which formed a central feature of Freetown society from its earliest days", introduced Settler lifestyle, valued, language and Christianity to the incomers.[96] Governor Thompson (1808-9), arrogant and military, with a paranoid dislike for the Nova Scotians, was their Antiochus Epiphanes. He was enraged at their independent-mindedness and contemptuous of their style of Christianity, their "ignorant enthusiasm and republican frenzy", their "most absurd enthusiasm ... most ignorant and wild notions of liberty".[97] While he saw the Maroons as the Spartans of Africa, the noble savage "half-reclaimed", he saw the Nova Scotian as:

... vain, loquacious, full of ideas of his own importance, insidious, fawning, and suspicious, with all the vices of civilization, and none of the greatness of the savage, an Athenian in everything except his knowledge and his virtues.[98]

Despite Thompson's attempts to segregate and isolate the Nova Scotians from the Maroons and Recaptives, the Settlers survived his brief tyranny and continued to be the role-model for the other Africans to follow, and to evangelise and transplant among the immigrants their own brand of independent evangelical revivalism. Their success in mission to the Recaptives ensured the continuation of their own brand of pneumatological and evangelical Christianity as an important strand in early Recaptive Christianity.

The Nova Scotians and the British Missionaries

As early as 1793 the Freetown Methodists had written Dr. Coke, the Superintendent of the Wesleyan Foreign Mission in England, asking the help of a missionary-pastor to guide them. Though independent-minded they were not averse to obtaining some material help from abroad. David George who accompanied Clarkson to England in December 1792 had made contact with English Baptists and obtained financial help for building a chapel. On Macaulay's return to Freetown in March 1796, he was accompanied by six missionary families chosen by Dr. Coke for service in Sierra Leone. Their mission, however, was to convert the Fula. Poorly prepared and unable to cope with conditions even in Freetown, the missionaries returned to England leaving a very unfavourable impression on the Settlers. In July 1806 the Methodists, with their numbers depleted by divisions, church finances and fabric in a critical state and the founding fathers getting on in years, wrote again to Dr. Coke, confessing they had no money, but asking him to send out a "pious person" to manage the Society in Freetown.[99] George Warren arrived in Freetown in November 1811 to take charge of the Methodists affairs as superintendent and pastor. He was warmly welcomed and regarded as an answer to prayer. Three English schoolmasters accompanied him to Freetown, Rayner, Hirst and Healey. Warren died in July 1812. Rayner had to return to England with ill health. It was left to Healey and Hirst to struggle on with the work. William Davies arrived in 1815. His initial impressions were very favourable. He wrote home describing the vitality of the churches, "In their band meetings and love feasts the Spirit is poured out in such abundance that they are at a loss as to how to express themselves, their joy on these occasions is indeed unspeakable."[100] Davies considered himself the man in charge, but the Nova Scotians expected him, as with all their preachers, to "present his credentials to the congregation" and receive their recognition of his divine call. Davies refused to go through this congregationalist procedure. The Rawdon Street elders accused him of "lording it over them, of being too proud for a Methodist preacher".[101] In 1817 he was banned from the chapel. A charge of immorality levelled against him was not sustained and the final reason given for his dismissal was his bad temper.

By 1818, however, the missionary factor was proving its worth and chapel membership had risen to over one hundred and fifty, many of the new converts were Maroons and Recaptives. Over two hundred would attend "love feasts". The total Society membership was over four hundred and fifty. Plans were made for a stone building to replace the wooden structure with its grass roof. At the same time the Maroon members started raising funds for their own chapel between Perceval Street and Westmoreland Street. The Rawdon Street chapel contributed generously. The hundred Methodist Maroons, however, resenting the elitist attitude of the Nova Scotians and their own inferior status within the congregation, made a unilateral declaration of independence in 1821 just as Saint John's chapel was nearing completion. They insisted they would be independent both of Rawdon Street and the England society, and that anyone of their own choosing could preach from their pulpit, a privilege denied them at Rawdon Street. The Maroons "taunted the Nova Scotians for having sold out their Rawdon Street chapel to the whites".[102] In 1822, Saint John's Maroon Church had a congregation numbering 226, almost entirely Maroons with a few Recaptives. The following year almost 600 were attending.[103]

At this time missionary John Huddleston became embroiled in a bitter dispute over the ownership and management of the Rawdon Street chapel. Huddleston had a low opinion of the people he had come to serve. Hearing the Wesleyan Society planned to appoint Nova Scotians as missionaries he wrote a letter of protest:

I am persuaded that such a step is not for the benefit of the people. I know not, yet this we observe that for black men the stations of preachers greatly impress them though they might have been good men before yet so shallow are their minds that anything like promotion makes them as full of self as they can hold. We have several now in the colony of different persuasions and it is observable to every brother that their heads are full of pride. As private christians they are many of them ornaments to the christian profession, raise them and you loose them.[104]

Huddleston claimed ownership of the new chapel for the Wesleyan mission. The Nova Scotians responded that the whites should build their own chapel if they wanted to control one. Some even suggested that the "white man had come for thief their money."[105] They had raised £460 for the chapel. In May 1821 a secret meeting of the congregation was

convened. Huddleston and his assistant George Lane got wind of what was going on, interrupted the meeting, read the Riot Act and ordered the people to go home claiming the congregation had no right to be there. The Settlers ordered the missionaries out while Huddleston declared the society dissolved. They immediately reconstituted themselves as an independent body of Methodists. James Wise declared, "We have nothing to do with the Missionary Committee or you. If you, the missionaries cannot agree with us you had better go back to some other place."[106] The dispute reached Governor MacCarthy who confirmed the trustees' ownership of the chapel. The Rawdon Street Methodists, led by James Wise, invited the daughter chapels in the villages to join them and constitute an independent Methodist society free from white interference. The society was known as the Settlers' Meeting or the Big Meeting, but soon took the title West African Methodist Society to distinguish themselves from the missionary run Wesleyan Methodist Society controlled by Huddleston. Huddleston and Lane died in the 1823 yellow fever epidemic. Within a few years the West African Methodist Society had a dozen chapels in Freetown and the surrounding villages.[107] The West African Methodists came into existence because of missionary insensitivity and racism. They were a free, autonomous, African church, with roots going back into the Nova Scotia revivals, and composed mainly of Recaptives.

Nova Scotian society reached its zenith during the benevolent governorship of Charles MacCarthy (1815-24).[108] They were the wealthy landed aristocracy. Recaptives who aspired to economic prosperity and social status modelled themselves after the Settlers. They adopted their language as a *lingua franca*. Many adopted their style of worship. However, within two decades of MacCarthy's death in the Gold Coast in 1824, the Nova Scotians were engulfed by the Recaptives, the scorned "cruits" and "Willyfoss niggers", and became a minority group in their own town.[109] Sibthorpe, himself a Recaptive, gives a rather prejudiced report on Nova Scotian and Recaptive relationships around 1840:

The Nova Scotians saw with chagrin and envy themselves sinking into oblivion, and the "captives", as they styled them, rising into influence and power. Instead of competing with those whom they deemed their inferiors, the Nova Scotians, with few

exceptions, withdrew from the field of industry in disgust, some transporting themselves back to America, some embarking in petty mercantile pursuits, where they were almost uniformly unfortunate through giving credit to the natives beyond the jurisdiction of the Colony; others, without much thought of the future, living upon the money acquired in their "golden age", but none of them making any permanently strenuous effort to acquire more. Meanwhile, many of the emancipated blacks were rising by degrees to comparative eminence and wealth, partly by their own diligence and frugality, and partly through the favour shown them by the Colonial Government; the Nova Scotians regarded them with envy, jealousy and bitter dislike. "Well!" exclaimed one of them once, "it is only my wonder dat we settlers do not rise up in a body and *kill* and *slay*, and *kill* and *slay!* Dem Spanish and Portugee sailors are quite right in making slaves."[110]

The Nova Scotians were inexorably drawn into the new evolving heterogeneous community. In the process they passed on, and also lost, their own distinctive brand of Christianity, African evangelical Christianity with a vibrant pneumatological dimension. This is what particularly distinguished them, and gave them their unique place in African Church History. The fortunes of this Christian inheritance, and what happened when it was passed on to the Recaptives and the Krio, will now be investigated.

CMS STRATEGY AND OPERATIONS IN SIERRA LEONE

In 1799 some English evangelicals, including William Wilberforce, Henry Thornton and Zachary Macaulay, founded the Church Missionary Society (CMS). Their aim was mission to the "heathen" of Africa and the East, and their first field was to be Sierra Leone. Early in 1804, Lutheran pastors, Melchior Renner and Peter Hartwig, arrived in Freetown with the intention of conducting mission to the Susu.[111] While in Freetown the two missionaries frequently quarrelled, attracted crowds around their house, and confirmed the Nova Scotians' notions of their own spiritual superiority. When they reached the Rio Pongas they concentrated on educational work. In 1806, CMS sent out another three ordained Germans; Butscher, Nylander and Prasse. Butscher and Prasse joined Renner, now married to his Nova Scotian housekeeper Elizabeth Richards, at the Rio Pongas, while Nylander stayed on in Freetown as Company chaplain, but with little impact on the Nova Scotians despite his marriage to Ann Beverhout. The Company church was in disrepair and Nylander held

services in his own house. His most important task was teaching at the Government school and from the outset establishing that practically indissoluble union of mission and schools which has characterised practically all missionary efforts in Sierra Leone. Freetown's population was just under two thousand and according to Fyfe:

The Nova Scotian churches were full. The Huntingdonians had theirs in Wilberforce Street, on the corner of Church Street; later they moved to the adjoining site left them by Mary Ash, widow of their early leader, drowned in 1801. The Baptist Church was on the west side of Rawdon Street, where lower down, on the east corner of Cross Street, the Methodists built theirs in 1798. They, with their many preachers, cohered less than the others: some broke away in 1809 to form a new congregation.[112]

Missionaries complained that at night the streets of Freetown were often filled with masked men, drums beating and women dancing. One wrote that after conducting an evening service he came across, "men and women dancing, trampling, clapping hands, and crying. The women fell on the ground on their faces, and one clothed in a beasts skin made the greatest nuisance of himself."[113] That a fair amount of cultural interaction was taking place between the Settlers and natives is noted by Grant, and the fact that witchcraft was involved. "In 1808 a law had been passed forbidding the use of "witchcraft" to intimidate others after several settlers were prosecuted for bringing in witchdoctors to try suspects by ordeal."[114] However, the missionaries greatest complaint concerned the low moral behaviour of the Europeans. In 1812, Nylander, frustrated as a missionary, in poor health, and "disgusted with Freetown", transferred to the Bulom Shore. He translated the Gospel of Matthew into Bulom Sherbro, "the first Bible translation made in Sierra Leone".[115] Butscher was moved from the Rio Pongas to take over as chaplain. Like Nylander he received his salary from the Government.

Following the March 1807 Act forbidding British subjects to trade in slaves, slaves captured by the British navy all along the West Africa coast were released at Freetown. Governor Maxwell and Butscher arranged for CMS to take the responsibility for educating the children of the Recaptives, who were now flooding the Colony at the rate of over 2,000 a year.[116]

Conditions in the Recaptive villages surrounding Freetown were dismal. In 1815, Government and CMS co-operation took a significant forward step with the agreement that a church and school be built on Leicester Mountain, financed by the Government with Butscher the superintendent. Work on the Christian Institution began early in 1816. Educating and Christianising the ever increasing number of Recaptive youths appeared a much more fruitful mission field than the Rio Pongas. When Edward Bickersteth came out to inspect CMS operations in March 1816, in the light of the burning down of the Bashia station by hostile slave traders, the work already afoot on Leicester Mountain, and that sixteen of the twenty-six missionaries sent out by CMS since 1804 had died, "He and MacCarthy agreed that the recaptives presented a more promising mission-field than the unresponsive Susu, and that the CMS must make the Colony their centre."[117] Convinced Government support was God's provision, Bickersteth wrote mission secretary Josiah Pratt, "This Colony is the spot where we must spend our chief strength".[118] Recognising that the better scholars could be trained as teachers and missionaries to their fellow Africans, the Christian Institution left teaching the children to the village schools. It moved to Regent and was reconstituted in 1820 as a seminary for higher education, concentrating on training for the ministry and the professions. It developed into Fourah Bay College, and later the University of Sierra Leone.[119]

Governor MacCarthy, confident of CMS co-operation, conceived his Parish Plan as the way to tackle the problems of administering, civilising, educating and Christianising the Recaptives.[120] In essence the Plan arranged for the Colony to be divided into six parishes with CMS providing a clergyman-superintendent for each, and the Government providing salaries, church buildings and parsonages. By mid-1818 two more were added, and as new villages were started the number soon went up to thirteen.[121] In 1818, Nylander abandoned the unfruitful Bulom mission and returned to Freetown to take charge of the recently constructed Saint Patrick's Church at Kissy. The Rio Pongas missionaries were all withdrawn and the Susu mission closed. The Parish Plan seemed to present CMS with an ideal missionary situation, a population ready to listen and obliged to respond, children galore to

teach and mould into exemplary African Christians and financial and moral support from the Government. However, after a promising start to this marriage of convenience, their divergent interests became apparent. This led to quarrelling over the mission's failure to supply enough personnel and the Government's scaling down of expenditure. After the deaths of Johnson and During in 1823, and MacCarthy in 1824, a separation was effected. The divorce came in 1897 when the British Government withdrew its grant to the bishopric.

The Unique Ministry of William Johnson

In 1816 two other German missionaries arrived in Freetown, William Johnson - whose importance in establishing Christianity among the Recaptives can hardly be overestimated - and Henry During.[122] Johnson's ministry provides an interesting study on the meeting of African and European cultures, especially with the Africans severely disadvantaged. Johnson went up to Regent where he became village superintendent, pastor and school-master. It was not MacCarthy's policy to have ethnically homogeneous villages and by 1821, according to Fyfe, Johnson's flock was made up of "Kono, Susu and Bulom from the Colony neighbourhood, Bassa and Gola from the Kru coast, and Ibo, Efik, Kalabari, Yoruba and Hausa shipped from the Bights."[123] The Recaptives were generally grateful to their liberators and keen to please. T. S. Johnson, a Krio Anglican clergyman, writes:

The adults were kept on rations provided by Government for six months (if male) and for three months or until married (if female). This paternal care on the part of the British Government, together with the fostering and education given these Liberated Africans, developed in them a feeling of affectionate regard for their benefactors which they have handed down as a tradition to their children.[124]

Peterson notes that:

By 1823 well over two-thirds of the recaptive population was receiving direct government assistance.... Only at Regent was over one-third of the population self-supporting. At three other villages, Wellington, Hastings, and York, the entire population was dependent on the government.[125]

The Recaptives were hard-working and enterprising, nevertheless, accepting the outward appearances of the religion of one's benefactors while in a dependency situation was an easy

move to make and obviously accounted for much of the growth of Anglicanism in the villages over the period of the Parish Plan. More profound conversions, when they did take place, were, as Okorocha demonstrates for the Igbo, a search for spiritual power after the protection of the former sources of power had failed.[126] Johnson, operating both as missionary and village manager, was aware of the problems and sought to discern between genuine converts and facile professors. Having experienced evangelical conversion at a Moravian Brethren prayer meeting in London in 1813, he understood that "nothing less than the Power of God operated through the Spirit of God, in the human heart will change man", and he looked for evidence of such a work of the Spirit in the hearts of prospective church members.[127] However, in testing candidates he followed the normal CMS confessional method, holding catechetical classes where instruction was given and the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed and some passages of Scripture were learned by rote. Then came an examination which Johnson described thus:

I questioned the candidates who stood in a line before the reading desk, on Regeneration, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, the Holy Trinity and the Fall and Recovery of man. I then explained to them the questions and answers in the prayer books, and baptised them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. After the sprinkling of water the candidates were invited to partake of the Lord's supper and henceforth to regard themselves as full members of the church.[128]

Like the other missionaries, Johnson was limited in to what he could do due to language and communication difficulties and his lack of control over the political situation. The politically ambitious MacCarthy, an advocate of baptismal regeneration, pressed for mass conversion. He was frustrated because Johnson would only baptise those in whom he believed he could discern a work of grace. MacCarthy claimed those refused baptism by the missionaries went instead to the Nova Scotian chapels.

The Recaptives arrived in Sierra Leone already steeped in their own indigenous religions in which it was common practice to incorporate powerful foreign deities into the local pantheons and cults. The white man had very powerful divinities, medicines, and obviously special access to God's power. Their "Book" contained the secrets of their religion and therefore of

their success. It was sensible to appropriate these new channels of divine power and blessing. The missionary was also the village administrator who dispensed rations and favours. He was a paramount chief to be honoured and obeyed. While the Recaptives were willing to convert, their level of understanding was low. The resident missionary at Charlotte, complained that despite many meetings for prayer, Scripture reading and preaching:

Many of them do not understand English, and others so little that, when I speak to them, it is with great difficulty that I make myself understood: so that although many frequent the means of grace, yet few fully comprehend what they hear.[129]

Nevertheless, MacCarthy and the CMS missionaries under his power, pursued their Westernising, civilising and Christianising policy. They aimed to make model Christian citizens out of the Recaptives, and model Christian communities out of their villages:

MacCarthy spared no expense to make the villages reflect his vision. Bells, clocks and weathercocks were ordered from England for church towers, forges for village blacksmiths, scales and weights for village markets. Quill-pens and copy-books, prayer books and arithmetic books were ordered for the schools, with tin cases for the children to carry them in, lamps to read them by. Hats were ordered for the men, bonnets for the women, shoes for all; gowns and petticoats, trousers and braces - buttons, too, with needles, thread and thimbles, soap and smoothing-irons, even clothes-brushes, nothing was forgotten.[130]

Fyfe describes the situation at Regent at this time:

When the bell rang, the people assembled, out of curiosity, or in the hope of being given clothes. Before the year was out they were assembling to hear Johnson's gospel, voluntarily or under orders, for as superintendent, armed with magisterial powers, he could compel them to come in.
Ruled by his persuasive authority church-goers were converted and baptised. By early 1817 he had forty-one communicants, a year later seventy-six (this included many young children). The church was enlarged, but still overflowed with orderly, respectably-dressed people, the school-girls in white, the boys in scarlet jackets, provided at government expense. A good choir master, he taught his congregation to sing hymns. Out of church hours the children held their own prayer meetings, praying and singing....
when in 1821 MacCarthy went up to Regent to be greeted with hymns by an orderly community drawn up under silken banners, he and his sceptical officers could only stare amazed.... Sunday at Regent was a day of silence, broken only by the villagers assembling quietly for morning, then afternoon, church.[131]

At the height of his ministry Johnson had 450 communicants at Regent and 1,079 undertaking Christian instruction out of a population of over 2,000. Anything from five to nine hundred would attend the daily morning and evening prayer meetings and up to a

thousand divine service on Sunday. The church, named Saint Charles after the energetic and ambitious MacCarthy, and the first stone church in West Africa, had to be improved and enlarged five times during Johnson's superintendency. Eventually it could seat a thousand worshippers. Peterson accuses Johnson of using his powers and resources to procure Christian disciples:

By operating as religious leader, school teacher, and superintendent, Johnson greatly enhanced his personal authority in the village. Soon after his arrival the Governor sent some new clothing to Regent to be distributed to the Liberated Africans. The people assembled for the expected distribution one morning after family prayers. Johnson gave out some of the clothing, but then stopped. He explained to them that since he was not yet well acquainted with them he "would come and see them at their respective Farms, and give them according to their industry". If initially he rewarded labour, he soon only rewarded labour and devotion. In 1818 he met with a group of schoolgirls to hear their testimonies. About twelve were present and all were very attentive. As a reward for their good behaviour he gave each girl one acre of land. Later he ordered some new clothing from the C.M.S. in London and used it to reward his communicants.[132]

His regime of benevolent authoritarianism allied with a well-meaning system of rewards and favours produced, at least of the surface, the model African Christian village peopled by well behaved civilised Africans; exactly what British evangelicals at home were looking for.

In January 1817 Johnson recorded finding a house filled with Recaptives, "many sitting weeping and trembling, others were singing in their broken language".[133] He also recorded hearing hymn singing in the middle of the night and a man's voice praying:

I heard the sound of prayer in the middle of the night but I could only distinguish a few words until the prayer being ended a number of voices blended together to sing the doxology - in the sounds of prayer I had heard the footsteps of God, the sound of a rushing mighty word from heaven a precursor of a new Pentecost.[134]

Johnson attempted the following morning to find out who the people involved were, but without success. However, there can be little doubt that, as Grant makes clear, the Nova Scotian preachers were at work among the Recaptives. On 6th April, outbursts of revivalistic emotionalism began to break out in the Regent church:

In the morning whilst speaking to a crowded congregation on John xi. 25, several were affected, and wept, and prayed aloud for mercy. In the afternoon, the same scene took place, whilst speaking on 1 Cor. xv. 55.
In the evening whilst engaged in prayer, crying and praying became general, so that I was obliged to leave off, and give out a hymn, but all to no use. The greatest part of

the congregation were on their knees, and crying aloud for mercy.... While I passed toward the door, I saw one man on his knees, knocking with his hands on the boards, and crying, "Lord Jesus, me no let thee go - pardon my sins first.[135]

Johnson, influenced by his evangelical aversion to emotionalism, later described by the CMS London committee - who equated emotionalism with antinomianism - as the "wiles of the Devil", had the doorkeepers remove those most strongly affected. This calmed down the atmosphere and restored order in the church. Occasional outbursts still erupted from time to time, but by 6th September, according to Johnson, "groanings and loud prayers have at length ceased to be heard among us."[136] However, later that night "the mountains echoed with the sound of hymns and a service took place led by the villagers themselves."[137] The following morning, Johnson recorded:

This morning when I awoke I heard the girls singing and praying behind the school house. Mrs. Johnson got up and advised them to go to bed which they did. About 4.00 am the boys began to sing in their house after they had sung several hymns I sent one of my servants to advise them to be silent as all the people were asleep.[138]

From a position of hindsight it is easy to appreciate that most of these expressions of emotion were the religious responses of a suffering people who had been uprooted from family, home, friends and lands, and who were earnestly entreating divine help. Only from the Nova Scotian missionaries, who were now very active in the villages, much to the irritation of the European missionaries who called them the "Freetown Ranters", and also those among themselves who were influenced by the Settler chapels, did they receive a form of Christianity which could meet their spiritual and emotional needs. For many Recaptives the spiritual power needed to cope with life's difficulties was sought beyond the boundaries of the Anglican Church of which they were members. Most continued to tap their traditional sources of spiritual power. Thus evolved the religious dualism which became a distinctive feature of Krio Christianity and which is examined in detail later. It is sad to note that after such prodigious and whole-hearted effort by Johnson, and the seemingly magnificent response, the people of Regent "lost interest in churchgoing" after Johnson, suffering from yellow fever and almost blind from ophthalmia which he had caught from some Recaptives, tragically died aboard ship on 4th May 1823 while on his way back to England.[139]

At Gloucester, During, who lacked Johnson's charisma, faced similar problems.[140] Recaptives were again pressurised into adopting an unfamiliar and unsuitable, Westernised form of evangelical Christianity. Fyfe notes:

Once they were under shelter he began Christian instruction by enforcing Sabbath rest, then daily school and religious services. Like Johnson he made them come, sending his recaptive church wardens to round them up, and, as at Regent, some responded with conversion.[141]

When During was on leave in 1822, Johnson observed that the number of backsliders increased alarmingly. The conclusion he unfortunately came to was that more overseers were needed and not that the style of Christianity being imposed on the Recaptives was too foreign to take deep root. During also fell victim of the yellow fever epidemic that swept the Colony in 1823. In August, at the point of death, he set sail for England, but neither he nor his ship ever arrived there. T. S. Johnson, from his Anglican Krio perspective, can only view CMS operations among the Recaptives with satisfaction:

The missionaries began to work in the mountain villages. Their work met with signal success from the beginning, particularly at Regent. In gratitude for the freedom they were enjoying, the Liberated Africans gladly adopted the religion of their benefactors. It is this concentration of C.M.S. work in the villages of the Colony that accounts for the predominance of "Anglicanism" in the villages.[142]

Anglicanism was adopted in the villages, but for the majority the indigenous religions survived, going underground and as far out of view of the European missionary as possible.

By the end of 1824 only twenty-seven of the seventy missionaries sent out by CMS remained alive and some of them were unfit to continue in the work.[143] Whatever their failings, the zeal, dedication, and sheer physical heroism of these men and their wives cannot be questioned. However, it is obvious that the foundations of Nova Scotian Christianity, laid during the evangelical revivals in the American colonies and in Nova Scotia, were quite different from the foundations that were now being laid for the Recaptives, and hence Krio Christianity, in the villages around Freetown under the supervision of CMS missionaries. There was a difference in how problems and needs were perceived and dealt with. One saw the answer in spiritual terms, in being possessed or filled with the power of the Spirit of God,

the other in more material terms, being helped, provided for, educated and civilised. One emphasised traumatic struggle with the sinful nature, leading eventually to inner peace and joy which signified regeneration. The other emphasised attendance at the means of grace and civilised Christian behaviour as the evidence of a holy life and a work of grace. The Nova Scotians encountered Christianity in the "crackling" fires of revival enthusiasm, the Recaptives in the philanthropy of their benefactors. In their independent attitude towards white authority, church and politics the Nova Scotians demonstrated a spirit of "American republicanism", whereas the Recaptives were generally grateful to their liberators and submissive to the Government. In the light of what Krio society was to become over the next half century, Johnson's missionary work, and that of the other pioneer CMS missionaries, was certainly not a failure. There was a core of genuine Christian converts, significant among them the educated elite who were trained to be teachers, evangelists and future leaders of the Anglican church in Sierra Leone and abroad. Three such men were William Tamba, David Noah and William Vivah. However, such men were to build according to the pattern revealed by the CMS missionaries with their European evangelical perceptions.

RECAPTIVE CHRISTIANITY AND THE NOVA SCOTIANS' SPIRITUAL INHERITANCE

The first missionaries to the Recaptives were the independent, emotional and enthusiastic Nova Scotians. Evangelism took place in the homes and work-places under the Apprenticeship Scheme, at the chapels which were open to and welcomed the new arrivals, and also through Nova Scotian mission outreach to the villages. In the Settler churches they experienced some of the vibrancy and vitality of their indigenous worship. Here they could express hurt emotions, shout, sing, clap, and freely respond to the perceived presence and power of God. The confrontation over equal rights, social discrimination and spiritual elitism - the besetting sins of the Nova Scotians - arose later, culminating in Anthony O'Connor's ecclesiastical revolt in 1844 when the Recaptives wrested control of the West African

Methodists from the landed aristocracy at Rawdon Street.[144] Meanwhile, great was the rejoicing on all sides when a bedraggled Yoruba, Igbo or Ashanti Recaptive "found the Lord", "found peace", and started "giving glory".

The popularity of enthusiastic Nova Scotian Methodism among the Recaptives can be seen by the growing number of West African Methodist Society chapels both in Freetown and the villages. By the 1840s, there were "half a dozen affiliated chapels in Freetown itself and another 18 chapels located in the villages."[145] The Huntingdonians at the same time could boast of ten village congregations. The Baptists, after a good early start at Kissy, discouraged by MacCarthy's opposition and suffering from internal conflicts, seem to have had no significant influence in the villages. The Nova Scotian inheritance of pneumatological evangelicalism was passed on to the Recaptives and was mostly in the possession of the dissenting West African Methodists and Huntingdonians. However, the form of Christianity initially encountered by the Recaptives in Freetown was, from the inauguration of MacCarthy's Parish Plan, challenged by British Anglicanism. Nova Scotian enthusiasm had no place in MacCarthy's scheme of things. At Kissy a Nova Scotian Baptist, "built a rough chapel and immersed converts in the stream."[146] When Wenzel arrived as superintendent and pastor in 1816, MacCarthy bought the chapel from the Baptists. The Baptist preacher opened up another preaching post between Kissy and Freetown and began to attract back his congregation. MacCarthy closed the station down and strongly discouraged any further Baptist interference. Preventing "dissenter" missions taking root in the villages was part of his Parish Plan policy. It failed. "Independence teachers", "without education and with little sound knowledge of religious truth", but possessing "the gift of an animating address with a large stock of scriptural expressions" continued to plant dissenter churches in the villages.[147] In 1817 MacCarthy initiated the construction of the prestigious Saint Patrick's Church at Kissy. As he laid the foundation stone the Europeans present marched up and struck the stone three times with a hammer. The CMS missionary Wenzel preached on the text: "Behold I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and he who believes

in him will not be put to shame." There was to be no doubt in the minds of those present where their future prospects were most promising. Work on the ultimate symbol of the power and grandeur of Anglican Christianity, Saint George's Cathedral, was begun in January 1817. Due to difficulties and delays the Cathedral was not completed and officially opened till 28th March 1828, after which time the prestige of Anglicanism in the town was greatly enhanced and their fortunes in the city began to prosper.

Despite the fact that the Nova Scotians were by and large a landed aristocracy and very much a minority group in Freetown, Nova Scotian style Christianity still represented normal Christianity in the city in the 1820s.[148] Of the twelve chapels in Freetown at that time eleven were led by Nova Scotian preachers.[149] The meetings were crowded, "full of tears and embraces, visions and testimonies to the effect of the Holy Spirit in settler lives."[150] By contrast the Anglican church in Freetown prior to the completion of the Cathedral was poorly attended, the congregation consisting mostly of whites and those in Government employment who were "marched to the church under discipline".[151] According to Walker:

It was, clearly, not the Anglicans, nor the lone European Methodist, who established the religious character of the town, so noticeable to visitors, exemplified by a decorous observance of the Sabbath....
Far more Liberated Africans belonged to the settler Methodist society than to the European Methodist or Anglican churches in Freetown. The Nova Scotian preachers and class leaders were also active in the Liberated African villages, where they won large numbers of converts and established chapels affiliated to the settler chapels in Freetown....
All the settler denominations united for a regular Wednesday morning prayer meeting, and on special occasions, such as Good Friday, they joined for an all-night service of hymn and worship. The Methodists and Huntingdonians held joint processions and shared in visions and the visitation of the Holy Spirit. Their Sunday services, sometimes lasting as long as four hours, were all characterised by physical involvement, the clapping, jumping and embracing that a missionary termed "carnel gesticulations" but which the participants considered "an expression of the joy of the heart and of brotherly love". The chapels were also similar in the sense of mission they felt towards the unconverted: they all sent preachers and class leaders into the Liberated African villages to save sinners and to found new societies.[152]

While the old Nova Scotian aristocracy continued to monopolise the leadership of these churches, most congregations were overwhelmingly Recaptive. The *status quo* could not continue indefinitely. In 1844 matters came to a head in a people's revolt led by Popo

Recaptive Anthony O'Connor. O'Connor was converted at Rawdon Street in 1833. He became a popular preacher and married into a Nova Scotian family. However, the Nova Scotian leadership at Rawdon Street would not ordain him or allow him to preach from the pulpit, only from the reading desk. Grant records and comments significantly:

O'Connor finally refused to tolerate what he saw as blatant discrimination and walked out of Rawdon Street leading all the recaptives with him. The many recaptives in the villages who had converted to Christianity under Jewett and Stober's efforts likewise left the Rawdon Street connection and joined forces with O'Connor....
O'Connor took the name "West African Methodist Church", and the group initially worshipped in a dilapidated building known as West End Chapel. Contributions were made and a new chapel, named Samaria, was built for the new church. The result of O'Connor's actions was not simply to bring one more church into the Colony, but to make Nova Scotian Methodism a recaptive Methodism.[153]

When CMS turned their attention to mission in the villages in line with MacCarthy's Parish Plan, a sophisticated English style of Christian worship became available to the Recaptives. The secrets of the whites' spiritual power, the *sine qua non* of African religion, could be learned by reading the white man's Book, so the Recaptives responded eagerly when the missionaries offered to educate their children. The educational goal of the missionaries, however, was to produce African Christian gentlemen, English style. With increasing literacy an educated Recaptive elite did eventually came into being, many of whom prospered commercially as well as educationally and ecclesiastically. The form and style of Krio Christianity was set at this time and continued to develop along the lines of British Anglicanism and its non-establishment rival, British Wesleyanism, until standard Krio Christianity in its twin headed manifestation, Anglican and Methodist, was fully formed. The Nova Scotian planted churches, poor by comparison, were eventually not able to compete.

As the Recaptives prospered economically and socially, their religious fervour and revival enthusiasm cooled. The Nova Scotian aristocracy, prospering in commerce and the professions, and successful Recaptives who wanted to demonstrate their enhanced social standing, gravitated towards the Wesleyan and Anglican churches. Recaptive groups, now evolving into Krio society, were gradually identifying their growing commercial and cultural

interests with Britain, and so increasingly modelling themselves after British social and ecclesiastical patterns. The hard work, resourcefulness and commercial enterprise of the Recaptives produced a wealthy middle class which regarded its material prosperity as a sign of God's favour flowing to them through their British trading and church connections. The prevailing European Christian philosophy, and the one the Colony itself had been founded on, was based on the assumption that commerce and Christianity went hand in hand. Recaptive society as it evolved into Krio society apparently demonstrated to Africans and British evangelicals alike the blessedness of such a marriage of convenience. In 1857 David Livingstone himself was to declare, "I go back to Africa to try to make an open path for commerce and Christianity".[154] By the 1840s, the decade of O'Connor's revolt, even among the Recaptive West African Methodists, the process of becoming British in form and style was well under way. Ironically, in the 1860s the older missionaries were becoming painfully aware of how successful they had been in influencing the style of worship in the Colony and were bemoaning how life had gone out of the church and the glory had departed.

Anglicanism and British Wesleyanism were the styles of Christianity carried back to Nigeria by the returning Recaptives in the 1840s. Since the emergence of independent African states and the collapse of the British Empire, the wisdom of adopting the style of the imperial masters has been increasingly questioned. Professor Idowu, a Methodist clergyman, criticises the Krio for inspiring Nigerians to become "Black Englishmen" like themselves:

The time is now overdue [1965] for the Church in Nigeria to look at herself; to examine her own soul. Several factors combine to lay this as an urgent necessity upon her. And the sum total of these factors is contained in the fact that the Church in Nigeria is on trial: she is being called upon to justify her existence in the country; to answer in precise terms the question as to whether her purpose in Nigeria is not to serve as an effective tool of imperialism, a veritable means of softening up Nigerians for the purpose of convenient exploitation by Europeans. Involved in the indictment against her is also the question as to whether the aim of the religious educators in Nigeria was to make Christians or to "Westernize" Nigerians; whether, in fact, Christianity and "Westernism" are not synonyms in their evangelistic vocabulary. Further still, there is the question as to whether what we have in Nigeria today is in fact Christianity, and not in fact only transplantations from a European cult the various ramifications of which are designated Methodists, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Baptists, Roman Catholics, Salvation Army, Seventh Day Adventists, and so forth....
If it is true that Christianity is a white man's cult, a kind of imperialistic witchcraft

which has been employed to fetter the souls of Nigerians for the sinister purpose of colonial exploitation, then as colonialism has now had its day and its imperialistic hold upon Nigerians has been released, it means that its spell has been broken; the magic, as far as Nigerians are concerned, has lost its power.[155]

The crisis situation facing the present-day Anglican Church in Sierra Leone, which is loosing its youth in large numbers to the Pentecostal-evangelical churches and is struggling to keep its old structures from collapse, makes the question of the choice of Christian style made by the Recaptives and the Krio both contemporary and relevant.

The dissenting churches reached their peak among the Recaptives in the 1840s. By then the Huntingdonians had established chapels in ten villages and their village membership doubled during the 40s decade.[156] Zion Chapel, Wilberforce Street, however, realising that their position *vis a vis* the English denominations was being threatened by lack both of finance and the aura associated with having a white minister, wrote to the English Huntingdonians asking for the help of a minister for their work in Africa. Anthony Elliot, who had succeeded John Ellis as leader, wrote on Christmas Day 1848. There was no reply. However, Anthony's son Richard while visiting London in 1850 contacted members of the Huntingdonian Executive Committee and was given opportunities to speak about the Huntingdonians' work in Africa. This seemingly fortuitous contact resulted in the English Connection agreeing to supply Zion with money and books for their mission to the indigenous tribes. They also offered free passages and accommodation to any Huntingdonian who wanted to come to London, an offer immediately taken up Elliot's eldest son John. Scipio Wright went for a year to the Huntingdonian college and was ordained in 1853. The new contacts brought mixed blessings. On the one hand English finances paid for the salaries of four full-time evangelists and provided for the building of a boat, the *Selina*, which was used for up-country mission work. On the other hand English control followed. First the Rev. George Fowler came out in 1853 and "attempted to organise the Sierra Leone Connection on the same grounds as its English sister."[157] He reported eliminating the cause of some "excitement", "irregularity and confusion" at Campbell Town, and found things "such as I could not altogether approve" at Spa Fields.[158] At Waterloo, he was anxious to introduce

more orderly procedures. At the Women's Band meeting:

There was more excitement and noise than I liked, but the people here are naturally excitable. Seventy related their experiences and there was confusion when they all spoke together. The meeting lasted three and a half hours.[159]

In 1856 the two Huntingdonian leaders, Anthony Elliot and Scipio Wright, both died. The Rev. John Trotter, who was sent out the following year, was almost immediately appointed pastor and superintendent not only of Zion, but of all the Nova Scotian Huntingdonians.

For the first time in its history the Nova Scotian Huntingdonian church fell under the direction of a white man. Yet the people did not consider this to be a betrayal or a rejection of their heritage of independence. On the contrary, chapel membership had increased, they had more money, more schools, and, significantly, more respect in Sierra Leone than before 1850. When Trotter returned to England in 1862 the Zion congregation met and "resolved and carried unanimously, That it is the decided conviction of this conference that unless a European minister is appointed over the churches in this colony, the connexion will soon come to nothing". A more personal, and revealing, appeal came from A. H. Brown, the settler Huntingdonian secretary, who wrote to Trotter "on behalf of the District Meeting":
Oh, our dear Pastor, do come once more to your poor African children; we are all hungry to see you! You will know how you kept us like the other societies when you were here; and how the Governor, the Bishop, the Secretary, the Queen's Advocate, then came to help us. But now we cannot go forward like the other churches.
The settlers obviously believed that only a connection with the European could assure the continued existence of their church.[160]

The Huntingdonians at Spa Fields found it impossible to continue an independent existence and joined the Wesleyans in 1886. In 1887, after a long period without an English superintendent, Zion chapel, also found independence too burdensome and joined up with the African Methodist Episcopal Church of America. Dependence on overseas aid did, in the long run, not greatly benefit the Huntingdonians, who, prior to their English contacts, had founded ten churches in the Recaptive villages and "managed to find sufficient funds to build chapels for their congregations."[161]

The West African Methodist Church, in serious decline after O'Connor's death in 1855, capitulated to their increasing financial and sociological pressures and approached the British United Methodist Free Churches, a body unconnected with the Wesleyan Conference, in 1858. In 1859 the churches amalgamated and the Rev. Joseph New came out to be the

West African Methodist Church's first white superintendent. In June 1861 the proud autonomy of the Rawdon Street Methodists which had lasted for ninety years in Freetown, as well as almost a decade in Nova Scotia, came to an end. With the fabric of the chapel in a dangerous state of repair they decided to join up with the Wesleyans. Shortly afterwards the front wall of the chapel collapsed. Those against the merger claimed the spirits of the founding fathers were angry. The majority saw it as confirmation that they had done the right thing and that to survive they needed outside help. With financial help from the Wesleyans a new chapel was erected, but as Walker observes:

This time the missionaries were more careful, for when the new chapel was completed its ownership was vested not in the trustees but in the European superintendent. Forty years after they had ejected the missionaries from their society, the Nova Scotian Methodists were ... brought under European control.[162]

In 1932 when the United Methodists of England merged with the Wesleyan Methodists to form the United Methodist Church, several former West African Methodist churches took the opportunity to reclaim their former independence. However, their former pneumatological evangelicalism, their Nova Scotian revivalistic heritage, was not restored.

According to Baptist minister the Rev. Valcarcel:

By the year 1853, the first Baptist Church in Freetown was meeting at Rawdon Street, a name which the church later carried, Rawdon Street Baptist Church. Among the officers of the Colonial Service at that time was Mr. John McCormack, who after fellowshipping with the Rawdon Street Baptist Church founded a church of Baptist principles known as the Church of God. This church met at first in his home. It attracted some of the members of the Rawdon Street Baptist Church, the two amalgamated, forming the Church of God Baptist. This church was geared to reaching only the Creoles .... As a result it has remained small, ingrown, and stagnant to this day.[163]

McCormack's Baptist friends in London sent money to support the Freetown church and a trust fund was created with the interest being sent in grants to the Church of God. The Recaptive Baptist chapel, which had separated from the Nova Scotian dominated chapel in 1838 and called themselves the African Baptist Church, succumbed in 1882 to the prevailing financial pressures and joined the Church of God. Twenty years later, in 1902, the small Baptist chapel at Rawdon Street, which had remained in the hands of families mainly of

Nova Scotian descent, and which since 1853 had been receiving some assistance from American Baptist contacts, followed suit in the hope of being sustained by further outside financial help. Within a decade they disbanded. The last significant bastion of autonomous Christianity in Freetown, Saint John's Maroon Church, associated with the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1897, and in 1900 they joined the Wesleyans. Whatever financial benefits accrued from the overseas connections, there followed the inevitable loss of chapel autonomy and control. Christian worship African style was replaced by British Victorian formalism, spontaneity in worship was stifled, enthusiasm was dampened. While this was an acceptable development for the majority of educated and anglophiled Christian Krio, most of whom were Anglican or Wesleyan, the spiritual inheritance of the Nova Scotians was sacrificed on the altar of prestige and social status. The revival flames from the Great Evangelical Awakening were almost totally extinguished. They could be found burning only in the small prayer fellowships, mainly run by Krio ladies. As a result of rejecting their spiritual inheritance, major problems concerning the spiritual vitality and ability of these Krio churches to be self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating, were to surface later.

THE WESLEYAN MISSION SOCIETY'S MISSION TO THE RECAPTIVES

British Methodism, spearheaded by the missionaries of the Wesleyan Mission Society, made its own distinctive contribution to the formation of Krio Christianity. Although not enjoying the same Government backing as the Anglicans, the Wesleyan missionaries, despite their disputes with the Nova Scotians, also experienced church growth both in their Freetown activities and in their mission to the Recaptives. William Davies, on being expelled by the Rawdon Street Methodists was appointed by MacCarthy missionary-superintendent at Leopold in 1817. His short stay at Leopold was seemingly very fruitful. Grant observes:

At Leopold, Davies enjoyed the freedom of his combined role of parish superintendent. By November 1817 he was reporting 50 - 60 people under "serious impressions and in the greatest concern for their salvation" and between two and

three hundred attending the services. This was happening at the same time as William Johnson, another CMS missionary, in the village just along the path was experiencing a similar enthusiasm for church, with high attendances and many expressing their desire for salvation.[164]

However, Davies gained a reputation for rather speedy and indiscriminate baptising, a point in his favour as far as MacCarthy was concerned.

Wesleyan missionaries were welcomed by Recaptives in Portuguese Town and Congo Town. In 1819 the people of Congo Town collected £20 and began building a stone "house for God" such as the Government had built for the CMS missionaries at Kissy and Regent. About 1820 the Wesleyans started congregations at Bathurst Street and Charles Street made up mainly of Recaptives. Thus the Wesleyans were spreading their influence among the Recaptives both in the villages and the Freetown suburbs. British Methodism at this stage of its development had lost some of its early revivalistic enthusiasm, but they were still inspired by a strong social consciousness and also open to "heart warming" Christian emotionalism. There are reports of members leaving the Anglicans and joining the Wesleyans because their hearts could be touched there. Some claimed, "In church people only received instruction whilst in the chapels they saw visions and felt strong shakings."[165] In January 1833, Wesleyan missionary, William Ritchie, wrote:

I am now pretty well acquainted with the habits of the people. I know well how they are wrought upon, it is not mere excitement, but sorrow for sin. Many of whom I have known would neither eat nor drink nor sleep until they know for themselves the Saviour's death.[166]

For many Recaptives the Wesleyans at this time provided a half-way house between the enthusiastic and poor dissenter churches and the civilised and wealthy Anglicans. In 1828 the Wesleyan missionaries were given a shot in the arm by the defection of James Wise from the Rawdon Street Methodists. Wise along with several supporters, John Robinson, Abraham Hazeley, Aberdeen Turner, Isom Gordon, Peter Blair and George Cummings, became itinerant preachers in the Wesleyan circuit and greatly helped the Wesleyans' subsequent expansion. In the 1840s the Wesleyans with their white missionaries, good organisation, progressive and well financed school and teacher training programmes,

outstripped the West African Methodists and other dissenting chapels who were outwith the ambit of white prestige and overseas mission funding. They remained the largest denomination in the Colony until overtaken by the Anglicans in 1860.

Following their rejection of Nova Scotian control in 1844, the West African Methodist Church experienced a drift in their membership towards both the Wesleyans and the Anglicans. This was the way the tide that was bringing in the new social order called Creoledom was running. As the Recaptive communities blended, social pressures pushed the churches to copy things British during its period of empire greatness. All felt the need for large prestigious church buildings put up according to the pattern set by MacCarthy and the Anglicans. While the Wesleyans could follow suit, the West African Methodists could not. Among the Krio, an educated elite was emerging who were prospering commercially and who were not averse to contributing generously to their denomination's prestigious church building projects. These replicas of British churches reflected the European ecclesiastical climate rather than the requirements of Freetown congregations with their more social, communal and spontaneous ways of expressing religious feelings. They did, however, fit into the African Victoriana model the Colony was evolving towards and to which supporters of missions to Sierra Leone were happy to contribute. The main beneficiaries of this status seeking drift were initially the Wesleyans, however, as one's social status further improved, one moved up to the Anglicans. The situation around the year 1850 is summarised by Walker. He writes in the context of, "the aura of prestige, of wealth and education, guaranteed by the European connection":

The settler chapels, and the independent West African Methodists after 1844, could offer no such combination. Their settler-derived prestige had been dissipated by economic displacement. They could not reach the same number of students or potential converts with their limited financial resources. They gained no confirmation of respectability from the presence of white men. As a result, the period following the Liberated African divisions of the 1840s witnessed a move away from the independent chapels and into European mission churches, first to the Wesleyans and then, as the families grew in social position, to the Anglicans. By 1848 the Wesleyan Methodists had twice the membership of all independent black churches combined, and by 1851 the Anglicans with 13,863 members were virtually equal to the Wesleyans' 13,946. In the latter year "African Methodists", both settler and Liberated African, numbered

5,134, the Huntingdonians 2,849 and the Baptists 462. Then in 1860, for the first time, the Church of England became Sierra Leone's largest denomination.[167]

Several new Wesleyan churches were built during the 1850s. The most prestigious of these were Buxton Memorial, opened in 1854, and Wesley Church, the Wesleyans' answer to the Cathedral. Work on Wesley Church was started in 1858, but not completed until 1886.

Long before its completion, Wesley Church had become the obvious symbol of the newly prosperous Freetown Liberated African and Creole. Iron windows were forged in Britain and the materials for the roof came from North America. No expense was spared by the trustees who directed the subscription drive and succeeded in securing a £1,000 donation from the British Wesleyans as well as £200 from the Colonial Government. The trustees themselves included the top people of mid-century Freetown society, Liberated Africans such as John Ezzidio, W. H. Pratt, and William Lewis, those who had already risen by their commercial prowess. The affluence of the Freetown Wesleyans reached such heights that by 1862 the Revd. Charles Marke, a Liberated African preacher, found it necessary to preach against those who would join the society merely for prestige.[168]

The figure of Tregaskis dominated the Wesleyan scene during the 1865-75 period. In the previous two decades the Wesleyans had often been without direct European oversight due to missionary health problems. Christian laymen such as John Ezzidio and William Smith took charge of things as best they could.[169] Ezzidio due to pressure of work and his involvement with the Legislative Council wrote in 1864 to the Wesleyans in London asking for a superintendent to be sent out from Britain. Tregaskis arrived in Freetown in December 1864, tropicalised after thirty years service in the West Indies. According to Fyfe he "devoted himself single-mindedly and ruthlessly to his work". He was a "practical fighter" and a strict Victorian-style disciplinarian.[170] Believing the church to have become careless and easygoing under Ezzidio's supervision he tightened up disciplinary procedures. Several ministers were driven away from the church and Ezzidio, seeing his dream turn into a nightmare, wrote to London asking for Tregaskis' recall. Tregaskis' antipathy towards the Anglicans inspired him to challenge and seek to surpass them in education and church growth, but in this he failed. Tregaskis' tyrannical behaviour eventually alienated missionaries and Sierra Leoneans alike. Fyfe describes Tregaskis as, "a Superintendent who coupled lip-service to building an African church with overbearing contempt of the Africans who were to build it."[171] After his departure on leave in 1874, the Wesleyan Mission Society

appointed Charles Knight to be their first African superintendent.[172] In 1877, Knight became ill and in 1879 he died. This enlightened African experiment was then dropped and a European, the Rev. Matthew Godman, was sent out to take over. By the end of the century the period of growth and expansion of the Wesleyan Methodist Church had come to an end. Decline in conversions had been taking place for several decades, but this had been compensated for by the increase in infant baptisms. In 1900, only thirty-eight adults were baptised whereas there were 314 infant baptisms.[173]

MISSION THROUGH EDUCATION AND THE BIRTH OF AN EDUCATED KRIO ELITE

With Johnson, During and MacCarthy, the mainstays of the Parish Plan dead, relationships between CMS and the Government altered. The Parish Plan, which had never been free from disagreement and rancour, particularly over the supply of missionary personnel, could no longer be sustained. Of the 79 missionaries and their wives sent out up to 1824 at least 53 had died while on active service, and of the five that came to Freetown in 1823 four died within six months.[174] Most missionaries had belatedly discovered, like Nylander who took over at Kissy when Wenzel died in 1818, that neither he:

... nor any of our missionaries, placed as superintendents to a Captured Negro Town, are in our right sphere as missionaries.... We are encumbered with everything connected with our situations as Superintendents of public works, clearing and repairing Roads, imprisoning and punishing.[175]

Law enforcement was the state duty most disliked by the missionaries, it undermined their Gospel ministries. Nylander wrote to Pratt in 1821 that:

I am as averse to corporal punishment as any - and so averse that I have been censured for not keeping my people under greater subjection by those means; but I must freely confess that no Captured Negro Superintendent can dispense with it at present.... At present we have to consider them as Children of a barbarous uncivilized country where nothing but the fear of punishment keeps them in subjection.... When I wrote to you of the inconsistency of our being Ministers and Superintendents of Captured Negroes I mentioned no particulars: but now I must candidly tell you, that this is one of our burdens. None of us I am sure will make use of the rod without sufficient cause and in a degree consistent with the character of a tender parent.[176]

Four months after MacCarthy's death, CMS asked for the burden of superintending the villages to be lifted. Both sides welcomed the collapse of the Parish Plan. The missionaries concentrated on preaching and teaching their Recaptive protégés who would communicate the Gospel to their own peoples unhampered by racial and cultural barriers. They were, however, in competition with the dissenting chapels who were growing in membership and number of chapels during the 30s and 40s, and also the British Wesleyans who were growing even faster and who were also involved in teaching and training. They were also in competition with the Koranic schools run by Mandinka and Fula *karamoko* and *alpha* at Fula Town and Fourah Bay.

The twin strategy of church planting and evangelical education whose main purpose was to produce literates who could read the Bible, was from the beginning the major evangelistic thrust of CMS mission in the Recaptive villages. Realising the firm grip indigenous religion had on the older generation of Recaptives, CMS concentrated their missionary effort on the young, hoping to wean them from their parents' "heathen" customs. Where possible, boarding education was instituted where pupils were separated from their "pagan" background. The first teachers sent out to work among the Recaptives in 1816 were commissioned with this exhortation:

We are not backward to confess that our main hopes of being instruments of God to Africa are founded on the rising generation. The state of the Native Mind, and the habits in which the people have long indulged, are most unfavourable to their moral and religious improvement.
The society has, therefore, resolved to spare no pains in the education of the children. The evil influence of the family and environment around the children have led the Society to look, with more confident hopes, to some plan which may wholly separate children from the influence of evil sentiments and habits.... It has taken measures, in consequence, to erect the Christian Institution of Sierra Leone.[177]

The Christian Institution, which after moving to Regent in 1819, then down to Wilberforce Street in Freetown in 1826, moved over to Fourah Bay, the Muslim Aku area, in 1827. It was renamed Fourah Bay College in 1841. Its influence in moulding the Krio Christian leadership and establishing the British evangelical pattern of worship in the Colony and along the West African coast has been of immense importance.

The Christian Institution's most illustrious student was Samuel Ajayi Crowther who was consecrated the first African Anglican bishop at Canterbury Cathedral on 29th June 1864.[178] In 1827, with five others, Crowther was in the first class of admissions when the Institution opened at Fourah Bay. After completing the course and a period as schoolmaster at Regent, Crowther returned to Fourah Bay College as assistant tutor and then assistant to the Superintendent. He was chosen, as a Yoruba speaker, to go on the disastrous 1841 Niger Expedition whose aim was to open up the Niger for commerce and thus undermine the slave trade.[179] The expedition, where only 15 of the 145 whites survived, while all the blacks did, caused CMS to realise that Sierra Leoneans, with their disease immunities, their knowledge of Nigerian languages and customs, and their high standard of education, were the ideal pioneers for their Nigeria mission. They would be the missionary-evangelists, teachers, linguists and Bible translators. In 1843, Crowther was taken to England and ordained first a deacon then a priest. He was commissioned to spearhead mission and translation work in Yorubaland. T. S. Johnson writes that on Crowther's return to Freetown:

The novelty of seeing one of their own colour performing service as a clergyman excited great interest among all classes in the community, who spoke of him as having been "crowned" a minister.[180]

After one year in Freetown, Crowther sailed to Nigeria, landed at Badagry on 17th January 1845, and proceeded to Abeokuta. Here he was reunited with his mother. She wanted to offer sacrifices to the ancestors for protecting her son and bringing him home, but Crowther proclaimed that she owed this mercy to the Christian God.[181] His mother and a sister were among his first converts. He translated the baptism service into Yoruba for the benefit of his mother. Johnson proudly declares:

Thus began the work in Nigeria, mainly by missionaries from Sierra Leone under the leadership of Mr. Crowther, afterwards first native Bishop of the Anglican communion in British West Africa. Thus from Sierra Leone, as from Jerusalem of old, the Gospel message has radiated to almost every part of West Africa.[182]

Ayandele, however, dismisses this gracious African Anglican Christian as one of a group of "deluded hybrids".[183] Crowther's humiliation during CMS's purge the Niger Mission and their refusal to consecrate another black bishop as his successor will be looked at elsewhere.

The Yoruba outreach Crowther pioneered and the Niger Mission which he led following its inception in 1857, were significant missionary endeavours spearheading the advance of evangelical Christianity through Africans into the inland regions of Nigeria. These ventures drew into mission in West Africa, theology and linguistics graduates of Fourah Bay College, and justified the academic and linguistic bias of CMS's higher education programmes.[184] Paul Hair points out that between 1840 and 1900, of the 110 "native clergy" employed by CMS in West Africa, at least 70 were from Freetown and district, and in 1880 there were about 30 of them serving in the Niger Mission.[185] On the other hand this missionary drive towards Nigeria, and to a lesser extent Gambia, Ghana and Dahomey, depleted the Sierra Leone Church of some of her choice leaders and also led inevitably to neglect of mission to the hinterland, which was conducted in the main by Krio traders and artisans. The educated elite's primary missionary vision was to take the Gospel back to the ancestral homelands. This was what Archdeacon Dandeson Crowther challenged them to in 1892:

If we, educated sons and daughters of West Africa, with all our intelligence and advantages, cannot, or rather shrink now from facing difficulties for the extension of the Gospel of Christ *in our country* and wait to have it done by others, who, with their lives in their hands, come out to do it - it will be a cause for great humiliation.... To give up to Europeans *now,* to me shows a great want of faith in God... and a reproach of our African character as being always dependable on other people even for his own good.... Here is the vast Iboland, our own father and mother land needing the Gospel - are we to be content to enjoy English sermons at Sierra Leone, praying that Europeans should be sent to them, or to have subscribed in England the mites of widows and pennies of children to send the Gospel to our own flesh and blood?[186]

From the beginning of its Recaptive work CMS had recognised that its goals in Africa, evangelistic and educational, could only be attained through the agency of "intelligent and pious natives". Despite the difficulties and the many deaths of mission personnel, CMS were determined to pursue, "by all means in their power...the education of intelligent and pious natives with the view of their becoming Christian teachers among their countrymen."[187] Two secondary schools were started in 1845, one for boys, the CMS Grammar School, and one for girls, the Female Institution at Regent. Both were boarding schools. In one of his ingenuous autobiographical insertions, Sibthorpe eulogises the benefits derived from a

Grammar School education where the concentration was on English studies which included "grammar, arithmetic, geography, English, Grecian, Roman and Bible histories" for the less academic, and additionally, for those hoping to graduate to Fourah Bay College, "classics and mathematics rightly so-called."[188]

The late Mr. William Betts observed that whatever African is capable and not willing to visit England once in his life does the greatest harm to himself. But I say unto Sierra Leone youths, any elementary scholar whose parents can afford it, who does not pass through the Grammar School before active service, will all life be a "blunt axe". With natural ability or without, Grammar School is a new world of wisdom inside Freetown; the atmosphere of common-sense pervades the premises; even a dunce, when he enters here, if he cannot learn by books, he will by looks and hearings. Let no Sierra Leone youth enter into active life without being baptized into the Grammar School education. *It is Sierra Leone boys' Porroh Bush!*[189]

In 1850 the Female Institution moved to the parsonage at Kissy Road and in 1855 the new building on the grounds was ready for use and the ladies moved over from the parsonage. Its name was changed to the Annie Walsh Institution in 1865.[190] Sibthorpe's enthusiasm for the Grammar School was to be matched only by his passion for the Annie Walsh Institution which he called the "Bonda Bush" of Krio girls, and from which "most of the clergymen procure wives, and in it their own daughters are educated."[191]

Sibthorpe's views concerning the benefits of a British education were typical of the majority of the Krio educated elite, but there was some disquiet about Africans receiving such an alien education. This found expression in the speeches and writings of E. W. Blyden and James Johnson. To them the evangelical education of the missionaries was a failure as it alienated the youths from their native cultures, taught them the histories of European nations and not their own, made them dependent on Europeans and stifled their native originality and inventiveness. In 1872, Blyden, in his newspaper ***The Negro***, criticised Christian missionary teaching and proposed the setting up of the West African University where the educational programmes would be aimed at meeting the needs and aspirations of Africans, and the teachers would be Africans, including Muslim.[192] For this he brought down upon his head the fury of Tregaskis, and also the antipathy of Bishop Cheetham who was already incensed at the influence of Blyden's African philosophy among the Anglican clergy and the educated

Krio who had by then come to doubt if anything in their past histories and customs was worth preserving or even knowing. Assailed by missionary criticism, Blyden retired to Monrovia in 1873 and ***The Negro*** ceased publication.

Many of the educated Recaptive and Krio young men and women demonstrated their appreciation of their British Christian inheritance by becoming church members and attending church at least at divine service on Sundays and especially on Communion Day Sundays. Whatever the depth of their Christian commitment, they had certainly been well instructed in Scripture and the main evangelical doctrines of inbred sin, vicarious atonement, and salvation through faith in Christ alone.[193] The significance of this and its importance in the influence the Krio can exert on the mainly non-Krio Pentecostal-evangelical revival movement will be taken up later. From the beginning the missionaries were at pains to teach "sound doctrine" and to impress that the Bible, rather than fallible dreams and visions, was the ultimate authority in spiritual matters. Grant writes:

Sierra Leoneans [i.e. Krio] **themselves recognised the place of the Christian church and upheld the value of a Christian society and a Christian education. By 1861 there was no doubt in many of the professional classes in the peninsula that the source of England's greatness, the Bible, was also proving to be the source of Sierra Leone's greatness.**[194]

In Sierra Leone the triumverate of European civilisation, education, and evangelical Christianity, became practically indissoluble. Yet changes were to come with increasing Government involvement in the field of education during the twentieth century. At the 1966 seminar on "The City of Freetown" held at Fourah Bay College, Canon Fashole-Luke bemoaned the then passing away of the evangelism through education atrategy which had been for the Anglicans and Methodists their main means of making converts:

In these [Christian] **schools all children - Christian, Muslim, and pagan - are compelled to take part in religious devotions, to study the Bible and Christian teaching, and to observe the Christian ideals of the schools. This was a very useful tool in the churches' evangelistic efforts, when the churches had the monopoly of schools in Freetown. But now that the State is providing more and even better schools, and also has control over them, opportunities for evangelizing the pagan children are being reduced. Even though the United Christian Council decided to manage its own primary schools, nevertheless it is becoming clear that it is difficult for it to compete with the schools under the auspices of the Local Education Authority. Furthermore,**

the independence of these U.C.C. Schools is severely limited by the Ministry of Education, which pays the salaries of the teachers and has to approve of their appointments. But though these avenues are being closed to the churches, attempts are being made to devise other methods of evangelizing the pagan tribesmen of the city; it may be that the growth and development of tribal churches is at least one attempt in the right direction.[195]

By noting the tribal churches that were starting to emerge in the city, especially through the efforts of the Assemblies of God and the Evangelical United Brethren, Professor Fashole-Luke was tolling the knell over a fossilising British missionary strategy that was no longer justifying its existence and expenditure, and hailing one of the new directions along which evangelism and church expansion was then beginning to move.

BLACK CONGREGATIONS, BLACK CLERGY, WHITE BISHOPS AND THE NATIVE PASTORATE CHURCH

Accompanying the expansion of missionary education was a parallel growth in the membership of the Anglican and Wesleyan churches. As the churches expanded it became apparent to mission committees that missionaries, CMS and Wesleyan, could no longer provide adequate pastoral care for their spreading flocks. Grant notes that:

It was in this context that Henry Venn presented his ideas for self supporting, self governing churches to the Parent Committee of the CMS already anxious that the ministry of the "native congregations" be transferred to the Ecclesiastical Establishment leaving the CMS free to continue its mission to the Heathen....
He believed that the breath of life in a Native Church depended on the church's ability to govern, support and extend itself. The "euthanasia of a mission", a phrase used by Venn as early as 1844, became his key phrase in policy making.[196]

In Sierra Leone, both missionaries and congregations, believed that the time had come for the Anglican Church to have its own resident Bishop. T. S. Johnson records that a large number of baptised Recaptives were awaiting confirmation, several teachers and catechists were ready for ordination so as to administer the sacraments to the congregations on a regular basis, and some churches and cemeteries needed to be consecrated by a bishop. On 27th December 1852, the Rev. Owen Emeric Vidal, the first Bishop of the newly constituted Bishopric of Sierra Leone, arrived in Freetown. The body of the Anglican Church in Sierra

Leone was black, but its head was to be white until 1961 when the Rev. M. N. C. O. Scott (1961-71), took over from Bishop Horstead, the last of the white Bishops. Bishop Vidal was welcomed with great rejoicing, his arrival greatly enhancing Anglican prestige in the Colony. Visiting Christ Church, Pademba Road, the bishop recorded, "I never witnessed such a congregation as I met on that occasion: there could not have been fewer than 1,800 persons inside the church, and numbers without."[197] At his first ordination service, held at St. George's Cathedral on 20th January 1853, two Europeans were made deacons and another admitted to priest's orders. No Sierra Leonean was ordained. Later that year the Bishop visited Lagos, succumbed to a fever and died while sailing back to Freetown.

Bishop Weeks was consecrated in 1855. One of his first tasks was to ordain the first eight clergymen of the Anglican Church in Sierra Leone to be ordained in Sierra Leone, Ajayi Crowther having been ordained a deacon and afterwards a priest in England in 1843. These men J. C. Taylor, Jacob Cole, John J. Thomas, Joseph Wilson, J. Taylor, James Quaker, S. Wiltshire and J. Campbell were to become the first Sierra Leonean clergymen of the soon to be formed Native Pastorate Church.[198] Bishop Weeks, who had taught Ajayi Crowther to read and write, steered the mission in the direction it was being inexorably driven. Unfortunately he died in 1857, but by then the foundations for the Native Pastorate had been laid. The momentum towards a native pastorate gained force among the clergy during this period of rising Krio self-consciousness. The three main questions discussed were, what was to be the constitution of the native church, how was it going to be financed, and when would the first Sierra Leonean Bishop be consecrated? There was strong pressure to consecrate Crowther as Bishop, but Venn, aware of the hostile reaction of the missionaries, declined to recommend him. "I objected on the ground that it was too much of an English Colony and it was with difficulty that I could stop the nomination."[199] Grant points out that:

While Venn wished for a "native" Bishop, it was for a "native" Bishop as head of a "native" church.... The church in Sierra Leone was too much an English Church; it was not "native" in the sense that Venn envisaged the church of the Yoruba or Niger Delta to be. There were too many Europeans involved in the Church in Sierra Leone to allow it ever to become a "native" church.

Venn was also aware that neither the colonial church in Sierra Leone, nor the Government there, would have totally accepted Crowther as head of the Church. Crowther would not have been Bishop of a "native" church, and it did not seem appropriate to Venn that there should be two Bishops in Sierra Leone, a Bishop of the colonial church and a Bishop of the native pastorate. Crowther also had suggested that it was not appropriate for a native clergyman to take up such a position.[200]

Instead of Crowther, Bishop Bowen replaced Bishop Weeks. After Bishop Bowen died in 1860, Bishop Beckles took over (1860 - 1870).

The Native Pastorate Church Controversies

The status of the first eight locally ordained native clergy *vis a vis* the Bishop was initially much similar to what prevailed in England. In 1860, in order to adapt to the local situation, a constitution for the Native Church was worked out, stating among other things:

That the charge and superintendence of the native pastors and Christian congregations which have been, or may hereafter be, raised through the instrumentality of the Society's mission in Sierra Leone, be placed under the Bishop of Sierra Leone assisted by a Council and by a Church Committee, and that arrangements be proposed for providing the native pastors with a suitable income from local resources and also for giving them a status assimilated to that of incumbent at home (e.g. England).[201]

CMS were asking the native church to take over the financial and evangelistic responsibilities of the church while at the same time keeping a secure grip on the helm. The function of the Council and Committee was to support the Bishop. They were composed partly of nominees of the Bishop and partly of members elected by the clergy. The Council was to help the Bishop with administration, the selection of pastors and to deal with complaints. The Committee was to oversee the collection and disbursement of church funds, pay the pastors' stipends, repair churches and parsonages, and build new ones. Only the Bishop could ordain candidates for the ministry.

On All Saints' Day 1861 the Native Pastorate got under way with the transfer of ownership from CMS to the Pastorate of nine pastors and their parishes.[202] These included Kissy, Wellington and Hastings. Other churches and mission stations were progressively handed over by CMS; Christ Church was transferred in 1875; Holy Trinity, known as "Vanity Fair" after it was furnished with stained-glass windows from England, was transferred in 1878.

Despite democratising and widening the administrative base, just as the secular control was in the hands of the Governor and the Colonial Office, so ecclesiastical control remained firmly in the hands of the Bishop, the missionaries and the CMS London Committee. This exercise in democracy freed the Bishop from many of his routine pastoral and administrative chores, it put the responsibility for the growth of the Anglican church in Sierra Leone into local hands, but it refused to relinquish ultimate power. Meantime, with the erosion of their authority relations between missionaries and native pastors deteriorated and tensions developed. CMS had invested heavily in Sierra Leone, in lives, labour and money, and they feared that by vesting control in the hands of the natives all could be dissipated by incompetence and corruption. This kind of dilemma has also plagued other missions and soured mission and national church relationships down to the present. Of course, by inheriting the crippling burden of maintaining church buildings and paying clergy salaries, any significant expansion of the church without continuing financial help from the parent body in England was impossible. By this ecclesiastical neo-colonialism, CMS's first Anglican transplant into Africa continued to grow in dependence and develop strictly along British Anglican lines, despite Venn's dream of a self-financing and self-governing native church and the fact that in Sierra Leone there was now a well established African church operating with an expanding body of well educated African clergy.

The pastors of the Native Pastorate Church were dissatisfied with the new arrangement. James Johnson at Christ Church, Pademba Road, who represented the radical wing of the clergy, questioned the necessity and wisdom of being ruled over by white bishops.[203] Johnson was born at Benguema in 1836 of Aku parents, educated at the Grammar School and Fourah Bay College, and ordained in 1863. His Christ Church parish was full of indigenous religious practices. According to Fyfe, CMS missionary Beale had once attacked an *Egungun* dancing "devil" masquerading in the street outside the church. *Shango* worship was openly practised in the parish. Just beyond Brookfields there was a *Bundu* "bush", and many Krio visited the popular indigenous shrine at George Water.[204] Johnson freely mixed

with his parishioners, speaking Yoruba to those to whom it was their mother tongue. At an open-air service a he rebuked a *Shango* worshipper who was disturbing the event. The man died soon afterwards and the parish residents were greatly impressed. Influenced by his own personal experiences in communicating the Gospel in a pluralist religious community and by his exposure to Edward Blyden's "Negro personality" philosophy, in which the benefits of Europeanisation and evangelical education were seriously questioned, Johnson struggled with the issues involved in communicating his Europeanised Christianity to people, mostly illiterate, with an indigenous religious background. He questioned the effectiveness of European missionaries and advocated a process of indigenisation.

Edward Blyden's arrival in Freetown in August 1871 - commissioned by Venn for linguistic work and mission to the Fula - brought all the racial issues to a head. Bishop Cheetham, who had taken up his charge earlier in the year, and the missionaries, strongly resented Blyden's negative views on European mission work and his divisive influences among the clergy with whom he was immensely popular. Lynch describes Henry Cheetham as, "An energetic man, with a low opinion of native African ability, and with no patience for the 'pretensions' of native pastors towards ecclesiastical independence."[205] Neither the Bishop nor the missionaries would co-operate with Blyden who had hoped to change missionary attitudes to Africans by working from within the mission organisation. His comment on the missionaries, in a correspondence with Venn, was scathing:

I find there is not much sympathy here for the study of native languages or for the interior enterprise. As a general thing the European missionary, however ardent his zeal in behalf of "poor benighted Africa" while in Europe, as soon as he comes in actual contact with the Negro, his ardour undergoes a sensible refrigeration.[206]

On an unproven rumour of his having committed adultery with Mrs. Royle, wife of the Liberian President, Blyden's appointment with CMS was terminated after only three months. He then took up Government service. Blyden's criticisms of missionary ethnocentricity and their education policy and domination of the African church were supported by Johnson. While Blyden was involved in travel in the interior, Johnson took over as editor of ***The***

Negro, and according to Cheetham, declared that "the Church of England is not our church", condemned the "mistaken benevolence of Protestant missionary societies", and expressed his ardent desire for an independent Native Church.[207] In a correspondence with the acting Governor, Pope-Hennessy, Johnson complained:

In the work of elevating Africans, foreign teachers have always proceeded with their work on the assumption that the Negro or the African is in every one of his normal susceptibilities an inferior race, and that it is needful in everything to give him a foreign model to copy; no account has been made of our peculiarities - our languages, enriched with the traditions of centuries; our parables, many of them the quintessence of family and national histories; our modes of thought, influenced more or less by local circumstances; our poetry and manufacture, which, though rude, had their own tales to tell; our social habits and even the necessities of our climate.[208]

Bishop Cheetham, who viewed Blyden as "the great source of evil", was alarmed by the "most strong and virulent anti-white feeling" that was being generated, fought back.[209] Following the decease of Venn in January 1873, Bishop Cheetham decided the time was ripe for ending the revolt fermenting among the pastors. He threatened to withhold funds he had collected for the Native Pastorate Church while home in England. He also refused to promote dissidents. He presented the pastors with a questionnaire to test their loyalty. The pastors were in a weak position. They were also facing opposition from the leading laymen, the wealthy anglophile merchants on whose contributions the churches depended and who felt their status and positions threatened by the rising power of the pastors. In the end the pastors, distancing themselves from Blyden, yet remaining loyal to Johnson, capitulated:

As to the grave evil done through mistaken benevolence, they were not prepared to say what the nature of those evils were, and who did them. As to what they were in relation to the Church of England, they answered that they were the legitimate offspring of that Church and will ever remember with gratitude the good done them through her. They were not proprietors of the *Negro* and were not responsible for the opinions expressed therein. But they were free to express that James Johnson had done a great service to the pastorate at a very important crisis.[210]

Johnson was invited by CMS to come to England to familiarise the Committee with the problems facing the Pastorate. He went with the hopes of many Krio that changes in the ecclesiastical and educational systems would be forthcoming. His own vision was of an independent African church which would be free from foreign control and sectarianism, and

which would effect the redemption of Africa. The Bishop wrote warning letters to the CMS Secretary. When Johnson arrived in England in May 1873 the Committee's position was:

While it sympathised with the aspirations of the Africans, it considered that ecclesiastical independence for them would be premature. It urged mutual tolerance and forbearance between Africans and Europeans. It was, however prepared to consent to opening Fourah Bay College as a non-denominational institution of higher learning.[211]

The bid for independence petered out and the fires of Krio nationalism were quenched. With the tide now running against the advocates of independence and self-government as a result of the Ashanti War of 1873-4, and a swell of anti-Krio racism on the rise, the FBC concession was all that was available. FBC was affiliated with Durham University and Freetown became the "Athens of West Africa". Johnson returned to Freetown in January 1874 with instruction to transfer to Breadfruit Mission, Lagos. The pastors protested, but to no avail. With Johnson out of the way, "the controversy came to a quiet end".[212] Johnson, however, did not cease to address the issues involved. In 1908 he submitted an article to the Pan-Anglican Congress entitled "The Relation of Mission Work to Native Customs". His argument, the result of mature thinking and practical experience, is summarised by Spitzer:

Johnson emphasised that Christianity was not intended to be the religion of any one particular race of people, but of the entire world. In every continent it wore a slightly different garb so as to blend with indigenous beliefs. Johnson believed that, so far as Africa was concerned, Christianity could be spread without "denationalizing" and Europeanizing Africans. This did not mean that practices such as infanticide, ritual cannibalism, and witchcraft ordeals had to be tolerated. These were naturally repulsive, contrary to all justice, and were obviously legitimate objects of attack and suppression. Body and facial tattooing, domestic slavery, home sepulchres - customs which were unenlightened but not entirely abhorrent - were to be left to die naturally through quiet ameliorative influence. But, Johnson warned, Christian missionaries should not meddle in name-giving, dress, and marriage customs of African peoples. African names, he pointed out, were not necessarily heathen, and African dress was merely a matter of convenience and taste which should not at all be taken to reflect on the enlightenment of a particular individual. Likewise, since Jesus Christ did not prescribe any one particular marriage custom or ceremony, Johnson saw nothing wrong with native marriage practices and felt that they could continue in the Traditional African manner. Furthermore, while he believed that monogamy should be an ultimate ideal, he was against excluding polygynists from the church.[213]

Johnson remained an Anglican at heart and an advocate of selective indigenisation. His vision was that the Native Pastorate would become a fully Africanised Anglican Church.

The Constitution drawn up by Bishop Beckles lasted until 1890 when a new one was deemed necessary, mainly because Bishop Ingham (1883-1897) felt he needed more control over the transfer of clergy. While the democratic base of the new constitution was widened by the inclusion of parish representatives who basically supported the institution of a white bishop, the Bishop's control over the clergy was strengthened. Five of the clergy, who were against being moved from their present charges, refused to give their assent to the new constitution and demanded the right to remain under the old one. This led to a bitter legal battle which the CMS lost. Despite their legal victory, the five dissidents were forced, by the congregations taking the law into their own hands, to vacate their parsonages. The white Bishop still commanded the support of powerful and influential pro-British forces among the laity. On his assumption of office, Ingham's successor Bishop Taylor-Smith (1897-1901), a strict disciplinarian, announced that, "people should bear in mind that he was here to *govern* the Church committed to his oversight".[214] The five pastors realising their lack of power to resist the white Bishop wrote a conciliatory letter dated 8th January 1898 saying:

My Lord,
We, the undersigned, clergymen of the Church of England residing in this Colony, respectfully offer you our congratulations on your elevation to the episcopate, and welcome you on your arrival as Bishop of this Diocese.
We trust that the experience gained by you of men and things during your former residence as Canon Missioner will be of great service to you in the cause of our common Lord and Master in this your elevated position as the Chief Pastor of the flock in this part of the Lord's Vineyard and that you will endeavour, God being your helper, to feed the flock of Christ over which the Holy Ghost has made you an overseer.
We are fully confident that if, like Solomon on his accession to the throne of Israel, you seek counsel and wisdom from the Most High, the Church in Sierra Leone, which has most unfortunately been split up these many years past into so many factions, will, under your superintendence, by the help of God, have all its breaches healed, will expand, and be consolidated, and the work of our God shall prosper in your hands.
That peace, prosperity, and spiritual vitality may be the heritage of the Church during your episcopate is the earnest prayer of ...
Your Lordship's most humble & obedient Servants,
(*Sgd.*) *Moses Taylor* and others.[215]

The Bishop thanked them for their letter and good wishes and expressed the hope that since "peace and prosperity" were the fruit of obedience and unity, these virtues would characterise their own lives.

The Native Pastorate controversies exposed the foreigness of imported Anglicanism and also the depth to which it had become the religion of the educated and wealthy elite. Even the enlightened and progressive native pastors were not able to overcome Anglican entrenchment. However, even at that stage the failure of Anglicanism to indigenise and meet the existential and problem-solving needs of Sierra Leoneans was made apparent. The ethnocentricity of CMS missionaries was plainly demonstrated, and the reluctance of CMS to relinquish ultimate control over the affairs of the Krio Anglican Church to the Krio was made glaringly obvious. The result was a diminishing of the power and consequently the zeal and enthusiasm of the clergy, an increased formalism in worship, and a further extinguishing of inspiration, spontaneity and vitality among the laity. The Anglican church, now called the Church of Sierra Leone, was to continue for seventy more years under the control of white bishops who were secure in the knowledge that, because they were British and Anglican during the Empire period, they commanded popular Krio support. The inevitable end to rule by white bishops came in 1961 when the Rev. M. N. C. O. Scott succeeded the retiring Bishop Horstead to become the twelfth bishop of the Diocese of Sierra Leone. The most remarkable thing about the changeover was that it had taken so long. However, merely changing an English bishop for a Krio one did not in itself address the deeper inner spiritual dilemma or solve the pressing problems of the church. The next chapter will examine twentieth century developments within the Anglican and Methodist churches, the dualistic nature of Krio Christianity and the continuing survival of the Christian Krio's African religious inheritance.

[1] It is preferable to use the term *Krio* rather than *Creole*. *Creole* came into the English language from the Spanish *criollo* which was a term used to differentiate those of Spanish parentage who were born abroad in the Spanish colonies of the West Indies and Americas, from those born in Spain, but later the term came to be applied to people of mixed racial ancestry, particularly the mulattos of the Carribean region. In Sierra Leone the word was used initially to describe Recaptive children who were born in the Colony, possibly by the Maroons and Nova Scotians in a derogatory sense, but gradually it came to be used for whole heterogeneous community of Liberated Africans, Nova Scotians and Maroons, all of whom were eventually to blend into the distinctive Creole community. Professor Wyse of the History Department at the University of Sierra Leone claims *Krio* derives from a Yoruba verb *akiriyo* which means to walk around and be satisfied. This came to be applied to Liberated Africans, who were in the habit of wandering around visiting after attending church services. With the waning of British influence, the *Krio* community began to replace *Creole* with *Krio* when referring to their language. Now the term is also used to describe the community. In this study the term Krio will be used for the language and the community.

[2] Christopher Fyfe, ***A History of Sierra Leone***, (London: Oxford University Press, 1962a): ***Sierra Leone Inheritance***, (London: Oxford University Press, 1964): Christopher Fyfe and Eldred Jones (eds.), ***Freetown: a Symposium***, (Freetown: Sierra Leone University Press, 1968): James W. Walker, ***The Black Loyalists: the Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone 1783-1870***, (London: Longman Group Limited, 1976): John Peterson, ***Province of Freedom: a History of Sierra Leone 1787-1870***, (London: Faber and Faber, 1969): Akintola Wyse, ***The Krio of Sierra Leone: an Interpretative History***, (London: C. Hurst and Co., 1989).

[3] Michael Banton, ***West African City: a Study of Tribal Life in Freetown***, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957): Arthur T. Porter, ***Creoledom: a Study of the Development of Freetown Society***, (London: Oxford University Press, 1963): Leo Spitzer, ***The Creoles of Sierra Leone: Responses to Colonialism 1870-1945***, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974): W. S. Marcus Jones, ***Legal Development and Constitutional Change in Sierra Leone (1787-1971)***, (Ilfracombe, Devon: Arthur H. Stockwell Ltd., 1981).

[4] Andrew F. Walls, "The Nova Scotian Settlers and their Religion" in ***SLBR***, 1(1), June 1959, pp.19-31; "The Usefulness of Schoolmasters" in ***SLBR***, 3(1), June 1961, pp.28-40; "A Christian Experiment: the Early Sierra Leone Colony" in ***The Mission of the Church and the Propagation of the Faith***, ed. J. G. Cuming, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp.107-29; "Black Europeans, White Africans: Some Missionary Motives in West Africa" in ***Religious Motivation: Biographical and Sociological Problems for the Church Historian***, ed. D. Baker, (Oxford: Blackwood, 1978), pp.339-48.

[5] A. B. C. Sibthorpe, ***The History of Sierra Leone***, (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1970, fourth edition, first edition published in 1868): Thomas S. C. Johnson, ***The Story of a Mission - the Sierra Leone Church: First Daughter of C.M.S.***, (London: SPCK, 1953).

[6] Elizabeth Currie Grant, ***The Development of Krio Christianity in Sierra Leone 1792-1861***, (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1993).

[7] Bengt G. M. Sundkler, ***Bantu Prophets in South Africa***, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961, second edition; first edition published by Lutterworth Press in 1948).

[8] 1,196 Black Loyalists sailed from Halifax on January 15th. 1792. According to Clarkson's report 1,131 reached Sierra Leone, disembarked on 7th. March and held their first Sunday Thanksgiving Service on the 11th. See Walker, ***ibid.***, p.159.

[9] Walls, (***1994***), p.315.

[10] Walls, (***1970***), p.107.

[11] For the history of the Black Poor settlement, its origins and its fortunes in Sierra Leone see, Fyfe, ***ibid.***, pp.13-19: Walker, ***ibid.***, pp.95-114: Peterson, ***ibid.***, pp.17-27: Jones, ***ibid.***, pp.7-45.

[12] Included in the party was a sizeable group of over 100 whites, made up of colonists seeking a new life in Africa, about 60 white women, some of questionable virtue, and the agents of the Committee.

[13] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, pp.18, 20-21.

[14] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.103.
[15] Lamin O. Sanneh, ***West African Christianity: the Religious Impact***, (London: C. Hurst and Co., 1983)., pp.xv-xvi.
[16] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.34.
[17] For Grant's analysis of the Frazier/Herskovits debete see ***ibid.***, pp.34-37. For the and Frazier and Herskovits debate see, Franklin Frazier, ***The Negro Family in the United States***, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1939): Melville J. Herskovits, ***Myth of the Negro Past,*** (New York: Harper, 1941).
[18] Frazier, ***ibid.***, p.87.
[19] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.35, quoting from Melville J. Herskovits in F. S. Herskovits (ed.), ***The New World Negro***, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966), p.174.
[20] Eugene D. Genovese, ***Roll Jordan Roll: the World the Slaves Made***, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), p.211. A. J. Raboteau, ***Slave Religion: the Invisible Institution in the Antebellum South***, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p.86.
[21] R. Bastide, ***African Civilizations in the New World***, (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p.169.
[22] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.36.
[23] Edward W. Fashole-Luke, Richard Gray, Adrian Hastings & Goswin Tasie (eds.), ***Christianity in Independent Africa***, (London: Rex Collings, 1978), p.359.
[24] Fashole-Luke, (***1968***), p.132.
[25] M. J. Herskovits, (***1941***), p.280.
[26] See, Eldred J. Jones, " Some Aspects of the Sierra Leone Patois or Krio" in ***Sierra Leone Studies***, n.s.(6), 1956, pp. 97-109; "The Potentialities of Krio as a Literary Language" in ***SLS***, n.s.(9), 1957, pp.40-48
[27] Grant uses the term "Slave Christianity" to describe the type of Christianity generally practised by Plantation slaves during the 18th century, while pointing out that the term and phenomenon apply more especially to that distinctive brand of Christianity developed by the Negro slaves during the 19th. century.
[28] Arnold A. Dallimore, ***George Whitefield: the Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the 18th. Century Revival - Volume 1***, (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1970): J. Pollock, ***George Whitefield and the Great Awakening***, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1973). For Whitefield's campaigns in the South see, Dalimore, ***ibid.***, pp.495-526.
[29] Through reading Scougal, Whitefield received divine illumination:
God showed me that I must be born again, or be damned! I learned that a man may go to church, say his prayers, receive the sacrament, and yet not be a Christian.... I ... holding the book in my hand, thus addressed the God of heaven and earth: "Lord, if I am not a Christian, or if I am not a real one, for Jesus Christ's sake, show me what Christianity is that I may not be damned at last".
God soon showed me, for in reading a few lines further, that, "true religion is a union of the soul with God, and Christ formed within us", a ray of Divine light was instantaneously darted in upon my soul, and from that moment, but not till then, did I know that I must become a new creature. ***Ibid.***, p.73, quoting from George Whitefield, ***Sermons on Important Subjects***, (London: Baynes, 1825), p.702.
[30] ***Ibid.***, p.77, quoting from Whitefield's ***Journals***, p.58. In ***Sermons on Important Subjects*** Whitefield declares, "I know the place! It may be superstitious, perhaps, but whenever I go to Oxford I cannot help running to that place where Jesus Christ first revealed himself to me and gave me the new birth." Whitefield, ***ibid.***, p.702.
[31] Dallimore, ***ibid.***, pp.495-6.
[32] ***Ibid.***, p.494.
[33] ***Ibid.***, p.500, quoting from Whitefield's ***Journals,*** p.422.
[34] ***Ibid.***, quoting from Whitefield's ***Works, Vol.1***, p.167.
[35] ***Ibid.***, pp.499-500, quoting from Whitefield's ***Works, Vol.5***, p.234.
[36] ***ibid.***, pp.486-7, quoting from Whitefield's ***Journals***, p.421.
[37] ***Ibid.***, p.487, quoting from Whitefield's ***Journals***, p.425.
[38] ***Ibid.***, p.487-8, quoting from Whitefields ***Journals***, pp.425-6.

[39] ***Ibid.***, p.490.
[40] ***Ibid.***, pp.490-1, quoting from Whitefields ***Journals***, p.421.
[41] The following report is from a Charismatic conference held in Brighton, England, in 1993: **Immediately, from all parts of the auditorium, come blood-curdling screams. Moments later people are writhing on the floor, shrieking as if the end of the world has already come. Others remain standing, eyes shut tight, making groaning or barking noises while being held up by "counsellors" praying in tongues, *sotto voce*. For twenty minutes the Brighton Centre's main auditorium is pandemonium. Dozens are bent double, coughing and vomiting into tissues. Some are hyperventilating, sobbing into the arms of the people sitting around them. Gradually, as the soothing harmonies of the worship group take over, only pockets of disturbance remain, until eventually there is a lull.** ***The Sunday Telegraph*** of 31st October, 1993.
The Ellel Ministries four-day "Church Ablaze" conference was attended by over 3,000 people. Ellel Ministries, a Charismatic group founded in 1986 by Oxford University graduate, publisher and university lecturer, Peter Horrobin, is, according to the report, "known for exorcising demons and breaking the power of curses over people." The activities of the group are presently being investigated by the Evangelical Alliance of which it is a member.
[42] Walker, ***ibid.***, pp.1-17: Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.50-53.
[43] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.64.
[44] See, M. W. Armstrong, ***The Great Awakening in Nova Scotia, 1776-1809***, (Hartford: The American Society of Church History, 1948): George A. Rawlyk, ***Ravished by the Spirit. Religious Revivals, Baptists and Henry Alline***, (Montreal: Kingston McGrill, 1984).
[45] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.62.
[46] Concerning Peters, his journey to London and his association with John Clarkson see, Grant, ***ibid.***, 53-56; Walker, ***ibid.***, pp.94-96. Peters seems to have failed to have an audience with any senior Government officials even though through the good offices of Granville Sharp, his petition was presented to Secretary of State Henry Dundas. On the meeting of Peters with Granville Sharp and the arrangements made with the Sierra Leone Company for the Nova Scotians to be offered transport to Sierra Leone see, Walker, ***ibid.***, pp.94-96, 105-7.
[47] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.55.
[48] ***Ibid.***, p.53.
[49] ***Ibid.***, p.58.
[50] In July 1784, John Wesley wrote to James Barrey, a white Methodist from Shelburne: **The work of God among the blacks in your neighbourhood is a wonderful instance of the power of God.... I doubt not but some of them can read. When, therefore, we send a preacher or two to Nova Scotia, we will send some books to be distributed among them; and they never need want books while I live. It will be well to give them all the assistance you can in every possible way.** Walker, ***ibid.***, p.73.
[51] ***Ibid.***, p.72.
[52] ***Ibid.***, p.72-3.
[53] ***Ibid.***, pp.67-68, quoting from Boston King's ***Memoirs***, p.160.
[54] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.86.
[55] ***Ibid.***, p.73, quoting from Clarkson's diary entry for 13th. December 1791.
[56] Boston King's ***Memoirs***, 24th January 1791.
[57] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.60.
[58] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.66.
[59] ***Ibid.***, pp.67-68.
[60] ***Ibid.***, pp. 68-69.
[61] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.288. Fyfe notes that Edward Baron, Bishop of Constantia, visited Freetown in 1842, but was not able to start a mission there at that time. For the early period of Catholic mission in Sierra Leone see A. P. Kup, "Jesuit and Capuchin Missions of the 17th Century" in ***SLBR***, 5(1), June 1963, pp.27-34; Jebbeh E. Forster, ***A History of the Catholic Mission in Sierra Leone: the Diocese of Freetown and Bo, 1864-1961***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of History, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of

the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, 1988.

[62] Christopher Fyfe, "The Countess of Huntingdon's Connection in Nineteenth Century Sierra Leone" in ***SLBR***, 4(2), December 1962, pp.53-54. Walker, ***ibid.***, p.71-72. Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.71-72.

[63] Fyfe, (***1962-a***), p.57.

[64] On the life and conversion of David George see Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.68-71; Walker, ***ibid.***, pp.74-77; Christopher Fyfe, "The Baptist Churches in Sierra Leone" in ***SLBR***, 5(2), December 1963, pp.55-60.

[65] Following the British defeat in 1782, Liele migrated to Jamaica. In 1784 he pioneered the first Baptist Church in Kingston.

[66] The letter, dated 20th August 1791, was written by Mr. H. Harding of Shelburne to a Miss Lavina D' Wolfe of Horton near Walpole.

[67] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.76.

[68] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.55.

[69] Walls, (***1970***), p.109.

[70] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.78: Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.56.

[71] Fyfe, (***1962-a***), p.55: Walker, ***ibid.***, p.196.

[72] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.197.

[73] Walls, ***ibid.***, p.118, quoting from the ***Methodist Magazine***, 15(n.s., 9), 1812, pp.637-9.

[74] Porter, ***ibid.***, p.26, quoting from J. Clarkson, "Mission to America", ***Public Archives of Nova Scotia***, MSS., p.176.

[75] Knutsford, ***ibid.***, p.60.

[76] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.196, quoting from Falconbridge, ***Two Voyages***, p.201.

[77] ***ibid.***, p.205.

[78] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.107.

[79] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.206.

[80] Fashole-Luke, ibid., pp.136-7.

[81] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.200.

[82] ***Ibid.***, p.201: Viscountess Knutsford, ***Life and Letters of Zachary Macaulay***, (London: Edward Arnold, 1900), pp.54, 60, 84: Walls, (***1959***), p.26.

[83] Walker, ***ibid.***, p. 208.

[84] The Maroons were bands of runaway slaves, around 1,500 in total and mostly Ashanti, who established their own free society in the mountainous interior of Jamaica following the expulsion of the Spanish by the French in 1655. They maintained their independence from the British through armed resistance until they were overpowered during the 1795-96 Maroon War. Some were transported to Nova Scotia, but failed to settle there and eventually were shipped to Freetown in order to act as a counter-balancing force that would curb Nova Scotian intransigence and rebellion. Their arrival in Freetown on September 30th 1800 did exactly that and was decisive in putting down the Settler Revolt. The name Maroon is thought to be derived from the Spanish *cimarron* which denotes cattle that have escaped and live wild. See Currie notes, p.49. For a summary history of the Maroons in Jamaica see Fyfe, ***ibid.***, pp.79-81: F. W. Butt-Thompson, ***The First Generation of Sierra Leoneans***, (Freetown: Government Printer, 1952), pp.23-30: Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.99-102. For in depth studies see M. C. Campbell, ***The Maroons of Jamaica 1655-1796***, and V. B. Thompson, ***The Making of the African Diaspora in the Americas 1441-1900***. For their time in Nova Scotia see Robin Winks, ***The Blacks in Canada***, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971).] For the Maroons in Sierra Leone see, Fyfe, ***ibid.***, pp.88-91: Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.102-4.

[85] W. S. M. Jones, ***ibid.***, pp.73-75.

[86] Paul Hair, "Freetown Christianity and Africa" in ***SLBR***, 6(2), December 1964, p.14.

[87] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, pp.52-53.

[88] ***Ibid.***, p.55.

[89] Macaulay's ***Journal*** entry for 3rd October 1793.

[90] According to Butt-Thompson *grumettas* were slave-soldiers the European slave traders trained for waging wars to capture slaves and who were also employed on building projects. Thompson, ***ibid.***, p.5.

[91] Sibthorpe, ***ibid.***, pp.22-3.
[92] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.135.
[93] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.121.
[94] Sylvanus E. P. Jackson, "Death Ceremonies among the Kroos in Sierra Leone" in ***SLBR***, 2, November 1981, pp.55-66: Aminata A. Kamara, ***Death and Reincarnation among the Kroos of Sierra Leone***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, no date given.
[95] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.103.
[96] Porter, ***ibid.***, p.37.
[97] Walker, ***ibid.***, pp.261-2.
[98] ***Ibid.***, p.261, quoting from a correspondence between Thompson and Castlereagh dated 2nd. November 1808.
[99] ***Ibid.***, p.292.
[100] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.138, quoting from a letter sent to Blanshard, Dr. Coke's successor as head of Methodist missions, on 10th August 1815.
[101] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.293.
[102] ***Ibid.***, p.294.
[103] Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.144-5.
[104] ***Ibid.***, p.142, quoting from a correspondence from Huddleston to the mission Secretary dated 12th April 1819.
[105] Walker, ***ibid.***
[106] ***Ibid.***
[107] ***Ibid.***
[108] For coverage of this period see, Walker, ***ibid.***, pp.306-30: Fyfe, ***ibid.***, pp.128-51. For MacCarthy see, Andrew F Walls, "A Colonial Concordat: Two Views of Christianity and Civilisation" in ***Church, Society and Politics***, ed. D. Baker, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975), pp.293-302.
[109] The Nova Scotians and the Maroons had a variety of pejorative names for the Recaptives. "Cruits" was a shortened form of recruits, and "Willyfoss" was an abbreviated form of Wilberforce. The Recaptives were said to owe their freedom to the British Government whereas they had obtained their freedom basically by their own efforts. Spitzer, ***ibid.***, p.11.
[110] Sibthorpe, ***ibid.***, pp.50-51.
[111] For early missionary activity in Sierra Leone see, Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.116-21.
[112] Fyfe, (***1962-a***), p.104.
[113] Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.120.
[114] ***Ibid.***
[115] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.127.
[116] Between 1807 and 1863, when the last shipload of slaves was discharged, an estimated 50,000 slaves were released at Freetown.
[117] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.128.
[118] Peterson, ***ibid.***, p.75, quoting from a letter from Bickersteth to Pratt dated 13th March 1816.
[119] Butscher died in 1817. For a detailed account of the origins and development of the Institution up till 1905, see Sibthorpe, ***ibid.***, pp.147-58: T. S. Johnson, ***ibid.***, pp.32-33, 100-7.
[120] For details of MacCarthy's Parish Plan and the financial and administrative arrangements worked out with CMS see Fyfe, ***ibid.***, pp.128-31. For the Parish Plan set in the context of mission strategy and Government politics see, Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.125-30: Peterson, ***ibid.***, pp.63-80: Sanneh, (***1983***), pp.61-63.
[121] T. S. Johnson lists the thirteen parishes as St. George's (Freetown), St. Andrew's (Gloucester), St. Charles' (Regent), St. James' (Bathurst), St. Peter's (Leopold), St. John's (Charlotte), St. Paul's (Wilberforce), St. Patrick's (Kissy), St. Arthur's (Wellington), St. Thomas' (Hastings), St. Michael's (Waterloo), St. Henry's (York), St. Edward's (Kent). When Leopold and Bathurst merged the united parish was called St. Peter's and James'. T. S. C.

Johnson, ***The Story of a Mission - the Sierra Leone Church: First Daughter of C.M.S.***, (London: SPCK, 1953), p.29.

[122] On William Johnson see, Grant, ***ibid.***,156-93: Peterson, ***ibid.***, pp.103-17: A. T. Pierson, ***Seven Years in Sierra Leone. The Story of the Work of William A. B. Johnson***, (London: Nisbet, 1897).

[123] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.138.

[124] Johnson, ***ibid.***, p.20.

[125] Peterson, ***ibid.***, p.94.

[126] For an analysis of the Fisher - Horton debate on African conversion see, Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.211-17. See also C. C. Okorocha, ***The Meaning of Religious Conversion in Africa: the Case of the Igbo of Nigeria***, (Aldershot: Avebury Gower, 1987), where Okorocha maintains that conversion in Igbo society is basically a search for spiritual power and therefor a religious phenomenon.

[127] Peterson, ***ibid.***, p.104, quoting from Johnson's journal entry for 27th October 1817.

[128] Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.158-9.

[129] ***Ibid.***, p.155.

[130] Peterson, ***ibid.***, p.131.

[131] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.129.

[132] Peterson, ***ibid.***, p.111.

[133] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.183.

[134] ***Ibid.***, p.184.

[135] ***Ibid.***

[136] ***Ibid.***, p.184.

[137] ***Ibid.***, quoting from Johnson's journal entry for 7th September 1817.

[138] ***Ibid.***, p.184.

[139] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.153.

[140] For details of During's life and ministry at Gloucester see, Peterson, ***ibid.***, pp.100-3.

[141] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.130.

[142] Johnson, ***ibid.***, p.28.

[143] Figures supplied by Johnson, ***ibid.***, pp.29-30. He also observes that, "The first three Bishops of Sierra Leone died within seven years of their consecration." ***Ibid.***

[144] For some background information concerning O'Connor and also the events leading up to the Recaptive Revolt at Rawdon Street and its consequences, see Walker, ***ibid.***, pp.347-8.

[145] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.346.

[146] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.130.

[147] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.169, quoting from a petition presented to the Governor in 1829.

[148] In 1825 the Nova Scotians made up only 3% of the Colony's population and 10% of Freetown. The Maroons made up another 10% of Freetown's population. The remaining 80% was made up of Recaptives, Kru, native workers and the white population. In the December 1844 Freetown Census, the year of O'Connor's split with the Nova Scotian leadership at Rawdon Street, the population of Freetown was 14,330; Recaptives were in the majority, natives came next, and those of Nova Scotian and Maroon descent numbered less than a thousand.

[149] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.320.

[150] ***Ibid.***

[151] ***Ibid.***

[152] ***Ibid.***, pp.320, 345-6.

[153] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.281-2.

[154] Johnson, ***ibid.***, p.22.

[155] Idowu, (***1965***), pp.1-2.

[156] For an account of the English missionary involvement with the Sierra Leone Countess of Huntingdon Connection, see, Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.290-7.

[157] ***Ibid.***, p.294.

[158] ***Ibid.***, p.295.

[159] ***Ibid.***, pp.295-6.
[160] Walker, ***ibid.***, pp.371-2.
[161] Grant, ***ibid.***
[162] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.372.
[163] Valcarcel, ***ibid.***, p.5.
[164] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.140.
[165] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.238, quoting from Graf's journal entry for 25th March 1838.
[166] ***Ibid.***, p.276.
[167] Walker, ***ibid.***, p.370.
[168] Peterson, ***ibid.***, p.234.
[169] For details on John Ezzidio see, Christopher Fyfe, "The Life and Times of John Ezzidio" in ***Eminent Sierra Leoneans in the Nineteenth Century***, (Freetown: Sierra Leone Society, 1961), pp.213-23; (***1962-a***), pp.231ff.: Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.289-90: William Smith was the Colonial Registrar.
[170] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.350. For more on Tregaskis see, ***ibid.***, pp.328, 350-1.
[171] ***Ibid.***, p.398.
[172] See, E. Matei Markwei, "The Rev. Charles Knight in Methodist History - 1" in ***SLBR***, 9(1), June 1967, pp.23-34; "The Rev. Charles Knight in Methodist History - 2" in ***SLBR***, 9(2), December 1967, pp.55-66.
[173] Gilbert W. Olson, ***Church Growth in Sierra Leone: a Study of Church Growth in Africa's Oldest Protestant Mission Field***, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), p.87.
[174] Peterson, ***ibid.***, p.140. For a treatment of the problems of sickness and death in Freetown and the incredibly high mortality rate among missionaries see, ***ibid.***, pp.139-49.
[175] ***Ibid.***, pp.132-3, quoting from Nylander's conversation with Bickersteth at Kissy on 3rd March 1819.
[176] ***Ibid.***, p.133, quoting from a correspondence from Nylander to Pratt dated 14th September 1821.
[177] Olson, ***ibid.***, pp.31-32.
[178] Ajayi Crowther, a Yoruba, was made a slave after his town of Oshogun had been attacked by Yoruba Muslim during the chaotic period of the collapse of the Oyo Empire. He passed hands several times before eventually landing up at a slave market near Lagos. Eko slave traders bought him and took him to their trading station where he was sold to Portuguese traders. The Portuguese slave ship carrying the young Crowther had just departed the Lagos area when it was intercepted by two cruisers of the British Navy. After two and a half months at sea, during which time he worked as a deck-hand, he was landed at Freetown and liberated on 18th June 1822. He was settled at Bathurst, baptised in 1825, and given named Crowther after the missionary incumbent. For more on Ajayi Crowther see, Peterson, ***ibid.***, pp.174-8, 181-2: Sanneh, ***ibid.***, pp.75-76: Harry Sawyerr, "Christian Evangelistic Strategy in West Africa: Reflections on the Centenary of the Consecration of Bishop Samuel Adjayi Crowther on St. Peter's Day" in ***IRM***, 54, 1965, pp.343-52: G. O. M. Tasie, "The Story of S A Crowther and the CMS Mission" in ***The Ghana Bulletin of Theology***, 4, December 1974, pp.47-60.
[179] The story of the Niger Expedition can be read in Johnson, ***ibid.***,, pp.80-83.
[180] ***Ibid.***, p.83.
[181] Peter Falk, ***The Growth of the Church in Africa***, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), p.125.
[182] Johnson, ***ibid.***
[183] E. A. Ayandele, ***The Educated Elite in the Nigerian Society***, (Ibadan: 1974).
[184] See, Paul Hair, "The Contribution of Freetown and Fourah Bay College to the Study of West African Languages" in ***Sierra Leone Language Review***, 1, 1962, pp.7-18.
[185] Hair, (***1964***), p.15.
[186] ***Ibid.***, p.16, quoting from a letter written by Archdeacon Crowther to a supporter in Freetown in 1892.
[187] Johnson, ***ibid.***, p.100.

[188] Sibthorpe, ***ibid.***, p.167. See, Christopher Fyfe, "A. B. C. Sibthorpe, a Neglected Historian" in ***Eminent Sierra Leoneans in the Nineteenth Century***, (Freetown: Sierra Leone Society, 1961), pp.31-38.
[189] Sibthorpe, ***ibid.***, pp.174-5.
[190] The change in name in 1865 came after the building was extended with the help of a gift of £2,500 donated by Mr. and Mrs. Walsh whose daughter Annie had wanted to become a missionary in Africa, but had tragically drowned before she could fulfil her ambitions.
[191] ***Ibid.***, p.178.
[192] Paul Hair, "E. W. Blyden and the CMS in Freetown 1871-2" in ***Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion***, 1(1), June 1962, pp.22-28.
[193] For an account of how the Recaptives and the missionaries dealt with the question of sin in terms of the two hearts concept, the indwelling good and the evil hearts, how the Christian doctrines of sin and salvation were communicated on these terms especially by the Nova Scotian Methodists, and how the Recaptives interpreted their religious conversion as deliverance from the "bad" heart see, Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.243-55.
[194] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.378.
[195] Fashole-Luke, (***1968***), pp.130-1.
[196] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.340. For Venn see, W. R. Shenk, ***Henry Venn, Miissionary Statesman***, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1983).
[197] Sibthorpe, ***ibid.***, p.209.
[198] Johnson, ***ibid.***, p.62. For coverage of the Native Pastorate see, ***ibid.***, pp.60-79; Hollis R. Lynch, "The Native Pastorate Controversy and Cultural Ethno-Centrism in Sierra Leone 1871-1874" in ***Journal of African History***, 5(3), 1964, pp.395-413: Grant, ***ibid.***, pp.340-58.
[199] Grant, ***ibid.***, p.349, quoting from Venn's letter to Rev. J. A. Lamb, 23rd January 1864.
[200] ***Ibid.***
[201] Johnson, ***ibid.***, pp.62-63.
[202] Lynch, ***ibid.***, p.396.
[203] See, E. A. Ayandele, ***Holy Johnson: Pioneer of African Nationalism 1836-1917***, (London: Frank Cass, 1970).
[204] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.351.
[205] Lynch, ***ibid.***, p.398.
[206] ***Ibid.***, p.399, quoting from Blyden's correspondence with Venn dated 16th October 1871.
[207] ***Ibid.***, p.405, quoting from Cheetham's correspondence with Venn dated 1st February 1873.
[208] ***Ibid.***
[209] ***Ibid.***, p406, quoting from Cheetham's correspondence with the C.M.S. Secretary dated 9th April 1873.
[210] ***Ibid.***, p.408, quoting from the pastors' response to Cheetham's loyalty questions dated 3rd April 1873.
[211] ***Ibid.***, p.411.
[212] ***Ibid.***, p.412.
[213] Spitzer, ***Ibid.***, pp.137-8. Johnson, along with Blyden, was an associate member of the Dress Reform Society which was founded in 1887 and of which Cornelius May, later to be editor and owner of the ***Sierra Leone Weekly News***, was a founding member, and A. E. Toboku-Metzker was the secretary.
[214] Johnson, ***ibid.***, p.69.
[215] ***Ibid.***, pp.68-69.

CHAPTER THREE

A RELIGIOUS DUALISM: ENGLISH EVANGELICALISM AND THE INDIGENOUS RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

Balancing two religious and cultural systems, African and European, within the socio-cultural phenomenon that became Creoledom during the later Victorian period precipitated an identity crisis of great proportions for the Krio educated elite. The crisis was not so severe for the Muslim Krio who more happily accommodated indigenous religious beliefs and practices. They were recognised as urban Africans and respected for their Islamic faith and Western contacts by the Fula, Mandinka, Kuranko, Susu and Temne in particular. The educated Christian elite, however, with their aspirations to be African Englishmen, loyal British subjects, and model Christians, were profoundly affected. As with the Nova Scotians whose unique society was overwhelmed by the flood of Recaptives, so also it turned out for the Krio. The Krio community had no sooner established its own unique cultural identity than the flow of migrants from the hinterland threatened to overwhelm them. Banton points out that in 1901, native peoples made up 49% of Freetown's population and were in the majority in the rural areas of the Colony.[1] Shortly afterwards the Krio ceased to be in a majority in Freetown which demographically became a Sierra Leonean city. Banton notes that from 1931 to 1957 the Krio population remained steady at about 17,500.[2] The present figure must be significantly lower due to massive emigration during the last decade of economic collapse. Not only did history repeat itself demographically, but also politically, as Colonial administrations increasingly identified their interests with the peoples of the Protectorate to the exclusion of the Krio.

Just as Krio society was in process of reforming itself according to the styles of Victorian England, after British evangelicalism had won the day against Nova Scotian revivalism and

the Native Pastorate was struggling to establish itself, a rising tide of European racism began to make its presence felt to the educated Krio elite. The writings of arrogant racists such as Richard Burton poured scorn on the slave race who had dared to imitate the British and who could even match and often excel them in their own most prestigious areas of accomplishment, education and Christian religion. The image of the Krio that was now being presented to the British public by these supercilious Darwinians was not that of the civilised African Christian gentleman, but that of an "ape-like black man in top hat and dark suit."[3] An example of this lampooning that became popular with travel-writers who resented seeing Africans "civilised" and not conforming to popular notions of the "noble savage", appears in Burton's ***Wanderings in West Africa***. Burton is ridiculing two educated Africans he met while sailing to Freetown:

The second, our Gorilla, or Missing Link, was the son of an emancipated slave, who afterwards distinguished himself as a missionary and a minister. His - the sire's - name has appeared in many books, and he wrote one himself, pitying his own "poor lost father," because, forsooth, he died in the religion of his ancestors, an honest Fetishist. Our excellent warm-hearted ignorant souls at home were so delighted with the report of this Lion of the Pulpit, that it was debated whether the boy, Ajai, had not been providentially preserved for the Episcopate of Western Africa.[4]

The "Gorilla, or Missing Link" was Samuel Crowther, the son of Ajayi Crowther. Such attacks were studiously and graciously responded to by eminent Krio such as James Africanus Horton and George Gurney Nicol who made a distinction between proper Englishmen and the baser types.[5]

While the Freetown intelligentsia struggled with this dilemma, the brilliant and erudite Edward Wilmot Blyden, the great champion of African culture and identity, arrived on the scene.[6] He cleverly refuted the racist arguments of African inferiority and called on the Krio to reject European cultural imperialism and white racism. As a West Indian Krio he could identify with the Freetown Krio, although, at the same time he was highly critical of their Anglophilia. His involvement with CMS, James Johnson and the Native Pastorate Church has already been discussed. Blyden was impressed by Islam and regarded European missionary education in Africa a failure. He regarded the Krio as a dependent cultural hybrid who had exchanged

their African identity for a Victorian British one. Blyden's *magnum opus* was ***Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race***, a collection of essays published in 1889.[7] Here he propounded his theory that each race had its own special God given talents, one was not inferior to another and each had the ability for equal though not identical development. People had racial personalities, the Europeans were individualistic, monogamous and scientific, whereas the "Negro Personality" was communal, polygynous and spiritual. Blyden proposed parallel development as the way forward. Mixing the European and the African styles did not work. He cites the Krio as a prime example of the degenerating effects of this personality blending, blaming their European missionary education and cultural assimilation for their "decrepitude" and the loss of their African identity. In a public address at the Freetown Unity Club, which was printed in the ***Sierra Leone Weekly News*** of 20th June 1891, he declared:

Your first duty is to be *yourselves*.... You need to be told to keep constantly before yourselves the fact that you are African, not Europeans - black men, not white men - that you were created with the physical qualities which distinguish you for the glory of the Creator, and for the happiness and perfection of humanity; and that in your endeavours to make yourselves something else you are not only spoiling your nature and turning aside from your destiny, but you are robbing humanity of the part you ought to contribute to its complete development and welfare, and you become as salt, which has lost its savour - good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden down by others.[8]

Blyden idealised the simple "unaffected" interior natives, and although he abhorred their "paganism, with all its horrors and abominations", yet these, he claimed, were conditioned by their environment and their "virgin souls" only needed proper enlightenment and guidance.[9] Blyden, contrary to the hopes of British evangelicals, could not see the Krio bringing that to them. His views on the value of African personality were well received in Freetown, while his views on Islamic education, the noble interior "aboriginals", and the effete sterile nature of Creoledom were not. He encouraged the smouldering resentment of the Native Pastorate clergy during the 1871-73 troubles, but in the end the clergy capitulated to the Bishop and publicly distanced themselves from him and his views.

The most ironic feature of the Krio identity crisis was that while humiliated by the disparaging attitude of the British they themselves were displaying a similar attitude towards the

"aboriginals". Their fears of being overrun by hordes of up-country immigrants and their resentment of native vagrants who roamed the streets and often resorted to crime, found frequent expression in the Freetown press during the last decades of the century. Following the brutal massacre during the Hut Tax War of 1898 of several hundred Krio, mainly traders, and seven United Brethren in Christ missionaries, the Mende came in for particularly scathing comment. The ***Sierra Leone Times*** editorial for 1st April 1899 derided them thus:

Dressed, or rather undressed in a style which would have been considered scanty even in the days when Adam delved and Eve spun, they go about our thoroughfares offering silent and *nude* reproaches to the existing local regulations, our civilisation and ideas of decency.
The Kossoh folks - or as they like to be called, Mendies - file along the streets, all in a row, like skewered herrings, clothed for the most part with hideous grins and adorned with dirt; the lower apparel or rather appendage, which they ought not to wear, only rendering the absence of those which they ought to wear more conspicuous.[10]

The editor further comments:

Freetown swarms with a vast horde of these unwashed gentry ... lodged in hovels which might be regarded as being unservable even for animals, they add to the difficulties which the Sanitary Dept. have to contend with.
It is no uncommon thing to find over eighteen of them, males as well as females dwelling together in one hut barely large enough for four persons; dwelling together promiscuously.
It is also notorious that in the majority of cases, no cess-pits or latrines are provided in their premises; open fields, public springs of water, street gutters and even highways, furnishing objectionable alternatives for these filthy people. So disgusting are their habits, that in these localities where they reside mostly, the rentable value of decent houses had depreciated; no citizen who could help it, caring to dwell within 100 yards of such abominable filth....
There ought to be a distinct and separate legislation for these people, a legislation that might include a trial, at least, of the plan suggested a few years ago, viz. - to locate them in quarters apart by themselves, under the careful supervision of the Sanitary Authorities.[11]

For their part, the Protectorate peoples disdainfully referred to the Krio as "slave *pikin*", (children of slaves), and "white men".[12] Kenneth Little describes the Mende attitude:

The Mende speak of the Creole people from the Colony as *pu-bla*, i.e. white men, on account of their European ways. They are sometimes termed "rogues", "ungrateful", and are called "foo-foo eaters", because of the Creole predilection for this particular diet of grated cassadu. They are also described as "dirty"; their women "don't wash"; and the Creole is "landless" and the "son of a slave".[13]

If the destiny of the Krio was to be lights to Africans in heathen darkness, their light was not, at this stage of their history, penetrating very far into the provinces or making much

impression on the immigrant population of the city. By 1916, the Krio felt more insecure than ever. A correspondent of the ***Sierra Leone Weekly News*** expressed their predicament:

It may seem an irreconcilable, but nevertheless it is a bold fact that Sierra Leone is not our home. Our home and our own land are far beyond the distant seas. There are more than a dozen nations and tongues constituting the aboriginal tribes of Sierra Leone and its Protectorate. From which of these do we claim descent? From none whatever. Between the white man and the aboriginal native, we are just like parasites to the one, and mushrooms to the other. The former despises us, and the latter both despises and ridicules us. The white man regards us as mere *aping* creatures of the highest type, and the aboriginal native regards us as interlopers and homeless wanderers - children of slaves from beyond the seas, and has no confidence in us.[14]

A SURVEY OF TWENTIETH CENTURY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ANGLICAN AND METHODIST CHURCHES

Only within their inherited church structures which were anchored to British imperialism, could the Christian Krio retain their unique cultural identity and feel secure. Rather than their disillusion with Britain encouraging them to rebel and seek an independent and more indigenous Christian expression, the reverse took place. Going to church became a statement of the superiority of the Christian Krio over the Protectorate "Unto Whoms" - a the term for the native peoples taken from Psalm 95:11, "Unto whom I sware in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest." As the twentieth century progressed Krio Christianity assumed its classical form. Filomina Steady claims that European Christianity had become the traditional religion of the Krio and the Christian *rites de passage* such as baptism, confirmation and burial became obligatory.[15] Church membership and attendance had long since become the Krios' platform for demonstrating economic success and social status. A poem which appeared in the Sierra Leone Weekly News dated 13th July 1907 demonstrates this association of church-going and social standing:

O ye big men
O ye men who go to Church;
O ye men who get the money;
O ye men who get the voice;
Stand up - wake up - things are bad.

O you important men
O you men who go to Church;
O you men who have money;
O you men who have influence;
Stand up - wake up - things are bad.[16]

Spitzer describes Krio Christianity during the first half of the twentieth century:

Church services ... were well attended and long; and the congregation was thoroughly acquainted with the rituals and orders of procedure. Hymns were sung with much spirit, and they were seldom shortened by an omitted verse. The enthusiasm which had been characteristic of religion in the English evangelical movement merged with the predisposition for communal participation in worship, inherited from traditional African religion, and it remained characteristic of Creole Christianity. The Sabbath was kept holy, and special food and Sunday suits were reserved for its celebration. Sierra Leoneans had a general interest in questions of theology and a predilection for infinite debate on questions of eternity. If any book was to be found in a Creole home, it was certain to be the Bible; and the people took pride in being able to quote lengthy passages from memory.[17]

The Methodist Church of Sierra Leone

Less tied in with the State and Government and more influenced by the post World War One resurgence of nationalism and the desire for self determination than the Anglicans, the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1926 requested the London Committee of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society to appoint a Sierra Leonean as Acting District Chairman. The reply, which highlighted the humiliating and continuing financial dependency of the church on its mission parent, bluntly stated:

The present time or situation is not opportune for the making of this arrangement. The District has not yet extricated itself from a financial position which has given the greatest anxiety to the Committee, and has required of it again and again large measures of financial help. At the present time it will be difficult for one who is not a missionary sent out by the Committee to act in the double capacity of financial agent of the Committee and Chairman of the District.[18]

In 1931, still smarting from the rebuff and yet not willing to bite the hand they believe fed them, the Sierra Leone District Synod protested, "It is a matter of regret, though not for complaint, that present conditions do not allow African representatives at Conference dealing with problems of Church and State affecting Africa and the African."

In 1932 the United Methodist Church, an amalgamation of various Wesleyan secessions, merged with the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the main Methodist body, to form the

Methodist Church. While some West African Methodists took this opportunity to re-establish their independence lost to the United Methodist Free Churches in 1859, others threw in their lot with the Methodist Church. Relations between the missionaries and the national clergy continued to deteriorate. In 1936 the Synod requested the London Committee of the Methodist Missionary Society to recall the missionary Chairman. Not only did the Committee refuse the request, they also discontinued the recently created post of Assistant General Superintendent, then held by a Krio, claiming it was not serving its intended purpose and that there was no one with suitable gifts and graces to fill the position. The 1936 minutes of the District Synod records, "The London Committee and the Conference have but very little, if any, sympathy with the aspirations of the African towards self-expression and self-determination." The move towards independence although undesirable to many because of the sense of dependence decades of London control had encouraged, was in the post-War period unstoppable. In January 1960, Rev. W. E. A. Pratt was elected Chairman and General Superintendent by the Synod. Bowing to the inevitable, the appointment was ratified by the London Committee. Full autonomy was eventually granted in 1967 when the Sierra Leone Methodist Church became a separate independent Conference comprising two districts, Western and Provincial, with Rev. Pratt its first elected President. A second independent Methodist church was now in existence in Sierra Leone, which unlike the much smaller West African Methodist Church, had never previously been masters of their own destiny.

Krio Christianity after World War Two

In the post-World War Two period, Krio Christianity, in parallel with Krio society, entered a process of slow and steady decline, particularly the dominant Anglicans. The stagnant conservatism of the elitist churches led to dropping Sunday attendances. The situation drew sharp criticism from the Freetown press. The ***Sierra Leone Weekly News*** for 17th January 1947, less than three months before the arrival of Adejobi and the Spiritual churches, vituperated, "The Church as a whole has lost touch with the masses due to the stuffy

atmosphere, long sermons, drawling prayers, pew-rent system and the highly paid minister." By the early 1950s even the very pro-British Krio Assistant Bishop of Sierra Leone, T. S. Johnson, was openly questioning the suitability of the Anglicanism the Krio had inherited and embraced, for meeting the spiritual needs and aspirations of African people. Anglicanism in particular, being so identified with the Colonial power, had passed its peak in Sierra Leone and the options open to it were change or decline. At the end of his book, Johnson, echoing the sentiments of James Johnson and Blyden, writes:

It may be feared that the talent for imitation with which Africans are gifted may be leading us to adopt with complacency the religion of the progressive and powerful West, and to appropriate its theology with its rituals and ceremonies, *without the foundation of our souls being touched* [italics mine]. **That is to say, our religion may be one that is divorced from our everyday thought and practice. The danger of our worship being performed, not in the vernacular, but in a foreign tongue with thought-forms and ideas quite alien to the man in the street, is a very grave one. For worship to be real it must reflect the cultural background of the people.**

There are certain beliefs inherent in our people to which they hold fast and by which their lives are governed, but which are repressed and hidden because the religion of the West, which they have adopted, does not countenance them, for instance, belief in the existence of evil spirits. It is this that makes native Christians sometimes go through Church worship without any emotional satisfaction, and ultimately be won over to the "confidential" Christian gatherings which have for them a deeper sense of reality.

The forms of worship in most of our churches in this land are patterned after the traditional order of service of the individual denomination responsible for its founding, but contain hardly anything that belongs to the culture of the people. This also explains the comfortable syncretism adopted by many professing Christians, who fear God and yet serve fetish in secret.

For a church to be indigenous in the best sense of the word, it should be able to work out its theology in terms of its own experience, otherwise the profession of its Christianity will be merely skin deep. If ideas held by the people are contrary to Christian thinking, such as ancestor-worship, these must first be explained and, if possible, sublimated.[19]

In 1956 Samuel Pratt was much more critical and hard-hitting:

Christianity is a living religion, but the average Creole Christian does not seem to realise this. To him it is merely a world movement with a base in Sierra Leone, of which he is a member. This local base has meeting place or churches which he attends regularly clad in his Sunday best, and where he goes through a set ritual in a parrot-like manner. He pays his church dues not so much from motives of charity or to assist in the propagation of the Gospel, but mainly to maintain his membership in this movement so that at his death he will be taken into church for the first part of the Christian Burial Service. Since the churching of his corpse is his main reason for being a member in any particular church, he pays, if anything, only the minimum subscriptions due. Of course, being a professing Christian he is recognised as a respectable man (for isn't Christianity the religion of the State and of Great Britain?).

In the Law Courts he can take his oath on a Bible instead of on native "medicine". At last, but not least, he can in Christianity satisfy his thirst for ostentation during the Christian festivals, the celebration of Holy Matrimony, Holy Baptism, the Burial of the Dead, and Memorial Services. Outside of this his Christian witness is negligible.[20]

Krio public worship, although socially meaningful, was foreign, formal and Victorian, with the inspirational and the spontaneous little in evidence. Other than the fact that the worshippers were black there was nothing apparently African about it. The Rev. Dr. W. L. Avery of the Theology Department at FBC protested in 1972:

With minor qualification, John V. Taylor could be describing the Sierra Leone scene when he complains that in Africa Christ is "worshipped almost exclusively with European music set to translations of European hymns, sung by clergy and people wearing European dress in buildings of an archaic European style", and that the form of worship bears "almost no relation to traditional African ritual nor the content of the prayers of contemporary African life."[21]

The presence of prayer and revival fellowships, mostly organised and attended by women, does need to be acknowledged. The Martha Davies Benevolent Society and the Mami Pinkney's Prayer Band will be considered later. However, these, and the occasional church-run evangelistic campaign which did take place, were side shows within the decaying, male-dominated, Anglican and Methodist ecclesiastical establishment. Principal Foray of FBC notes that Bishop Horstead campaigned for "spiritual revival" and conducted missionary outreaches, but with little success.[22] Femi Anthony recounts her spiritual pilgrimage and demonstrates that spiritual dissatisfaction which has led many to leave mainline churches and search for spiritual fulfilment elsewhere:

I hail from a family of devout Anglicans. My grandfather was a Canon in the Church. I was brought up from childhood in the religion of my parents, grandparents and great-grandparents. For over four decades of my life, I was a member of Saint George's Cathedral. On a day in April 1981 I was invited to Saint Peter's Healing Temple - a Spiritual/Pentecostal church - where I was exposed to a new way of worship. I received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit after only three visits to the church and was baptised (by immersion) on Maundy Thursday 1984.
From 1981 to 1986, I became aware that the mainline churches in the country which had been patterned in accordance with European, American and other foreign traditions were showing signs of fatigue and I began to lose interest in worship services. In 1986 I was anointed at the All Saints (born again) Christ Healing Church in London. This was a church which was "black" with occasional visits from "white" Pentecostals.
It was during my association with Christ Healing Church that I came to realise that I had not been privileged to see God through the eyes of my own culture. The mainline churches had nothing "black" in anything connected with the church, except for the

majority of worshippers who were Sierra Leoneans. The missionaries were white, the pictures of Christ were white, until the recent past the Bishops and priests were white. Now I suddenly found myself in a church where BLACK became more meaningful. We not only sang hymns, but enjoyed spiritual choruses and negro spirituals and danced, as David danced, unto the Lord to the accompaniment of timbrels, drums, guitars, tambourines, Shegurehs, singing "Alleluias" to our Saviour.[23]

Significantly, Femi Anthony's spiritual odyssey took her from a mainline evangelical church to an indigenous Spiritual church where she experienced spiritual power, but where she did not settle. Eventually she moved on to a "black" Pentecostal-evangelical church. Many Muslim have also found the indigenous Spiritual churches like Saint Peter's Healing Temple and Church of Salvation a half-way house on their spiritual pilgrimage.

Migrants into Freetown during the post-World Two period tended increasingly to attach themselves to the Fula Town, Fourah Bay or Bombay Street mosques, or one of the newer tribal mosques such as the Temne mosque at Old Field Street and the Limba mosque at Sanders Street. Islam was now being percieved as the best religion for the black masses, the illiterates and the poor, whereas Christianity was seen as the religion of the whites and the educated Krio. By 1976 there were at least 26 mosques in the Greater Freetown area of which only three were not connected with a particular ethnic group.[24] At that point Freetown had long since ceased to be either a Krio or a Christian city. According to Professor Fashole-Luke, in 1966 there were 50,000 Muslim in Freetown, as compared with 40,000 Christians. The remaining 40,000 of the city's population at that time were given as having no particular religious affiliation, but could be termed "traditionalists".[25] These statistics conceal the strength of indigenous beliefs and practices in the city, both within and without church and mosque communities. However, the fact that in 1966 in the "Christian city of Freetown" professing Muslims outnumbered professing Christians by 10,000 is highly significant historically and religiously. From this point on the Christian church in Freetown, a city whose population has grown fivefold since then and which may reach 1,000,000 by the end of the century, must be studied against the background of an overwhelming Muslim presence, which recently, with the already observed rise of the Basharia Movement and others, is displaying an increasingly fundamentalist dimension.[26]

The Krio have been accused of hindering the spread of the Gospel among the other ethnic groups both inside and beyond Freetown. Their attitude of superiority has undoubtedly been a barrier. On the moral level, their reputation for promiscuity and adultery, while espousing monogamy and a Christian ethic, caused the non-Krio, who took the matter of adultery much more seriously, to regard the Krio as hypocrites.[27] Only as the Krios' ecclesiastical domination has crumbled, has the Gospel began to make significant inroads into the non-Krio population of the city. The tribal-church mission strategy of the Assemblies of God has been crucial in initiating this development. Among the Limba, the National Pentecostal Church is growing rapidly. The Loko, Temne, Kissi and Mende churches are also experiencing significant growth. Many of the converts are Muslims. Churches like New Testament Church, Deeper Life Bible Church and Jesus is Lord Ministries are attracting members from a variety of ethnic groups, including the Krio. Samuel Pratt, pointing out the spiritual weakness and artificiality of Krio Christianity, highlights its alternative sources of spiritual power:

What is sad is that some of this vacuum is filled with practices introduced by the "theists" from the hinterland, namely, the worship of the "good devils"; in other words, idolatry is cultivated as a means of obtaining power, riches, honour, etc. The Creoles recognise that such practices are incompatible with their Christian principles, and I have yet to meet one who openly confessed that he indulged in them. Nevertheless their skin-deep Christianity does not afford them sufficient strength to withstand the wiles of these "good devils." Many a Creole starts on the downward path because he or a member of his family is smitten by an illness or misfortune; and having started, he cannot stop. Meanwhile, the church grows poorer in faith and in resources, the "medicine man" grows richer and richer, and the Krio no longer enjoys spiritual peace of mind.[28]

It is now time to fully assess the place and vitality of indigenous religious practices within the Krio Christian community and see how the Krio found spiritual power through traditional means when that power was not available in their churches.

THE SURVIVAL OF INDIGENOUS RELIGION WITHIN KRIO CHRISTIANITY

In appraising mission work in the Colony it is necessary, as Grant points out, to be aware that much missionary reporting was aimed at creating a favourable impression in the homeland.

Although there were plenty stories of converts giving up their "greegrees" (charms), at the grass roots level, there was much more continuing involvement with indigenous religious practices than has been generally appreciated. Before focusing attention fully on the newer expressions of Christianity, the question of how radically did evangelical Christianity really alter the Recaptives' basic religious ontology must be addressed and Krio Christianity put into proper perspective.

Grant draws attention to the dimorphic nature of Victorian Krio Christianity. There was the public social level, which presented a picture of strict orthodoxy, and also the private family level where traditional practices were performed. Here the essential aspects of African spirituality continued to operate, in particular, communicating with the departed family members, the familiar spirits. The duality observed by Grant was also noticed by Spitzer:

It is essential to understand that to most Creoles, including the overwhelming majority of the upper class, culture was not an either-or situation. Adoption of one way of life did not mean rejection of another. While having become genuinely Anglicized in their outlook toward education, wealth, and upward mobility, they continued to adhere to beliefs which were founded in the customs of their pre-Creole ancestors.[29]

The Krio clergy and educated elite, in their antipathy towards the uncivilised "aboriginal", publicly condemned indigenous religious practices. Using native charms and fetish, seeking cures from indigenous healers and help from diviners, being a member of a native society such as *Poro*, *Wunde* or *Bundu*, all these were decried as heathenism, superstition, barbarism and idolatry. Polygamy was gross immorality, and social entertainments like drumming and dancing were frowned upon. Criticism of the Krios' own Yoruba, Igbo and Ashanti religious imports, however, are conspicuous by their absence. The editorial which appeared in the ***Sierra Leone Times*** in 1898 was the exception rather than the rule:

Our claims to be regarded as a civilized community must be weak, untenable, and even ridiculous, so long as we continue to tolerate and participate in practices which cannot be reconciled to any of the beliefs, tenets, or principles which we profess to hold as civilized Christians.[30]

Serious public attempts to purge Krio society of its own "heathen" practices, by those who felt they were in the vanguard of the civilising and Christianising of Africa, were rare. What

crusading that did take place, by those who felt the civilising of Krio society had not gone deep enough, generally happened at the domestic level. However, in the close-knit Krio communities, where the extended family included the departed, upward social mobility did not separate the elite from the mass of the Krio population or from their families' traditional ways of venerating and communicating with the dead.[31] During the period of missionary control, by this separation of traditional practices from Christian worship, the Krio were able to faithfully maintain family solidarity privately, and present a picture of impeccable evangelical Christianity publicly. The Krio operated two religious systems, each with its own specific function and sphere of influence.

Unlike the Nova Scotians, the Recaptives landed at Freetown carrying their indigenous traditions with them. Many never abandoned their indigenous religious practices despite missionary pressures to do so. Professor Wyse maintains that a significant number of the liberated Africans came from the Sierra Leone interior and brought their own ways of accessing supernatural power directly into the Krio community.[32] As mentioned above, *Shango* and indigenous worshippers openly practised their faiths in the Pademba Road and Brookfields areas. Outside Freetown, Yoruba, Igbo, Ashanti, and Sierra Leonean indigenous religious practices were conducted much more openly. At Hastings in 1831 the Rev. Weeks mentions four types of idols which were the focus of religious activity. The most common images were representations of *Shango* the Yoruba divinity of thunder and lightening - the Yoruba equivalent of Canaanite Baal and Syrian Hadaad - and *Oshun* the water spirit, *Shango*'s consort. The Yoruba divinity cult was a developed, sophisticated form of the ancestor cult. Professor Sawyerr notes:

As T. F. Fabiyi has pointed out ... the many *orisas* of Yorubaland may be traced to deified ancestors. Dr. Idowu himself has observed the *Odudawa* and *Shango* were deified heroes. So even the Yoruba divinities give us some basis for the study of Ancestor Worship.[33]

These divinities acted as powerful intermediary spirits who directed the power of *Olodumare*, or *Olorun* "owner of heaven", to the Yoruba.[34]

The Yoruba, like the Mende and other Sierra Leonean groups, believed twins possessed extraordinary psychic powers. The twin cult existed among Christian Recaptives at Hastings:

These were rough wooden figures, intricately carved on the head, which stood eighteen inches high and which were considered to afford effective comfort in the time of sickness. If a woman gave birth to twins, and one died, the parents went to a "greegreeman" and obtained a figure to serve as a substitute for the dead child. The idol was thought to protect the living twin. If the living child fell ill, the parents prayed to the idol to restore the youth's health. Belief in the efficacy of the idols was strong. The Revd. Graf reported from Hastings in 1844 that one of his oldest women communicants had given birth to twins, but both had subsequently died. She indicated that the Christian prohibition which had prevented her from having twin figures to protect her children had led to their death. The funeral ceremonies showed a return to the safety and security of Yoruba belief as the woman "got a sheep, some fowls, rice, rum, etc., and on an appointed night she had the most notorious idolaters of this town at her house, who killed the creatures and made the requisite religious mummeries". In other cases, when parents did pray to the idol to restore health, they were naturally concerned to know the gods' reaction to their offering and sought the answer in divining by throwing kola nuts.[35]

The spirit of the twin resided in the wooden twin figure, *ibeji.* Offerings are made to the *ibeji* and if one of the twins died the image replaced it in the domestic routines. It was washed, clothed and fed. Missionaries were horrified to discover their parishioners "bowing down to heathen idols" or at least being in possession of them, and attacked the practice of "idol worship", often without appreciating the human and emotional factors involved. Sometimes the devotees themselves would show the missionary their carvings knowing that after reproaching them he would go away in disgust and leave them alone. Some of the carvings were quite large and conspicuous. Weeks records seeing one three feet high, while Schon and Metzger at Kissy came across a much larger one which dominated the room and had two horns, a bloodstained face and a large bowl half filled with chicken blood in front of it.[36] Under missionary pressure, the larger "idols" were quickly abandoned or institutionalised within the secret societies. The smaller ones also disappeared from general view becoming household charms whose main function was to protect, heal and bring prosperity.

Ceremonies to honour their own particular divinities, the elemental spirits of thunder and lightening, earth and water, were popular among each ethnic group. The rituals could be quite elaborate, involving animal sacrifice, usually a chicken. During the smallpox and yellow

fever epidemics which frequently ravaged the Colony, *Shopona* was invoked and goats, sheep and cows were sacrificed. Ajayi Crowther records a visit to a Shango house on Circular Road. All sat on the ground facing the *Shango* image in front of which were placed pots, bottles, and a large white-washed calabash. Singing, drumming and dancing had gone on all night. According to Crowther, ram sacrifices were particularly liked by *Shango*. As sanitation and health in Freetown improved, the frequency of these ceremonies declined. For critical cases the help of native priests and Muslim *alfa* and *mori* was sought. Sacrifice as a religious practice revived among the Krio with the arrival the Spiritual churches, the priestly role being normally, although not always, taken by a non-Krio prophet-healer.

Peterson notes the high death rate among those recently liberated, many of whom were sick on arrival at Freetown, and observes that, "Illness and the fear of illness and death provided potent reason for the continuation of worship of such deities as Shango."[37] James Johnson encountered *Shango* dancers at Oke Muri while visiting a Yoruba woman whose daughter was mentally disturbed:

Everyone in the area thought it was the punishment of the god Shango. The dancers had come to the woman's compound to try to placate the deity. Johnson had come with his Yoruba testament and hopes of converting the woman. When she saw him, however, she simply told him to go away. She told him that she had entered the church three times during her lifetime in Sierra Leone. She admitted that she had "found peace" on each occasion, but she had not found good health. Therefore, she told him, she would remain with the Shango dancers who did provide good health. She told Johnson to leave and then danced off with the others.[38]

When Johnson preached to a group of *Shango* devotees dancing their way to George Brook an old Yoruba told him that from experience he knew which form of worship was most powerful and effective. He accused Johnson of being a child and only speaking as he did because the white men paid him for it. Peterson writes:

Johnson painfully observed that five of the drummers were Krio, colony-born children of Liberated Africans. The transference of Yoruba systems of belief to the Krio generation distressed the missionaries. They had long placed hope in the second generation. Nevertheless, the older pattern persisted into post-1850 Freetown.[39]

Eventually the more obvious and public manifestations of the indigenous religious practices

died out or disappeared from public view. They could not survive overtly in the Krio society which modelled itself after the pattern of Victorian England. Advances in tropical medicine meant cheaper and usually more effective cures from the practitioners of Western medicine, Krio and missionary, thus the need for the idols declined and the scope of the healer-priests diminished. The social stigma attached in being involved with idols eventually removed the majority of church members from any overt association with them in their traditional form. However, amulets and charms were not so obviously "heathen" and could be easily concealed. Peterson claims that using *gri-gri* and local medicines was common even among communicants. Muslim *sebe* charms from the interior were popular, but Recaptives also made their own. In 1886, an article entitled "Greegreeolatory" appeared in the ***Sierra Leone Weekly News***. It narrated the case of a Recaptive from Charlotte, a professing Christian. He was discovered incanting swears in front of a sacred tree in order to empower his charms to kill three villagers. The eavesdropper reported the matter to the elders who fined him forty shillings and destroyed his charms. Sometimes the missionaries found protective charms on the Recaptive children. Peterson instances two cases:

The Revd. J. F. Schon at Bathurst reported finding a charm around the neck of the son of a family belonging to the parish church. He called the boy to his house and tried to persuade him to take it off. The boy refused and left, but soon afterwards he returned to the missionary with his parents. Both parents were enraged; the father became abusive. He argued that the charm was not a gri-gri "because he had not bought it with an intention of killing or injuring any person, but as a medicine to cure the child, and ... to secure it against the influence of witches. It was in his opinion just as much as if he had given some medicine to the child to drink, or had [him] vaccinated". The Revd. Graf told of a similar case in Hastings in 1844. The parents in this case wanted to protect their son from "bad luck" and witches. Most of the charms contained seeds, grass, dirt, or a piece of paper with some saying on it, usually in Arabic. The Hastings charm contained also "a small pair of iron stocks, such as used on feet of criminals." The mother explained to Graf that this meant that sickness of every kind was "tied and fettered" to keep it from attacking her son. The Bible itself was used as a charm in some cases. An African school teacher at Waterloo was dismissed from the C.M.S. because he used the Bible to discover "evildoers".[40]

As Creoledom developed, the overt use of native charms also decreased and those used were small and easily concealed. Amulets, chains, strips of red calico worn under one's clothes, and small stones, items which could be carried in purses and pockets, became

popular. Pregnant women going out at night would carry for their protection pieces of charcoal, a small knife between the breasts, or limes which reputedly had the power to neutralise witch-spirits. Objects that passed as innocuous Christian symbols, crosses, candles, bells, even the Bible, increasingly came to be used as protective and fortune providing charms. The same process took place with medicines which were drunk or smeared. Although Krio herbalists went into decline as their medicines and cures were replaced by Western ones, specialists continued to function both privately and in the secret societies. Helga Kreutzinger, in ***The Eri Devils in Freetown, Sierra Leone***, claims:

There is hardly a Krio family that has not its witch-doctor or alpha as a constant guide. From birth to death he will act as adviser in matters of health and family life, using both herbs and magic.[41]

Into this health and good fortune market came the occultic paraphernalia of the West and the East. Faith in the efficacy of charms has continued to survive among the Krio as a means of accessing divine power. Although not so strong as before it continues to hold its ground and operate in subtle and sophisticated ways. The charms and medicines are perceived as "visible symbols of invisible forces which come either directly from God or through the spirits" and are seen as "good magic" to counteract "evil magic".[42] The justification for their continued use among Christian Krio is that it is part of African culture and the traditional way of life. Studies have shown that the fear of witchcraft increases in the city during times of stress and insecurity. Means of protection must be available, and charms provide that protection. In Freetown society today herbalists, medicine-men, and diviners still have an important role to play, even among the Christian Krio.

Witchcraft as "The Enemy Within" in Krio Society

Belief in witchcraft has remained an existential reality even among highly educated Krio and church members. Spitzer records the "Feety-goody" scare that terrified Freetown in 1914. An "evil disposed female" introduced the plague from the Gambia. An invisible insect bit people who then died "after prolonged and excruciating torture." It was observed that Krio women suddenly took to wearing red outfits in public, and "so many Freetown residences

sported red taffeta window curtains."[43] The colour red is repulsive to witch-spirits. During the dangerous times of conception and child bearing, charms are openly hung over doorways to keep evil spirits out, and tied to the wrists and neck of babies to protect them from the witch's "evil eye". Witches favourite drink is infants' blood and babies in the womb are especially under threat. Mothers may be protected with "holy water" or "holy oil" with which they wash their bodies and sprinkle their houses. Babies have "pikin grease" ointment smeared on their bodies.[44] Pregnant women keep protective stones under their beds. Dogs whining at night arouse fears of witch attacks since dogs can see spirits approaching. There are day witches and night witches. Day witches cause sickness and death, but local herbalists can provide antidotes for their poison. Night witches are more powerful and mysterious. The owl, *koko*, is commonly believed to be a witch-bird. When it hoots an infant dies. *Witch bod kry na net, pikin day na monin*, (An owl hoots at night, a child dies in the morning), is a common saying. Any owl observed is attacked with stones and verbal abuse. The owner of the tree it perches on may be suspected of harbouring a witch-spirit.

Suspicion of witchcraft is a constant fear. No one can be sure that even close friends are not witches, as witches operate by night when everyone is sleeping. Their own bodies lie asleep while their souls are abroad doing mischief. Heavy sleepers are suspected of being witches since the reason they cannot be easily awakened is that their souls are far away and are not able to return quickly enough. Witches may even be unaware that they are witches. The coincidence of dreams, negative feelings, and misfortunes, within such a cosmology automatically implies witchcraft, even to the dreamer, despite the fact that as Evans-Pritchard discovered in his investigations on witchcraft among the Azande that, "It is highly improbable that an act of witchcraft ever takes place, whereas acts of magic or sorcery may be witnessed daily".[45] If someone's face is seen clearly in a dream, it can indicate that the person is a witch who is seeking to do harm. When houses burn down at night and people perish, those who died are suspected of being witches who did not get back to their bodies in time to make an escape. Eccentrics, unmarried ladies, and barren women especially, are

strongly suspect. Members of a family that experiences a spate of bereavements become suspect of witchery. Two instances indicate the present-day strength of belief in the destructive power of witchcraft even among educated Krio Christians. The first, already narrated, concerns the disturbance which took place in the Anglican Church at Charlotte in November 1991 when accusations of witchcraft were made and a free-for-all broke out. The second concerns the January 1993 coup attempt after which twenty-seven suspects were executed. A Krio Christian and University lecturer had no hesitation in accepting the story circulating that some plotters had been so powerful in witchcraft that bullets could not kill them. They had to be annihilated using acid and run over with heavy vehicles.

A large and lucrative market exists for those who can spot witches and provide protection from witch attacks. Certain society devils, especially the *Ariogbo*, have a reputation for uncovering witches. A "pot man" can be hired when sickness and death bedevil a family. After activating the medicine in his pot, the "pot man" wanders around until the pot "fastens" onto an unsuspecting and innocent witch.[46] Some anti-witch medicines are offensive as well as defensive, redirecting the evil back against the sender. When struck by illness, some confess to having committed terrible atrocities. It is common for Christian Krio to claim their involvement with witchcraft is a recent development, coming about through their intermarriages and increasing involvements with the Provincials. They claim their Christian faith, which relied on God alone for protection, has suffered as a consequence, and they are now more involved in these practices than those from whom they learned them.

KRIO SECRET SOCIETIES

Ethnic societies translated from their countries of origin were from the beginning a major means of organising and administering the Recaptive villages. They protected the interests of their group and kept social cohesion and harmony. They were particularly concerned

about the survival of family traditions and maintaining proper burial customs. Above all their expertise lay in the areas of spirit power and the realm of the dead. The missionaries tried to suppress these societies with their "heathen" practices, drinking orgies, drumming and dancing, but failed since, for the majority, the authority of the society transcended that of either the church or the mosque.

The *Egungun* or *Ojeh* Society

The most powerful society was the Yoruba *Egungun*, meaning "skeleton", also called *Egun*, *Agugu* and *Ojeh*. Church members, despite the threats of excommunication by the missionaries, were involved in *Egungun* funeral rites where the deceased's spirit reappeared in the dress of the society devil. The devil, impersonating the deceased, would visit the old home, embrace each of the children and bless them. After being presented with a string of cowries the devil would dance back to the *Egugun* house.[47] Following the devil's visit celebrations, which included the consumption of large amounts of alcohol, took place. Describing the revelry and drunkenness at a funeral at Gloucester in 1846 which lasted a whole week, the Rev. J. F. Schon complained that, "the most distressing thing to my mind is their giving these occasions a religious appearance by singing and praying at intervals."[48] Waterloo and Hastings were *Egungun* strongholds. Towards the end of 1869 John Wright, a Wesleyan elder and lay-preacher at Hastings, discovered that two elders were misappropriating church funds. He reported them to the Government village manager who sentenced them to prison. Shortly afterwards Wright fell ill and died. He had been poisoned by the *Egungun* society branch, the *oje*, at Hastings, of which he and the other elders were members, for taking the case outwith the society's jurisdiction.

Peterson records a legend which has grown out of an unsuccessful attempt by the Rev. J. Graf, CMS missionary at Hastings, to banish a dancing devil:

One day Graf went out with a whip in his hand to end an *Agugu* dance. He began to castigate [the dancers]; but he only flogged a mass of empty Egugu clothes. The bodies inside the clothes had mysteriously and inexplicably vanished. The

[missionary] marched back to the Parsonage; his whip had dropped, but a broom belonging to one of the ... Egugu escorts, followed him to the Parsonage, gyrating in fact executing a little dance of its own behind the worthy Cleric's back. However, when [he] turned round flourishing a Bible, it disappeared.[49]

Sanneh interprets the incident as the missionary being challenged to spiritual combat and instinctively responding in recognisably appropriate terms by using his Bible as a cult power object. He regrets that the seeming success of the missionary's confrontation was not followed up by further use of the Bible and possibly other Christian holy objects as power tools in the contextualising of the Gospel message:

Convinced that he had demonstrated the superiority of Christianity, the missionary had missed completely the obvious implication that Christianity could engage indigenous customs only by itself being transformed into familiar categories of apprehension. The Bible as a symbol of spirit power was drawn alongside the gyrating broom infused with similar power. At his place of residence, the missionary was within the proper limits of the spirit power of the Bible, with the retreating broom conceding the point. Thus *Egun* and Christianity, at least in local perception, were debating and competing within a common spiritual discourse, rather than about whether such a spiritual world existed at all.
The implications of such an encounter for the subsequent transformation of Christianity in Africa should be self-evident, and need no further elaboration at this point.[50]

Sanneh seems unaware that this is precisely the path taken by the Spiritual churches, the consequences of which will be investigated later.[51]

The strength of the society lay in its authority over the realm of the dead and consequently the power of its medicine, charms and magic. Its authority in the area of death and dying is superior to that of the church, so its hold on its membership is practically unbreakable. One can be a church or mosque member as long as the secrets of the society are kept and loyalty to the group maintained. The disloyal are under the threat of terrible swears and the danger of poisoning. Other important functions are to offer entertainments, settle disputes, especially adultery cases ("woman palavah"), and provide finance during bereavements. The earliest known *oje* of the *Egungun* society in Freetown was at Oke Muri. Their May anniversary celebrations last a week, starting with a vigil called *ikunle*, that is "kneeling", on the eve of the festival. According to an informant, "The whole night is spent in homage to the deceased. Prayer, worship and sacrifice are offered to them." Many eminent Krio are

members of the society. Nowadays *Egungun*, or *Ojeh*, is open to people of non-Yoruba descent provided they "learn a few key phrases of Yoruba."[52] Freetown Mandinka and Temne are now included in the membership and it is growing in popularity among Provincial Muslims. Since the Fourah Bay area was the original centre of Islam in Freetown, and since *Egungun* was the principal society of the Aku who lived there, Provincial Muslims regard the Fourah Bay imams as custodians of the society.

The Hunting, *Adikali* and Free Masons Societies

Specialist societies emerged out of *Egungun* the most important being the Hunting societies. They have became much more popular than *Egungun* and are now, with their offshoots, the main Krio secret society.[53] The oldest Hunting society in Freetown is *Odileh* which has about 160 members and dates its inauguration to 1880. The second oldest is called Hastings and dates from 1890. It has over a hundred active members. More recently formed Hunting societies are *Araokay,* founded in 1957, having over 120 members, and Front Line with over two hundred active members which was founded in 1979. One third of their members are female. Their motto is "Unity and Co-operation". The members wear uniforms for their special occasions. On hunting expeditions overall suits are worn and hats made with grass. At funerals the men wear white *rapel,* a v-shaped cloak with long hanging sleeves, blue dungarees and white shoes, while the women wear white *buba,* the female v-shaped cloak, and black *lappa,* a wrap-around skirt. There are at present several hundred Hunting society units in Freetown and they reproduce the indigenous socio-religious equivalent of the church or the mosque. The *Baba Ode,* "Big Daddy", pastors the society. He is appointed to his office because of his skill in hunting and his knowledge of all aspects of the society. He is the chief. The *Ashigba* ranks next in importance. He is the man of spiritual power, the diviner. Normally he is an elderly active member and a medicine-man highly skilled in the use of herbs and charms. All the Hunting societies belong to one parent organisation known as the Hunting Amalgamation which functions as a governing council headed by a president. Its aim is to foster unity and encourage ecumenical relations between the different Hunting

groups. Each *Baba Ode* represents his society in the Hunting Amalgamation.

As Krio involvement with hunting declined the Hunting societies became more social and professional associations. Occasional hunts are still organised and one grand annual hunt is held to remind the members of their origins. On the annual hunting day, normally Boxing Day, the spirits are consulted and their blessing sought. Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Easter Monday and Whitmonday are also popular hunt days. The Hunters' devil symbolically represents the spirits of the society and its animal totem. The devil dancer's face is covered with the fur of a civet cat and his head is crowned with a mask carved as a deer with two long horns called in Yoruba *apari.* He can hardly see and needs an assistant, *ebileh,* to direct him. He wears a jute dress, dyed dark brown to symbolise a deer by being soaked for several days in a dye made from mango bark. The dress is decorated with protective cowrie and snail shells and palm leaves, all possessing magical powers. He is usually called "Mr. Brown". In a hamper on his back, which is decorated with snail shells, the devil carries his objects of mighty power, often including a dog's skull painted red. The dog is of great importance in the hunt and is believed to have "four eyes", two of which can see bush spirits and give warning. These objects protect the devil during the dance and any chance meeting with a rival devil which can result in a fight and bloodshed. Carried in each hand are two other objects of power, a steel axe and a magic broom made from a split palm rib about thirty-five centimetres long. The devils' robes are to be ritually consecrated once a month by throwing rum and kola nuts on the ground before the box containing the clothes. Before making the offering the officials must wash their hands using a black soap specially prepared by a society herbalist. The devil goes out to meet the returning hunters raising his magic broom to bless them and then leads them back to the *igbedu,* the society house, where the women take the game and cook it along with vegetables and rice. Drumming and singing get under way. *Omoli,* a strong home-made corn liquor also called "power gin" is drunk. After the feasting, the devil entertains with dance, acrobatics and drama from around 5 to 9 p.m. Sometimes he goes berserk under the influence of the power contained in his hamper and

threatens to attack the spectators many of whom sit on benches and chairs around the dancing area. To cool his temper, a hunter carrying a pot of *sawe,* a water and herbs concoction, splashes the devil using the broom. At the direction of the *ashigba* the dancer can be replaced by another who dons the mask and robe. Several of the best dancers in the society will have opportunity to dance during the evening entertainment. Three drums of varying sizes and importance, *ako, afereh* and *agere,* and clapping sticks, *igi,* provide the music. Sometimes a hunter will approach the devil with a gun and shoot him from about six meters. The devil's medicine protects him, the spectators see that he is untouched by bullets. Money is thrown at his feet in appreciation of his performance and power.

The hunters attribute their successes to the power of the *ogun,* the fetish which embodies the spirits of the dead hunters, and also to their own charms and knowledge of magic, and the skill and expertise of their herbalist medicine-man, who is usually their president. The skills of the herbalist - an expert in the physical and psychical power of plants - in providing cures, antidotes, stimulants and suppressants for the hunters, as well as poisons for the victims, ensure him a crucial role in the operations of the lodge. This is true of the indigenous societies as well. The herbalists have gardens, at their homes or in the bush, where they grow the herbs the require. Stimulated by the herbalist's concoctions, hunters encounter bush spirits, including dwarfs known as *ebere*, who although normally invisible appear to the hunters and contract to make them rich. Some are wicked and inflict blindness and dumbness. The *ebere* are similar in behaviour to the *ndogbojusui* and *tingoi,* the forest and river spirits of the Mende, and the *ronshoh* dwarfs of the Temne. The *ebere* are now commonly called *ronshoh* or *wonsho* and are hybrid creatures with man and animal features. They are dressed in rags like old hunters or *eri,* the Hunting Society devils, and have faces like gorillas. They can appear as beautiful young women to men, and as handsome young men to women. Women may join the society, they can cook, but are not allowed to go on a hunt. Those who make contracts with the *wonsho* often become childless. Although they become very rich they must appear to live in poverty. The work of the herbalist is accepted

as very dangerous because while experimenting with his hallucinatory herbs he may go mad.

Hunters drink the blood of their prey to obtain courage and skill in hunting that animal. They rub herbs on their bodies to protect them from stray shots and also to make themselves invisible or to change into animals. Such claims are rarely doubted even by educated Christian Krio, although their accounts of them are invariably second-hand.[54] Each Hunting Society has its own powerful medicine, its *ogun* fetish, through which the spirits operate. Kreutzinger records that in Leicester village it was a dog's head while in other lodges it could be the skull of another animal, a stone, or a piece of iron which is associated with *Ogun* the Yoruba divinity of smiths and hunters. The *ogun* has its own special days of celebration. The holy of holies, a round roofless room about three metres in diameter, in which the *ogun* is kept, is also called the *ogun*, thus *ogun* can refer to the general assembly of hunter spirits, the fetish and the shrine. When divining and seeking revelations, rum, water and kola nuts are offered to the *ogun* by the *ashigba*, and *sawe,* what the Mende call *halei,* is splashed on the idol to revitalise it and cool its temper. The *ashigba* assumes the role of diviner and addresses the spirits in Krio interspersed with Yoruba phrases such as *"E na luki na obi"*, "Here are your kola nuts!" The general body of members are allowed to visit the *ogun* only on three occasions, when new members are being initiated, when a quarrel between two hunters has become serious and harmony must be restored, and before and after hunting expeditions.

Entry into the Hunting Society is by initiation. The initiate pays an admission fee and the cost of his or her first uniform, plus a bottle of hard liquor. The society provides the kola nuts, palm wine, palm oil and fowl for sacrifice. Initiation usually starts around midnight, but this can vary. The Front Line ceremony begins at 2 a.m. There is feasting and dancing. At this time the society elders visit the grave of the dead hunter who will be the guardian spirit of the novice. The spirit is invoked by the *ashigba.* Their return to the *igbedu* signals the start of the initiation rites. Kreutzinger describes an initiation ceremony:

Before the midnight ceremony of initiation old members of high rank like to visite [*sic*] the cemetery, where the herbalist invokes the spirit of one of the old hunters. Meanwhile the old members have built a fire in the igbedu - the official hunters' community centre - where they prepare a meal from the things they took along from home: oil, pepper, rice and chickens. After the ceremony, old and new members join in feasting.
About the initiation itself, little information was available. Before the main ceremony in the bush, old and prospective members pray together the "Our Father", then join in bringing a sacrifice to the Ogun. It consists of rum and gin (cold water), which is thrown on the Ogun "to make the heart cool"; two red and white cola nuts are offered, and the ashigba informs the Ogun that new members are present, waiting to be initiated. He speaks directly to the old, dead hunters. Then, the new members wash their hands in the sawe that is held ready by the herbalist, this means that their hands are clean and they are free to join the society.[55]

A more up to date informant states that a white cock is brought in, its neck broken and the blood allowed to drip on the ground before the divinity.[56] Some societies, for example Front Line, offer a red cock.[57] Having washed their hands, feet and faces clean with the power energising *sawe*, the initiates are received into the society. The *ashigba* presents each one with a jute hunting bag to carry their charms, knives, cutlass, cord and jar of water. Anyone who swears falsely in the presence of the *ogun* will go mad or blind.

Kreutzinger describes the *ashigba* of the Leicester lodge in 1966:

The dress of the devil is kept in the igbedu, the house of the ashigba, in a room reserved for that purpose, where only the ashigba and the ritual caretakers are permitted to enter. The ashigba of Leicester is a carpenter, seventy-three years old; his daughter lives in the house and takes care of him. His grandfather and his father were ashigbas, and he himself accepted this high office three years ago, putting his life under the law of the devil that is not always easy to keep. He is a pious Christian, member of the Anglican Church, a deeply religious man who spends many hours of the day in the room of the devil, taking care of him and observing his law to abstain from sexual intercourse before any sacrifice in the Ogun, and before the dance of the devil.[58]

Strikingly apparent is the pragmatic acceptance of a synthesis of Christian and indigenous African practice where the major aim is to channel divine power effectively. Kreutzinger also describes the societies' attitude towards the *ashigba's* power:

No one is concerned about the source of his power, as long as the supply is sufficient, and serves the society well.... The idea of "power" - energy, strength - is of such tremendous significance, that everything else is subordinated to it. The only principle is the direction: power is here to help, to heal, to strengthen, to protect. He who abuses the great power and turns it into a force of evil through his own attitude towards it, will be heavily fined or even excluded from the witchdoctor's union. In the old days, a negligent witchdoctor was killed, today he often has to leave the district, and sometimes the country.[59]

A major responsibility of the Hunting societies is to bury its deceased members. Their burial ceremonies, and also wedding ceremonies, frequently overlap church ceremonies. A tacit *modus vivendi et operandi* has developed between the two institutions. Before a funeral or wedding, the society devil and his helpers, so as not to sleep with their wives and loose power, spend the night in the *igbedu* either sleeping or singing hunting songs and drinking *omoli.* All the Hunting Society members wake up around four and proceed to the house of the deceased or the bridegroom. With the exception of the devil and his helpers, all members attend the church service, dressed in dark suits, ties, white shirts, and sporting a cutting from an oil palm leaf, *mari-wo*, in their button-hole. They take part in the services, reading the Scripture passages and praying. After a wedding service the devil meets the couple as they leave the church, blesses them with the magic broom and conducts them to the *igbedu* where the dancing and festivities can continue for up to seven nights. At funeral services for deceased hunters the coffin is carried to the church by the lodge members who sing society songs and hymns. The members line up to make a triumphal arch with their guns at the door. The service concludes with a hunter saying the last prayer and reading from the Bible. The minister then blesses the coffin. After this the society takes control of the remaining burial procedures. The mourners drop their *mari-wo* into the grave which is now closed and gun-shots are fired into the air.

Thanksgiving Services are grand occasions nowadays - the missionaries having long since departed - and kindred societies are invited to share in the service and read the first lesson. The minister celebrating should be a member of a Hunting Society and the sermon should be on a text with a hunting connection. After the service the hunters are led to the *igbedu* for refreshments by one of the Freetown school bands. The refreshments after the service tend to be non-alcoholic, but this rule is not so much adhered to these days and beer, stout, rum and gin are often available. However, there is no hunt or dancing and the devil does not come out. This is not the case for the "Forty-days" *awujoh*, when a hunt is organised in honour of the deceased and the devil is very prominent in the celebrations at the dead

person's house. Here the devil, rather than the father or oldest family member, offers the libation. Despite the inclusion of Christian elements into the societies' ceremonials, for example singing hymns, readings from the Bible, especially the Old Testament, and reciting the Lord's Prayer, and despite the fact that the majority of the Leicester lodge were members of the Anglican church, the evangelical vicar of Saint Andrew's Church, the Rev. Prince Decker, attempted to stop the local Hunting societies from holding Thanksgiving Services in the church, believing the two organisations and faith systems to be inherently incompatible. Hunters drunk on palm-wine forced Decker to flee the village. He went to the archdeacon who told him that he was himself a member of that society. This caused a great furore in the village and although the Rev. Decker, a popular evangelical preacher, struggled to sustain his stand he was eventually forced to give way and was subsequently transferred to the Gambia. Bishop Thompson refused to support Decker in his stance claiming he had been taking services in the village for twenty-five years and found no conflict of interest involved.[60] However, the younger and more fundamentalist evangelicals who are associating with the newer Pentecostal churches are increasingly of Prince Decker's opinion, that the two systems cannot merge and each still maintain its own essential integrity. In the older denominations, however, the tendency is towards more accommodation and concentration on the common ground which is that all believe in God and that all power ultimately comes from God. In this accommodation, the barriers that enforced parallel religious activity are slowly coming down.

From 1935, tribal Hunting Societies calling themselves *Adikali,* (Susu for "lesser chief"), began to be organised, first among the Kru at Krootown Road and next among the Temne and Mandinka at Bombay Street. They were basically the same as the parent body, but were more inclined towards the youth and tended to be more flamboyant in the style and dress of their devils. More definitely youth oriented organisations came into existence in the 1950s, and by styling their devil after the *eri* of the Hunting Societies became known as the Eri Devil Societies. The first were *Kojadei* and Rainbow. In 1963 there were over sixty Eri Devil Societies with their number increasing annually.[61] Since then they have grown considerably

and are a city-wide multi-ethnic phenomenon operating outwith the umbrella of the Hunting Amalgamation. Unlike the Hunting Societies and being mostly non-Krio they generally have little or no connection with the churches. In fact they are an alternative and rival *koinonia* to church fellowships and Christian youth groups. Many run football teams and hold frequent dances during the rainy season, "lock bush", when no hunting is done. The members help those in financial and employment difficulties and partners of the other sex are frequently found in the society. These are incentives to join and account for much of the increase in numbers over the past decade. Many operate like city gangs and fights take place between devils and lodges, the winners annexing the losers. The night before a confrontation with another lodge, the fighters sleep on their fathers' graves entreating their help. Before a parade the members spend the night near the *igbedu* drumming, dancing, drinking beer and *omoli,* and feasting. The girl members led by the "mami queen" join in. The route they take is plotted by the police who are afraid of disturbances should two devils meet. The most used route is along Kissy Road, Mountain Cut, Circular Road, Pademba Road, Krootown Road, Siaka Stevens Street and Kissy Street. After the parade the members return to the *igbedu* to spend the rest of the day singing and dancing. Some of the powerful and feared lodges are the Paddle, of which ex-President J. S. Momoh was a member, Tiger, Rainbow, *Egande*, *Muwaf*, Bloody Mary, Liberty and Torpedo. They are reputed to have very powerful medicines. These newer and more youth oriented societies are changing and adapting to the modern situation while still retaining a firm conviction in the power of their spirits, charms and devils, and in the traditional ways of appropriating that power. One of the more obvious changes is that they are much less involved in death and burial ceremonies than the older Hunting Societies. They maintain that dancing, being an expression of happiness and enjoyment, is inappropriate at the death of a companion.

Of the indigenous Sierra Leonean societies, the Temne woman's society *Bundu,* and its Mende and Sherbro equivalent the *Sande,* have attracted Krio women, whereas the male society, *Poro*, made little headway with Krio men.[62] Banton claimed that at the time of

writing (1957) there were no *Poro* lodges in Freetown and considered *Poro* type societies incapable of establishing themselves in a city like Freetown because "it has to be all-powerful if it is to function properly, and in a technologically advanced environment this is out of the question."[63] Admittedly there were no registered lodges, but his explanation ignores the adaptability of the society, its ability to adjust to a non-agricultural environment, and its presence and pre-eminence among the non-Krio communities in the city, especially the Mende and Temne. The lack of success of *Poro* among the Krio was due rather to the strength of the Nigerian originated societies and male Krio prejudice towards the Provincial peoples. In fact the 1960s witnessed a rush of young Krio intellectuals into secret societies such as Hunting, *Ojeh* and *Geledeh* (a Popo society similar to *Egungun*), and even into *Poro* and *Wunde*, as that generation, reacting against white imperialism and rejoicing in their political independence, sought to rediscover their African identity and deepen their participation in indigenous Sierra Leonean traditions. Today there are many *Poro* lodges in the city, the vast majority of the membership being Mende and Temne. It is interesting to observe from Kreutzinger's survey that while Temne and Limba were attracted to the Krio-originating Hunting Societies, especially their offshoots the *Adekali* and the *Eri* societies, the Mende, being more staunchly *Poro*, were not.[64]

As Creoledom evolved Freemasonry was introduced into Krio society. Wyse points out that the present popularity of Freemasonry and its increase in membership among the Christian Krio is a direct result of their disillusionment with the post-World War Two political developments. Freemasonry has become increasingly popular among Krio professionals and intellectuals and is particularly popular with clergymen both Anglican and Methodist. Its benefits are social and professional. In its initiation and other rituals, spiritual power is sought after from international and universal sources. The spiritual power-brokers of Krio Freemasonry stretch beyond their tribal ancestry. However, the Masons come a poor second to the Hunting Societies despite the common saying, "To be a Krio man is to be a Mason"[65] The present-day strength of secret societies ensures the continuation of tribal traditions,

customs and beliefs even within the Krio community, Christian and Muslim. Nowadays there is generally no stigma associated with being a member of a secret society in Freetown; as institutions of spiritual power they generate awe and respect. One's social status in the city is now much more dependent on the prestige of one's society than of on one's church. The societies are seen as providers of security, protection and the physical and material needs of their members. Above all they are communities of power in an insecure and threatening urban environment. They have had an ambivalent relationship with the Christian churches and the mosques which have never been able fully to replace them or prevent their members associating with them. Dual membership, as pointed out by Wyse, is no longer a matter of conflict in these churches. A *modus vivendi* parallel to that arrived at with the Masons is now evolving between the historic churches and the secret societies. In the newer evangelical and Pentecostal churches the situation is different. Compromise and accommodation are no longer options. Both offer their members fellowship and security, and both make similar demands for absolute loyalty and total commitment. It is going to be increasingly difficult for the new generation of Christians in Freetown to have a foot in both camps. A similar situation exists in the growing Islamic fundamentalist community led by the Basharias.

THE ANCESTOR CULT AND THE *AWUJOH*

The religious bed-rock for the vast majority of Krio is the ancestor cult. Although adaptation and modification have taken place, the power of the ancestors to control the lives of their descendants is taken for granted. Here we are at the *naos*, the inner sanctuary of Krio as well as indigenous Sierra Leonean spirituality. The major involvements with the ancestors take place at the great life crises, birth, marriage and death, for which elaborate *rites de passage* have developed in indigenous African societies. However, the ancestors are consulted on all matters of importance and their presence acknowledged in a multitude of ways, for example tipping out of the first drink from a bottle of liquor, sending the first puff of

a cigarette in their direction, apportioning of the ancestors share in a meal, leaving a glass of water on a table overnight for the ancestral visitor, the spontaneous ejaculatory prayers when something goes wrong, and so on *ad infinitum*. Faith in the constant presence of the dead is expressed in the saying, "It is wrong to throw hot water from a pot at night since it might burn a dead ancestor who may happen to be around."[66] Before throwing out hot water one must call out a warning. Likewise one would not sweep out the house at night as it could result in throwing dirt on an ancestor. Sickness and misfortune, as with the indigenous peoples, can be an ancestor reacting to some insult or oversight. Disturbing dreams are taken as an aggrieved ancestor giving warnings. Problems which have not become so serious as to call for an *awujoh* are dealt with by leaving red or white kola nuts and a glass of water on a table overnight. These are taken outside in the morning and presented with the problem to the ancestors. The nuts and some of the water are thrown on the ground. The rest of the water is drunk and used to wash one's face. Evidence of sacrifices to the dead are according to Professor Fashole-Luke:

... found in almost every street in Freetown. In one case, the offering will consist of a green paw-paw cut in two, the halves laid open; in another case, the offering will consist of grains of clean rice mixed with palm oil and chillies, plus a few coins. These are usually thrown in the streets and left there. A third case, is a mat made into a bundle, with a few things wrapped in the mat, like a red cloth and cowrie shells; this type of sacrifice is associated with sickness and death. These sacrifices are offered to avert sickness, to promote recovery from ill health, to avert failure in business and to banish witchcraft and its evil effects. The significance of these sacrifices ... lies in the fact that some of them are offered by Christians. Christian Creoles ... are Africans even if they are Christians.[67]

All the above mentioned are common and culturally acceptable practices among the Christian Krio and demonstrate that in problem solving, as with other Sierra Leonean groups, the ancestral spirits evoke the first and the foremost call for help.

As with secret societies, so with the *rites de passage,* neither the church, nor the influence of Victorian England, nor missionary education had the power to remove or replace them. The ancestors and the *rites de passage* had precedence over the dogma of the churches, which were taken more as institutions concerned with material things and status than institutions of

spiritual power. The *awujoh* is basically a Yoruba mourning feast to celebrate the passage of a deceased person into the realm of the ancestors. Revelry, drinking, drumming and dancing were the order of the day as the pain of death was driven away and the triumph of life over death was celebrated. The climax of the celebrations is the feasting of the ancestors and the first post-decease personal communication with them, first at the graveside in a preliminary encounter then later at the home. In former times graves were beside the home and for a patriarch or matriarch the grave would be inside the home. Peterson describes the vain effort of Rev. J. F. Schon at Gloucester in 1846 to stamp out the practice of native wakes:

The recaptives vehemently defended the necessity of having the wakes. If missionaries continued to regard the wakes as the worst carry-over from the recaptives' past, the Liberated Africans themselves thought of them as the most important. Schon was told on another occasion that the drumming and singing comforted the widow. The missionary tried to stop the celebration anyway but was firmly rebuffed. One recaptive explained to him that "We were born in another country, this fashion we learned from our fathers. What they did we do too. This fashion no fit for white man, white man's fashion no fit for black man; you do the fashion you see your father do, we do the fashion we learn from our fathers. Suppose our fathers go to hell, we cannot tell; suppose they go to heaven, we cannot tell." Schon tried to refute the argument, but suddenly another recaptive intervened and told him, "Sir, it no fit for you to come to we tell we so, suppose you have anything to say, you must call headman to your house, and must speak to him alone ... no other person ever done like you." The Liberated African rather neatly told Schon the procedure to follow if he cared to protest further. Schon left the celebrants and returned home.[68]

The Wesleyans were no more successful in their attempts. Despite threats of expulsion from the church for attending traditional wakes the missionary at Wilberforce in 1867 had to admit that professing Christians not only attended them, but took delight in them. In 1870 the Liberated Wesleyan preacher at Wellington, the Rev. Charles Marke, wrote to the society in London explaining that absence from the wakes was "considered as an absence of love for the deceased...in direct contrariety to established usage".[69]

Two burial systems existed side by side for the Christian Krio, traditional and Christian. Christianised wakes, funeral rites and memorial services, where the excessive drinking of intoxicating liquor could be curbed and the night time revelries curtailed, were introduced by the missionaries. Wakes still tend to be occasions for revelry, especially when the deceased

has reached a good old age. The expenses and excesses involved in holding such wakes is now resulting in their becoming increasingly dysfunctional. A sociology student amusingly caricatures a Krio wake for an elderly person where social pressures force the family to make a great and lavish occasion and many turn up just for the alcoholic beverages and entertainment:

I have observed that during wake keeping the Christian Creoles are reluctant to sing when alcohol is not yet served.... As soon as hard liquor is served, they will come out with the most appropriate shouts. As the drinking becomes excessive the soft hymn singing soon gives way to dancing. Earlier in the evening the hymns or shouts were soft and in the best European musical tradition, but as more alcohol is consumed, the hymns become faster and louder and the soft tunes develop into passionate and heavy, heavy African beat especially when there is a band such as Gee Body Water Dance Band. Limbs start to move and dancing begins. Scores of Creole mamies woggle their huge bottoms to the strong rhythm of the drum if it is a band, or to the violent burst of shouts like "wae de bottle, bottle dae nar room" or "Glory be to God in the highest, Hallelujah!"[70]

Whatever their success in Christianising the traditional wake the *awujoh* feasts and graveside libations were too culturally ingrained to be given up or seriously tampered with, and while the churches remained under white missionary control they had officially to take place without the Church's blessing. More recently, while Harry Sawyerr and Professor Fashole-Luke have attempted to incorporate the *awujoh* into the Anglican Eucharistic communion of saints, there has only been little movement in this direction simply because the *awujoh* has become institutionalised on its own terms and there is no need to alter the *status quo*. According to Professor Fashole-Luke:

Freetown Christians seem to live in a dual existence; they hold firmly to the doctrines of the church, but hold equally firmly the traditional beliefs of their fathers. The two are kept in watertight compartments and are seldom, if ever, allowed to come together or interact upon each other.... The church has never had enough authority either to banish these African beliefs from the minds of her members or to abolish the African rites and customs.... Consequently she has succeeded in making the majority of her members in Freetown lead a Jekyll and Hyde existence.[71]

However, the Roman Catholics under the leadership of Archbishop Joseph H. Ganda, and influenced by the growing number of secular priests, with their doctrinal emphasis on the veneration and mediation on the saints, are now moving strongly in this direction.[72] The United Methodist Church, a mainly Mende denomination, are more slowly moving in a similar

direction. The newer churches, however, are taking a rigorously separatistic approach.

An *awujoh* feast can be held for ancestor communication at any time provided the proper preliminaries are carried out and the ancestors given due warning. These occasions can be weddings, births, entry into a new house, promotion at work, travel abroad, loss of money, failure in business, domestic crises. Misfortune, sickness and unpleasant dreams, being often regarded as warnings from an offended ancestral spirit, will prompt an *awujoh* and prayers for forgiveness. The graveyard is visited two or three days before the *awujoh* and the spirits are informed of the intention to hold the feast. Their approval is requested. A red and a white kola nut, a bottle of water, rum or brandy, and some beer and soft drinks are taken along. The family circle the grave, the kola nuts are split and all the items are laid on the ground. The eldest family member or one particularly liked by the departed, addresses the spirit, praising it for all the blessings it has bestowed on the family. Any disputes between family members are intimated and the departed is asked to help resolve them. Maintaining social harmony and cohesion is seen as a major benefit from the ancestral cult. The reason for coming is intimated and the approval and blessing of the ancestor is respectfully requested. The opportunity is taken to plead for help in all the difficulties the family are facing, mostly financial or health, and there may be weeping and expressions of grief and mourning especially if the person has only recently died. While the conversation is going on water is poured on the grave where the deceased's head would be, followed by the rum and any other favourite beverage. The water is for cooling the departed's hot temper. The deceased is generally assumed to be angry over the lack of respect shown. Here is a recently recorded *awujoh* graveside conversation:

Auntie Joy, how are you? We do hope you are doing well over there. We are trying hard to survive in this world. We are happy to inform you that Tungie and Ade have brought home a child, so keep watch over him for us. Olu is giving a lot of trouble. We believe that you can talk to him to be good. Francis has gone to Europe for further studies, so please help him in all his undertakings. Uncle Joe has gone to meet you in the "true world". We ask that all of you help care for us over here. This is what we have brought so take yours and leave ours.[73]

To ascertain the thoughts and feelings of the deceased, the kola are split and thrown with

these or similar words:

You have heard all that I wish to say. We are living in the unreal world and you are living in the real world. If you are satisfied and happy and want us to go on with the *awujoh*, take your own halves and give us ours.[74]

If two halves, one white and one red, face upwards and the other two are facing downwards, then the deceased is giving the all clear to holding the feast and the happy group shower him or her with praise. If the right combination fails to turn up this indicates disapproval, the spirit is "begged" and the kola thrown again. A sequence of bad throws leads to the thrower handing the kola to another member and suspicion rests on him that he is guilty of something that the spirit knows about even if the others do not. When the right combination does turn up the halves facing downwards are left on the grave while the other two are broken into little pieces and eaten as a communion meal by those present. Since it is taboo to take any of the offerings away from the cemetery - they belong to the dead - all the food and drink is consumed on the spot.

The *awujoh* feast proper takes place at the home of the person who has requested it or of the deceased. The lavishness depends on the family's financial circumstances and the seriousness of the situation. A cow, or one or more sheep could be slaughtered; several fowl along with beans, plantain, *agidi* (corn meal mush), and other vegetables are cooked. Near the door a hole is dug and at the appropriate time the family gather around while a chicken is killed and the blood made to drip into the hole. The family head does this while kneeling respectfully and telling the family spirits that the fowl represents the cow that was or should have been offered. Water or an alcoholic drink is then poured into the hole while supplication is being made to the dead calling the name of the one most directly involved first. For example at an *awujoh* called to celebrate a family member's departure to England for further studies this prayer was made:

Granpa Agadagudu, Grandma Hagar, Uncle Josie...we are now giving you your "cold water", especially your "Hotty Hotty" Captain Morgan. Your grandchildren and great grandchildren are here. Please look after them and make sure everything goes well. Take more "cold water" to make you feel good. Continue to pray and protect us.... Your favourite grandson Jenner has gone to London to study law. Please open his

way, guide him, protect him from bad friends and always follow him where he goes. When God is before him you should be before him.[75]

Following this, food is tipped into the hole. This is called *nyoleh* and the offering is normally made by the family matriarch. The final ritual is the *kapu kapu,* "grab, grab". Food is placed on a *fanah,* a broad mat container, which is placed near the hole and a mock struggle takes place as everyone tries to grab as much of the food as possible. The dead are thought to join in the wrestling and eat the food also. This is a fun contest and brings the ancestral involvements to a happy conclusion, relationships are for the most part temporarily restored and family solidarity is cemented. In fact these social harmonising elements are the main benefits the ceremony and the cult actually bring. As a problem solving technique they seem to make very little difference to the course of events; indeed they may be criticised for hindering a rational and scientific approach.

At the end of the *awujoh* comes the crisis point. Has the feast been accepted by the departed and can the living depend on their support, protection and intercession with God? The family head takes the kola nuts, splits them, and after shaking them for a long time in his cupped hands he throws them. If one white and one red face upwards there is great rejoicing. These are placed in the hole while the other halves are broken into small bits and eucharistically distributed. If the right combination fails to come up the group take this to indicate the spirits are not happy, some grudge not been dealt with or sins have not been confessed. Attempts are made to remove the impasse and the kola are thrown again. This family catharsis is continued until the kola turn up the accepted way. Another vital omen is the presence or absence of vultures, *yuba*. Food including the entrails of the slaughtered animals and fowl are earlier in the day placed so as to attract vultures. Family members compete to identify the departed among the vultures. A sociology student writes:

Vultures should visit the house where the ceremony is held. It is believed that these vultures are the dead relatives who have come to join in the ceremony and the feasting. If they failed to appear most of the people who were invited to join in the feasting would never touch the food, but would simply leave the house in which the Awoojoh was held in haste.[76]

Spitzer comments, "Since garbage-ridden Freetown abounded with vultures, however, the

probability of their absence was remote."[77]

The most important *awujoh* is the fortieth day celebration. This is the day the departed's spirit completes the ascension process and enters heaven. This parallels the ascension of Jesus and in this ceremony there is an obvious fusion of traditional and Christian beliefs. Christians calculate the fortieth day from the day of dying while Muslims start counting from the burial. Formerly these dates corresponded as Muslim burial frequently took place on the day of dying, but nowadays with body preservation at funeral homes this is not often the case. For the fortieth day ceremony the cooking must be completed by noon as that is the precise time when the spirit enters heaven. Before six, the *nyoleh* hole is dug. At six, the oldest female family member places food and drinks into the hole and calls on the name of the deceased saying for example:

Omotunde, you have now passed into the world of eternity leaving us in this world, but we know that you are still with us in spirit. Watch carefully your children and protect them from all harm and danger.[78]

She then calls on other departed relatives. Others can now come and make their own supplications. This must take place shortly after six because at six the dead leave their graves to wander about.[79] Kola nuts are tossed to ascertain whether the deceased has heard the prayers. If this is confirmed the rest of the food is grabbed in the *nyoleh* struggle. The hole is not immediately filled in, but is covered with banana or plantain leaves, so that anyone may afterwards talk to the dead. The third day *awujoh* is now rarely observed. On the third day just as Christ rose from the grave so the deceased's spirit was taken to depart from the grave. The third day *tenjamei*, "crossing the water", ceremony is traditionally important for the Mende. The seventh day was generally the main feast in the past and may still be kept, but not nowadays on the grand scale of the fortieth day which has taken over as the *awujoh par excellence*. The fortieth day *awujoh* marks the end of the first phase of mourning and may be preceded by a memorial service at church where the Eucharist is taken. After the forty days some Krio families will go to the grave to discover if the death has been caused by witchcraft or natural causes. A libation is poured out and kola are split and

thrown until a satisfactory answer is obtained.

Some families hold further *awujoh* on the first, fifth and tenth anniversaries. These take place on the Friday, and on Sunday the family attend church together, dressed in white or coloured clothes. Afterwards they make their way to the cemetery where they pour libations, make offerings and talk to the departed. With this the mourning period officially ends. Special visits to the graves of dead relative are made on Christmas Day, New Years Day and Easter Sunday. Libations are poured and the dead are entreated for their help and protection. An up-to-date report on family affairs is given to the dead. Harry Sawyerr has recorded graveside libations in and around Freetown in the mid-1960s.[80] There is little change today. On December 27th 1965 at King Tom Cemetery he recorded a relative, obviously a clergyman, conversing with the deceased on behalf of a leading Civil Servant who was travelling abroad:

We wish you to (help us) maintain peace at home and to make provision for us so that we may all prosper at our work. So, in the Name of God, the Father, in the Name of God, the Son and in the Name of God, the Holy Ghost (*he pours out, first rum, then water on the grave. One of the women interjects*): "Peace! Peace! for all of us at home; you can see more truly than we." (*More drinks are poured out. The first speaker continues*): I do not have much to say. I had to come to you ... to plead on behalf of X. I say, please guide me. Do you recall what X told you? He said, the family name should be acclaimed. Indeed it is being acclaimed by the grace (Power) of God. You know he would be going on a journey today. Please guide him. He has never been to his present destination. Provide for him. Take care of all the children. Guide them. They are stubborn, of course ... we too are stubborn. But provide for us .... Show yourself to us (*perhaps in dreams*). We plead with you; that is why we have come.... We are all trying to ensure that the family name is acclaimed. We are doing our best. But our efforts are feeble. But you, if you give us a hand, you who say we should acclaim the family name, if you do give us a hand, we shall succeed. We beseech you guide us; provide for us, give us peace at home. Give us health and strength. May God grant that we remain together, to come and visit you (as a family group) .... In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, if you have listened to all our complaints ... if you have been attentive to us, if you are satisfied with us, give us a sign. (*Two kola nuts, one red and one white are split into the component valves and tossed. They fall, the reds concave upwards and the whites convex upwards. They toss them again and they fall up one of each. The family are pleased, they take the valves which fell concave upwards and depart.*)[81]

In another essay Sawyerr describes, "One now unchangeable and regular Krio Institution": on the first convenient Sunday after the funeral the family worship together and take the Holy Eucharist, and in the afternoon, around five o'clock, seven and five are traditionally the hours

of sacrifice, a representative group visit the grave.[82] There is a tendency nowadays to proceed to the graveside immediately after the Eucharist so that the deceased member can be included in the Holy Communion. In this way the small unofficial movement towards the *communio sanctorum* mentioned above, has begun in the Anglican Church.[83] Everyone removes their shoes at the graveside, something the Krio will not do in church. Sawyerr's recorded graveside libation was held at 5 p.m. following Holy Communion at Saint George's Cathedral at 7.30 a.m. About twenty family members visited the grave for the libation. Sawyerr describes the scene:

The family gathers around the grave and a male relative starts off the proceedings with a Christian prayer.
"... We who are left behind. O Father, mayst thou ingraft in our hearts the true sense of (our) realisation that this life is but short; long though it may be, it is not ours but thine. Those who have gone before, O Lord, may they in their own way arrive at thy Almighty throne. Do thou accept them as thy servants. May we who are left behind follow such a road (path) that when our own turn comes we shall not be found wanting. This we ask in thy great Name who hast asked us when we pray to say, 'Our Father....'" [*All join in saying the Lord's Prayer*].
[Bottles and glasses are now organised by the side of the grave. Water, beer and rum being poured out. Meanwhile a general chatter goes on as to where those who are going to address the dead should stand - at the head or at the foot? The atmosphere is quite happy and cheerful].[84]

The deceased has gone into the *tru wol* (true world) and now knows reality and has great understanding of good and evil. She is assured that she is not forgotten and intercessions are made for her to look after her daughter Kumbi who has done all the necessary duties and spent a great amount of money:

I hope too that you will not fall asleep. I hope that you will not fall asleep at any time (whether by day or by night). On the seventh day after your death, I was lying in my bed; when I turned around, I felt your cold hand rubbing against mine.... Let your shadow protect Kumbi. For if Kumbi is not worth anything (has nothing i.e. no money), she will not be able to provide for her children.... So please make provision for her. When God is present with her, wherever she goes, you also be with her, please, as her number two protector. We are pleading with you. We plead with (beg) you. We do not command you. We are not giving you any orders. On the contrary we are pleading with you. As a mother please stand by her side (always). Stand by her wherever she goes. May no weapon raised against her prevail (prosper). Let not any evil designs against her succeed (take hold of her)."[85]

Mention is made of a family member who is abroad and although not able to be present has sent a lot of money for the various festivities possibly having had to raise a loan. Another

family member is at Fourah Bay College. "Open his dark understanding; what he does not know; let him know. Whenever he takes up his pen, please do his writing for him."[86] One of the men cries out, "Europeans (white men) maintain their traditional rites, when circumstances demand. The black man (Africans) offers sacrifices [*sara*]", and alcoholic drink is poured out.[87] Kumbi is urged to speak to her mother, but is hesitant. Eventually she blurts out tearfully, "I cannot explain the nature of your illness. I do not know where your illness came from."[88] Someone shouts in language coloured somewhat by the imprecatory Psalms possibly sung earlier in the Cathedral:

Watch Kumbi; take care of Kumbi. Guide her in her goings out as well as her comings in. Let no evil weapon attack her, by the power of God. Turn back whatever dagger, however sharp, which is raised against her against her enemies. Turn it back and let it pierce them (their soul). Let any sword which is sharpened for use against her strike them and cut their own throats. Let any net which is spread for her, catch the feet of those who spread it. That is our plea. We leave her in your care.[89]

The women are badgered by the men to pass the bottle so that they can speak to the deceased. One lady accuses the men of only wanting to drink from the bottle. According to Sawyerr at that stage there are continuous interruptions and "Confusion Reigns". There are demands for the kola to be broken up, all the drinks consumed and the ceremony concluded. There is "general chatter and laughter" as the drinks are consumed and the proceedings end with the Doxology and a "local religious shout - 'Good-bye, sleep and take your rest'."[90]

Pul nar Doh or *Komojade*

The next most important *awujoh* takes place when a child is born. Life and the continuation of the life of the family is of paramount importance. Barrenness, impotence and infertility are the great curses, so the blessing of children is vitally important. As with burial rites so also in the celebration and blessing of a new-born baby the Christian formalities were considered inadequate for the simple reason that the ancestors were excluded. Thus a dual celebration was adopted, the indigenous family and ancestor ceremony, *komojade* or *pul nar doh*, "take outside the door", was kept first as a family and domestic affair, while later the Christian baptism ritual was carried out at the church. Much Christian practice has been adopted into

the *pul nar doh* which is held on the seventh day after birth for girls and the ninth for boys who were believed to mature more slowly. According to Banton, the Temne and other tribes have a similar ceremony seven days after birth, called *awurako* in Temne, where kola and rice flour is put in the infant's mouth and predictions are made concerning its future. An Islamicised version is carried out by Muslims during which the baby is named and a sheep is sacrificed.[91] Among the Christian Krio a clergyman is invited to give an address and Scripture passages are read, prayers are offered and hymns are sung. Afterwards the child is lifted by an elderly matriarch and taken on a tour of the house before going out into the street. All the important places like the market and the church pointed out and the blessings of God and the ancestors invoked. On returning to the house a portion of kola is chewed and spat into the baby's mouth so it will talk fluently. The child is given its African or temporary name; its permanent name is given three months later during baptism. Next comes a "small refreshment" consisting of various drinks such as beer, stout, gin, and cakes. Included will be beans and *akara*, a mashed bean paste served with a hot sauce. This food, a favourite of the ancestors, has already been offered to them when an *awujoh* was held to find out from the ancestors what infant's name was to be.

The *pul nar doh* ritual in itself poses no great problems for the Christian theologian, being in the main, as also the *put stop* engagement ritual, a happy and meaningful case of cultural syncretism.[92] It is in the *awujoh* where the ancestors are communicated with and intense spiritual and material dependency is clearly evidenced, that serious problems of religious as distinct from cultural syncretism arise. Although there is no legal compulsion to continue the practice, failure to hold and participate in *awujoh* would brand any Christian as mean, disrespectful, unsociable, and one who was inviting ancestral retribution not only on oneself, but perhaps on the whole family. Under pressure from the educated elite and the costs involved, peripherals are being modified or abandoned. However, so culturally imbedded and socially functional are the rituals that the *awujoh* will continue even among the Christian Krio for several generations to come.[93] Changes that are taking place are mainly due to

financial constraints in the present harsh economic climate. The practice is sustained particularly enthusiastically by the women who prepare the feasts and who obtain honour and social status as a result. The only serious soteriological challenge to the ancestor cult comes from the Pentecostal-evangelicals and the fundamentalist Muslims. Within the Krio evangelical Christian community attention is, perhaps for the first since its creation, seriously focusing on the questions of the lordship of Christ, the authority of the Bible *vis a vis* that of the departed, and the role of intermediaries in the divine operations. Within the fundamentalist Muslim community the major concerns are to purify Islam from incompatible indigenous practices, submission to the Koran and adherence to Shari'a Law. This indicates a new trend in religious aspirations among communities that hitherto prided themselves in their religious toleration. The theological issues involved in the Krio's religious synthesis need to be faced as it is becoming increasingly difficult in the present religious climate of Freetown to, as Elijah put it, "limp between two opinions".

Having examined the indigenous religious background and surveyed and analysed Krio Christianity, the scene is now set for a proper investigation and assessment of the Spiritual and Pentecostal-evangelical churches. Krio Christianity was the form of Christianity these newcomers met on arrival. As the traditional religion of the Krio it strode the Freetown Christian arena like a Colossus. How the Pentecostal-evangelicals and the Spirituals planted their own particular brands of Christianity in Freetown in the shadow of this two-headed ecclesiastical giant is a story that needs to be told, and told now while some of the meagre historical sources are still available and memories remain alive. The Krio Christian experience has lessons for all Sierra Leonean Christians with an indigenous background. Despite the "Black Englishmen" label, the Krio were and remain existentially and ontologically Africans. The unique historical and religious pilgrimage of the Christian Krio, and their evangelical doctrinal foundations, are vitally important for the spiritual health and stability of the multiplying pneumatological churches in Freetown and Sierra Leone.

[1] Banton, (***1957***), p.102.
[2] ***Ibid.***, p.103.
[3] Spitzer, ***ibid.***, p.45. Some of the most popular books of this racist genre were Richard F. Burton, ***Wanderings in West Africa, from Liverpool to Frenando Po. By a F.R.G.S***, 2 vols., (London:1863); ***To the Gold Coast for Gold***, (London:1883): G. A. L. Banbury, ***Sierra Leone, or the White Man's Grave***, (London: 1881): A. B. Ellis, ***West African Sketches***, (London: 1881): A. F. Mockler-Ferryman, ***British West Africa***, (London: 1900).
[4] Spitzer, ***ibid.***, p.48.
[5] James A. B. Horton, ***West African Countries and Peoples, British and Native. With the Requirements Necessary for Establishing That Self Government Recommended by the Committee of the House of Commons, 1865; and a Vindication of the African Race***, (London: 1868): George G. Nicol, ***An Essay on Sierra Leone***, (Sierra Leone: 1881).
[6] Blyden was born in 1832 of Igbo parentage on Saint Thomas in the Virgin Islands and emigrated to Liberia in 1851. There his academic and political talents flourished. He became an ordained Presbyterian minister, the editor of the ***Liberian Herald***, vice-principle of Liberia College, Secretary of State, and three times he ran unsuccessfully for the presidency of the Republic of Liberia. Having made several powerful political enemies, he fled Monrovia and in August 1871 arrived, via England, in Freetown.
Blyden's skills as an Arabist and knowledge of Islam, which made him particularly suited for mission to the Muslim, were recognised by Henry Venn and the parent committee of CMS in London. They appointed him to go to Freetown as a linguist to teach Arabic at Fourah Bay College, reduce the Fula language to writing and spearhead a new missionary initiative to the tribes of the interior. In Freetown he began translating the Bible into Fula using Arabic script and greatly impressed the Muslim of Fula Town with his Arabic abilities. However, his criticism of European evangelical mission and education, and his pro-Islam sympathies which led him to adopt a strategy in mission which aimed not at converting the Muslim to Christianity, but rather at purifying Islam and making it a foundation for the Gospel, led to conflict with the Freetown missionaries and his dismissal from CMS after only three months service. However, Blyden's talents were recognised by Governor Kennedy and in January 1872 he was sent on a Government mission of "Peace and Friendship" to the kings and chiefs of Falaba and Tangare in the interior. Here he became more than ever impressed with Islam and critical of European mission and education in Africa. Following this expedition he became an ardent proponent of the concept of a West African University where the teaching would be done in the African context by African teachers, including Muslim, and where places were open to all and not just to Christians. His opinions infuriated the missionaries, particularly the belligerent Tregaskis who fiercely attacked him and his proposed African University in the press. Towards the end of 1873, Blyden, discouraged and frustrated, having been prevented by missionary opposition from obtaining the new post of Director of Public Instruction, resigned as Agent to the Interior and returned to Monrovia.
For more details about Blyden and his profound influence on West African thought, see Fyfe, ***ibid.***, pp.321, 385-94: Spitzer, ***ibid.***, pp.111-5: Lynch, ***ibid.***, pp.397-411.
[7] Edward W. Blyden, ***Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race***, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1967, first published 1889).
[8] Spitzer, ***ibid.***, pp.113-4.
[9] ***Ibid.***, pp.114-5. Spitzer is quoting from Blyden, ***ibid.***, pp.iii-iv.
[10] Spitzer, ***ibid.***, p.86, quoting from the Sierra Leone Times of 1st April 1899.
[11] ***Ibid.***, p.89.
[12] ***Ibid.***, p.84.
[13] Little, ***ibid.***, p.73.
[14] Spitzer, ***ibid.***, p.84, quoting from the Sierra Leone Weekly News of 15th January 1916.
[15] Filomina Steady, "The Role of Women in the Churches in Freetown, Sierra Leone" in ***Christianity in Independent Africa***, eds. Fashole-Luke, *et al.*, (London: Rex Collings, 1978), pp.151-63.
[16] Fyfe, ***ibid.***, p.22.
[17] Spitzer, ***ibid.***, p.129.

[18] This reply was contained in the Committee's Annual Letter dated 1st February 1927.
[19] ***Ibid.***, pp.136-7.
[20] Samuel A. J. Pratt, "Spiritual Conflicts in a Changing African Society" in ***The Ecumenical Review***, 8(2), January 1956, pp.157-8.
[21] W. L. Avery, "Christianity in Sierra Leone" in ***Africana Research Bulletin***, 11(2), January 1972, p.23, quoting from Taylor, ***ibid.***, p.13.
[22] Cyril P. Foray, ***A Historical Dictionary of Sierra Leone***, (Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press Inc., 1977), p.291.
[23] Femi Anthony's testimony is taken from her booklet, ***Calvary Hill***, a compilation of Lenten metitations on the Cross, composed in March 1991.
[24] Yasmin Jalloh, ***Ethnic Segregation in the East End of Freetown***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Hons.), 1987, p.47.
[25] Fashole-Luke, (***1968***), p.127. In the 1963 census, Freetown's population was given as 127,917 persons.
[26] Ref. pp.2-9 above.
[27] From conversation held with Rev. Ibrahim Sankoh-Cole at FBC on 28th February 1992.
[28] Pratt, ***ibid.***, pp.158-9.
[29] Spitzer, ***ibid.***, pp.26-27.
[30] ***Ibid.***, p.75.
[31] The open asymetrical structure of upper-class Krio society has been investigaged by Martin Kilson in his study of political change and modernisation in Sierra Leone. Martin L. Kilson, ***Political Change in a West African State: a Study of the Modernization Process in Sierra Leone***, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966).
[32] Wyse, (***1989***), p.vi.
[33] Harry Sawyerr, "Ancestor Worship II - the Rationale" in ***SLBR.***, 8(2), December 1966, p.33.
[34] According to Rattray, Ashanti religion was also an ancestor based intermediary system: **The predominant influences in the Ashanti religion are neither "Saturday Sky-god" nor "Thursday Earth-goddess" nor even the hundreds of gods (*abosom*), with which it is true the land is filled, but are the *samanfo*, the spirits of the departed forebears of the clan.** R. S. Rattray, ***Ashanti***, (Oxford: 1923), p.216.
[35] Peterson, ***ibid.***, p.251.
[36] ***Ibid.***, p.253. Peterson draws his information from Quarterly Reports sent in by Weeks in 1831 and Schon in 1833.
[37] ***Ibid.***, p.256.
[38] ***Ibid.***, pp.258-9. The information is taken from Johnson's March 1865 Pademba Road District Report.
[39] ***Ibid.*** The information is taken from Johnson's March 1866 Pademba Road District Report.
[40] ***Ibid.***, pp.234-5.
[41] Helga Kreutzinger, ***The Eri Devils in Freetown, Sierra Leone***, (Wien: Osterreichische Ethnologische Gesellschaft, 1966), p.19.
[42] Avery, ***ibid.***, p.12.
[43] Spitzer, ***ibid.***, p.153. He makes use of an article entitled "A Credulous Age" which appeared in the ***Sierra Leone Daily Guardian and Foreign Mails*** on 3rd July 1914.
[44] Glenda M. Johnson, ***Childbearing Patterns among the Christian Creoles***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1988, p.8.
[45] E. E. Evans-Pritchard, ***Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande***, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), 1937), p.27.
[46] Sylvia C. O. George-Williams, ***Magic Witchcraft and Sorcery among the Creoles***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1983.
[47] For further information on *Egungun* and other secret societies among the Creoles see

Peterson, ***ibid.***, pp.264-9. From the Nigerian perspective see Geoffery Parrinder, ***Religion in an African City***, (Oxford University Press: London, 1953), pp.45-48: E. Bolaji Idowu, ***Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief***, (Longmans: London, 1962), pp.192-4.

[48] Peterson, ***ibid.***, p.257.

[49] Peterson, ***ibid.***, pp.266f. The story was told at the Hastings Centenary Celebrations in 1919 by J. S. T. Davies.

[50] Sanneh, ***1983***, p.86.

[51] For Sanneh's views on the benefits of religious pluralism see, ***ibid.***, pp.86-89.

[52] Banton, ***ibid.***, p.185.

[53] Much of the information in this section is gleaned from Kreutzinger's research.

[54] Rev. Ade Jones, pastor of Bethel Temple, a former Sierra Leone ambassador and AOG superintendent, could not disbelieve a story he had heard of an adulterer who had been shot by the wronged husband who had mistaken him for a deer. As far as he was concerned, transformation into an animal did actually take place. Recorded conversation held with Rev. A. Jones at K 22, Kortright, Freetown, on 23/3/90.

[55] Kreutzinger, ***ibid.***, p.31.

[56] Georgina E. A. Williams, ***The Cultural Role of the Hunting Society among the Creole***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1981, p.6.

[57] Patrick I. Bangura, ***Front Line Hunting Society - a Case Study***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1985, p.10.

[58] Kreutzinger, ***ibid.***, p.32.

[59] ***Ibid.***, p.34.

[60] Conversation held with Rev. Ibrahim Sankoh-Cole at FBC on 20th November 1991.

[61] ***Ibid.***, p.67.

[62] *Bundu* made progress in the Colony during the smallpox epidemics of the late 1850s as Liberated and Krio women in the Hastings and Wellington areas entered the *Bundu* bush to be initiated into the society and take advantage of the protections and cures they offered. From there *Bundu* spread to other villages and also into Freetown where it obtained a certain prestige among Krio women especially the Muslim who admire the principles of submissive womanhood inculcated by the society and the practice of female circumcision.

[63] Banton, ***ibid.***, p.184-5.

[64] Kreutzinger, ***ibid.***, p70.

[65] For information on Freemasonry in Freetown see Wise, ***ibid.***, pp.12, 14, 123-4: Abner Cohen, "The Politics of Ritual Secrecy" in ***Man***, 6, 1971, pp.427-48.

[66] Rebecca J. George-Pratt, ***A Brief Study of Selected Superstitions among Christian Krios***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1985.

[67] Fashole-Luke, (***1967***), p11.

[68] Peterson, ***ibid.***, p.236.

[69] ***Ibid.***, p.237, quoting from a letter from Marke to Boyce dated 14th December 1870.

[70] Cyril F. King, ***Wake Keeping among the Christian Creoles***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1985, p.12.

[71] Fashole-Luke, ***ibid.***, pp.10-11.

[72] Joseph Ganda, a Mende, was the first Sierra Leonean to be ordained a diocesan priest. He was ordained on 9th April 1961 and became Sierra Leone's first native bishop when he was consecrated Bishop of the newly organised Kenema Diocese on 21st February 1971. On 4th September 1980, with the resignation of Archbishop Brosnahan, Ganda became resident Archbishop of Freetown and Bo.

[73] George-Pratt, ***ibid.***, p.7.

[74] Jenner T. G. B. Buck, ***The Social Significance of Awoojoh among Christian Creoles***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1985, p.12.

[75] ***Ibid.***, pp.14-15.
[76] ***Ibid.***, p.16.
[77] Spitzer, ***ibid.***, p.27.
[78] Beresford M. Davies, ***The "40th Day Ceremony" amongst the Christian Creoles of Sierra Leone***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1985, p.15.
[79] Veronica Paul, ***Rites of Passage among the Creoles***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1988, pp.9-10.
[80] Harry Sawyerr, "Graveside Libations in and near Freetown" in ***SLBR***, 7(2), December 1965, pp.48-55; "More Graveside Libations in and round Freetown" in ***SLBR***, 8(2), December 1966, pp.57-59; "Two Short Libations" in ***SLBR***, 9(1), June 1967, pp.34-37; "A Sunday Graveside Libation in Freetown after a Bereavement"in ***SLBR***, 9(2), December 1967, pp.41-49; "More Graveside Libations in and around Freetown" in ***SLBR***, 8(2), December 1966, 57-59.
[81] Sawyerr, "More Graveside Libations in and around Freetown", ***ibid.***, pp.58-59.
[82] Harry Sawyerr, "A Sunday Graveside Libation in Freetown after a Bereavement" in ***SLBR***, 9(2), December 1967, p.41.
[83] Ref. p.29 above.
[84] Sawyerr, ***ibid.***, pp.42-43.
[85] ***Ibid.***, p.43.
[86] ***Ibid.***, p.44.
[87] ***Ibid.***, p.45.
[88] ***Ibid.***, p.46.
[89] ***Ibid.***, p.47.
[90] ***Ibid.***, pp.48-49.
[91] Banton, ***ibid.***, p.208.
[92] For a good description of the Creole engagement ceremonies and particularly the *put stop* see Spitzer, ***Ibid.***, pp.29-33. Also Banton, ***Ibid.***, p.210.
[93] Gabriel Setiloane poignantly expresses the deep cultural and existential impression the ancestral cult continues to exercise even over a Christian theologian. Writing on the Sotho-Tswana and their ancestral cult in ***Christianity in Independent Africa*** he exposes his spiritual foundations:

I discovered how emotionally even I am still attached to my ancestors when I noticed for the first time that, in publishing my meditation: "I am an African", as an example of the expression of Christian sentiments in the African context, the World Council of Churches, Publication Department, had omitted the portion which deals with the ancestors. "To take the ancestors away from an African", remarked a Ghanaian woman - herself a member of WCC staff and a daughter of a very highly-placed Christian minister, "is robbing him of his personality". I felt happy at this corroboration of my deepest feelings. Few ethnographers and observers of the African scene have remarked about the persistence of the role the ancestors play in African life even after acceptance of Christianity, the pursuit of university studies to the highest of levels and sojourn abroad.

It often seems as if these attainments increase the cords by which Africans are bound to their ancestors: "I came to the University's degree conferment ceremonies" a world-famous African professor of theology said to me. "My son is receiving a PhD in Physics. It is important that I be present at this son's academic attainment: He is my father, you know". (Meaning "He is named after my father.") Therefore, showing respect to him is, in fact, to continue to show respect to the deceased father. Another professor of theology in an African University, a Christian minister, born and raised in a manse, relates how, on returning home after studies in the USA and at Oxford, his parents slaughtered a beast and, in the traditional fashion, called the whole family to welcome him back. The ceremony, called in South-Tswana, *Pha Badimo*,

thanksgiving to the ancestors, presupposes their presence, and it is they who, in fact, welcome back the returning member of the family. "If I had said 'No' to this", the professor goes on, "I would have been understood to disown myself and my family, living and deceased".

Nor is he alone in this understanding. This presence of the dead is felt all through Africa in spite of Christianity and Western sophistication. (The very professor quoted above prides himself in the fact that he is equally at home among his people in Africa as he is in Europe, especially England). It is presupposed and taken for granted in all meetings between Africans - as when I was pick-pocketed on a Johannesburg suburban train. I felt the hand slip into my back pocket where I had the paper money. The train was packed, and I cried out "Who is that?" When I was able to turn round the money was lying on the floor of the compartment. No one could be charged with having done it. I was glad I had my money back. So were my fellow travellers. They congratulated me: *"Hadimo ba gagu ba na le uena"* - your ancestors are by your side. In spite of the fact that I was in my clerical attire as it was Sunday morning and I was on my way to lead a service, they did not say, "Your God, or your Christ was by your side".

Ah...yes...! It is true.
They are very present with us...
The dead are not dead, they are ever near us;
Approving and disapproving all our actions,
They chide us when we go wrong,
Bless us and sustain us for good deeds done,
For kindness shown, and strangers made to feel at home.
They increase our store, and punish our pride.

Gabriel Setiloane, "How the Traditional World-View Persists in the Christianity of the Sotho-Tswana" in ***Christianity in Independent Africa***, eds. Fashole-Luke, *et al,* (London: Rex Collings, 1978), pp.406-7.