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THE TRANSFORMATION OF FREETOWN CHRISTIANITY 1960 - 2000

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD

2013

Department of Religions,
SOAS, University of London

Declaration for SOAS PhD thesis

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the transformation of Freetown Christianity with reference to different religious institutions for the last 40 years. As a prelude to the study, I will look at the religious, socio-economic and political background of the Christian Krio. This background will help us to understand the extent and type of change that have occurred in the last 40 years in the religious scene in Freetown.

The thesis discusses the results of a survey on churches which showed that there has been a proliferation of churches during the period under review.

The thesis examines the two most populated born-again churches, Jesus is Lord Ministry and Flaming Bible Church with the aim of bringing out their roles and contributions to the change which Freetown has been witnessing.

A related interest in this study is the role of religion in the civil war in Sierra Leone (1991-2002). The evidence suggests that Christian institutions displayed a positive response to the civil war by arranging venues for peace talks, providing relief and rehabilitation to displaced people and refugees.

The thesis also shows that women have played a significant role in this transformation as founders and leaders of churches, roles which forty years ago were unheard of. The change in Freetown is also assessed by focusing on other religious institutions such as Bible Schools and colleges, deliverance schools and parachurch organisations to see their roles and impact on this change.

The conclusions of the study is twofold: (1) there has been a fluid overlapping of religious identities among “mainline” and Pentecostal (especially the charismatic ones) church members as the former tend to relinquish their membership or affiliation in the latter when they have achieved success in their social, economic, moral or physical problems. These problems are believed to be caused by the “devil” who could only be attacked by the Pentecostal churches. (2) that increase in the establishment of Bible Schools and deliverance schools played a major role in this change

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Dedicated To My Grandchildren:
Luba and Jamal

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Abbreviations

ACIF	African Christian Fellowship International
ACIS	Associate of Certified Institute of Secretaries
ACT	Accrediting Council for Theology
ACTEA	Accrediting Council for Theological Education in Africa
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AEA	Association of Evangelicals of Africa
AEAM	Association for Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AME	African Methodist Episcopal (Church)
AOG	Assemblies of God
APC	All People's Congress
BCS	Brotherhood of the Cross and St
BCSL	Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone
BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
BHCI	Brookfields Hotel Catering Institute
BTBTI	Bethel Temple Bible Training Institute
CA	Christian Aid
CATI	Conference of African Theological Institutions
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CCBTI	Church of Christ Bible Training Institute
CCSL	Council of Churches in Sierra Leone
CGP	Church of God of Prophecy
CIA	Christians in Action
CMS	Church Missionary Society
COP	Church of Pentecost
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSI	Christian Services International
CWS	Church World Service
DLBC	Deeper Life Bible Church
DLBM	Deeper Life Bible Ministry
DIA	Dutch Inter-Church Aid
EBTI	Evangel Bible Training Institute
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEC	European Economic Community
EFSL	Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone
EPC	Evangelical Presbyterian Church
FBC	Fourah Bay College
FICF	Freetown International Christian Fellowship
FSSG	Freetown Secondary School for Girls

FYC	Freetown Youth Centre
GCE	General Certificate of Education
HFB	Hilfer Für Brüder
JEE	Jesus Evangelical Encountering Ministry
IAF	International Agency Forum
IBIL	International Bible Institute of London
ICRC	International Commission of the Red Cross
INEC	Interim National Electoral Commission
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
IRCSL	Inter- Religious Council of Sierra Leone
MBTC	Monrovia Bible Training Centre
MCA	Missionary Church in Africa
MCSL	Methodist Church of Sierra Leone
MZC	Mount Zion Church
NAC	National Apostolic Church
NLM	New Life Ministry
NLMSDD	New Life Ministry School of Deliverance And Demonology
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPRC	National Provisional Ruling Council
ODA	Overseas Development Aid
PACWA	Pan African Christian Women Alliance
PCC	Pentecostal Churches Council
PPSL	Plan Parenthood of Sierra Leone
REAPS	Rapid Engagement in the Acquisition of Skills
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SAM	Sudan Alliance Mission
SDA	Seventh - day Adventist
SGA	Shekinah Glory Assembly
SLBC	Sierra Leone Bible College
SLDC	Sierra Leone Diamond Cooperation
SLEFES	Sierra Leone Evangelical Fellowship of Students
SLMF	Sierra Leone Military Forces
SLRC	Sierra Leone Red Cross
SLTCCTC	Sierra Leone Theological College and Church Training Centre
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
SU	Scripture Union
TC	Teaching Certificate
TFSR	Tools For Self Reliance
TRANSCEA	Transcontinental Evangelistic Association (of Sierra Leone)
UBC	United Brethren in Christ
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Educational Fund

UC	Unification Church
UCC	United Christian Council
UPC	United Pentecostal Church
USA	United States of America
WAATI	West African Association of Theological Institutions
WAM	West African Methodist
WCC	World Council of Churches
WCRP	World Conference on Religion and Peace
WCSL	Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone
WEF	World Evangelical Fellowship
WFP	World Food Programme
WIN	Women's Intercessory Network
WRC	World Relief Canada
YFC	Youth for Christ
YWAM	Youth With a Mission
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1:1. Introduction

The most important motive of the founding fathers of the Sierra Leone settlement, it could be argued was “the spread of ‘Christianity’ and ‘Civilisation’ across Africa from this base on the coast” (Clarke, 1986). The development then of Christianity in Sierra Leone was made possible by the evangelical zeal of the missionaries. The Anglican denomination dominated the religious scene, but the Methodists, the United Brethren in Christ, the Baptists, the Countess of Huntingdon’s Connexion and the Roman Catholics were also represented. Today, in addition to the above groups, African Independent Churches, Pentecostal and Charismatic groups are found in the country and account for the majority of churches in Freetown. Freetown Christianity then, has to be seen against this background of the shift from mainline to Pentecostal and Charismatic churches that has been occurring all over Freetown since the mid-1980s. Indeed, as Gifford has noted, “among the most striking characteristics of African Christianity in the last decade has been the proliferation of new autonomous Pentecostal churches” (1994, p. 241).

1:2. Background to the study

My interest in the topic is the result of many comments made by older members of the Wesley Methodist Church in Sierra Leone where I am privileged to be a member of the “Leaders' Meeting” (the highest decision-making body in the Church). During these meetings, a number of issues were discussed regarding the social and economic welfare of the Church including the low attendance at church services, low level of youth participation in church services and their general clamour for modernising the church services through singing, dancing and clapping in church. More importantly, further interest was generated by calls for an academic investigation into the sudden development of born-again churches. So intense is this new wave of religious commitment that the local parlance *God dey* (God is always present) has come to acquire a common currency among the Freetown population.

A further fillip was provided by the mass turn-out of people at these “born-again” churches and “spiritual” churches, not only on Sundays but also on Wednesdays and Fridays when services are also held. Two churches are worthy of note, these are: Jesus is Lord Ministry (JLM) and Flaming Bible Church (FBC).

A fascination with such religious fervour, the complexity and diversity of these churches and religious institutions, and a desire to understand their dynamics constituted, inter alia, the main triggers for this study.

In 1993/1994, my first year students in the Sociology Department at Fourah Bay College conducted studies of the different churches in Freetown. Most of these studies examined the historical background and social profile of about 80 churches and some of the religious institutions. While these reports shed some light on the types of churches found in Freetown, my study attempts to put into proper context the nature and scope of the transformation of Freetown Christianity as a result of these churches.

The Evangelistic Fellowship of Sierra Leone (1992) conducted a survey of the churches in the Greater Freetown area of the Western area (see Fig. 1). The survey covered the period from 1980-1989, and classified the churches into eight categories, namely: (1) Non-Indigenous Non-Pentecostal, (2) Non-Indigenous Pentecostal, (3) Seventh Day Adventist, (4) New Apostolic Church, (5) Freetown International Christian Fellowship, (6) Roman Catholic, (7) African Independent "A" and (8) African Independent "B". The variables examined in this survey were: the number of churches in each of the eight categories with full-time pastors, a breakdown of church attendance by sex and children, the number of churches planted between 1980 and 1989, the dominant ethnic group in each zone and the prime language used for services. One major pitfall of this survey is that it did not include all the churches in the Freetown area for the period under review. This work hopes to broaden this survey and to complement it by updating the data through the examination of the period from 1989 to 1998.

1:3. The Problem

The Krio are descendants of the various groups which settled in and around Freetown and who had a strong attachment to Western religion and education introduced by the metropolitan power, Britain, since the inception of the Colony¹ in 1787 (Fyfe, 1962; Peterson, 1969). During the second decade of the twentieth century, large numbers of immigrants from the Protectorate who were adherents of Islam or traditional religion

¹ Sierra Leone was formerly divided into the Colony and Protectorate. The term Colony has been replaced by the designation "Western Area" including Freetown and the Protectorate designated as the three Provinces: Eastern, Northern and Southern Provinces.

migrated to Freetown in search of socio-economic and educational opportunities. This influx of immigrants greatly changed the character of the city from a homogeneous and predominantly Christian one to a heterogeneous and religiously diversified society.

Certain socio-economic and political changes that followed during this period affected the Krio's position of dominance, which they had inherited from their British-oriented background. The spread of education to the interior, as well as the migration of young people to Freetown for schooling, resulted in the creation of a larger educated group that was not a single ethnic composition. In addition, Syrians and Lebanese traders, who had been arriving in Freetown since the beginning of the twentieth century, gradually replaced the Krio as the dominant ethnic group in commerce.² Moreover, friction between the Krio and the peoples from the Protectorate took on political dimensions over the years and coincided with constitutional changes destined to reduce Krio political power. In 1951, for example, the Sierra Leone Constitution was revised, and the Colony and the Protectorate were thereafter jointly represented in an enlarged Legislative Council with an elected unofficial African majority and party rule. Since the peoples of the Protectorate greatly outnumbered the Krio, they rapidly gained political supremacy. These socio-economic and political changes contributed to the Krio loss of identity and led to a situation in which they also experienced a "status inconsistency" and a "status reversal" (Porter, 1963). The Krio, who mainly belonged to the mainline churches ceased to be the dominant ethnic group in Freetown and the city began to witness a proliferation of churches and religious institutions. Consequently, the factors of "status inconsistency" and the "status reversal" which culminated in the loss of Krio identity and the proliferation of classical Pentecostal and born-again churches, and sundry religious institutions are crucial for examining the transformation of Freetown Christianity.

The major questions which arise in this regard are: When did this proliferation start? What constituted the main triggers for the birth of these churches? What are the consequences or impact of this development on the mainline churches? How do these churches cope with these consequences? What are the motivations for the quest for

² For more on the Lebanese traders as the dominant ethnic group in commerce see Van Der Laan, H.L., 1975, *The Lebanese Traders in Sierra Leone*. Herderstraat 5, The Hague, The Netherlands: Mouton & Co. N.V.

membership in these churches and Bible/ Deliverance Schools? What are the socio-economic, cultural and moral consequences on the adherents and students?

1:4. Review of the literature

Pentecostal churches and Charismatic churches, brought together in the concept of Pentecostalism, are expanding spectacularly in various parts of the world, including Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.³ It is now fashionable for social scientists to identify external social conditions in their attempts to explain aspects of religious change such as the expansion of a religion. Yet this should not preclude an awareness or recognition of the relative autonomy of those factors, which comprise the internal characteristics of a given religion. In fact, the question regarding the relationship between religious and societal processes is one of the most fascinating in the debate about Pentecostal growth. This study posits that the growth of Pentecostalism is one of the primary impacts of the transformation of Freetown Christianity.

A series of studies on the subject of Pentecostalism have been written from both the western and non-western historical, theological and sociological perspectives. In a period of 100 years, the modern Pentecostal movement has travelled to and taken many roots in many parts of the world. This growth and expansion has been accelerated since the second half of the twentieth century and has resulted not only in an increased number of adherents but also in the varieties of Pentecostalism. According to some often-quoted estimates, there are over five hundred million adherents worldwide,⁴ found in almost every country in the world.

There has however been a considerable confusion over the use of the term “Pentecostal”. Walter Hollenweger’s seminal publication in which he classifies Pentecostalism into three broad types represents one of the most meaningful attempts to put a form on the many divergences and heterogeneities within this movement. The three types identified by him are: the classical Pentecostals, the Charismatic Renewal

³ For example see the widely read books by Philip Jenkins, 2002, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* Oxford: Oxford University Press; Harvey Cox, 1995, *Fire From Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century*, New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing; and David Stoll, 1990, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?* Berkeley: University of California Press.

⁴ David B. Barrett and Todd M. Johnson, (2003) “Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 2003”, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 271 (1) pp. 24-25.

also known as Neo-Pentecostal; and the Pentecostal-like “non-white” indigenous churches such as those in Africa, South America and the Caribbean (Hollenweger, 1972, pp.33-34). The term “Classical Pentecostalism” is used to describe the movement that began in the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The term “Charismatic Renewal” or “Neo-Pentecostalism” refers to groups mostly but not only within established or mainline churches that adhere to basic Pentecostal teachings, including, in some cases, glossolalia or speaking in tongues, prophesying and divine healing (Hunt et al, 1997; Hunt, 2002) while the category of Pentecostal-like indigenous churches refers to groups in Non-Western societies that have accepted Pentecostal doctrines but have consciously mixed them with local or indigenous cultures and traditions.

The Pentecostal-like indigenous churches unlike classical Pentecostalism and even neo-Pentecostalism, were not started or influenced substantially by foreign missionaries and although they identify the Bible as the sole source of their beliefs, they consciously include elements of tradition and culture in the way in which they interpret and manifest these beliefs. These classical Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal adherents mostly do not share any affinity with some of these indigenous churches, which they consider “spiritistic” and “satanic”.

Hollenweger was one of the first to describe Pentecostalism in non-Western categories, considering the fact that its growth in the Third World occurred not because of its adherence to a particular Pentecostal doctrine, but because of its deep roots in black spirituality, which developed after the Civil War in the United States. Hollenweger summarises the black influence on Pentecostalism as follows:

- orality of liturgy;
- narrativity of theology and witness;
- maximum participation at the levels of reflection, prayer and decision-
- making and therefore a form of community that is reconciliatory;
- inclusion of dreams and visions into personal and public forms of worship;
- they function as a kind of icon for the individual and the community;
- an understanding of the body and mind relationship that is informed by
- experiences of correspondence between body and mind; the most striking

- application of this insight is the ministry of healing by prayer.⁵

These features outlined above bear a striking similarity to the large majority of Pentecostal and Charismatic churches found in Freetown, as the study will show.

One explanation often found in the literature on Pentecostalism is that it is linked to the anomie theory. The concept of anomie, which sociologists of religion such as Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge have defined as "the state of being without effective rules for living;" was key to the analyses of Willems and Lalive d'Épinay. Willems in his *Followers of the New Faith* (1967) posited that Protestantism thrives because it offers a comprehensive solution to the anomie of the urban migrant. Accelerated capitalist development, manifested in unbridled industrialization and urbanization, undermined the traditional "rules for living" in rural areas, and triggered mass migration to the cities. In the metropolis, the disoriented migrant created a powerful new identity as a *crente* (a believer). Lalive d'Épinay reached similar conclusions in *Haven of the Masses* (1969). He found that the vast majority of Pentecostal converts in Chile were unemployed recent migrants from the countryside. Pentecostalism, he argued, recreated the familiar patriarchal social structure of the *hacienda*, thus providing anomic migrants with a socio-religious haven from the indifference and chaos of life in the urban periphery. Willems and Lalive d'Épinay view Pentecostalism as filling a social and ethical vacuum and therefore see it as a positive functional relationship between socio-cultural change and Pentecostal growth. The anomie model could be applied to the case of Pentecostals in Freetown as their situation was not too different from those of Brazil and Chile. The main difference between them is that in the case of the Freetown Pentecostals their anomie was created by their displacement as a result of the civil war, whereas in those in Brazil and Chile were migrants to the urban areas. The anomie theory will help focus my enquiry when analysing the reasons for the proliferation of classical Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal/born-again/charismatic churches in Freetown.

Since Christian Lalive d'Épinay and Emilio Willem's pioneering research in the 1960s on the growth of Protestantism in Chile and Brazil, a new generation of scholars has

⁵ W.H. Hollenweger, 1985, "After Twenty Years Research on Pentecostalism", *International Review of Mission* 75, no. 297, pp. 3-12.

formulated novel hypotheses in an attempt to explain why Pentecostalism has had such an overwhelming success globally and also in appealing to the poor particularly in Brazil and much of Latin America. This thesis examines similar concerns in the Sierra Leone case and advances explanations for the unprecedented rise of Pentecostalism in Freetown.

On Pentecostalism in Latin America, the works of David Stoll (1990) and David Martin (1990) revived the study of Pentecostalism in the early 1990s in Latin America. Neither study sought to compare charismatic Protestantism with its competitors in the religious sphere; rather, they explain its broad appeal through research in several countries of the region. Concentrating on Protestantism in Central America, especially Guatemala, the anthropologist David Stoll (1990) points to political oppression as the primary impetus propelling meteoric evangelical growth. Politics also enter British sociologist David Martin's equation for evangelical growth in Latin America, but take a back seat to sociological factors. Although he avoids the term "anomie", Martin (1990) echoes Lalive D'Epina and Willem's theory which suggests that Pentecostalism empowers and offers security to the victims of modernization. In the political realm, Martin concurs with Stoll regarding the notion of "apolitical" Protestantism, which he ascribes to the inherent "peaceability" of this branch of Christianity. While eschewing mono-causal factors, this study transcends the traditional modernization theory to show that a large number of adventitious factors could account for the growth of Pentecostalism in Third World societies.

Martin notes a similarity between the styles of Methodism and Pentecostal services and cites a description of services held in Sheffield in 1835 in which there was "wild excitement", screams, "jarring songs", and shouts of "glory", and also of people falling down on the floor⁶ or leaping over the forms.⁷ Though concentrating his study on a radically different geographical and social milieu, Martin's work will help focus my enquiry as most Pentecostal and charismatic churches in my research area have a similar style of worship.

⁶ This appears to correspond to today to what Charismatics call "being slain in the spirit" or *fenpeace* (find peace) as it is commonly referred to in Freetown.

⁷ David Martin, 1990, *Tongues of Fire: the Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America*, Oxford: Blackwell, p. 28.

Cox's *Fire from Heaven* (1996) is a significant attempt to do justice to the global Christian revival or spread of Pentecostal Christianity. He emphasizes the African American Pentecostal churches and the spiritual power of music, healing rituals and other kinds of experiential religion. However, he tends to misrepresent Africa when he writes that "the African Independent Churches constitute the African expression of the worldwide Pentecostal movement".⁸ He then provides as examples classical Independent churches such as Zimbabwe's Apostolic Church of John Maranke founded in 1932⁹ and the Zion Christian Church, founded by Bishop Mutendi;¹⁰ Zambia's Lumpa Church, founded by Alice Lenshina in the 1950s;¹¹ and the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ on Earth of the Prophet Simon Kimbangu, founded by Simon Kimbangu in 1920. Cox used the following characteristics as a yardstick for measuring Pentecostalism: their use of drums and African instruments in worship; their rebellion against European expressions of the faith; and their incorporation of African elements like ancestor veneration.¹² The churches, which Cox writes about, are typical of what are termed spiritual or Aladura churches in Freetown. These churches are seldom referred to as Pentecostal churches. The Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Freetown totally condemn ancestor veneration because they are thought of as practices of the occult, which are regarded as satanic as they stand precariously close to the world of witchcraft. We should also note however, that not all Aladura churches in Freetown were born of the desire and drive for religious independency. Some were imports from the sister state of Nigeria.

Two other studies on the global perspectives of Pentecostalism are Anderson and Hollenweger's edited volume *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition* (1999) and David Martin's *Pentecostalism: the World Their Parish* (2002). Anderson and Hollenweger's volume addresses the phenomenon of the unceasing growth of Pentecostalism on a global scale with its "bewildering pluralism" from a pentecostally informed and critical missiological perspective. The definition of Pentecostalism is deliberately broad. This encompasses a plethora of groups such as the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles in 1906 to the contemporary middle-class Pentecostalism of Reinhard Bonnke or Pat Robertson, the African Independent churches

⁸ Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p.246.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 245.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 246

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.248

¹² *Ibid.*, p.146; see also pp. 206; 247.

and the new Pentecostal-charismatic movements with their emphasis on the Prosperity Gospel. Over half of the study is devoted to examinations of Pentecostal movements in the Third World. The contributions of Hollenweger¹³ and Sepulveda¹⁴ will be useful to my research as they offer interesting points for comparison with my own study.

Martin's book deals with the largest global shift in religion over the last forty years, the astonishing rise of Pentecostalism and charismatic Christianity. In this book, Martin extends the argument of his *Tongues of Fire*, which was limited to Latin America and applies it globally. He looks at the roots of the Pentecostal movement to explain how it crosses cultural boundaries, appealing to people as diverse as the respectable poor in Latin America and Africa, the new middle classes of South East Asia, and minorities in the Andes and Nepal. Martin offers a sensitive and illuminating account of the life-world of Pentecostals, which looks at the specificities of history, politics, culture, and economics while drawing out a wide-ranging theory and explanation of the secular and the sacred. Martin's Chapter 6 on Africa will be of great importance to my study on a comparative basis, as much of his findings drawn from studies done by scholars about Nigeria, Ghana Uganda, Zambia, Cameroon and Liberia echoes what is happening in charismatic churches in Freetown.

One problem within the literature of religious institutions in Freetown is the paucity of studies relating specifically to churches. Most investigators have concerned themselves with the historical and theological aspects of religion in Sierra Leone generally. Grant (1993) in her Ph.D. dissertation, "The Development of Krio Christianity in Sierra Leone 1792-1861", traced the roots of Krio Christianity to a particular period of Nova Scotian religious history. Grant's dissertation will be helpful in providing me with a background to Krio Christianity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Smith (1994) in his Ph.D. dissertation discusses the interaction between the evangelical Gospel and indigenous pneumatology which produced a dynamic church that appeals to the whole spectrum of Freetown society. He concludes that an increasingly indigenised form of

¹³ Walter Hollenweger, 1999, "The Black Roots of Pentecostalism" in Allan H. Anderson and Walter J Hollenweger (eds.), *Pentecostals After a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, Sheffield Academic Press Ltd., pp. 33-44.

¹⁴ Juan Sepulveda(1999) "Indigenous Pentecostalism and the Chilean Experience" in Allan H. Anderson and Walter J. Hollenweger (eds.), 1999, *Pentecostals After a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, Sheffield Academic Press Ltd., pp. 114-134.

pneumatic Christianity has developed among both the mainline denominations and the Pentecostal evangelical groups in Freetown. Smith's dissertation will be helpful as background reading for an insight into some of the churches he has dealt with in his work.

There are also two published articles on churches. The first is by Rev. Isaac Ndanema in 1961 on "The Martha Davies Confidential Association."¹⁵ Ndanema provides a brief history of the Association and its founder and founder- members. He also gives a brief description of their prayer meetings. He does not address issues relating to the role of women, who comprised the membership of the Church, nor does he account for the growth of membership of the church or the benefits enjoyed by its members. This thesis hopes to redress this imbalance by examining these variables in charismatic and born-again churches.

The second is an article on the Church of Salvation by Rev. T .K. Davies, who was a former member of the Church but has now founded his own Church, the Christ Pentecostal Church. Davies (1981) provides an historical background of the founding of the Church, and the rest of the article concentrates on the Church's doctrines. The Church is a spiritual Church based on the model of the Aladura and Prayer healing churches found in the sub-region. Davies' work will be useful as a viable starting point for my study particularly on the doctrine of Aladura Churches in Sierra Leone.

Epastalie's unpublished B.A. Degree dissertation¹⁶ examines the theological aspect of the Church of Salvation. Of greater significance for my study are the details she provides relating to the historical background of Aladura Churches in Sierra Leone.

Apart from the three dissertations and articles mentioned above, there is a marked omission in the extant literature of examination of churches from the sociological or anthropological perspectives. Some of these churches are, *en passant*, also treated

¹⁵ For the background and activities of this Band see Leslie Shyllon, 2008, *Two Centuries of Christianity in an African Province of Freedom- Sierra Leone, A case-study of European Influence and Culture in Church Development*, Freetown: Reffo Printing Murialdo Co., pp. 222-224.

¹⁶ A. Epistalie, (1993), "The Importance of the Old Testament in the Life and Worship of Independent Churches in West Africa: The Church of Salvation, Sierra Leone", unpublished B.A. Dissertation. SOAS.

briefly in a number of community studies undertaken by historians, theologians and anthropologists who have done some studies in other parts of West Africa (Turner, 1967; Hastings, 1979; Sanneh, 1983; Isichei, 1995). Scanty data on these Churches could also be found in accounts of the main line denominations produced by scholars whose interests lie mainly in Church history or comparative religion (Porter, 1953; Foster, 1961; Fashole-Luke, 1968; Hastings, 1979; Sanneh, 1983; Isichei, 1995).

In the light of the above, this work will be predicated on a number of studies done in the sub region (Ghana, Nigeria and Liberia) and a few other countries in Africa, to provide an insight into the complexities of the different types of churches and diverse aspects of religion. The studies done in Nigeria between the late 1960s and early 1980s focus on the African Independent Churches (AIC) mostly among the Yoruba (Turner, 1967; Peel, 1968; Omoyajowo, 1982). Parrinder (1953) and Hackett (1984) look at religion in Ibadan and Calabar respectively, and also offer a detailed analysis of some African Independent Churches. In the last decade or more, Afeosemime Adogame has published, *Celestial Church of Christ: The Politics of Cultural Identity in a West African Prophetic-Charismatic Movement* (1999).

However, between the late 1990s and late 2000 a new wave of religious fervour dominated the religious scene in the sub-region. This was seen in the establishment of new Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches and movements and is evident in the works of: Paul Gifford, *Christianity and Politics in Doe's Liberia* (1993); *African Christianity: It's Public Role* (1998); *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy* (2004); *Christianity, Politics and Public life in Kenya* (2009); Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe in Ghana* (1999); Allan Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Churches in the 20th Century* (2001) and *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (2004); David Maxwell, *African Gifts of the Spirit: Pentecostalism and the Rise of a Zimbabwean Transnational Religious Movement* (2006); Ogbu U.Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (2008); J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments Within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (2005); Matthews A. Ojo, *The End-Time Army: Charismatic Movements in Modern Nigeria* (2006); Asonzeh Ukah, *A New Paradigm of Pentecostal Power: A*

study of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Nigeria (2008); and Ruth Marshall, *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria* (2008).

Parrinder's study (1953) is the first detailed study that deals with religion and the diversity of religious life in Nigeria. Parrinder concentrates exclusively on Ibadan and his study provides us with a useful profile of the religious life of an African city as well as basic data on the various religious organisations in the early 1950s. Parrinder devotes a chapter of his book to the separatist sects which he defines as "Sects which sprung up in relative independence of the older mission Churches" (1953, p.1). He argues that the prayer healing or Aladura Churches are part of these separatist sects. He analyses eight of these Churches focusing on their beliefs, doctrines and liturgy, most importantly as schisms from American missions and Aladura Churches. Among the reasons he gives for schisms are: differences in views about beliefs and doctrines, for example in infant baptism and polygyny; divine calling and reasons for membership based on personal grounds. These variables were quite useful on a comparative basis, to test the Churches that emanated from schisms in my own research.

On the basis of an extensive field work, Turner (1967) has provided us in two volumes an exhaustive study of one of the spirit healing type church which enjoyed such a widespread appeal in contemporary West Africa, including Sierra Leone, in the late 1960s. *The Church of the Lord (Aladura). Volume I* avowedly with little attempt to place these Churches in a sociological setting, deals with personal disagreements, schisms and reunions that have been an inevitable part of their development and growth. *Volume II* contains a detailed analysis of the structure and practices of the Church; a theological analysis of its rites which reflects a successful comparison with the corresponding Anglican rites and on which they are largely based. He also discusses the basic theological beliefs of this Church. Turner's analysis of the structure, practices and beliefs of the Church will serve as a baseline for my study of the Aladura-type of Churches and a possible avenue to take off from the point where Turner left off in his analysis of the Church in Sierra Leone.

John Peel's *Aladura: A Religious Movement among the Yoruba*, is a sociological study that focuses on a comparison of the Aladura on the one hand and The Christ Apostolic Church and the Cherubim and Seraphim Church on the other. The three groups operate

in the same social and cultural milieu in Yoruba society. Bringing out the socio-cultural, political and religious history, Peel's study offers us an in-depth understanding of these two churches. His discourse on the beliefs and doctrines of both churches sheds light on "some of the social forces, beliefs about the world and practicable dilemmas that have produced doctrines" (1968, p.114). Peel's study traces the various schisms experienced by the original praying band, and the various tensions caused by the association of the praying men with some European and American missionaries. On the whole, Peel's conceptual framework has proved useful in the collection and analysis of those data in my fieldwork data relating to the Aladura churches that I have investigated.

Omoyajowo (1984) also examines the Cherubim and Seraphim Church in Nigeria. He gives a detailed historiography, much of which is a replication of what has been found elsewhere. However, Omoyajowo accounts for the spread and schisms of the church across Nigeria from Lagos, where it was founded to the rest of the states in the West, North and South, and concludes that:

there is no denying the fact that human factors and selfish considerations are responsible for the lamentable divisions we have seen in the Cherubim and Seraphim. These include the ambition to lead and the lust for power that is responsible for virtually all the schisms in Lagos, and the search for leadership that gave birth to the Western Conference. (1984, p. 104).

It is clear then that quest for leadership and power has been a main cause for schisms. Omoyajowo's theory has been most applicable to the Aladura type churches in my research, most of which were also borne out of schisms of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in Freetown.

Based on fieldwork research conducted between 1979 and 1983 in Calabar, a city located in the southeast of Nigeria, Rosalind Hackett (1989) produces a comparative inventory of religious institutions, both formalised and institutionalised religious collectives, which serve as a partial indicator of the religious range of expressions in the area. One major importance of her study is the detailed attention she gives to the role of various organisations in the religious system as they fulfil complementary religious needs of different categories of the population. Her work is further enriched by the provision of appendices that include a meticulous data file on the religious institutions

of Calabar, a model that was quite useful to my research in Freetown when collecting data on the historical background of the churches and in categorising them in the church survey.

Ojo (1988) analyses the Deeper Christian Life Ministry (DCLM) as a charismatic movement. He suggests that “it was the entry of the Pentecostal movement into the higher educational institutions in the early seventies, which drastically affected the existing evangelical Christianity and resulted in the emergence of the charismatic movements” (1988, p.141), the first among them being this ministry in the University of Lagos in 1973. He uses DCLM as a case study to bring out the characteristics of the charismatic movements, the main one being personal evangelism. He also discusses the role of the founder, W.K. Kumuyi, in the growth and development of the Ministry which was influenced by his former membership in the Apostolic Faith Church. Ojo also discusses the role of literature (tracts, books and audio cassettes) in this Ministry “which serves as a constant source of spiritual inspiration to members.” (*Ibid*, p. 149).

In another article, Ojo (1992), traces Deeper Christian Life Ministry’s growth from a Bible study group to a fully-fledged denomination and analyses the reasons for its growth and development. He attributes this first to the annual retreats held during the Christmas and Easter periods when free lodging, transport and food were provided. Through this medium, the Church was able to gain more members as well as spread the fame of the group. Secondly, the role of literature played a great part in the life of the group through their free distribution of tracts and later through cassettes that were sold at affordable prices, the aim being to provide an ideological supplement for the members. The third reason was the Church’s emphasis on miracles and healing- two elements that were reflected in testimonies appearing in their monthly magazine. The fourth and last reason is emphasis on evangelism, where individual members preached, and the distribution of tracts to every nook and cranny imploring people to turn away from their sins and accept Christ as their personal saviour. Through these methods, they were able to win more members. The reasons advanced by Ojo for the growth and development of this Church have been quite vital for a comparison with the charismatic churches in my own research. The growth and development of these churches in Freetown, it will be shown resulted from similar reasons.

Adogame (1999) analyses the Celestial Church of Christ (CCC). This work is a historical study which examines the two phases of the movement – these being the charismatic and post-charismatic histories of the church. He also examines the impacts of the traditional (Yoruba Culture) on CCC to explain its relative success stories and rate of proliferation with other charismatic religious movements. In this work also, Adogame describes, analyses and interprets the beliefs and rituals of CCC in order to show how several objects of worship, sacred sites, symbols, beliefs and practices are “traditional” elements whose modification, transformation, and incorporation within the larger context of the CCC enable its adherents to “go back” into their old, cherished tradition and at the same time to “go forward” into the new tradition that has been created and transmitted. In conclusion, he surmises that the CCC’s approach to Christianity is all infused with indigenous Yoruba Religion.

Ojo’s (2006) study is a historical analysis of the growth of Nigerian Charismatic movements especially those that sprung up in the universities among inter-denominational evangelical organisations such as the Student Christian Movement (SCM), Christian Union (CU), and Scripture Union (SU) in the expanding educational system from the 1940s through to the late 1960s. He contends that this resulted in the rise of Charismatic revival churches which later morphed into the independent Charismatic movements. He concludes that it was this close linkage between education and religion that paved the way for Charismatic renewal in Nigeria. From this point on, educated youths with widened horizon of experience and an elite status became actively involved in promoting this new trend in Nigerian Christianity.

Ojo contends that Charismatic movements in Nigeria, are primarily indigenous and authentically of African in origin although they share many features in common with Pentecostal and Charismatic movements in the Western world. He adds that since the mid-1980s a section of the Nigerian movements initiated networking with their American counterparts and have benefited much from the prosperity gospel of American Pentecostalism.

Moving to Ghana, the first of the extensive literature on churches during the post-independence period is Baeta’s (1962) study of independent churches. It should be noted here that the orientation of Baeta’s study is theological rather than sociological.

He defines independent churches as “spiritual” churches because “they are intended to signify that, in their worship the groups concerned engage in various activities which (by their own assertion) are either meant to invoke the Holy Spirit of God, or are to be interpreted as signs of His descent upon the worshippers” (1962, p.1).

This work offers a detailed account of five major groups together with a survey of four lesser bodies found in Accra, the capital of Ghana, although most of them have branches out of the capital. The study analyses the origins, beliefs and practices of these churches, their organisation, customs, ceremonies and catechisms, and concludes that the origins of these churches were not political or racial, but were genuine attempts at an indigenous Christian spirituality. Baeta notes that polygyny is a common practice in these churches and his conclusion on polygyny was quite useful in investigating whether this practice obtains in the spiritual churches in Freetown.

Beckman (1975) examined a Ghanaian Pentecostal group known as “Eden Revival”. This work contains some general information on “spiritual” churches and similar bodies found in other parts of Africa and the West Indies. However, his account is somewhat fragmentary and impressionistic and served only as background reading on spiritual churches for my research.

Wyllie (1980) focuses on independent Spiritist or prophet healing churches among the Effutu peoples of Winneba, a Ghanaian coastal town. He traces the growth of these churches in two phases over a period of ten years and observes that the founders of these churches were former members of mainline churches and “pagans” who had lost confidence in traditional healing methods and had come to find in Spiritism a convincing demonstration of victory over sickness.

Among the founders of the fifteen assemblies and three branches studied by Wyllie in the first phase, are six women founders, among whom were three petty traders, two fishmongers and a former prophetess of the Cherubim and Seraphim. In the second phase, out of the eleven assemblies, four had women founders, two fishmongers, one petty trader and one former member of the Apostolic Church and the other from the Church of the Lord (Aladura).

Wyllie notes that all the churches in the two phases lay emphasis on spiritual healing and show little interest in doctrinal expositions. Healing and miracles are open to non-members also and these help to attract more members into the churches. The majority of members in these churches are “women who are mainly converts and are attracted to these churches that are heavily oriented to solving problems of particular concern to women such as pregnancy, barrenness, child health and witchcraft” (1980, p.70). His survey reveals that members generally are mainly in the 22-44 years age group and in the low socio-economic strata, although, a few are significantly well off. The theme of women as founders, and healing as a major concern particularly for women were quite useful on a comparative basis for my research.

Paul Gifford (1994) writes on Ghana’s charismatic churches. His article is primarily concerned with the proliferation of new autonomous Pentecostal churches which he refers to as “charismatic” to distinguish them from established Pentecostal denominations like the Assemblies of God. He discusses five of them, two in Accra, one each in Bolgatanga and Tamale and one just outside Kumasi, which is not a fully-fledged church but a ministry. He discusses their origins, beliefs and doctrines; membership structure and their roles in public life. He concludes that: young people dominate these churches; illness is attributed to demons; media consciousness is high among them; they each operate Bible Schools and each founder and leader has written books containing lectures on their beliefs and doctrines. Gifford’s conclusions are typical of these charismatic churches investigated by Ojo (1992) and Marshall (1992). Gifford’s work will provide an invaluable starting point for my own research as these churches investigated by him will be used to compare charismatic churches in Freetown which share similar characteristics.

Meyer (1999) analyses religious change among the Peki Ewe of south-eastern Ghana over the past century or more. In this work she draws on a close reading of missionary texts and historical sources to provide a historical background as well as a careful analysis of the mission’s world-view and the precise mechanisms that allowed for the use of the vernacular among them. She also traces the historical, economic and social situations from pre-missionary times until the present, focussing on the Ewe’s ever-increasing insertions into a global world order, and provides a close reading of the “missionaries” world-view, particularly the dualist conception of God and the devil.

Meyer focuses on the image of the devil, shows how through local appropriations of the devil and its assimilation to previously existing notions of witches and spirits, the Ewe both become modern and express their ambivalence about the new forms of personhood and social relations that modernity entails. Furthermore, Meyer focuses on the emergence of independent, Pentecostal churches beginning in early 1960s and onwards, as well as the social tensions and contradictions to which they respond. She shows how the independent churches appealed to people precisely because, unlike the mission founded Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) the Pentecostals took the devil and his work seriously. They gave people a concrete way to ameliorate suffering and address their concerns through healing practises such as laying of hands and exorcising the devil. Meyer adds that deliverance meant “breaking all ties with the past” and thus created a cultural space that promoted modern forms of family centred on the nuclear family and the individual.

Meyer concludes that Pentecostalism is successful throughout Africa not because it offers new content, but it is because it offers a new form, which can be easily localised and adapted to local conditions, themselves always intrinsically a part of a wider political economic and religious networks which expands well beyond Africa.

Larbi (2001) in his *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* employs the historical method to analyse the origins, major historical developments and the theological orientations of the main strands of Ghanaian Pentecostalism, the indigenous classical Pentecostal denominations of the 1930s, and the Charismatic ministries/churches that started proliferating from the late 1970s.

Larbi traces the history of Ghanaian Pentecostalism from the Ministries of early 20th Century itinerant prophets like William Wade Harris and the older “African Independent” or “Spiritual” churches which the activities of this prophet brought into being. He also discusses the works of pioneering founders of Pentecostal movements including Apostle Peter Anim who collaborated with the Welsh Apostolic Missionary James McKeown in the 1930s in Pentecostal mission in Ghana. Furthermore, he discusses the falling out between Anim and McKeown especially over matters of healing without recourse to medicine. According to Larbi this “fall-out” later led to the

formation of three major indigenous Pentecostal denominations in Ghana; the Apostolic Church Ghana, Christ Apostolic Church and the Church of Pentecost. Larbi carefully analyses how a massive growth in the Ghanaian Conservative Movement eventually culminated in the rise of the new charismatic churches, now the most prominent strand of Ghanaian Christianity.

In addition Larbi discusses Ghanaian Pentecostalism against the backdrop of indigenous world views of spiritual causality and the search for salvation invariably conceived in terms of health, protection, and prosperity. Larbi contends that Pentecostalism enjoys prominence in Ghana because it provides the ritual context within which the deepest needs of its clients are met within a Christian context. He uses two Ghanaian churches, Church of Pentecost and Fountain of Life Ministries, to bring out this. He concludes that Pentecostalism, whether in its denominational forms as classic Pentecostal churches or as independent charismatic ministries and churches, is popular in Ghana because it remains biblical, and articulates a salvific theology that addresses the fears and insecurities of ordinary people in terms that remain true to their traditional world views.

Asamoah-Gyadu (2005), offers as an introduction to his book, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana, Studies of Religion in Africa*, a working definition of Pentecostalism which covers all the different streams of the movement that he discusses in the book. He also gives an overview of different waves of Pentecostal movements in Ghana since the turn of the beginning of the 20th Century in order to situate this study. Asamoah-Gyadu gives a multiform theological-phenomenological analysis of salvation as transformation and empowerment, as healing and deliverance and as prosperity. He concludes this work by evaluating the import and centrality of “spiritual renewal” as a distinctive hallmark of Ghanaian Pentecostalism in particular and African Charismatic spirituality in general.

Paul Gifford’s book (1993) on Liberia, *Christianity and Politics in Doe’s Liberia*, gives an analysis of the situation in that country during the 1980s when neither the mainline nor the Evangelical churches were able to challenge the “iniquitous social system”. According to Gifford, although the churches insisted on complete separation between Christianity and politics yet they still provided strong support for Government officials, advocated obedience and passive acceptance of hardship, and blamed demons for all

Liberia's ills. He notes that the rapid rise in Liberian evangelical churches is not confined to Liberia. Protestant Evangelism has been successful in Latin America and by the 1980s, Pentecostal churches had proliferated in Ghana. He argues that Liberia provides a particular instance in which the social effects of the worldwide Pentecostal explosion in the 1980s, governed in the case of Liberia by the United States, was a contributing factor in the oppression and impoverishment of that country.

Much of Gifford's work is a documentation of the Theology, ideology and the material resources informing this recent evangelism, which he shows, is a part of the "pre-millennial dispensationalism" of the Reagan years. He notes, according to this viewpoint, that we are living in the last age before Christ's coming, and that Americans, as God's chosen people must reconstruct the state into a theocracy, a belief shared by the then President (Samuel K. Doe) himself. The underlying message of Gifford's book is that such Christianity is anything but liberating and in Liberia was not going to solve the economic and political collapse, which made so many Liberians responsive to its message. Gifford's general analysis of *Christianity and Politics in Doe's Liberia*, will be quite useful to my research in Freetown given the roles played by the colonial powers in each dependency in religion and politics. His work will therefore be useful to my research in assessing the role of politics in Freetown's Christianity. But it is surprising that he does not allude to Mother Dukulay, a powerful prophetess ("spiritual mother") who lived during the Tubman, Tolbert and Doe regimes and played a significant role in Liberia's politics and religion.

1:5. The Purpose of the Study

Against the background of this review, the main purpose of this study is to examine the reasons for the change of Freetown Christianity from a homogeneous (mainline denominations) to a heterogeneous (Pentecostal and Charismatic) Christian society. It further aims to discover the reasons for the tremendous popularity of the charismatic churches, which continues to attract and retain teeming members of adherents from all levels of the social strata in Freetown, and is constantly shaping the worldviews and life-styles of these adherents. A religious phenomenon that is capable of influencing the lives of thousands in this way naturally constitutes a "problem" worthy of scholarly investigation by those academic disciplines which study religion. This, therefore, is the main justification for undertaking to examine what has become the fastest growing,

most dynamic, religiously and socially most puissant phenomenon in contemporary Freetown.

The study investigates the development and impact of “born-again” churches in Freetown with specific reference to Jesus is Lord Ministry and Flaming Bible Church. It also seeks to investigate the status quo of the Krio in relation to their position in Freetown’s Christianity. Another purpose is to investigate the roles of different religious institutions and organisations such as parachurch organisations and Bible and Deliverance Schools.

This study will also investigate whether the declining socio-economic and political situation in Sierra Leone has contributed to the proliferation of churches as Ruth Marshall (1992) argues in her study on Nigeria and Rene De Haes (1992) in his studies on Kinshasa. Mbon (1987) also found out that the Nigeria civil war did contribute to the proliferation of churches. This study contends that although these two phenomena contributed to the proliferation of “born-again” churches in Freetown, the greatest contributing factor was the establishment of many Bible Schools and institutions as well as Bible study classes held in these “born-again” churches which encouraged personal and mass evangelism.

The research investigates whether the leaders of “born-again” churches are using the opportunity provided by their positions to encourage, and deepen the faith of their members, or whether they are giving them false hope whilst at the same time boosting their leaders’ own fame and fortune.

It is hoped that this study will identify problems and prospects in need of attention by officials and members of mainline and born-again churches as well as the different religious institutions. In that regard the study would ultimately seem to have some practical relevance. I will then attempt to draw some conclusions and make suggestions on the research findings in the light of the problems stated.

1:6. The Significance of the Study

Studies on religion and religious institutions in Sierra Leone have tended to focus on the historical and theological aspects. Above all, the extant literature shows that the moral

and social impact of religion and religious institutions have been a much neglected area. Although Smith's thesis¹⁷ could be considered as an invaluable study with regards to a few churches, to a certain extent it was limited in that he only examined the historical and theological aspects of these churches.

By examining in detail not only the social and moral impact of churches but also some of the other religious institutions in Freetown, this study will contribute to an understanding of those forces which led to the transformation of Freetown Christianity. The analysis will be concerned with how Freetown moved from a homogeneous Christian society to a heterogeneous one. It will also serve to clarify some vital issues in the motives for the proliferation of churches in Freetown.

1:7. Scope of the Study.

The study provides an in depth survey of the role of two of the most popular influential charismatic churches and a few other churches such as Born-again Christ Healing Church, New Life in Christ Ministry and Faith Healing Church. Some religious institutions like parachurch organisations and Bible Schools and colleges will also form part of the scope of the study. The role and impact of these churches and religious institutions will be assessed in order to exemplify their influence on the transformation of Freetown Christianity. As a prelude to the study, a synopsis of the religious, social, economic and political background of the Krio from pre-independence to the emergence of charismatic churches in the mid 1980s is provided. This background examination will help illustrate the extent to which a change in the status of the Krio has influenced the transformation of Freetown Christianity.

However, because the civil war which affected Freetown from 1991 to 2002 is crucial for an appreciation of the change, this will also form a part of the investigation in order to buttress the far-reaching effects of this study. This is important because religion helped to fulfil one of its basic functions during this period and that is allaying the fears of its adherents. The scope also includes the role of women in the changes that have taken place in Freetown Christianity.

¹⁷ Robert Smith, 1994, *A Survey and Theological Analysis of the Spiritual and Pentecostal-Evangelical Churches in Freetown, Sierra Leone with emphasis on the influence of the Indigenous Religious Pneumatology*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Edinburgh.

1:8. The Research

Fieldwork for this research was carried out from February 1997 to October 1998, in Freetown the capital of the Republic of Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone is a relatively small country located on the West Coast of Africa. It occupies a total area of 27,925 square miles and is almost circular in shape; the distance from north to south is 210 miles, and from the west to east is approximately 204 miles (Alie 1990, p. 1). Sierra Leone lies between the republic of Guinea in the northwest, and the northeast, the Republic of Liberia in the east and southeast and is bordered in the west and southwest by the Atlantic Ocean. According to the National Census and Statistics office, the estimated population in 1995 was 4.7 million and in 2008, it was estimated at 6,294,774.¹⁸ The highest population densities are found in the capital, Freetown.

Freetown is situated at the foot of the northern end of the peninsular, at the foot of steep hills, about four miles up the River Rokel. During the colonial period, it was known as the Colony and since the country gained Independence on 27 April 1961 from Britain, it became known as the Western Area. In 1971, Freetown was extended to include the seaside and mountain villages surrounding it and designated, Greater Freetown which is divided into eight zones or wards. (see Fig. 11). The main languages spoken are English and Krio. English is the official language and Krio is the lingua franca spoken by at least 95 per cent of the population. Fifteen out of the seventeen ethnic groups are represented in Freetown's population (see Fig 111 for the different ethnic groups).

Ellen (1984, p.193) has noted that among the more usual rationale for field research are firstly the desire to study certain topics, secondly, to investigate specific theoretical problems and thirdly to suggest solutions to practical problems. The first and second criteria are germane to my choice of fieldwork site. Secondly, Freetown is one of the areas in which the greatest impact of the proliferation of churches is most felt, when compared to other parts of Sierra Leone, which have a high proportion of mosques.

Furthermore, Freetown is an admirable choice for such a research because of its accessibility. All the headquarter towns in the provinces have been affected by the civil war. Pelto & Pelto (1978) have warned that the community selected for research must be "socially tolerable" and should be one in which "the people seem cooperative and

¹⁸ Unpublished data from National Census and Statistic Office, Tower Hill, Freetown, June 1998.

friendly.” The socio-economic impact of the civil war so far has left most people both in Freetown and in the provinces quite unfriendly, suspicious and intolerant.

Lastly, many anthropologists and sociologists have studied most of the English-speaking cities and countries in West Africa. A study like this means an up-to-date analysis of Freetown in the anthropological literature of churches in West Africa. Research on Sierra Leone’s capital, Freetown will thus provide a basis for comparison with other West African capitals.

Unfortunately, for some of the period covered by the research, I was away from my field site because the country was in a state of chaos and anarchy due to a military coup on May 25 1997. During my fieldwork period, the country was also going through a civil war, which started in March 1991. This situation left me with great limitations in personally collecting my data since I had to flee to neighbouring Guinea for safety as the large majority of Sierra Leoneans did. However, in spite of these problems, I had to defy the guns, armed robbery, maiming, looting raping and the like and return to Freetown to continue my research.

During fieldwork, I interviewed over 100 people from different churches and religious organisations, the majority which was informal and in Krio. The interviews were conducted in order to ascertain their views regarding the proliferation of churches and the claims of “born-again” churches relating to their much-vaunted victory over demon and spirit possessions. During the research period, I regularly attended services at different born-again churches, crusades and revivals. As a Krio myself and having lived all my life in Freetown was of great value and made it easy for me to draw on my knowledge of the language and first hand experiences of the cultural practices in the Freetown community. Ellen (1984) has noted that working with one’s own culture has many advantages. Among the advantages she highlights are knowledge of the language (the most obvious and crucial one) and “cultural affinity”, the latter playing an important role in the outsider versus the insider relationship in research. She adds that “it was easy to understand people not only by the words they used but by their tone of voice, the way they reacted to certain subjects, their gestures and so on” (*ibid.*, p. 23).

Two social surveys were also conducted during fieldwork, one of them was a church survey or census (see appendix I) and the other was a membership survey (see appendix II). For both surveys, a structured questionnaire was used. The aims of the church survey were to determine the rate at which churches were being planted in Freetown, to elicit data on the historical, religious and social background of the churches and to provide information on the different types of churches, in order to help provide a classification of the churches. The churches were identified through three main sources: visual sighting, direct and indirect reports and the media. Through the first method, visual sighting, I was able to locate a good number of churches having lived all my life in Freetown. Direct and indirect reports came from a wide cross section of people (colleagues, friends, relatives and students) who either belonged to these churches or knew of people who did. The newspapers and radio were extremely invaluable sources of information on the location of the churches. They either contained announcements by the churches themselves of their programmes of activities or features by journalists on them.

Through the church survey, I also selected two churches for case studies. These churches were selected on the basis of the following criteria: geographical location, size and popularity of the church. In the central part of Freetown, Jesus is Lord Ministry (JLM) was selected and in the western part of Freetown the Flaming Bible Church (FBC). The membership survey was conducted among ten percent of members in JLM and twenty percent in FBC by the use of a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to elicit data on their socio-economic background in order to verify or refute current assumptions in the community that these churches mostly meet the needs of people in the low socio-economic strata. It also helped in assessing the different reasons given by members for joining the churches.

In addition to administering these questionnaires, the normal anthropological techniques of participant observation and informal interviews were used. Various services were attended in the large majority of churches in the research area, as well as a number of conferences, crusades, revivals, chain prayer sessions and church seminars, and the two selected churches were attended regularly throughout the fieldwork period. Most of the major occasions celebrated by the selected churches were also attended and these included crusades, seminars, revivals, church anniversaries, baptisms, weddings and

funerals. These visits were designed to examine the liturgies and rituals, and to provide an insight into the structures and procedures of these churches. They also provided opportunities for observing the healing practices and a forum for meeting and making contacts with leaders, church officials and members, both on a formal and informal level. Most of the services were recorded and the sermons analysed later on. The proceedings at these activities served as a useful point for comparing the born-again churches with mainline churches.

As a participant observer, my background as a Christian, though a Methodist came into play in the collection of data. This might have had some negative and positive influences in my role as a participant observer. On the negative side, people who knew me as a Methodist¹⁹ might have found it difficult to spell out their views, and I might have conducted the research with my own bias. Being aware of these probabilities, I tried, as Spradley recommends for participant observers to alternate “between the insider and outsider experience, and having both simultaneously” (1980, p. 57). However, as a participant and observer at their different services and functions, I enjoyed certain advantages. Church documents for example, “Jesus’ is Lord Ministry’s Testimony book” which could not have been easily accessed by an outsider were available to me. From this perspective, therefore, both insider and outsider may encounter similar problems. Currently however, “there have been calls for participant observation to be used as a compliment to other methods”²⁰.

Being a female researcher was quite advantageous when it came to collecting data for the chapter on women. I was able to tap the fine resource of gender consciousness and develop a fine rapport with the women. This enabled me to interview them in a more relaxed atmosphere, unlike a male researcher who would be likely to encounter significant disadvantage when discussing personal subjects such as gynaecological problems and childlessness.

Whilst this thesis examines themes that have been discussed in some of the scholarly books referred to, it nevertheless breaks new ground. It is the first comprehensive sociological analysis of Church life in post-Independence Freetown especially with

¹⁹ Members of “born-again” churches generally hold the view that members in mainline denominations are sometimes unfriendly and hostile to them.

²⁰ Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, London: Tavistock.

reference to the proliferation of born-again/Neo-Pentecostal churches. The work focuses on the causes and effects of the establishment of different religious institutions and analyses factors which have impacted on Church members in particular and the Freetown society in general. The thesis concentrates on a city rather than a country, but it is an important city because of its historical role. It was here that Christian missionary endeavours started and spread to other areas of (British) West Africa. The changes that are analysed in this work happened to the Church very suddenly (comparatively speaking), speeded up apparently by the social unrest and the civil war (1991-2002) that affected Sierra Leone. This contributed to the transformation of the Church in that the war left a good number of people in Freetown with spiritual food for thought and saw the increase in the number of churches that were founded or planted. The transformation also affected different aspects of social life including gender balance, tribal affiliation and the educational strata. It therefore provides us with the tools for comparing how and how far the Church has become ‘indigenous’ as in other African countries like Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa which have so far been the main regions of scholarly attention.

CHAPTER TWO

Pioneers of Freetown Christianity: The Krio, their History and Culture

2:1 Introduction

This chapter examines the nature of Christianity in Freetown during the pre-colonial period by providing a brief history of the founding of Freetown²¹ and an ethnographic survey of the Krio who constituted the main inhabitants of this city. The overall aim of this endeavour is to develop our understanding of the position of the Krio in the transformation of Freetown Christianity. The chapter analyses the religious, social, political and economic life of the Krio, all of which are characterized by a rich religious heritage. It concludes with an analysis of the state of the religious life of the Krio during the period under review.

Freetown was founded as a consequence of the abolition of slavery and the slave trade. This settlement soon acquired a complexity that was to have a tremendous impact not only in Sierra Leone, but also all along the West coast of Africa and even beyond. (Sanneh, 1983). Among other things, the philanthropic founders such as Granville Sharp and William Wilberforce envisaged a settlement that would constitute “a beacon of Christianity and Civilization for the continent of Africa” (Peterson, 1969, p. 22-23; Wyse 1989, p.1). This dream was soon realized in the character and cultural diversity of the different groups, which settled in the Colony (also known as Freetown) between 1787 and 1870. Four groups of freed blacks were eventually resettled in Freetown. The first to arrive in 1787 were the Black Poor from Britain. They were joined by 1,100 Blacks from Nova Scotia, Canada, who arrived in Freetown in 1792.²² The Settlers, as they became later known, were Christians belonging to the Baptist, Countess of

²¹ For a full documentation of the history of the founding of Freetown, see Capt. F.W. Butt-Thompson, 1926, *Sierra Leone in History and Tradition*, London; J.J. Crooks, 1903, *A History Leone*, London, and *Sierra Leone Inheritance*, 1964, London; C. Fyfe & E. Jones (eds.), 1968, *Freetown: a symposium*, Freetown,; A.P. Kup, 1975, *Sierra Leone: A Concise History*, London; J.E. Peterson, 1969, *Province of Freedom: A study of Sierra Leone, 1787-1870*, Evanston, 111; Arthur Porter, 1963, *Creolehood*, London,; A.B.C. Sibthorpe, 1970, *The History of Sierra Leone, 1868*, 4th edition, London: London; Leo Spitzer, 1974, *The Creoles of Sierra Leone: Responses to Colonization, 1870-1945*, Madison: Wisconsin. Older publications worth consulting are Robert Clarke, 1843, *Sierra Leone: A Description of the Manners and Customs of the Liberated Africans*, (reprinted London, 1969).

²² The Nova Scotians were originally slaves from the USA who had fought for the British against their slave masters during the American War of Independence (1775 – 1782). They were sent to Nova Scotia with the promise of freedom and a better life. History books vary on the exact number of the Blacks who left Nova Scotia, Olsen, 1969, p. 28 puts it at 1,175; Fyle, 1981, p. 35 puts it at 1,190; and Sanneh, 1983, p. 35 puts it about 1,200.

Huntingdon's Connexion, and Methodist denominations (Olsen 1969, p. 67; Alie 1993, p. 64). Fyfe narrated their momentous arrival in Freetown as follows:

Their pastors led them ashore, singing a hymn of praise ... Like the children of Israel, Israel which were come out again out of the captivity they rejoiced before the Lord, who had brought them from bondage to the land of their forefathers. When all had arrived, the whole colony assembled in worship, to proclaim to the continent whence, they or their forebearers had been carried in chains ... The day of Jubilee is come; return ye ransomed sinners home. (1962, pp. 36-37).

The next group to follow in 1800 were the Maroons who had revolted against their British masters in the West Indian island of Jamaica (Olsen 169, p. 28; Fyle 1981, p. 37). They had been slaves in Jamaica and were mostly from the Ashanti in Ghana, West Africa. They rebelled and fled to the Jamaican mountains, where they formed their own government (Fyle 1981, p. 37). The Jamaican authorities eventually subdued them and assured them that they would stay in Jamaica but this promise was not kept instead they were sent to Nova Scotia from where they left for Sierra Leone. The Maroons were also Christians belonging mainly to the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

After the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, Sierra Leone was found suitable to set up a British court that would try owners and crews of captured slave vessels (Fyle 1981, p. 38); Sanneh 1983, p. 72). The slaves who were captured on board these slave ships were emancipated to Freetown and became the last group and by far the largest. These slaves were called Recaptives on account of "being captured the first time and enslaved, they had been recaptured and freed by the British Navy" (Fyle 1981, p. 38). They arrived in Freetown between 1808 and 1863 and came from different parts of Africa, they were also known as the Liberated Africans. Crucial for our purposes was the differences between these four groups. Whilst the first three groups had gone through the "Middle Passage" and experienced slavery in the Americas, the Liberated Africans who were freed by the British Navy from slave ships bound for the New World did not taste the rigors of slavery except on the way to the coast in Nigeria. The existence of these two groups, those from the Americas who had become Christians and adopted some aspects of Western culture, albeit indirectly and imperfectly, and the Liberated Africans who never left the African scene, constituted an important factor in the evolution of the Krio society.

The use and application of the term Krio has generated widespread controversy among scholars. According to Luke:

the term Creole (from the Spanish *Criollo*, a native born) as used in Sierra Leone is applied to the descendants of the original settlers, i.e. Poor Blacks, Nova Scotians, Maroons and the Liberated Africans. The term implies no admixture of European blood nor any connection with the West Indies . . . as it does in the West Indies and America. In fact the term was originally applied exclusively to the children of Liberated Africans. With intermarriage and with the passage of time, this distinction came to be ignored and the term applied generally to the settlers and their descendants. (1939, p. 53).

Scholars, both Sierra Leoneans and non-Sierra Leoneans, who have worked on Krio society (Porter 1963; Peterson 1969; Spitzer 1974; Cohen 1981 and Wyse 1989)²³ tend to agree with Luke up to a point, except for Peterson, who argues that the four groups of “freed slaves” made up the Krio as a distinctive group. However, Porter believes that in addition to the groups referred to as Krio in Luke’s definition, the term also refers to “others who had cultivated their habits and come to accept their way of living” (Porter 1963, p. 3). It would appear therefore that even the autochthonous peoples or “natives” could also become part of Krio society by dint of their acquisition of Christian religion, Western education and European values (e.g. mode of dress and architecture, the perceived hallmarks of the Krio).

Peterson has defined the Krio as “second generation immigrants to Sierra Leone, descended from Liberated African parents whose cultural pattern was Afro-European” (1969, p. 14). Peterson does not include the first three groups whom he refers to as “settlers”, and does not give a reason for doing so. A possible reason for this might be that these first three groups had come to Sierra Leone detribalized and partially Europeanized by their experiences in the New World and in Great Britain. From Peterson’s definition one could deduce that Krio reflect a distinctly fused culture; on the one hand, the cultural forms which had their origins in the African past of its members,

²³ Other scholars who have contributed to the study of the Krio include, T. F. V. Buxton, “The Creole in West Africa”, *Journal of the African Society*, X11, pp. 1912-1913; P. E. H. Hair, 1964, “Freetown Christianity and Africa”, 1966, *Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion*, 2 Dec. 1, pp.13-21 and “Creole Endeavour and Self-criticism in Sierra Leone Church Missions, 1900-1920”, *Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion*, June V111, p. 6-18; K.L. Little, 1950, “The significance of the West African Creole for Africanist and Afro-American Studies”, *African Affairs*, 49, pp. 308-319; J.W. St George Walker, 1976, *The Black Loyalists: The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone, 1785- 1870*, Longman: Longman

and on the other hand, those aspects of European culture consciously or unconsciously assimilated by them.

Though Spitzer (1974) agrees with Luke, he contends that it was the intermarriage and cultural blending among the various groups that blurred the distinctions between Krio and non-Krio. In order to add on a wider cultural context to the term, Spitzer agrees with Porter's definition and includes:

Persons of black-African stock, usually from one of the neighbouring ethnic groups or from Sierra Leone hinterland . . . In the past an up-countryman could "pass for a Creole" if he sacrificed his ethnic identity and was willing to dress in European style, adopt a Creole name, that is a European name, and cultivate certain anglicized social manners. (1963, p. 131).

Banton stretches this cultural controversy further. He rightly suggests that:

many Protectorate people seeking an education for their children placed them in Krio families as wards. Often the children came to value their association with these families and frequently they were brought up to be ashamed of their native ancestry, so that on attaining maturity many wards assumed the surname of the family in which they had been living and aligned themselves with the Creoles. (1957, p. 104)

These "wards" and "children" who became Krio through the process of integration and assimilation came to constitute what could be regarded as the fringes of Krio society.

As the late nineteenth century wore on, and as the Krio followed the railway into the remote parts of the Protectorate to carry out trade, a process of acculturation was set in motion that stretched the cultural frontiers of Krio society further. Krio agents (known as "factors") of European firms "married local women and raised families" (Wyse 1989, p. 27). These descendants also came to extend the fringes of Krio society.

Though agreeing with the broad historical outline, which shaped Krio society, the Sierra Leonean Historian, Akintola Wyse, has injected a further dimension into Krio historiography. Using socio-linguistic evidence, Wyse argues in favour of abandoning the long established usage, "Creole" and advocates that "Krio" replaces it. Based on his findings, he suggests that the term aptly describes the people and the language whose culture forms a unique way of life and led observers to describe them as "Black-Englishmen". Wyse concludes, in agreement with Clifford Fyle, the Sierra Leonean linguist that "the term 'Kriyo' may have been contracted from Yoruba *akiriyo* (those who go about from place to place after church" (1989, p. 6). *Akiriyo* in Yoruba means a

Protestant Christian. The link between “Krio” and the Yoruba derivation might be seen in the fact that most Krio are Christian and it was usually a custom among Krio to visit relatives and friends after church on Sundays, but Wyse does not make this link clear in his analysis.

Who then are the Krio and how did they perceive themselves? The group referred to as Krio were descendants of the recipients of British philanthropy who were resettled in Sierra Leone between 1787 and 1863, and by the middle of the nineteenth century, eventually became essentially committed to British life-style in terms of their modes of dress, speech, religion and education. Deeply steeped in Victorian values, the Krio of the late 19th century and early 20th century, especially the elites, soon came to regard themselves as superior to the peoples of the protectorate by dint of their possession of Western culture. In time, they came to expect, demand and set the standards in their relationship with the Protectorate people. Nowhere else is this vision epitomized than in the largely Krio dominated press, the *Sierra Leone Weekly News*. In essence, the Krio saw himself as “being entitled to certain privileges by virtue of his almost highly developed intelligence and advanced standard of book knowledge” (*Sierra Leone Weekly News*, 3rd February 1917). Whilst regarding himself as a “child of fortune and philanthropy”, the educated Krio perceived in his existence a “mission” in the dependency. That mission, it was argued was to ensure the “welfare, both physical and moral of the million odd souls of his aboriginal brethren ...” (Ibid). They were, as they saw themselves, the interpreters of Western culture to other Africans. The Krio did fulfil this role acting as partners (with the British in their self-imposed role of regenerating Africa and the African institutions from the ill effects of the slave trade. The medium of the generative process was “commerce, cultivation, Christianity and civilization”. The development of Krio society, with its thought patterns, under the tutelage of the British Crown and the missionary societies, stymied the creation of a consciousness of common identity with the people of the Protectorate.

2:2. Locating the Krio

Freetown is the capital city where the majority of Krio live. The population of Freetown in 1998 when fieldwork was conducted was approximately 700,000 and the Krio then accounted for 20 percent²⁴. The demographic spread of Krio society was limited to the Colony i.e. Freetown, but the scope of Krio culture not only included the

²⁴ Unpublished source ,Central Statistics Office, Tower Hill, Freetown.

Krio elites of Central Freetown, but also the village Krio and the Muslim Krio of Foulah Town, Fourah Bay in the east end of Freetown, and Aberdeen on the periphery of Freetown. Harrell-Bond et al (1978) have noted that in spite of the differences between those Aku who called themselves Muslim and those who professed Christianity, cultural ties gave cohesion to the larger Aku community that transcended religious differences (1978, pp. 121-125).²⁵ In addition to these groups in the colony area, the Krio, since the turn of the century, had followed the railway line in association with the Syrian barons of trade, to tap new opportunities in the Protectorate.²⁶ Between 1901 and the 1920s, Krio traders were firmly established at Mabum, Ronietta, and Bonthe Sherbro, all towns in the Protectorate. The focus of my study however, is limited to the Krio found in Freetown who are mainly Christian.

Education, a priority of Krio, constitutes one of the basic tenets of the founding of the colony, and went hand in hand with Christianity throughout the colonial period. On these twin pillars were predicated the founding of institutions of learning such as the Church Missionary Society Grammar School in 1845 (Harding 1968, p. 144), the Annie Walsh Memorial School in 1849 (*Ibid*), The Methodist Boys' High School in 1874 and the Methodist Girls' High School in 1901 (*Ibid*, p. 145). Prior to all these was Fourah Bay College, founded in 1827 as a theological institution, which soon came to be the main bastion for Krio education and students all along the West African coast (Fyfe 1962, p. 423). Against a strong Westernized background, the Krio soon came to embrace Western education with a passionate zeal. The parish system²⁷ itself, engineered and prosecuted by Governor Sir Charles MacCarthy who was governor of the settlement between of the settlement between 1814 and 1824 complemented the efforts of these institutions and, in time, they came to serve as pioneers of Western education throughout colonies on the West African Coast. In the dependency itself, officialdom soon found a partnership with a core of educated elites.

²⁵ For a comparison of the social, cultural and economic differences between the Aku and Christian Ltd.; Akintola Wyse, 1989, *The Krio of Sierra Leone: An Interpretive History*, London: C.Hurst & Co..

²⁶ Personal conversation with Dr. Festus Cole.

²⁷ This scheme was initiated by Governor Sir Charles MacCarthy, Governor of Sierra Leone from 1814 to 1824. The system divided Freetown into villages and each village was put under the control Superintendent who was supervised by the Church Missionary Society. The Liberated Africans were to benefit from this scheme through the provision of schools and churches by the Mission. For a detailed account and operation of this system see Peterson, 1969, *Province of Freedom*; Gilbert W. Olsen, 1969, *Church Growth in Sierra Leone*, Michigan: Algonac.

During the colonial period, the Krio came to staff diverse sectors of the administration and continued to do so for the greater part of the colonial period in Sierra Leone, as well as in other British colonies. Many Krio held positions ranging from those of medium status such as foreman, senior clerk, and clerk of the Legislative Council to more elevated positions such as Assistant Colonial Surgeon, Acting Chief Justice and Collector of Customs (Fyfe, 1962). The evidence would suggest that education for the Krio was in some respects a curse in disguise. As the Krio dominated the professions, they soon came to use their privileged status to foment opposition against the bullying tactics of officialdom. By the end of the nineteenth century, Krio elites had come to be seen as the *bête noir* of the administration. As Syrian traders began to insinuate themselves into the wholesale and retail trade of the Colony and Protectorate, the administration found new henchmen in place of a rising and dominantly literate class, the Krio.²⁸ An examination of the various sectors of the administration by the turn of the Century would show that the Krio had begun to be elbowed out of important positions. So wide was the rift in Anglo-Krio relations that Governor Merewether argued in 1915 that the Krio “writes and speaks as if he is the only educated native on the West Coast” (Fyfe, 1962). Certain policies prosecuted against the Krio were to affect significantly the Krio outlook and were responsible for inducing him to begin to search for newer alternatives, particularly in their religious orientation. The thesis will examine the degree of correlation between these moods of despondency and despair and the accompanying changes brought about by the proliferation of churches in Freetown.

Two forces constitute the integrating and unifying influences among the Krio. These were the Krio language and Christianity. The vocabulary of the Krio language draws extensively on the English language, but there is a strong Yoruba element, and in addition, there is a “sprinkling of words from other West African languages, and one or two French, German, Spanish and Portuguese influences” (Jones 1956, p. 98). Its syntax is often quite alien to English and more akin to African forms. In assessing the importance of Krio in Sierra Leone, Professor Eldred Jones has noted that:

It is in this language that a Sierra Leone folk culture has developed. Evidence of this can be seen in its increased use in national broadcasting and the fact that when the National Dance Troupe of Sierra Leone resorts to language in its performance, it uses Krio, the one language that can unite its various elements into one harmonious whole. (1968, p. 208).

²⁸ Some Syrians and Lebanese traders in fleeing the Civil War in their home country (1890s) ended commerce in general. Some people saw them as the allies of the Colonial Government.

Sengova has further elaborated on the importance of the Krio language. He notes that “Krio has transcended its role as a community language of the Western Area or an urban code, to achieve the status of a national *lingua franca* bridging the linguistic gap between speakers of diverse languages of the country” (1989, p. 524). Sengova further argues that:

the bulk of Sierra Leone’s business sector in the medium of African languages, and Krio stands out prominently in this respect. Businessmen, women and petty traders from all parts of the country converge on the capital and other urban areas to buy and sell their goods. Their common language of contact and interaction is Krio. A merchant of Lebanese, Indian or African ethnicity may best operate business deals through the medium of Krio even where English is accessible for mutual communication. (*Ibid*, p. 524)

A monumental contribution to the understanding of the Krio language can be seen in the publication of *A Krio - English Dictionary* in 1980 by Professors Eldred Jones and C.N. Fyle to show that Krio is not a mere dialect of English but a distinct language with its own grammar and syntax. The Krio language is used in church services not only in the ethnic-based, Pentecostal and charismatic churches, but also in the mainline churches. The New Testament has also been translated into Krio and there are hymns and choruses known as “shouts” in Krio, all of which are widely used in all the different types of churches.

2:3. Krio Ethnicity and Identity

The literature on the subject of ethnicity presents a wide range of perspectives. Of the myriad discussions and definitions of the concept of ethnicity by anthropologists, many would concede that it has something to do with the classification of people and group relationships, and that it is a social identity based on an aspect of social relationship between groups which consider themselves and are regarded as culturally distinctive from members of other groups (Barth, 1969; Erikson, 1993).

Ethnicity is characterized by a host of factors including: a common history or historical experience, boundary-impermeability, place of origin or myths of origin, symbolic elements such as language or dialect, kinship, religion etc. The importance of these characteristics in ethnic identity appears as a matter of empirical variation. It should be noted however, that the analyst’s yardstick for determining ethnic identification would not necessarily embrace all these factors regarding a particular group or groups (Banks, 1996).

Ethnicity and social identities then, in general, are relative and to some extent situational (Mitchell, 1996, 1974; Cohen, 1974; Schildkrout, 1974; Erikson, 1993). They are situational in two ways. Firstly, it is an identity selected contextually and secondly, an individual may subjectively possess more than one identity, from which he or she may choose according to the situation. Mitchell reinforces this argument when he writes about "...treating the behaviour of persons who were following what might be construed as "tribal" modes of behaviour in one social situation, within the same framework of analysis which could be applied to these people in the situation in which they were acting as town-dwellers" (1974, p. 19). Ethnicity can be a fluid and ambiguous aspect of social life and can, to a considerable degree, be manipulated by the agents themselves. Ethnic identities cannot be manipulated indefinitely, and one cannot ascribe any identity to somebody by claiming, for example, that an Irish person is "really" a Jamaican (Erikson 1993). Ethnicity can be of varying degrees of importance in social situations, and it is often up to the agents themselves to decide upon its significance.

The term ethnicity implies the concept of ethnic group, which in turn suggests contact and interrelationship. To speak of an ethnic group in total isolation would be as absurd as to speak of the sound from one hand clapping (Erikson 1993). By definition, ethnic groups remain more or less discrete but they are aware of, and in contact with members of other ethnic groups. Moreover, these groups or categories are in a sense created through that very contact. Group identities should always be defined in relation to that which they are, in other words, in relation to non-members. An ethnic group then could be seen as a particular social group which emerges as a political group, in response to interaction and competition with other groups of comparative status (Barth, 1969; Cohen, 1969, 1974, 1981).

Cohen defines an ethnic group as a kind of a political organization. In his view, social interaction and organization are essentially dual in character. They comprise aspects of utility and aspects of meaning. Cohen has argued that a "Political man is also a symbolic man" (Cohen, 1974, preface). Ethnicity, he further suggests, is an organizational form which exploits this duality for particular ends, which may or may not be acknowledged by the agents themselves. Ethnic ideology has an immediate appeal because it offers answers to "the perennial problems of life," the questions of origins, destiny and ultimately, the meaning of life. However, Cohen contends that

ethnicity should also have a practical function in order to be viable. Only by focusing on this aspect is it possible to explain why some ethnic groups thrive while others vanish, and why only some ethnic identification assumes great social importance. Two empirical studies by Cohen exemplify this approach (Cohen, 1969, 1981). Both depict ethnicity as an instrument for competition over scarce resources, which is nevertheless circumscribed by ideology or shared culture, shared origins and metaphoric kinship.

Cohen's earlier monograph analyses the organization of Hausa trade networks in the Yoruba city of Ibadan, western Nigeria (Cohen, 1969). Hausa migrants to Ibadan succeeded in a relatively short space of time in virtually monopolizing the cattle trade in the city. This was accomplished through ethnic organization. Cattle were bought from Hausa traders in northern Nigeria. Consciously drawing on ethnic solidarity expressed in the idiom of shared culture, and strengthening their group cohesion by joining the orthodox Muslim Tijaniyya order, the Hausa in Ibadan quickly established reliable trade links with the north. In Cohen's analysis, this was a principal function of ethnicity. Had it not been profitable to be a Hausa and to communicate one's ethnic identity to other Hausas and thereby strengthen ethnic boundaries, Hausa identity might well have disappeared in the Yoruba city.

The second monograph (Cohen, 1981) analyses the ways in which Krio political interests were expressed in Sierra Leone during a period when ethnic politics were officially illegitimate. The Krio were essentially a professional elite, and the political elite, dominated by the numerically superior Temne and Mende, aimed at reducing Krio dominance in white-collar professions. Cohen shows how the Krio succeeded in retaining their privileges through becoming freemasons on a large scale and turning the Masonic lodges into unofficial Krio associations. Although the lineages thus developed might be described as ethnic networks rather than an ethnic association, the group succeeded in reproducing its boundaries and in keeping its "corporate holdings" within the group. Thus information regarding available jobs, scholarships and promotion in the civil service are allegedly passed on inside the Masonic network. As in his Hausa monograph, Cohen argues that the identity tag "Krio", would have been much less important (and might have vanished) if Kriodom did not have a clear function for its members.

Some scholars would argue that ethnic identities and groups carry a far greater range of meanings than merely political or economic motivations as prerequisites for the manifestation of ethnicity; other factors such as religion, kinship and class could well be considered (Osaghae, 1994).

2:4. Perceptions of Ethnicity

Mitchell (1974) distinguishes between ethnicity as a construct of perceptual or cognitive phenomena and ethnic group as a construct of behavioural phenomenon. On the one hand, he pictures the cognitive framework of ethnicity as a set of shared meanings attached to socially identifiable ethnic cues that provide the actors with sets of expectations or behaviour. On the other hand, he construes behavioural framework as the way in which people choose to, or prefer not to associate with those whom they identify as belonging to specific ethnic categories. In analyzing the relationship between the pattern of cognitive and behavioural ethnicity, he posits a comparison between ethnicity as a structural phenomenon and as a cultural phenomenon. As a structural concept, ethnicity has been taken to be an abstract attribute of actors by means of which an analyst is able to provide some general understanding or explanation of the conduct of these actors (*cf.* Cohen & Middleton, 1974). As cognitive or cultural phenomena, ethnicity can be conceived in terms of how the actors themselves may structure their experiences. Wallerstein argues along much the same lines as Mitchell, when he states that “membership in an ethnic group is a matter of social definition, interplay or the self-definition of members and the definition of other groups” (Wallerstein, 1965, p. 474).

Cohen makes the same point in connection with his notion of retribalization, which he describes as:

a process by which a group from one ethnic category, whose members are involved in a struggle for power and privileges with the members of a group in another ethnic category, within the framework of a formal political system, manipulate some customs, values, myths symbols and ceremonials from their cultural tradition to articulate an informal political organization, which is used as a weapon in that struggle. (1969, p. 2).

In his discussion of ethnicity and identity, Barth lays primary emphasis on the fact that ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves and thus has the characteristic of organizing interaction between two people (1969, p. 10). Two important implications stem from this perspective. First it makes no

assumptions about the "content" of ethnicity: ethnic groups provide an organizational vessel that may be given varying amounts and forms of content in different socio-cultural systems. They may be of great relevance to behaviour, but they need not be; they may pervade the whole of social life or they may be relevant only in limited sectors of activity. Second, the critical focus of investigation from this standpoint becomes the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses.

At the heart of Barth's analysis, therefore, lies the concepts of identity and boundaries, though in fact it is on the problem of boundary maintenance that he principally focuses. Moreover, his chief concern is with the more general question of the interaction of ethnic groups in diverse regions of the world in conditions of relative stability, and he addresses himself only marginally to those circumstances in which the emergence of ethnicity has been a response to changing social conditions. Entailed in ethnic boundary maintenance, Barth observes, are situations of social contact between persons of different cultures, and ethnic groups only persist as significant units, he adds, if they imply marked differences in behaviour.

In stressing that the focus of investigations ought to be the boundary that separates ethnic groups from each other, Barth advocates a relational and processual approach to identity. The ethnic group is defined through relationship to others, highlighted through the boundary, and the boundary itself is a social product which may have variable importance and which may change through time. Employing Barth's approach to ethnicity and boundaries, the next section goes on to discuss Krio ethnicity.

2:5. Krio Ethnicity

This section explores the construction of Krio ethnicity in the pre-colonial period through the use of boundary markers or cultural boundaries to establish their ethnic identity, the role of religion in the formation of this ethnic group, and the changes that they have experienced in the post-colonial period.

During the colonial period, the Krio manifested distinct cultural characteristics by which they displayed their identity and exclusiveness. These cultural characteristics were embedded in a status grouping marked off from other social groups in the country by a special life-style, which served as a boundary marker between the Krio and non-Krio. The Krio are classified into three categories, namely, "blue-blood" or "proper" Krio,

kangbay (person with mixed provincial heritage) Krio and Aku or Muslim Krio.²⁹ This research is concerned with the first two categories that are Christian.

As has been argued, Krio is a generic label for descendants of the recipients of British philanthropy who were resettled in Sierra Leone between 1787 and 1863, and who by the middle of the nineteenth century became essentially committed to a British life-style in terms of their modes of dress, speech, education and religion. Those Krio who maintained a predominantly British life-style constitute “blue-blood” Krio and were thus differentiated from the *kangbay*.

Kangbay Krio predominantly lived in the villages, particularly the coastal peninsula villages and were strongly influenced by the settlers (slaves who had settled in these villages). Oral tradition traces the term *kangbay* to Hamilton village, one of the coastal peninsula villages where the chief occupation was fishing. The term also originated from the casualness of the village Krio in dress, thought pattern and speech. This is correlated to the occupation of fishing.³⁰ The major distinguishing factor between a “blue-blood” Krio and a *kangbay* Krio lies in the casualness of the latter’s overall life-style, with which they were identified. Kriolized groups, that is, members of the fringes of Krio society are also often referred to as *kangbay*, when they fail to act, think and behave like the “blue-blood” Krio. The same aspersions would be levied against a “blue-blood” Krio who breaches accepted codes of behaviour. For example, when a “blue-blood” Krio turns up at a wedding ceremony in an African attire, other well-dressed “blue-blood” Krio would comment in a derisive and sarcastic manner thus: *luk di kangbay, ee aught to no better* (look at the *kangbay*, he or she should know how to dress properly on important occasions).³¹

Cohen (1981) provides a study of the Krio as an elite group. His study delineates Krio identity through two distinct variables: culture and power. The cultural variable is expressed in terms of a number of symbolic forms, or cults: those of origin, for example, the social importance of the church, the family, the dead, secret rituals and decorum. The power variable is manifested in command of high positions in the state bureaucracy, and the strategic professions of law, education, and medicine. He describes

²⁹ It is not unheard of to find Aku Muslims and Christians in the same clan and family, cf. Foullah 2006, p. 17 and Sesay 2006, p. 8 for an insight into this.

³⁰ Conversation with Mrs. Dorcas Coker, a fishmonger at Tombo village.

³¹ Attitudes to dress patterns are changing for various reasons especially economic, increased inter-marriage between Krio and non-Krio as well as political ideology.

the extent to which cultural activities such as balls, weddings, christenings and Masonic lodges served as boundary markers between Krio and non-Krio. Two criticisms of Cohen are that, firstly, he places too much emphasis on what cultural symbols mean for elite Krio and loses sight of what they mean to non-Krio. Secondly, he fails to account for how the cultural factors could be maintained as boundary markers between the elite Krio and those on the fringes of Kriodom such as the *kangbay*.

Another perspective on Krio ethnicity is presented in Arthur Porter's *Creoledom*. Porter outlines the historical development of Krio ethnicity and concludes that religious affiliation and education were indicators of Krio identity, factors which also served as boundary markers between Krio and non-Krio. Wyse (1989) also agrees with Porter's view, but while the latter is quite pessimistic that these factors will be maintained as boundary markers among the Krio in the post-colonial period, the former is quite optimistic that "the survival of Kriodom is likely to be assured, despite the people's economic decline" (Porter, 1989, p. 125).

It should be emphasized that the variables outlined by Porter and Wyse are no longer sufficient to determine Krio identity, for many factors have insinuated themselves into Krio society, not least of which are the "cultural baggage" brought over by the Kriolized Mende, Temne, Limba or Loko who, also in large numbers have availed themselves of the benefits and advantages of education. Many of these are to be found in the "born-again" churches to be examined; some have adopted authentic Krio names and, in the process, lost their identities.

The Krio appeared to regard the following attributes as necessarily associated with Krio identity, which served as boundary markers between themselves and non-Krio. The first attribute is Christianity. A Krio must be a Christian who belongs to one of the following denominations: the Anglican, Methodist, Huntingdon and Baptist denominations. The second is Krio customs. A Krio is one who lives by a body of customs which is thought of as common and distinctive to Krio. These customs or cultural practices are depicted in their family, economic, education and religious institutions. Among the most important are their marriage, death, dress and food conventions.

Endogamy was highly valued by Krio, particularly in establishing and maintaining the boundaries of Krio ethnicity. Krio parents disowned their children who got married to non-Krio and left nothing in their wills for them. On occasions when such a marriage took place after the will was made, a new will would be written without their names as benefactors.

Cohen (1981) has also outlined some of the serious considerations which inhibit Krio women from marrying provincial or non-Krio men. Among the major considerations he highlights are: their polygynous nature, the ease with which divorce is obtained under Islamic law and customary law, and its impact on the custody of the children, cohabiting in the provinces where all the wives live under the same roof as compared to living in the urban area, and the heavy obligations (financial and moral) which tie the provincial men to their extended families.

Although it is not a common occurrence for Krio men to marry a provincial woman, when it does happen, the men do not mind, because they use the women as income generators.³² These women may come from wealthy families especially from a ruling house of chiefs and the men benefit from their wealth. In such cases, the men are prepared to sever links with their family of orientation, as well as with other members of their extended family. In such cases, the children claim bi-lateral descent for different purposes. For example, they might claim patrilineal descent for their father's house, and matrilineal descent for Chieftaincy, if the mother comes from a ruling house.

With the rise of provincial men to power after the attainment of Independence, marriages between Krio and non-Krio became more acceptable, albeit not yet a preferred mode of behaviour among the Krio. Endogamous marriages were no longer held as a boundary marker between the Krio and the non-Krio. The majority of the Krio women who preferred to marry an uneducated but wealthy non-Krio have embraced the now common adage: "*den say Bailor Barrie you say Davidson Nicol*", (Bailor Barrie was an uneducated wealthy Fula merchant and Davidson Nicol was an outstanding Krio Doctor, but not wealthy).

³² Interview with Dennis Wright who is married to a provincial woman and both of them are entrepreneurs, held at their Bathurst St. residence on 27 August 1998.

One of the external markers of Krio identity was most visible in an external traditional symbol - dress. They were identified by their formal Western-style clothes at formal occasions such as church services, weddings and other social gatherings. A Krio man was identified in his three-piece woollen suit, a mark of identity, which distinguished him from men in other ethnic groups, particularly the Mende. The Mendes were the first among the ethnic groups to receive Western education. After independence, they comprised the main political force in the country and dominated the civil service, at least up to 1971. These factors led them to regard themselves as next in line to the Krio, hence a common parlance among them is: *next to God nar di Krio man, next to di Krio, nar di Mende man*, (the Krio man is next to God and the Mende man comes after the Krio). The Mende therefore, have always tried to imitate the Krio by wearing a three-piece suit, which is said to have been tailored by *Momoh Talla* (a locally trained tailor) and not by a British trained tailor such as Mr. Williams or Mr. Johnson. The Krio woman was identified by her European-style dress, matching hat, handbag, shoes and gloves. During the post-colonial period, the *safari-suit* (a suit, coat and trousers made from lightweight material) competed favourably with the formal Western suit in official circles and was even slowly accepted by the churches, even St. George's Cathedral, where the Krio intelligentsia are found to have worn them to church services. The women no longer attend church services in hats but put on indigenous costumes with head ties, thus leaving no distinction between them and women belonging to other ethnic groups. On one wedding occasion when a highly placed Krio woman appeared in a native costume, another well placed one who was dressed up in a European-style dress sighed and remarked thus: *tide you nor no udat na Elizabeth Williams en udat na Yanor Dumbuya* (one cannot tell the difference between a Krio (Elizabeth) and a non-Krio (Yanor)).

In the pre-colonial period, Krio were identified with certain schools. The Methodists attended the Methodist Boys High School or the Methodist Girls High School, while the Anglicans attended the Sierra Leone Grammar School or the Annie Walsh Memorial School. The Education Reform of the 1950s³³ opened the doors for provincial pupils to attend any school of their choice. This left the Krio in a position in which they no longer exercised control over their restrictive orders which banned non-Krio from attending mission schools. Opportunities in the education had white-collar occupations in view and the prime targets were the professions with which the Krio were identified. The

³³ An Act passed by the House of Parliament.

Krio has always showed contempt for manual work especially in agriculture and technical employment and preferences for professions like the law, medicine and education, which a lot of them were awarded scholarship to pursue. With the diamond boom in the early 1950s, the hinterland or provincial people were able to support their children to also pursue courses abroad in these professions. The outcome of this situation in Freetown was that for every one Dr. Williams or one lawyer Johnson (both belonging to the Krio ethnic group), there were four Dr. Kargbos and four lawyer Banguras (non-Krio). These professions were no longer the preserve of the Krio, and this mark of their identity crumbled like a pack of cards.

2:6. Krio Ethnicity and Religion

Any discussion of Krio ethnicity in Sierra Leone is, more often than not, implicitly about the question of religion and education. Religion and education were parallel processes; they played a significant role in the formation of Krio identity, and served as cultural markers of the Krio in the colonial period. After independence, changes in the socio-economic and political climate in the country also resulted in a change in the Krio's perception of their superiority over non-Krio. Religion and education were no longer a Krio monopoly as there were almost as many non-Krio Christians and non-Krio educated people.

Barth's fundamental premise is that boundaries persist despite a flow of personnel across them (what he refers to as "Osmosis" of personnel through time). He views ethnic groups as providing an organizational vessel that may be given varying amounts and forms of content in different socio-cultural systems (1969). Cohen (1974) pointed out that Barth's separation into content and vessel makes it difficult to appreciate the dynamic nature of ethnicity. He believes that Barth's analysis implicitly denies that personality is an open system, given the modifications through socialization under changing socio-cultural conditions (Cohen, 1974, p. xv).

In contrast, Schildkrout (1974) views ethnicity from a diachronic perspective and discusses the changing significance of ethnic identity among first and second-generation Mossi immigrants to Kumasi in Ghana. Schildkrout also views ethnicity:

as a set of conscious or unconscious beliefs or assumptions about one's own or another's identity, as derived from membership in a particular type of group or category. These beliefs may affect social behaviour and may influence relationships and interaction in a number of social fields: economic, political, domestic, or religious. Ethnic categories are frames of reference, which affect people's per-

ceptions of events, relationships, and other persons or groups. They have a descriptive content consisting of values and/or moral imperatives about behavior.

(1978, p. 10)

In Schildkrout's study of Mossi immigrants, she shows how the significance of ethnicity can change in relation to alterations in urban political and kinship organization. She also compares the different social cultural situations in which first and second generation of immigrants find themselves. This leads her to conclusions about the importance of structural factors and the irrelevance of culture in explaining the persistence of ethnicity as a basis of personal and group identity (1974, p. 187). While Cohen's belief that ethnic groups as interest groups is broad and generalizable, Schildkrout goes further and contends that we must view them primarily as structural categories. Their specific functions and content may vary from time to time and place to place.

Schildkrout's main argument is that we should not regard cultural differences as necessary conditions of ethnicity. She argues that it is sufficient that ethnic categories exist. The specific cultural coefficients that may but need not help to distinguish ethnic communities are of secondary importance (ibid, pp. 192-193).

Schildkrout's view is useful in analysing Krio ethnicity and religion for the following reason. The Krio always viewed religion as a collective cultural identity marker, which kept them in the mainline churches. The impact of the breakdown in the socio-economic and political system after independence had an adverse effect on the overall status quo of the Krio particularly their moral status. Religion for the Krio came to be regarded as a means of salvation, a personal and emotional experience that was not met by the mainline churches. The society therefore became less interested in religion as a collective cultural marker, performing the group function of maintaining Krio identity, but rather as an individual or personal and emotional experience, a function shared by "born-again" churches which offered them several avenues to achieve this end.

Although religion as a collective cultural marker played a less important role in maintaining Krio ethnicity, nevertheless one marked area in which it played an important role in the formation of Krio ethnicity was through education. The churches provided the framework of Krio communal life, including sophisticated schools that have given modern education and training to generations of men and women. Wyse has

observed that “education was a cult among the Krio, they worshipped it” (Wyse 1989, p. 33), and as such was one of the hallmarks of their identity.

Christianity, an asset inherited from the colonial authorities by the Krio, is also another distinctive mark of their identity and which also played an important role in the formation of Krio ethnicity. Banton has observed that “on two occasions, I advertently asked the Krio to what ethnic group they belonged and received the answer; ‘I am a Christian’” (1957, p. 109). The Krio regarded the non-Krio as the “Unto whom I swear”,³⁴ meaning that they were pagans or “heathens”. At least, that is how non-Christians were perceived by Krio since the founding of Freetown. When, in a court case investigating the claim of a group of Mendes to a piece of land donated to so-called “heathens” in the late 1960s by the late Pa Mango Brown, a highly religious Krio merchant, a decision was given in favour of the Mendes who admitted that they were “heathens” for whom the land was meant, they wasted no time in building their church on this piece of land and named it Mango-Browne Memorial Church.³⁵

In the colonial period, the Krio used religion as a boundary marker to shut out non-Krio from their churches and schools. Heathens were only allowed to attend their churches and schools, provided they were baptized in the Christian faith and also had Krio names.³⁶ This resulted in many hinterland peoples adopting Christian names and sending their children as “wards” or *men pekin* (a provincial child who is reared by a Krio family) to Krio families. It was therefore not uncommon to find Krio with names like Ahmed Taylor- Kamara, David Johnson-Kargbo, Elizabeth Kamara-Cole and Dorcas Kargbo-Williams. Although some of the children maintained their provincial surnames such as Victoria Kargbo or Joseph Turay a good many combined their provincial surnames with Krio first names, which were mostly Biblical or European. These groups were also referred to as *kangbay* because of their names.

The Anglican, Methodist and Baptist Missions also opened up churches and schools in the provinces. The hinterland peoples also began to be Christianised and educated without having to be compulsorily baptized or adopted as “wards”. Religion then

³⁴ Cf. Psalm 95: in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP)

³⁵ Interview held with Mr. Bunting Thompson, legal representative for the “heathens”, 22 September 1997 at 10A Thompson Bay, Cockerill North, Freetown

³⁶ Interview held with Pa David Robinson retired teacher, 7 April 1998, at 4 Settra Kroo Street, Freetown

became less of an index to Krio identity, particularly as many of the new provincial elites are also Christian.

One avenue also in which Krio ethnicity has made its mark in religion in Freetown is through its language. Krio is the lingua franca in almost, if not, all the ethnic-based churches as well as in classical Pentecostal and born-again churches. The reason is not hard to discern; it is the national language used across Sierra Leone.

2:7. Religion in the life of the Krio Community

Paul Hair, writing on Freetown Christianity and Africa, has noted that:

since its foundation in 1792, Freetown can be claimed to have been a Christian city, in the sense that the vast majority of the social elite, of the literate, and of those families who have lived there more than one generation, have been Christians ... Freetown is the oldest Christian community in Africa, and in Tropical Africa. (1964, pp. 13-14).

However, he hastens to suggest that “Freetown has never been entirely Christian” (*Ibid*, p. 14). The last published census on religious institutions in Freetown indicated that there were 258 churches and 555 mosques in Freetown with a population of 469,776.³⁷ These figures cover the period up to 1987.

Although there were four mainline denominations, the Krio belonged mainly to the Anglican, Methodist and Baptist denominations. St. George’s Cathedral and Wesley Methodist Church are considered as the Cathedrals of the Anglicans and Methodists respectively. Today, the bulk of the membership in these churches is mainly Krio, some of whom hold dual membership in the classical Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal /born-again churches. Religion can be seen in every aspect of the Krio life. Their day-to-day activities were centred around their belief in God and it is not uncommon to hear the Krio end their conversations with phrases such as “by the grace of God” or *if God gree* (if God permits). If any book was to be found in the home of the Krio, it was certain to be the Holy Bible from which both old and young took pride in being able to quote lengthy passages.

The Krio did not slavishly copy the cultural norms of their British mentors; they also adapted them to their own family and community requirements. On the religious side, Krio culture was mixed and in this vein Spitzer has observed that “there can be little

³⁷ Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone, Church Survey, 1992.

doubt that in everyday life most Creole retained and mixed elements from traditional African culture with the ways of the West” (1974, p. 138). Their strong attachment to certain traditional religious beliefs and practices, despite the missionaries’ attempt to stamp them out, had a strong hold on them. They tended to retain some elements of prior belief systems or re-interpreted elements of Christianity in order to make them compatible. Among these beliefs and practices were their membership in secret societies and performances of rites and customs on behalf of their ancestors. These beliefs and practices appeared to have been heavily influenced by the Yoruba, although there were inputs from other ethnic groups.

The Krio believe in the supernatural and recognize the powers of witches. In many Sierra Leonean societies, the belief in witchcraft is very strong (Sawyerr 1996, pp. 11-13; Shaw 1997, p. 856-76; Parsons 1964, pp. 21, 53-54; Wyse 1989, p. 10).³⁸ Witches are believed to be everywhere acting invisibly. A person may practise witchcraft, potentially afflicting people by mystical means through the power and encouragement of evil spirits. This is usually done at night to avoid being discovered. In many Krio homes, it is not uncommon to find the Bible under pillows in one’s bed, especially those of children, to counteract witches. Among the Krio, witches are mostly said to be women. The Mendes also believe that witches are also usually women but among other ethnic groups, such as the Limba and the Temne, a witch may be of either gender. It is said that a witch leaves the body spiritually when “asleep and goes out to attack another person, infant or adult while their victim is asleep” (Sawyerr 1996, p. 11). Parrinder has strongly dismissed such a belief as a delusion, adding, “People do not leave their bodies or destroy the souls of others, so in fact there are no witches, though many people believe in them” (1963, p. 92).

Witches in Sierra Leone are believed to take on different forms to perpetuate mischief. Like other spirits, they are capable of taking the form of animals, reptiles, or birds (Harris and Sawyerr 1968, p. 74). Witches are associated with animals and birds, especially owls and vampire bats. The nightly cry of an owl, known in Krio as *kohkoh* from a tree especially the cotton tree³⁹ is considered a supernatural manifestation of witchcraft. When an owl starts to hoot, people come out with sticks and metallic items

³⁸ See Magesa ,1997 *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life*, pp. 179-189 for a discussion on the English and African usage of the word.

³⁹ In Sierra Leone, cotton trees are believed to be the meeting places of witches. They are considered powerful spiritual centres for evil spirits.

such as pots and old tap pipes and beat them together, while using abusive and profane words against the so called witch who has sent the owl to come and carry out mischief.⁴⁰ These abuses and curses are directed at the witches' mother, it is believed that witches do not like curses or profanity to be used against their mothers and this would likely deter them from repeating their mischief. The same procedure is also followed when the hooting sound of a vampire bat is heard. The sound of a vampire bat indicates that witches are sucking blood from sleeping infants (Harris and Sawyerr 1968, p. 5).

Self-preservation has required members of most ethnic groups in Sierra Leone to take certain preventative measures against both evil spirits and witchcraft by procuring protective charms, often through the aid of a sacred specialist⁴¹. Sacred specialists are people who are believed to have received spiritual abilities either from God or from spirits. Because of their spiritual giftedness, sacred specialists play a vital role in the life of the individual and the community. They are human mediators between the supernatural and the people who help and guide people to maintain personal and religious values. *Abalists*,⁴² Muslim priests known as *moriman* (muslim cleric and scholar) and diviners are the three main categories of sacred specialists used by the Krio and most of the other ethnic groups found in Sierra Leone. Among the protective charms or *meresin* (medicine) prepared by the *alpha* (another term used for *moriman*) are *sehbeh*⁴³ and *lasmamei*.⁴⁴ Medicines are believed to possess mystical power because they are visible symbols of invisible forces that come either directly from Medicines are believed to possess mystical power because they are visible symbols of invisible forces that come either directly from God or through the spirits. Mbiti noted that they are used to “secure a feeling of safety, protection and assurance” (1989, p. 196). A favourite

⁴⁰ I have watched this scenario in my neighbourhood several times.

⁴¹ This African method of protecting oneself and one's interests against malevolent spirit(s) has also been referred to by scholars as magic. Parrinder, 1974, *African Traditional Religion* p. 114 referred to this act of mystical protection as “Personal Magic”, and Mbiti, 1989, *African Religions and Philosophy* pp.193-194 saw it as “good magic”.

⁴² Interview with Pa Roberts, a renowned *abalist* living at Brookfields from whom I got to know that they are men who have the widest knowledge of the curative properties of herbs, plants, bark and roots from the forest to make medicines for protective and curative purposes. They are gifted in curing minor, life-threatening, mental and witchcraft-related illnesses. Interview took place on 9 May 1998, at his traditional “clinic”, Block 12, off KingHarman Road, Brookfields.

⁴³ It normally comprised a verse taken from the Quran or some Arabic sayings written on a piece of paper and enclosed in a leather case with a long strip to be hung around the neck or waist, or behind doors in houses. Some *sehbeh* may be specially prepared for retaining under the pillow just as the Bible is opened under the pillow in Krio homes.

⁴⁴ A potion made by writing Qur'anic verses on a board and then washing the writing into a receptacle, a drop of perfume is added to this liquid which is then poured into a bottle. This liquid could be applied all over one's body or drunk depending on the instructions of the *alphaman*.

story often told by the Muslims to ridicule the Krio is about a Krio Minister of Religion, who, preaching from the pulpit, took a handkerchief from his coat to wipe his face and in the process, dropped his *sehbeh* in the full view of his congregation.

Why then did the Krio still attach themselves to their traditional beliefs and practices? This is perhaps due to the fact that Krio society is built on the basic cosmology of spirits and ancestors apart from their belief in the Supreme Being whom they call *Papa God*. Being Africans, their lives still tend to be haunted by fear of the unknown, witches and enemies, and every day Africans are seeking an escape from that world dominated by evil forces. The Krio therefore resort to their African traditional culture by consulting the *moriman* and the *abalist* to give answers to that aspect of fear and the unknown. They do not hesitate to consult the *moriman* when they are faced with an insurmountable problem such as an incurable disease, the frequent loss of jobs, sudden deaths and infertility. It is these features which constitute the inherent contradictions, if not irony in the attachment of the Krio to the established faith. Thus preaching from the pulpit during the colonial days one writer has observed that the Missionaries always implored their congregations to dispense with their charms (Peterson 1969). Among the Krio it is not uncommon for a pastor's warden to hold a very high office in a *hunting*⁴⁵

secret society such as the *Ashikpa* (the leader of a *hunting* society). What ought to be stressed here is the deep desire for more overt sources of solace and comfort provided by the *moriman*. In his psyche, God, his Supreme Being is a remote phenomenon and cannot be readily perceived or approached. It is in this context that the *hunting*, the *geledeh*⁴⁶ and the *ojeh*⁴⁷ and in some cases the *poro*⁴⁸ society has come to constitute

⁴⁵ A society of hunters. Originally imported by Yoruba settlers from Nigeria, hunting societies have for long been an important cultural phenomenon in Sierra Leone. Members of the society are usually from the same town, village or area. The society's primary activity is "going to the bush" to hunt – hence the name. But the societies have their initiation and other rites; they have their hierarchy of members from the *Ashikpa* (the head) to the novitiate and the female associates who do not go the "bush"; they have their secret language consisting of Yoruba words; they have their cultural dances and "devils" i.e. masked dancers who appear after a hunt and other special occasions. Yet they are also thrift and mutual aid societies, and although most of their activities are shrouded in mystery, they are religious societies as well. *Hunting* societies were found formerly in the Western area but have now spread to other parts of the country, notably the Northern Province. See also H. Kreutzinger, 1966, *The Eri Devils in Freetown, Sierra Leone*, , Wien:Verla Osterreichische Ethnologische Gesellschaft Wien.

⁴⁶ Sometimes it is known as *otta*. A society which originated from the Popo people, a Yoruba influence group on the borders of the Republic of Benin; it is also an earth-mother cult which is believed came originally from the Ketu, a Yoruba group in Nigeria.

⁴⁷ A secret society derived from Yoruba culture. A cult that associates with the spirit world of the dead.

⁴⁸ Mende secret society. It was not a common practice for Krio to become members of this society. In

the more readily accessible “shrines” or “altars” for the Krio. This however does not impinge on the strong attachment of the Krio to his Christian religion.

Commitment to a church was interpreted to include practising their own distinctive rites, which they incorporated into Christianity. These are specifically African practices, which commemorated important events in the life cycle from birth to death, and the life thereafter.⁴⁹ Mugambi (2005) has noted in his article, “Christianity and the African Cultural Heritage”, that these rites of passage “are expressions of the understanding and expectations of communities regarding the role of individuals in society.” He added that these rites of passage were not regarded as incompatible with Christian ethics and Christian prayers were even an essential feature. The belief in these phenomena was dramatized in the following rites and customs: the *komojade or pul na do* (the ceremonial outing and naming of a new-born baby), *put stop* (betrothal/engagement ceremony among the Krio) and *awujoh*.⁵⁰

The most important ritual associated with the birth of a child was *komojade or pul na do*, a ceremony which involves taking out the child soon after its birth, on the seventh day if a girl, and on the ninth day if a boy. It has been suggested that the difference in the number of days is because female children were believed to mature more quickly than males and so are brought out two days earlier than males (Spitzer 1974, p. 29). On this occasion, the child is introduced to his or her surroundings by an elderly relative or family friend, who points out the various roads leading to, particularly, the church, to which the child is expected to make frequent visits for church services, Sunday school, class meetings and youth fellowship.

An important feature in this ceremony, is the naming of the child, usually with a Biblical or English name, such as “Elizabeth” or “Dorcas” for a female, “Joseph” or “Edward” for a male, and a Yoruba name which has a particular meaning, most times coinciding with the circumstances surrounding the child’s birth. If a male is born after

a conversation with Prof. Akintola Wyse, I came to know that the Shorunkeh-Sawyers brothers (two of them) who came from a notable Krio family were members of this society. For an insight into the role of this society see Kenneth Little, 1948, “The Poro as an Arbiter of Culture”, *African Studies* 7, no. 1, pp.1-15.

⁴⁹ Birth as a rite of passage is discussed in J.S. Mbiti, *African Religions*, pp. 112-18.

⁵⁰ Ceremonial feasting for the dead (usually on the third, seventh and fortieth days), in remembrance of them or to secure their co-operation and blessing on an important family occasion (e.g. a wedding, possession of a new house). Cf. Harry Sawyerr, 1996, *The Practice of Presence: Shorter Writings of Harry Sawyerr*, Grande Rapids, MI: Eerdmans

the death of any of his paternal or maternal grandfather, he is usually named “Babatunde” meaning “my father has returned”. A female is named “Iyamide” or “Iyatunde” after the death of a paternal or maternal grandmother.⁵¹

Between two and three months later, the baby goes through the rite of baptism in the church. For the Krio, baptism symbolizes the child’s association with the church. In this regard, the expectations of the godparents are high. The child is not only the responsibility of his parents but the godparents are implored to participate in the nurture and upbringing of the infant. Added to these charges is the religious responsibility for the child, who is expected to grow in God’s footsteps (Cohen 1981, pp. 188-189). The *komojade* can be compared to the custom of showing a child to the moon, a practice among the Gu of Dahomey. In this ceremony, the child is thrown up in the air at the new moon, nine times for boys and seven times for girls with the words, “look at the moon, little one” (Parrinder 1974, p. 94).

At the *put stop* ceremony, a Bible and an engagement ring form the major part amidst an elaborate exchange of traditional courtesies and speeches by articulate and humorous speakers on both sides, at the end of which the bride’s family signal their approval. About a few months to the wedding day, the trousseau is taken to the bride’s family. Spitzer has erroneously noted that the trousseau had to be returned if an unsuccessful marriage could be blamed on the wife (1974, p. 29). The trousseau is never returned at any point in the marriage. Spitzer might be confusing customary marriage among the other ethnic groups when the trousseau is returned under such a circumstance.

The Krio generally believe in the power of their ancestors and in their continuing influence among the living. As in most African cultures, the ancestors are of central importance in the lives of most ethnic groups in Sierra Leone. To take the ancestors away from them is to “destroy their roots in the past, their culture, their dignity and their understanding of *communio sanctorum*” (Hollenweger 1993, p. x; Setiloane 1978, p. 406). Ancestral veneration is evident all through Sierra Leone, even among converts to Christianity and in spite of Western sophistication. Avery noted that: “In Sierra Leone, sincere Christians, even ordained ministers, engage quite openly in ... ancestral rites”

⁵¹ Conversation held with my great-aunt, Mrs. Morkeh Barber at Allen Town who gave me an insight into this ceremony and meaning of names.

(1971, p.13). This could be described as exemplifying the Christian belief in the “Communion of Saints”.

Harry Sawyerr (1964, 1967) has explored the nature of “ancestor worship” and the social and psychological effects of this practice on the Krio. Sawyerr argues that the Krio believe in the cult of the dead and that when physically removed from this world, the dead continue to watch over and influence their own kin who are still living. The Krio therefore, visit the graveside of their dead relations and friends on Christian festivals, notably Christmas and Easter, together with New Year’s Day and Good Friday, as on special days such as the anniversary of the dead and the birthdays of the deceased. In his examination of the speeches addressed to the deceased, Sawyerr has noted that:

they are generally cases of out pouring of grief, of petitions and intercessions for peace within the family circle, for success for the petitioner or other relatives and protection from evil-eye or witchcraft. Prayers for forgiveness of actions done by the speaker or the family, which might have offended the deceased, are prominent in all these speeches. (1965, p. 48).

These graveside libations also include the pouring of tap water and the favourite alcoholic drink of the deceased on the graves in order to cool the deceased’s heart and yield to the suppliant’s petitions and request.⁵² The alcoholic drink is referred to as *oti oti* (the word is derived from the Yoruba word for strong drink). In cases in which the deceased was a teetotaler, soft drinks replace the *oti oti*, usually the favourite one of the deceased.⁵³

Another feature at the graveside, the final ritual, is the “throwing of kola nuts”, one red and one, white opened up. The significance of this is to show an indication of whether the deceased has accepted the offer of the drinks, and are pleased with the suppliant and are also willing to grant their requests. A good omen is said to be two of the halves falling with their hollow side up and the other two with their convex side up. Any other formation is not regarded as propitious. This ritual has to be performed repeatedly until the desired results are achieved.⁵⁴

⁵² Conversation with my mother, Madame Ayo Aribaut after the traditional visit on Christmas day, 1997, to the graves of our deceased family members at Race-course cemetery at Cline Town, Freetown

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

The belief in “ancestor worship” is exemplified in the *awujoh*, during which the key feature on this occasion is the appeal to the dead. Peterson has pointed out that the origins “were in the traditional death celebrations of the Yoruba and other tribes represented in the Colony” (1969, p. 236). On the occasions when the *awujoh* is held, Wyse has noted that “as an important event in the Krio calendar of customs ...it celebrates specific dates and anniversaries of the deceased: *three day*, *seven day* and *forty day*” (1989, p. 11). Because of the economic realities on the celebrations of these customs, the *three day* and *seven day* are no longer observed but the *forty day* and the *wan year* (the first anniversary of the death of the departed) are still adhered to, particularly the *forty day*, which has a great significance. On the *forty day*, it is believed that the spirit of the departed makes his final exit from this world for the next and therefore must be sent away with a fitting farewell.

Wyse has noted that the *awujoh* could be held on a large scale “with elaborate dishes mostly African” (1989, p. 12), but has failed to note that the *awujoh* could also be observed on a small scale when black eyed beans is the only item prepared and serves the same purpose as when it is done on a large scale. He also fails to mention the most important ritual in the *awujoh*, which is the throwing of *kolwata/oti oti* and kola nuts.

The Krio also have a strong attachment to their African societies and fraternities inherited by the Liberated Africans from their Yoruba descendants. Though these societies were cultural, they may have been quasi-religious as well. They encompass the *gunugu*,⁵⁵ *ojeh*, *gelede* and the *hunting* societies. These societies were found all along the Christian settlements in the peninsula where the majority of the liberated Africans were settled. They however tended to thrive mostly in Hastings. Peterson suggests that the reason for this was “because they were Yoruba in origin and Hastings was predominantly Yoruba” (1969, p. 264). On the function of these societies, Peterson argues that they “offered a traditional and credible answer to those who sought to know about man’s fate after death. In addition, they provided a very practical answer to the problems of health that befell the newly settled recaptives” (1968, p. 107).

The *hunting* society developed into a distinctly Krio organization which became popular in the Colony as a result of the changing needs of the recaptive population in the

⁵⁵ A secret society from the Nupe and its devil type. The term is also referred to the *egungun* (an abstract devil) in the shape of a rectangular pillar covered with cotton print (dark, red or blue). With the help of staves that are moved up and down, he appears sometimes short, sometimes high.

villages, and served as a replacement for the *egungu*. Peterson (1969, pp. 268-269) writes: “given the attraction of the capital Freetown and against the background of the depletion of wildlife in the Colony, the Hunters society transformed itself into a secret organization of Creole civil servants”. Nearly all members in this society were Christians and most held high positions in the church.

The *ojeh* and the *hunting* societies are two of the most important African societies among the Krio. They are patterned on a hierarchical structure and their beliefs, practices and rituals are based on Yoruba social and religious organization. Wyse notes the importance of these societies for the Krio and writes that “these societies provided a spiritual and psychological satisfaction for which people yearned as well as opportunities to delve into the mystic and curative Arts of Africa. They also offered the public the pleasure of taking part in ceremonial and cultural relaxation” (1989, p. 54). *Hunting* celebrations are held at a *forty day* ceremony for its members after a hunt, for a wedding of its members or members of their kin group, and occasionally, on national holidays.

The *ojeh* and *hunting* societies are exclusively Krio- based secret organizations and have formed the basis for other secret societies founded by immigrants from the hinterland. These immigrants sought entry into the Yoruba based societies of the Krio but “they were rejected because of their low status, lack of education and religion” (Nunley 1987, p. 60). This led them to form their own associations which Nunley refers to as *Ode lay* societies and notes that they “provided identity and security to the young immigrant, who otherwise found survival in the city difficult” (*Ibid*). The *Ode lay* organization is tailored on the same pattern as the *hunting* and other secret societies in terms of their hierarchical structure, rituals and practices. These associations have extended to other areas of the hinterland unlike the Krio-based ones (particularly the *hunting* society), which are confined to Freetown. Nunley offers a reason for this restriction and suggests that “the inability of the *hunting* organization to become part of the countryside (hinterland) is a result in part of its Christian membership” (1989, p. 76).

The *hunting* society itself has some religious overtones, and this is reflected in their preliminary and concluding prayers during their monthly meetings and in their thanksgiving services held in the church (Nunley, 1987, p. 205). The latter practice,

though banned by the churches in Freetown since the early 1990s, does not preclude the society from continuing with its religious practices.

The Freemasonry, a ritual organization, was another secret society in which the Krio participated. It was introduced into their society by British civil servants and army officers during the colonial period. Cohen (1981) suggests that the Krio became members of the Freemasonry because it offered them among other things, a system of morality, which was spelt out in their rituals and practices, avenues for contact with their “brethren” in foreign lands and contacts with the cream of society.

Cohen also discusses the significance of this society among the Krio in relation to the secret societies found among the people in the provinces. While there is some evidence that the provincial secret societies, particularly the *poro* society, played fundamental roles in the pre-colonial and post-colonial periods, the associations which the Krio belonged to were based on the ritual beliefs and practices that are formally non-political. The *poro* society seems to have been a mobilization force during the Hut Tax War of 1898⁵⁶ and the riots of 1955-1956⁵⁷ and, as the hierarchies of the *poro* society and the chiefs were complementary, together they formed one composite system of authority, which inevitably filtered through to the political system. The Freemasonry and the other secret societies, which the Krio belonged to, were mainly ceremonial and were linked to the Grand Cousinhood and did not have any impact on the political system. He further argues that “there is certainly no conscious or deliberate use of Freemasonry in political maneuvering” (*Ibid*, p. 122).

Cohen also argues that “Masonry is synonymous with high status in Freetown because of the relatively high cost of membership and frequent banqueting” (*Ibid*, p. 110). However, he fails to take into account the fact that people of low status such as tailors, clerks and bricklayers were also members of this society.⁵⁸ Furthermore, he contends

⁵⁶ This war was against the imposition of the Hut (House) tax by the British Empire in Sierra Leone. It was initiated by Temne chief Bai Bureh in 1898, and later involved other ethnic groups, including the Mende (majority of whom belonged to the *poro*). See Laray Denzer, “Bai Bureh and the Sierra Leone Hut Tax War of 1898, in Michael Crowder (ed.), 1978, *Colonial West Africa Collected Essays*, United Kingdom: Routledge, pp. 61-62.

⁵⁷ These riots occurred in Sierra Leone and were originally sparked by the artisan union’s strike over pay, further unrest followed strikes by transport workers. These events led to a growing sense of animosity between the members of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP), a Mende -dominated Party and Krio political parties.

⁵⁸ Conversation held with my husband, Mr Bunting Thompson, past master of Lodge Mount Aureol 1612 (Scottish Constitution), at 10a Thompson Bay, Cockerill North, Freetown.

that “Masonic membership is an important feature of the lifestyle of any Creole of importance” (*Ibid*, p. 112) but he fails to realize that there are some Krio elites, for example, lawyers, doctors and ministers of religion to whom Masonic membership is not important because they believe that they cannot “serve God and mammon”. They also believe that Freemasonry, being a secret society, is associated with the devil.⁵⁹

On the basis of the above discussion, it could be argued that the Krio were the forerunners of Christianity in Freetown and that they have played a unique role in the spread of Christianity among the other ethnic groups in Sierra Leone as well as other countries in former British West Africa. They belonged to either the Methodist or the Anglican denominations and their cultural and social lives were steeped in a rich religious heritage.

In the next chapter, an analysis of the data generated by a church survey conducted during fieldwork will be undertaken. The main objective of this endeavour is to establish the fact that Freetown is no longer dominated by the mainline churches but is now witnessing a proliferation of Pentecostal and “born-again”/charismatic churches, which are quite vigorous. The establishment of these churches has contributed to the transformation of Freetown Christianity.

⁵⁹ Conversation held with Honourable Mr Justice Freddie Short, Judge of the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone, who is not a member of the Masonic Lodge, at his Smart Farm residence in Freetown.

CHAPTER THREE
Places of Worship: A Demographic and Theological
Survey of Churches in Freetown

3:1. Introduction

Charismatic Christianity is a global phenomenon. Since the late 1970s, it has spread from the United States to many parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America. It is the fastest growing expression of Pentecostal religion in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Sierra Leone, the “new” charismatic churches dominate the religious scene especially in Freetown, the capital.

For most of the twentieth Century Sierra Leonean Christianity has been divided among three denominational groups: mainline (Anglican, Baptist, Catholic and Methodist), the classical Pentecostal churches (including the Assemblies of God and the United Pentecostal Church) and the Spiritual/Aladura churches who are also pentecostals because they believe in the basic doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. In the past four decades, however, the fastest growth rate has been among the charismatic or neo-Pentecostal churches. In Freetown these churches are commonly known as “Born-again” or “Believers” churches therefore in this work I will use the terms “born-again”, “neo-Pentecostal” and “charismatic” churches to refer to these new churches. The term “born-again” refers to those churches and church groups which emphasize a personal commitment to Jesus rather than a commitment which is based on family commitment. It is an allusion to Jn.: 3:3 where Jesus tells Nicodemus that “you must be born again.” Freetown’s Christianity has to be seen against the background of the shift from mainline to Pentecostal churches (particularly the new Pentecostal/neo-Pentecostal churches) a phenomenon that has been occurring throughout Freetown since the mid-1980s. These churches have made an enormous impact on Freetown’s religious scene where they now use most of the schoolrooms for church services. Gifford has observed that, “among the most striking characteristics of African Christianity in the last decade has been the proliferation of new autonomous Pentecostal churches” (1994, p. 241).

Against this background, this chapter analyses the findings of a church survey conducted during fieldwork between February 1997 and October 1998. The purpose of the survey was threefold. Firstly, it located and identified the different types of churches (and their numbers) that were planted in Freetown up to 1998, in order to assess the proliferation of “born-again” churches as one of the causes of the transformation of Freetown Christianity. Secondly, it broadens the sample and approach employed by the Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone’s Greater Freetown Survey in 1990. Lastly, the survey was done in response to Smith’s call for “an urgent need for another survey” (Smith 1994, p. 601). The survey therefore attempts to show that the mainline denominations no longer dominate the Christian religious scene in Freetown. On the contrary, “born-again” churches now tend to supersede the former, drawing their impetus from an unprecedented large following and a vibrant liturgy, which in turn caters for the social needs of its followers.

The last survey of churches undertaken in Freetown was conducted by the Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone (EFSL) and Youth With a Mission (YWAM) in 1989. However, in an article entitled “Religion in Freetown”, Luke (1968) reported that there were 64 churches and one prayer chapel in Freetown.⁶⁰ According to Luke’s report, there were three Roman Catholic churches, ten Anglican churches, 31 Methodist churches, three Baptist, seven Assemblies of God churches, five Aladura churches, one Jehovah’s Witnesses hall and one Seventh-day Adventist church. Luke’s report does not include any of the neo-Pentecostal churches because these churches were non-existent then.

3:2. The EFSL/YWAM Survey

The last survey of churches undertaken in Freetown was conducted jointly by the then Director of YWAM, Scot Morey, as part of YWAM’s evangelistic strategy for Freetown and Sierra Leone. The results of the survey were handed over to the Evangelism and Missions Department of the Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone (EFSL) which took on the project as part of its “Target 2000 Evangelistic Research Programme” for the whole of Sierra Leone. The EFSL published the results in 1990 as the “1990 Greater Freetown Church Survey.” This survey classified all the churches in

⁶⁰ Luke’s report was limited to Freetown which then did not include churches beyond Kissy in the east and Congo Cross in the west.

the eight municipal zones in the Freetown area into eight categories, comprising the following:

1. Non-Indigenous Non-Pentecostal
2. Non- Indigenous Pentecostal
3. Seventh-day Adventist
4. New Apostolic Church
5. Freetown International Christian Fellowship
6. Roman Catholic
7. African Independent 'A'
8. African Independent 'B'.

The survey covered the period from 1980 to 1989. The variables examined in the survey include a number of churches in each category with the number of full-time pastors, a breakdown of church attendance by sex and children, the number of churches planted between 1980 and 1989, the dominant ethnic group in each zone, and the prime language used for worship during services in the churches. According to the survey, there were 252 churches in the eight categories. Although the survey employed no specific criteria in determining the different categories, it is possible to conclude from the names of the churches enumerated that the non-indigenous non-Pentecostal category comprise churches in the mainline denominations excluding the Roman Catholic which falls into a separate category. This category accounted for 96 churches in the survey including the Anglicans with eighteen congregations and the six Methodist denominations with 65 congregations (the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone had twenty, the United Methodist had twelve, the West African Methodist had twelve, the African Methodist Episcopal had ten, the Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone had six and the United Brethren in Christ, five congregations). The Baptists had nine congregations and the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion had four congregations.

In the non-indigenous Pentecostal category, there were 56 churches which included churches in the Assemblies of God (AOG) Mission, Church of Pentecost (COP), Christians in Action (CIA), Church of God of Prophecy (CGP), and Deeper Life Bible Ministries (DLBM). The churches in categories 3 to 6 included the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA), the National Apostolic Church (NAC), the Freetown International Christian Fellowship (FICF) and the Roman Catholic, all of which had four, five, one and eight churches respectively. The African Independent 'A' categories accounted for 48 churches in the survey. The churches in this category all share the same

characteristics whilst also emphasising the basic doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. The Aladura churches, otherwise referred to as the “spiritual” or “Adejobi” churches are characteristic of the EFSL’s last category - the African Independent ‘B’ category. There were 34 churches in this category with the Church of the Lord (Aladura) having six branch churches.

3:3. The Church Survey

While the EFSL/YWAM delineated eight categories, this chapter identifies four categories namely: Mainline, Mission, classical Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal churches. The criteria used in categorising the churches were based on their beliefs, doctrines, rituals and patterns of worship. The different categories will also be qualified in terms of their characteristics alongside the analysis undertaken below.

Freetown was divided into eight zones (zones A to H) after Sierra Leone became a Republic in 1971 based on the Freetown City Council Municipality’s demarcation of wards for election purposes. These wards fell into Freetown West 1, 2 and 3; Freetown Central 1 and 2, and Freetown East 1, 2 and 3 (see Fig. II). The survey was carried out with the aid of a questionnaire that was distributed to as many pastors in each of the churches in all the categories, except for the mainline churches. The questionnaire was designed to ascertain the different types of churches in Freetown in order to categorize them based on their forms of worship, doctrines and rituals. The questionnaire was also designed to elicit information about the founders and the provenance of respective churches in order to assess the newcomers into the religious scene in Freetown. For the mainline churches, face-to-face interviews were conducted with the head of each denomination in order to ascertain the specific number of churches in each denomination. The survey revealed that there were 530 churches in all the four categories. The names of the churches in the different categories are contained in Appendix IV.

Table3:1 below provides a breakdown of the number of churches in the different categories. This will be followed by a brief discussion of the historical background of the different churches in the respective categories, their main characteristics, and the basis on which the classification was made.

Table 3:1: The number of churches in the different categories and zones

Categories	Zones									
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	TOT.	%
1.Mainline	24	13	11	14	10	3	5	45	125	23.6
2.Mission	11	5	1	1	1	2	-	14	35	6.6
3.Classical Pentecostal	24	23	11	4	12	7	3	51	135	25.5
4.Neo-Pentecostal	37	38	15	12	15	12	5	101	235	44.3
TOTAL	96	79	38	31	38	24	13	211	530	100

Source: Fieldwork, February 1997 to October 1998

3:3:1. Mainline Churches

The Mainline Churches are products of missionary bodies which began effective and sustained evangelization in Sierra Leone and dates as far back as 1792 when 1190 Nova Scotians arrived in Freetown. Most were mainly Christians, comprising “Methodists, Baptists and Countess of Huntingdon’s Connexion with their own preachers” (Fyfe 1979, p. 27). Commenting on the religious nature of Freetown, Fyfe also observes that “Freetown has always had the attributes of a Christian city” (Fyfe, 1964, p. 4).⁶¹ To all intents and purposes, the mainline churches during the immediate post-independence era were invariably complete replicas of their respective missionary societies. Thus, they imbibed the ethos of western missionary bodies. According to Bediako (2005), the obvious problem that bedevilled this transmission of Christianity which was not taken into consideration, was the lack of constructive dialogue with traditional cultures and spiritualities. He also contends that it was not so much a case of an unwillingness on the part of these Mainline churches to relate to the realities of the situation, but a failure to adjust to the new circumstances.⁶²

The mainline or historical churches comprise five denominations including the Anglican, Catholic, Baptist, the Countess of Huntingdon’s Connexion and the Methodists. The history and development of the religious activities of these five denominations have been well documented by Fyfe (1962).⁶³ The survey revealed a total of 125 churches which constituted 23.6 percent of the total number of churches in

⁶¹ Cf. P.E. H. Hair, 1964, “Freetown Christianity and Africa”, in *Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion* Vol 6 No. 2, Dec. pp. 13-21

⁶² Bediako, K., 1995, *Christianity in Africa, The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, p. 69.

⁶³ See also, Kalu, O.U. (ed.) 1980, *The History of Christianity in West Africa*, London: Longman Group Ltd.; Lamin Sanneh, 1983, *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact*, London: C. Hurst Co.; E.C. Grant, *The Development of Krio Christianity in Sierra Leone:1792-1861*.

Freetown. The Table below gives a breakdown of the number of churches in the five denominations.

Table3:2: Showing the number of Churches in the Mainline Denominations

Denomination	Zones								TOTAL	%
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H		
Anglican	4	-	2	4	1	2	2	3	18	14.4
Baptist	1	5	1	2	2	-	-	6	17	13.6
Catholic	3	1	1	1	-	-	-	3	9	7.2
Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1.6
Methodist	14	7	7	7	7	1	3	33	79	63.2
TOTAL	24	13	11	14	10	3	5	45	125	100.0

Source: Field Work, February 1997 to October 1998.

The evidence shows that the oldest denomination in Freetown is the Methodist, which was established in 1811 by Methodist missionaries from England (Olson 1969 pp. 86-101). In time, the Methodists split up into the following groups:

- African Methodist Episcopal (AME)
- Methodist Church of Sierra Leone (MCSL)
- United Brethren in Christ (UBC)
- United Methodist Church (UMC)
- West African Methodist (WAM)
- Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone (WCSL)⁶⁴

All the above groups retained the same basic forms of worship, doctrines and rituals as their denominational counterparts all over the world although there is a great deal of effort by some of them to incorporate a charismatic flavour into their worship whilst also integrating local rituals and manifestly syncretic practices into their services. Table 3:3 below gives a breakdown of the number of churches in the different groups in each of the eight zones.

⁶⁴ This mission was formerly known as the American Wesleyan Methodist Mission but changed to Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone in the mid-1980s when the Americans pulled out and handed over the mission to the indigenous people.

Table 3:3: Distribution of Methodist Denominations in Zones A to H

Denomination	Zones								Total	%
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H		
AME	-	1	1	3	-	1	-	5	11	14
MCSL	3	1	3	2	4	-	1	4	18	22.7
UBC	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	5.1
UMC	3	2	1	1	1	-	-	11	19	24.1
WAM	4	2	2	1	2	-	1	5	17	21.5
WCSL	3	1	-	-	-	-	1	5	10	12.6
TOTAL	14	7	7	7	7	1	3	33	79	100.0

Source: Field Data, February 1997 to October 1998

The MCSL and the UMC are the largest groups within the Methodist denomination. They each have eighteen and nineteen churches in Freetown respectively, but the MCSL has not established any churches since they achieved autonomy in 1967. The UMC and the WCSL are the two most active in terms of church planting. The former established twelve churches in Freetown between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s, while the latter established ten churches within the same period. The WCSL have the majority of their churches in the northern province of Sierra Leone. According to Olsen (1969), the Northern Province was chosen for several reasons. J.A. Cole, a relative of a Limba paramount chief, requested the services of the American Wesleyan Methodists. He was an educated Limba and a member of St. John's church in Freetown. Few missionary societies had ventured beyond the coast. The interior tribes offered opportunities for missionary work superior to those located on the coast because of the effects of the old slave trade, the liquor traffic, the perceived influences of Europeans which were considered minimal, and the relative autonomy of the peoples of the north.

The Anglicans closely followed on the heels of the Methodists in 1816 when the Church of England, through the Church Missionary Society (CMS), began mission work in Sierra Leone.⁶⁵ In 1961, the Anglican denomination became known as the Church of Sierra Leone when white bishops ceased to head the mission. The Rev. M.N.C.O. Scott succeeded Bishop Horstead to become the 12th Bishop of the Diocese of Sierra Leone. The Church of Sierra Leone is divided into two dioceses – Freetown and Bo. Although these dioceses have become autonomous, they have also retained the

⁶⁵ For an insight into the history and development of the Anglican Church in Sierra Leone, see Raymond S. Foster, *The Sierra Leone Church, an Independent Anglican Church*, 1961, London: S.P.C.K., Gilbert L. Olsen, 1969, *Church Growth in Sierra Leone*, Algonac: Michigan, pp.77-85.

use of the Anglican Common Prayer Book and hymnal used by the Church of England. The Bishop of Sierra Leone attends international conferences and ecumenical sessions organised by the Church of England and other religious bodies such as the World Council of Churches. Unlike the Methodist denomination which allows some element of a charismatic flavour in their services, the Anglicans are quite conservative in this regard. Anglicans eschew clapping, singing of choruses in the lingua franca, Krio, or in any part of their services, despite pleas from the younger generation for such activities. The survey revealed that there were eighteen churches in Freetown up to 1998. All of these churches were built and established by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) during the colonial period.

The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion was established in 1825 with five stations in the colony, presently known as Freetown. The history and establishment of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion has also been well covered by Fyfe.⁶⁶ In 1962 the Connexion had fourteen places of worship and 1,200 full members (Olsen, 1969, p. 102). These places of worship were reduced to four in the early 1990s and in 1998, they were left with only two, Goderich and Lumley. The churches at Waterloo and Benguema had by then ceased to function. A likely reason for this might be that their members have all died and their children and grandchildren have now drifted to other mainline churches and "born-again" churches in Freetown. It was also a direct effect of the rebel war.

The Baptist denomination is reckoned to have been started in Sierra Leone in 1853 by the Baptist Missionary Society in England, but it had a very slow growth compared to the Anglican and Methodist denominations. They established two churches, the Rawdon Street Baptist Church and Church of God. Both churches were merged into one, the Church of God Baptist. The historical background, activities and problems faced by the Baptist Mission in Sierra Leone are well documented by Valcarcel (1985).

The efforts made by the Baptist Mission to establish more churches in Sierra Leone were fraught with a lot of problems. It was only in 1974 when the Baptist Convention

⁶⁶ Christopher Fyfe, 1962, "The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion in the Nineteenth Century" in *Sierra Bulletin of Religion*, 4 (2), December, pp.53-61. See also James Walker, 1976, *The Black Loyalists: The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone 1783-1870*, London: Longman Group Ltd., Elizabeth C. Grant, *The Development of Krio Christianity in Sierra Leone*, pp. 290-296 and pp. 363-365.

of Sierra Leone (SLBC) was formed that “real” mission work commenced in Sierra Leone. Within the first five years of the establishment of the Convention, they planted nine churches. During fieldwork undertaken in 1998, it was found that they had succeeded in establishing seventeen churches in Freetown, this accounting for 13.6 percent of the churches in the mainline category.

The Roman Catholics started their mission in earnest in 1864 when the mission of Holy Ghost Fathers, led by Father Blanchet was established in Freetown. Roman Catholics had been established in Freetown since 1808 due to the liberation of recaptives from French and Portuguese colonies, but in the initial phases, they were disorganised and, as Fyfe points out, they were few in number and priestless.⁶⁷ The Catholics have been most active in terms of church planting. In the late 1960s, they had only two churches in Freetown, the Sacred Heart Cathedral and the St. Anthony’s Church. By the early 1970s and the early 1980s, they had planted seven more churches in Freetown which are located at Blackhall Road, Calabar Town, Juba (2 churches), Kingtom, Murray Town and Kissy.

Since the mid-1980s, the mainline churches have witnessed remarkable changes and suffered a considerable erosion of their prestige. They have experienced an exodus of dissatisfied worshippers, the majority of whom attend the “born-again” churches, or at best, a reduction in commitment and allegiance of many of their members who seek fulfilment of their religious needs on a temporary basis elsewhere, or who cease attending church regularly, appearing only for festivals and *rites de passage* ceremonies. People in Mainline churches have been accused of ignoring issues such as healing and witchcraft, and de-emphasizing the role of prayer and evangelism, matters which are ascribed great prominence by “born-again” churches.

3:3:2. Missions

Churches in this category were generally started by White missionaries and retained White connections for some time after which they were left in the hands of the

⁶⁷ Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 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” 1963, *Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion* 5 (1), June, pp. 27-34; Jebbeh 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.

indigenous people. Nine groups comprising 35 churches were identified in this category and accounted for 6.6 percent of the total churches in Freetown. These groups (and the number of churches) were the Church of Christ (5); The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (4); the Evangelical Lutheran Church (4); Jehovah's Witnesses (4); Korean Presbyterian (3); the Missionary Church of Africa (2); New Apostolic Church (6); Seventh-day Adventist (6) and Unification Church (1).

The first group among the Mission category to commence mission work in Freetown was the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) in 1904. The first missionary to be sent to Freetown was Pastor D.C. Babcock who was the President of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for West Africa. In 1907, the first SDA church was built and commemorated at Circular Road in Freetown with 30 members. In that same year, Pastor Babcock left Freetown and three Sierra Leoneans, Pastors Samuel Nicol-Kamara, Francis Kennick and Wilson were left in charge of the church. The departure of Pastor Babcock created financial and leadership problems and the church failed to grow. However, in 1927, some White missionaries were sent to Freetown from the headquarter church in Tacoma Park, Maryland, in the United States of America (USA). These missionaries succeeded in reviving the church and, in the same year, the mission was established as a legal Christian church. Between 1927 and the early 1960s, more missionaries were sent to Sierra Leone but they concentrated in the Northern Province where they established many churches. They however maintained the church at Circular Road and, between 1970 and 1980, they established five more churches in Freetown. These churches were located at Congo Cross, Fourah Bay Road, Kissy Mess Mess, Lumley and Wellington.⁶⁸

The first Jehovah's Witnesses personnel were sent to Freetown in 1950 and were led by Mr W. R. Brown, an American and a graduate of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead.⁶⁹ When they arrived, they were unable to secure a meeting place but embarked on propagating the faith through their literature (*The Watchtower* and *Awake*) and evangelisation techniques, which included house-to-house visitation and preaching. The practice of house-to-house evangelism is particularly suited to the African context,

⁶⁸ Joan Williams, A study of Jehovah's Witnesses, a long essay submitted to the Department of Sociology, University of Sierra Leone as a course requirement in the Intermediate Year, May 1995.

⁶⁹ Interview with Mr. Ayo Sawyerr, member of Jehovah's Witnesses, 12 April 1998 at 24 Regent Road, Freetown.

where visitors are readily welcomed and discussion on religious matters is a popular pastime. Within few months, the membership soared and there was an urgent need for a church building or Kingdom Hall as the Jehovah's Witnesses refer to their place of worship. Mr Brown, who was nicknamed "Bible Brown", because he carried the Bible wherever he went, informed the headquarter church in Brooklyn, New York, about the increase in membership and the need for a permanent place of worship. This need was met with an immediate response and funds were sent to Freetown to erect a building. In the same year the first Kingdom Hall was built at Wilkinson Road. With a permanent place to worship, the membership further increased and evangelisation began to spread to other parts of Freetown. In the early 1960s, another Kingdom Hall was built at 14b Henneson Street at New England for members living in the central part of Freetown.⁷⁰ In the 1970s, two more places of worship were built in the east end of Freetown, one at Guard Street and the other at Kissy.

The Church of Christ, a branch of the conservative and fundamentalist Protestant organization from the USA, and known as the Churches of Christ⁷¹ has five churches in Freetown. Elvis Huffard, an American Missionary, established the first church in 1966. Huffard was on his way to Nigeria to open a church, but had to divert his journey to Sierra Leone because of the Nigerian Civil War (1966 –70). In that same year a church building was erected at Priscilla Street, which served as a place of worship and the headquarters in Sierra Leone.⁷² Soon after the church was established, the American missionary also opened a Bible School at Priscilla Street. The programmes at this Bible School were based on Bible correspondence courses offered at the headquarter church in Nashville, Tennessee in the USA. When the American missionary who was running the school left in the mid-1970s, the school closed down because of lack of finance. Between 1970 and 1980, four more churches were established by American missionaries at Aberdeen, Kissy, Lumley and Tengbeh Town. In the early 1980s, the American missionaries left for good and all the churches were supervised and run by Sierra Leoneans.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ For the origins of the church in the USA see S.Y. Ahlstrom, 1972, *A Religious History of the American People*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

⁷² Taiwo Iscandrie, A study of Church of Christ, a long essay submitted to the Department of Sociology, University of Sierra Leone as a course requirement in the Intermediate Year, May 1995.

In 1976 Kiyo Nagatoma and his wife Akimi were sent to Sierra Leone as missionaries by the Unification Church (UC), with headquarters in New York. They started by evangelising in different parts of the city but without much success as both of them were branded as spies and incognito British Broadcasting Cooperation reporters.⁷³ The couple were not able to establish a church so they were recalled to Japan and replaced by another Japanese, Osamu Sanu. The latter had spent some time in Liberia where he had acquired some proficiency of the English language although he could not speak it fluently. With his modest use of English, Osamu was able to establish the only Unification Church in Freetown.

The church met at Congo Cross in the house of a former Assistant Commissioner of Police, Mrs. Rex-Johnson. In spite of the fact that Osamu had a lot of attractive literature and audio-visual materials and offers of travel and study abroad, the church did not attract many adherents. The failure of the church to strike deep root in Freetown was perhaps due to the missionaries' emphasis on theology, which was based on the "Divine Principle", the basic scripture revealed to Rev. Moon, and their total commitment to the Unification Family, which also meant renouncing one's parents, family and career. These demands seemed out of place in the African context because of the very close kinships ties on which the large majority of African families are based. Another factor that could explain the non-response of Sierra Leoneans to the UC was the language barrier which hindered successful communication of the church's message.⁷⁴

Belonging to this religious revolution was the New Apostolic Church (NAC) started in Sierra Leone in 1979 through the effort of the Sierra Leonean Arabic scholar, Momoh Abdul Conteh. In 1978, Conteh, who was studying Architectural Engineering in Cairo in Egypt, met a German, Walter Kirschbaum who was on an evangelisation tour in Cairo. Kirschbaum succeeded in converting Conteh who eventually was ordained as a community evangelist of NAC in Cairo. Both men travelled to Freetown in 1979 and started off in humble circumstances with house-to-house evangelisation, within a few months they succeeded in winning some souls. Among them were Brothers (members

⁷³ "Beware of Japanese Spies", The Daily Mail, 28 November 1976

⁷⁴ Elizabeth Okon, A study of the Unification Church, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1995.

term males as “brothers” and females as “sisters”) Collingwood Daniel Lewis, Lamin Sheriff and Samuel Ade Cole.⁷⁵ In that same year the first NAC was established in Freetown. The church met at the Freetown Community Centre at Siaka Stevens Street. In 1980, the Church acquired a property at Wellington Street where the church was transferred

During this period, German missionaries visited the church at least twice a year. In 1986, the church’s district headquarter at Stuttgart in Germany approved the erection of a building at the site at Wellington Street and the building plan and funds were provided by them. In March 1987, the church was completed and dedicated as the New Apostolic Church headquarters in Sierra Leone. The building of the headquarters served as an incentive to the local pioneers Conteh, Sheriff, and Lewis and gave them the zeal to spread the church’s gospel to all parts of the country. Between 1987 and 1995, five more churches were established at Aberdeen, Calabar Town, Goderich, Kissy and Lower Allen Town. The headquarter church in Germany provided the funds for permanent church buildings to be erected.

The next mission to start mission work in Freetown was the Korean Presbyterian Church Mission in April 1987. The Headquarters of this Mission in Korea sent The Rev. Doe Won Shin to Freetown as a missionary and he established the first church, the First Korean Presbyterian Church at the hall of the Technical Institute complex at Congo Cross. In 1990 and 1992, two more churches were established at Kissy Trade Centre and Lumley. This is the only mission, which still has foreigners (Koreans) running the churches, although in 1995 a Sierra Leonean, The Rev. Joseph Kamara was ordained as a priest by the mission.⁷⁶

Two missionaries, Elder Fisher and Elder Watts, founded the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints, also known as the Mormons, in Sierra Leone in 1988. Both missionaries were sent from Liberia to Sierra Leone by the Mission’s President for the West African Mission, Elder Miles Cunningham. In Sierra Leone, the Church is divided into two Districts: the Freetown district and the Wellington district. These districts are further

⁷⁵ Interview with Brother Daniel Lewis, 8 May 1998 at 8 Upper Waterloo St., Freetown.

⁷⁶ “First Sierra Leonean to be ordained Priest at Korean Presbyterian Church”, The Daily Mail, 28 November 1995.

divided into branches. The Freetown district has branches in, Goderich and Lumley. The Wellington district has branches in Kissy and Wellington.⁷⁷

Part of this developmental framework, was the first Evangelical Lutheran Church, established in Freetown by The Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Sinnah Yovonnie in May 1988 during a visit from Chicago in the United States of America where he was studying. The first church started off in one of the classrooms at Grace Brethren Church (a United Methodist Church) at Campbell Street. After a brief period they started holding services at Lumley Health Centre. In 1989, Sierra Leone became a member of the Lutheran World Federation in Geneva.⁷⁸ Between 1989 and 1991 three more churches were established at Up Town, Peacock Farm at Wellington, Mellon Street, also at Wellington and Consider Lane at Calabar Town. Despite its membership in the World Federation, none of these churches has a building of their own. This has resulted in a slow growth rate in membership as members of churches consider a church building as very important to the stability of the church. They all hold their services in rented halls or classrooms. However, they did succeed in leasing a building at Small Waterloo Street which serves as their headquarters where the President and Secretary-General who are both Sierra Leoneans coordinate and supervise the activities of the branch churches. All the pastors in the churches are also Sierra Leoneans, although once on a while, white missionaries from the World Federation visit the local churches.

The Missionary Church of Africa (MCA) was known as the Sudan Alliance Mission (SAM). This mission was established in Sierra Leone in 1906 by Miss. Elizabeth Kate Driscoll. Most of the churches established by this group were found in the Northern Province of Sierra Leone.⁷⁹ However, between 1991 and 1992, two churches were established in Freetown at Wilberforce and Wellington. In an interview with the pastor of the Wilberforce church, Pastor Milton Marah as to why the mission had only three churches in Freetown, it was revealed that the group's main interest was in propagating

⁷⁷ Agnes Pessima, A study of the Church of Latter Day Saints, a long essay submitted to the Department of Sociology, University of Sierra Leone as a course requirement in the Intermediate Year May 1995.

⁷⁸ John Simbo, A study of The Evangelical Lutheran Church, A dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment for the Requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1995.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

the gospel in the Northern Province, which was an inaccessible area. He further revealed that there were lots of missions already working in Freetown.⁸⁰

3:4. Pentecostalism in Sierra Leone

Pentecostalism in Sierra Leone covers the classical Pentecostal churches and the neo-Pentecostal categories of churches covered in the church survey. In general, these two categories share the basic doctrines, beliefs and practices of Pentecostalism. The following discussion will centre on these doctrines, beliefs and practices, which are observed by members of churches in these two categories. This will be followed by a brief historical background, peculiar features and an analysis of the survey of each of these two categories.

The term “Pentecostal” is taken from the Day of Pentecost experience in Acts 2:4. Probably the most important distinguishing “proof text” in Pentecostalism, when the believers in Jerusalem were “all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.” This experience of being “filled” or “baptised” with the Holy Spirit is that which distinguishes Pentecostal Christians (in their own view) from other Christians.⁸¹ This “distinguishing” doctrine – “speaking in tongues” (glossolalia) is practised by both categories of churches mentioned above but the majority of churches in the neo-Pentecostal category insist on “speaking in tongues” as the “initial evidence” of having received the Holy Spirit although this insistence is by no means universal. In the neo-Pentecostal category, a special session known as the “Holy Ghost Fire Service” is held once a month during which members go through prayer exercises to aid this *rite de passage*.

Members in both Pentecostal categories speak of their experience of “Salvation”. These members are identified by a strong conviction that at a certain times in their lives, they got “saved” whereby their lives were changed from a “worldly” lifestyle to a “Christian” ethic as can be seen from the case of Sister Vandi, founder New Life in Christ Ministry. As indicated earlier on this characteristic of members in the neo-Pentecostal churches has earned them the name, “Believers” and “Born-again” by non-

⁸⁰ Interview with Pastor Milton Marah, pastor-in-charge of the Wilberforce branch at his Residence, 13 April 1998.

⁸¹ For the history and theology of the Pentecostals see, Nils Bloch-Hoell, 1964, *The Pentecostal Movement: Its Origin, development, and Distinctive Character*, London: Allen & Unwin Ltd; 1984, *In the Latter Days: The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Twentieth Century*, Anne Arbor: Vine Books/Servant Publications.

members of the Pentecostal churches. When a non-member also wants to ridicule members of these churches, they would often ask the following question: What are you born-again as? On most occasions, they would hardly wait for them to proffer a reply but give it themselves. This would usually follow a familiar pattern such as “you are born-again as a millionaire”, to which the members would usually respond – “in Jesus’ name”. Members of Pentecostal churches practise baptism by immersion (usually single immersion) and have regular prayers for divine healing. They hold “healing and deliverance” services at least once a month when members and non-members attend specifically for healing and deliverance. It should be observed that neo-Pentecostal churches are opposed to traditional religious practices such as the consultation of diviners, observing death rites such as *awujoh*, consuming alcohol, smoking tobacco, watching movies (except religious-based ones) and visiting the graveside of deceased members of their families.

The majority of church leaders in Pentecostal churches can be heard on occasions imploring their members to refrain from visits to the graveside and observing the traditional death rites. They often quote passages from the Bible in their sermons when admonishing their members to refrain from such practices. Another area of conflict and tension is in their condemnation of visits to traditional diviners and *morimen*. It is argued that such people consort with evil, unknown spirits and demons which can exercise control over their skills and powers. These visits, it is contended, also constitute a compromise or departure from the Christian faith, as well as to their “individual souls”.⁸²

The Pentecostal churches are especially vehement in their attacks on their members if they belong to secret societies, and do not hesitate to discipline them if they are discovered to be violating this code. Most of these churches have made relinquishing one’s membership of secret societies a criterion for membership in their churches. Secret societies include both traditional secret societies such as the *poro* and *bundo* society, *hunting*, *wunde*, freemasonry and Rosicrucianism. It is generally argued that membership in a secret society constitutes a tacit acceptance of polytheism, if not direct involvement in “unchristian” practices. Although the mainline churches also condemn these practices, they sometimes turn a blind eye on wedding occasions when *hunting*

⁸² Sermon by Pastor Gerald Keister-Campbell at Calvary Charismatic Church on 28 June 1998.

masquerades perform in front of the churches by singing and dancing to local *hunting* songs whilst the *ashikpa* blows the *afereh*.⁸³

There is no fixed form of worship or order of service but as most of the pastors indicated, they do “as the Spirit moves” them. However, the main features of Pentecostal services include praise and worship, the congregation’s participation through singing, dance, prayer, testimony and choruses (in English and some of the vernaculars), and the preaching of God’s Word or the “Message”. The emphasis on the Bible as the Word of God is particularly strong. Preachers consciously attempt to follow its teachings in their sermons, which are phrases such as “the Bible says”, “the Word of God says” and so on.⁸⁴ Members of these churches are encouraged to study the Bible for themselves as their daily spiritual food in order to grow in their Christian lives. They also believe that the Bible is God’s Word, the purpose of which is to revive and strengthen those who read it. It is the essential armour of defence for its adherents when they are faced with difficulties of any kind. Most of their services are climaxed by an “altar call”, which serves as a means of church growth. The 1970s and 1980s saw the acceptance of church growth ideas by evangelical Christians around the world.⁸⁵ The church growth movement, initiated by the theories of Donald McGavran, deploys sociological principles to understand the growth of congregations and the development of Mission strategy. Though he has been criticised for relying on sociological techniques rather than the Power of the Holy Spirit, it has been adopted by many charismatic groups with great success. Charismatic and Pentecostal churches now have some of the largest congregations in the world.

Closely linked to the church growth movement and encountered most often in Africa is the “AD 2000 and Beyond Movement” which coordinates the efforts of many churches, denominations, missions, agencies, parachurch bodies and Christian service groups. This movement extends its activity not only to Evangelical churches, but also to charismatic and Pentecostal churches and even mainline denominations. The coordinating bodies in Sierra Leone for this movement are the CCSL and EFSL.

⁸³ Horn blown to signify death of *odelay* society member.

⁸⁴ Observation at Sunday services I attended at Flaming Bible Church, 21 June 1998 and New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ), 19 July 1998.

⁸⁵ Donald McGavran, 1970, *Understanding Church Growth*, Grande Rapids: Eerdmans.

There is a strong Western influence in the liturgy and leadership patterns of these churches and some leading Americans and popular evangelists and “prosperity message” figures such as Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland and Benny Hinn, are promoted in books and audio and video cassette form. The “prosperity message” advocates that a Christian who is committed to the will of God will know success in every part of life. For example, if one has faith in God, he will be rewarded with a large and growing church congregation and all those filled with the Holy Spirit will experience wealth, health and happiness

The evidence shows that one of the most important influences of these Churches in Freetown is the establishment of different Bible schools. About 50 per cent of members in each of these churches have attended one of them. In fact, many of these churches have a Bible School attached to them. At these schools, a great deal of emphasis is put on the “rights” of a “born-again” Christian. They are further warned that these “rights” could only be theirs if they abide by the spiritual laws of faith and giving. These members therefore get themselves into one of these churches to achieve these “rights”.

Miracles and faith healing are central elements of Pentecostal religious practices and perhaps the most important aspects of doctrine. Healing and protection from misfortune - physical, economic or spiritual - tend to be the reasons given most often for church attendance and conversion, and all churches make deliverance and healing a central part of their daily pastoral activities. The churches in these two categories tend to be highly evangelical and encourage members to spread the faith. Most of these churches have an evangelical team comprising seven or more people who organise different programmes such as hospital visitation, door to door witnessing and open-air preaching.

3:4:1. Classical Pentecostal Churches

This category of churches comprises all the Assemblies of God (AOG) churches, Pentecostal churches established by non-indigenes and Aladura/spiritual churches in the survey. The AOG Mission was established in Sierra Leone in 1920 by the AOG Foreign Missions Department and sponsored by the Illinois District.⁸⁶ They established six out of the twenty-four churches in this category and also extended mission work to

⁸⁶ For a detailed account of the establishment and activities of the AOG Mission in Sierra Leone, see Robert Smith, *A Survey and Theological analysis of the Spiritual and Pentecostal/ Evangelical Churches in Freetown*, pp. 439- 473.

the provinces, particularly at Makump and Mabontho in the Northern province. The churches in Freetown were mainly constituted along ethnic lines. One church each was established among the Kissi, Krio, Kru, Limba, Loko and Temne ethnic groups. The remaining churches (eighteen) were founded by members of the different ethnic groups with the Limba ethnic group founding the majority of them. In the mid-1970s, the AOG Mission to Sierra Leone came to an end and all of the churches became autonomous, self-governing and self-supporting.⁸⁷ At this point they were able to employ their local vernacular during some of their church services.

Nine out of the eighteen churches founded by indigenes resulted from within the National Limba Pentecostal Church at Fort Street and were all founded by members of this ethnic group. The schisms were a function of problems with Pastor Daniel Conteh, the head of all Limba Pentecostal Churches in Freetown.⁸⁸ During this period, Pastor Conteh founded five churches, all bearing the name, National Limba Pentecostal Church. Evangel AOG was a secession from Bethel Temple, the Krio church which was responsible for establishing two more churches. The remaining church, Daniel Sarwee Church, was established by the Kru ethnic group.

Fourteen groups with 54 churches were also identified within this same category, accounting for 9.8 per cent of the church survey. Four out of the fourteen groups were from the United States of America and these included Christians in Action (CIA), Four Square Gospel, The Door Christian Fellowship and United Pentecostal Church. There were four groups from Nigeria, which included Deeper Life Bible Church, Elohim Church International, Free Grace Garden Mission and Sanctuary Praise Church. Three groups in this category came from Ghana and they were the Trans-continental Evangelistic Association (TRANSCEA), Church of God of Prophecy, and Church of Pentecost. Out of the remaining three, two were from Liberia; these were the African Christian Fellowship International and Bethel World Outreach Mission, the last from Sweden being the Swedish Free Pentecostal Mission.

⁸⁷ Thelma John, A study of the Assemblies of God Mission in Sierra Leone, a long essay submitted to the Department of Sociology, University of Sierra Leone as a course requirement in the Intermediate year, May 1995

⁸⁸ Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 481-485 for an insight of the nature of the problem.

The first group to arrive in Freetown among the Classical Pentecostal churches established by non-indigenes was the CIA which was started in 1957, with their headquarters in Woodland, California in the USA. Their initial motive was to concentrate on personal evangelism, disciplining believers, and strengthening local churches, but as the years progressed, they saw the need to find a base for their converts, so they started establishing churches.⁸⁹ David Hall was the first CIA missionary to be sent to Freetown and was joined a year later by Philip Cheate.

The first CIA church was established at Syke Street in 1972 by Hall and Cheate who were assisted by other missionaries from abroad, as well as some Sierra Leoneans. In 1977 the CIA, Kissy branch, was established and seven years later in 1984, the Aberdeen branch of the Church was opened. Between 1985 and 1995, three more churches were established at Laura Dove Memorial School at Dove's Cot, UBC School at Blackhall Road, and Collier Street in Wellington. The church at Dundas Street in central Freetown is the only church with a building and was built in 1997. This building also includes an office, which is used as the church's headquarters in Freetown.

The second group to start mission work in Freetown was the United Pentecostal Church (UPC). In 1974, the church's headquarters in Antioch, California, sent The Rev. Donald Hugh O'Keefe and his wife, Abbie, as missionaries.⁹⁰ Before they came to Freetown, they had to spend about five months in Liberia, which served as a base for the orientation of UPC missionaries sent to West Africa. Donald had to travel five times to Freetown to secure a visa for himself and his wife. When they finally arrived in Freetown, they met The Rev. R.E.S. Nyanmoh and his wife (both of them were Kru) who allowed them to use their house at Guy Street where Donald preached his first sermon. This group comprising adults and children numbered twenty, and became the first UPC congregation comprising mostly Kru. A few months after the establishment of the first church, the mission founded another church at Dworzak Farm and extended its mission work to Songo, about 30 miles from Freetown, as well as to the Eastern

⁸⁹ Michael Goba, A study of Christians in Action, a long essay submitted to the Department of Sociology, University of Sierra Leone as a course requirement in the Intermediate year, May 1995.

⁹⁰ O'Keefe (1996) has documented his life as a Missionary in Sierra Leone in his book, *Mountain of the Lion, The Great Revival in Sierra Leone, West Africa*, Hazelwood, MO.: Word Aflame Press

Province. The response in the Eastern Province was quite positive and, according to O’Keefe, “It soon became evident that doors were opening faster than we could go through them. We were able to start churches, but we did not have pastors to look after those churches. We needed trained men, trained pastors, and we needed them as quickly as possible if we were going to grow.”⁹¹ This situation urged O’Keefe to open a Bible school at his residence in Freetown in 1979. The aim of the Bible School was to serve as a training ground for founders and leaders in the UPC. The school started off with four students, two of whom came from the Eastern Province, one from Songo and one from Freetown. These students went through a six-month training programme, which offered them sufficient guidance to enable them become pastors. At the end of their training, the two pastors from the Eastern Province went back to run churches in Gbando and Palima villages; the pastor from Songo established a church there and the other from Freetown became the assistant pastor at Dworzak Farm. The Bible School continued and offered a three-year course resulting in the receipt of a diploma and the award of a Bachelor of Sacred Theology degree after eight years of study until 1992, when it had to close down because O’Keefe had to contend with two court cases preferred against him by some members of the Freetown congregation.⁹² However, between 1976 and 1995, the UPC founded thirteen churches across Freetown and each church had a building of its own.

In 1989, the Door Christian Fellowship was established in Sierra Leone at Ferry Junction in Kissy by an American, Pastor Alvin Smith. In 1990, a church was built with funds from the headquarter church in the USA and is one of the most beautiful church buildings with a very big compound. This church is the third largest among all the “born-again” churches in Freetown with a membership of 1500, Jesus is Lord being the first with 3000 members, and Flaming Bible Church, the second with a membership of 2000. Two years after the establishment of the church, Pastor Smith went back to America and left Pastor Edward Saffa to oversee the church. In 1993, Pastor Saffa planted a branch church at Wilberforce and another at Kroo Town Road in 1994.

The last group from America is the Four Square Gospel Church and was established in Freetown by a Nigerian, Samuel Adetona, and regional coordinator of the church in

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 167-199.

West Africa. One year after the church was established, Adetona left for Nigeria and Pastor Ade Johnson, a Krio, was left in charge of the church.⁹³ During the research period, the church was closed down because Johnson had fled to Guinea, apparently, escaping the civil war and there was no one to obtain any details about the church.

There were fourteen churches from Nigeria in the Classical Pentecostal category and Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) established eleven of these. Deeper Life Bible Church was founded in Nigeria by William Folorunso Kumuyi in 1976.⁹⁴ In 1984, Pastor Felix Akinola (a Yoruba from Nigeria), arrived in Freetown to establish this ministry. Akinola started off with Bible study sessions at Lower Allen Town for a brief period and then moved to Freetown. He continued with his Bible study sessions at 9 Fergusson Street and, by the end of the year, he established the first DLBC at the Government Model School at Circular Road. In 1987 he established the headquarter church at E.B. Williams Municipal School at Jomo Kenyatta Road.⁹⁵

Deeper Life Bible Church is one of the churches which practise the “holiness” doctrine but is not the “only holiness ministry in the city” as Smith erroneously claims in his thesis.⁹⁶ The other churches, which practise the “holiness” doctrine, are Faith Healing Bible Church and its fifteen branches, the Holiness Pentecostal Church at Congo Town, and its two branch churches at Calabar Town and Wellington.

Akinola planted ten more churches between 1987 and 1992, all of which were overseen by Sierra Leoneans, but Akinola acts as the General Overseer of all these branches. All the Pastors of the different branches meet every week at the church’s headquarters for consultation. After 1992, the DLBC experienced a slow growth in membership. A possible reason for this is that the church practises the “holiness” doctrine, which has a very strict code of morality which people find difficult to adhere to. At the same time, a lot of other “born-again” churches were being established which offered the same salvation and healing being offered by the DLBC and were not very strict about codes

⁹³ Jeredine Jones, A Study of Four Square Gospel, a long Essay submitted to the Department of Sociology, University of Sierra Leone as a course requirement in the Intermediate Year, May 1995.

⁹⁴ For the history and development of Deeper Life Bible Church see, Matthews A. Ojo, “Deeper Life Ministry: a Case Study of the Charismatic Movements in Western Nigeria” in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 18 (2) 1988, pp.141-162.

⁹⁵ Interview, Pastor Felix Akinola, 22 June 1998, at Canon St., Freetown

⁹⁶ Smith, *A Survey and Theological Analysis*, p. 580.

relating to mode of dress, facial make-up and the use of jewellery, which the DLBC were very strict on.

The rest of the churches founded by Nigerians were one-branch churches and they included Elohim Church International, Free Grace Garden Mission and Sanctuary Praise Church. One of the one-branch churches, the Free Grace Garden Mission was founded by Pastor Duncan Edem Archbong in January 1987 and is located at Thunder Hill in Kissy village. In 1997 he also founded the Free Grace Garden Mission School for displaced children. At the outset, the school had 300 pupils on roll but the intention is to extend the school. He is therefore engaged in appeals for funds to assist him in doing so. Elohim Church International and Sanctuary Praise Church were founded in 1990 and 1992 respectively. These churches have their headquarters in Lagos, Nigeria, and do not receive any funding from the latter but depend on local resources to maintain their churches.⁹⁷

Churches from Ghana included Church of Pentecost, Trans-continental Evangelistic Association (TRANSCEA) and Church of God of Prophecy. The Rev. James McKeown, an Irishman who came to Ghana, established the Church of Pentecost in Ghana (then the Gold Coast) on March 4 1937. McKeown was sent to the Gold Coast to work as a resident missionary of the Apostolic Church of Bradford, in England. Three decades after the church was established in Ghana, missionaries were sent to Liberia to establish the church there. In 1987, The Rev. F.C. Ampiah and Rev. Kwesi Ansah, both Ghanaian missionaries, came to Freetown from Liberia to establish the first Assembly of the Church of Pentecost. This Assembly was started at Bishop Johnson Memorial Secondary School with 50 members and was known as the Fourah Bay Assembly.⁹⁸

Two years after the Fourah Bay Assembly was established, a member of this unit, a Sierra Leonean, established the Ropotu Assembly at Wellington. Between 1989 and 1993, three more Assemblies were established by members of the Fourah Bay

⁹⁷ Interview, Pastor Duncan Edem Archbong of Free Grace Garden Mission, 18 April 1998 at the Church compound, Thunder hill, Kissy.

⁹⁸ Interview, Rev. Felix Antwi, (General Overseer of Church of Pentecost in Sierra Leone), 2 March 1998, at 40 Regent Rd., Freetown.

Assembly who were all Sierra Leoneans, at Old Wharf (Old Wharf Assembly), Goderich (Funkia Assembly) and Murray Town (Murray Town Assembly).

Trans-continental Evangelistic Association (TRANSCEA) began mission work in Freetown in 1985 by Kenneth Oppon, a Ghanaian. Oppon was a member of the mission in Liberia, which started in 1977. Seven years after they were established in Liberia, they decided to send Oppon on a mission to Freetown. He started a home-cell at a house in Dundas Street. During one of their cell meetings, Oppon prayed for a lady called Miss Nicol who was suffering from a continuous haemorrhage. After a few more prayer sessions, Miss Nicol claimed to be healed through Oppon's prayers. The lady's sister, Miss Evelyn Nicol, then suggested that the mission could open a branch of the church in Freetown and gave up her house for this purpose. In 1985, the first church was opened at the house in Dundas Street with twenty members. Within two months, the membership increased three-fold and the church had to move to the Rokel Secondary School at Tower Hill. In 1988, Oppon established eight home cells in different locations in Freetown including Fourah Bay College Campus, Fourah Bay Road, Kissy Road (2 churches), Mary Street, Murray Town, Robert Street and Sackville Street.

One of the two churches from Liberia is Bethel World Outreach Mission and was established in Freetown in 1992. The parent church in Liberia was "founded in January 1986 by a Liberian (a Kru) who had spent some time at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago" (Gifford, 1997, p. 38). The first church in Freetown was founded by Musa Koffe, also a Liberian (a Bassa) who was studying at the Freetown Bible Training Centre, which had just moved to Freetown from Liberia. Koffe was a former member of TRANSCEA. The current pastor during my study was Pastor Julius Laggah who took up office in 1995.

The other church was The African Christian Fellowship International (ACFI), which was established in Freetown in February 1991, by Edward Kofi (a Kru) from Sinkoh in Liberia. Kofi was a member of the ACIF in Liberia and was on one of his usual evangelization tours to Freetown in October 1990.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ Interview with Pastor Laggah at 10 Circular Road, Freetown, 8 April 1998.

The rest of the churches in the Classical Pentecostal category are the spiritual churches and accounted for 57 of them in the survey. What are commonly termed spiritual churches in Freetown are referred to as prophet healing churches or *Aladura* type churches¹⁰⁰ by Turner. *Aladura* in Yoruba means “one who prays”. According to Mitchell, Aladura type churches comprise three main subtypes and many splinter groups, which arose among the Yoruba in Western Nigeria in 1918 (Mitchell, 1970, p. 461). The three main subtypes are the Faith Tabernacle (later known as Christ Apostolic Church), the Cherubim and Seraphim Society and the Church of the Lord (Aladura). Only two of these subtypes have churches in Freetown; Christ Apostolic, which has two branches and the Church of the Lord (Aladura), the first spiritual church to be established in Freetown which has six branches. Sundkler refers to Aladura type churches as “Zionist” type¹⁰¹ and Daneel (1987, p. 35) employs the term “spiritual” for these churches. The most prominent features of these churches, according to Turner are to be found in their “central beliefs about the revelation from the Spirit through the prophets and a practical salvation in which healing is prominent.”¹⁰² The origins of these churches in Sierra Leone are traceable to the year 1947 when Primate Adejobi from Nigeria established the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in Freetown.¹⁰³ Since this was the first spiritual church to be established in Freetown, all spiritual churches in Freetown are often referred to as “Adejobi” church or “Aladura” church. Hackett (1989) has identified spiritual churches as one of the sub-categories of Indigenous Religious Institutions. She also classified the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star (BCS) and Mount Zion Church (MZC) as sub-categories of Indigenous Religious Institutions. The BCS and MZC are both found in Freetown, but this study classifies them as spiritual churches because they are both recognised as such in Freetown. According to Hackett, BCS is the largest spiritual church in Calabar with 30 branches. In Freetown it is one of the smallest churches with only one branch. One reason that might account for the BCS having only one branch in Freetown is perhaps due to what people refer to

¹⁰⁰ Literature on the Aladura in general includes Geoffrey Parrinder, 1953, *Religion in an African City* London: Oxford University Press, and J.D.Y. Peel, 1968, *Aladura; A Religious Movement among the Yoruba*, London: Oxford University Press for the International African Institute.

¹⁰¹ Sundkler, B.G.M., 1961, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*, (2nd ed.), London, p.55.

¹⁰² H.W.Turner, 1967, “A Typology for Religious Movements” in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 1 (1), p.28.

¹⁰³ For the History, theology and doctrines of this church in Sierra Leone, see Harold Turner, 1967, *African Independent Church*, Vols. 1& 11. London: Oxford University Press, , and Robert Smith, *A Survey and Theological analysis*, pp. 232-276.

as their bizarre doctrines, rituals and forms of worship.¹⁰⁴ From general discussions with a cross-section of the Freetown community, their unpopularity stems firstly, from the fact that their members regard their leader, Olumbo Olumbo as the second reincarnation of Christ, the personification of the Holy Spirit and even God Himself. This they consider sinful. Secondly, their doctrines and rituals draw on mystical and occult teachings.

In traditional society and culture, there are elements of magic, divination, veneration of ancestors, belief in spirits, the use of elements and symbols which have parallels in spiritual church practices; divination in the consultation of prophets, in the telling of visions and in the interpretations of dreams. The available evidence shows that spiritual churches have incorporated many features from indigenous forms of worship. There is the use of local musical instruments, lyrics, hymns set to local tunes, dancing and clapping during worship, as is the practice in some secret societies like the *hunting* and *ojeh*.¹⁰⁵

Members in these churches are older people and less educated than those found in the “born-again” churches. One reason that could be advanced for the type of members that are attracted to these churches is that some of the activities these churches engage in, such as stream bathing, are time consuming and are also held during the day. Stream bathing is usually done at noon and lasts for three hours, therefore, people who are employed, could not afford the time. Spiritual churches are not opposed to drinking alcohol, smoking and watching any type of movies, practices, which the neo-Pentecostal type churches forbid.¹⁰⁶

This category of churches contains a myriad of small one-branch churches. Out of the 57 churches identified in this category only six had more than one branch in Freetown. These churches were the Christ Apostolic Church (2), Church of Salvation (3), the Church of the Lord (Aladura) (6), Celestial Church of Christ (3), Mount Zion (3) and St. Peter’s Healing Church (2). All of the churches with more than one branch have a

¹⁰⁴ For background information on the BCS see Friday Mbon, 1987 “Public Responses to New Religious Movements in Contemporary Nigeria” in *New Religious Movements in Nigeria*, R.Hackett, (ed.) Star, Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, pp.209-35.

¹⁰⁵ Observation at church services attended at the Church of the Lord (Aladura) on 8, 15 and 22 March 1998,

¹⁰⁶ Interview, Pastor Kendoh, an Elder of the Church of the Lord (Aladura), Oniel St, 6 March 1998.

“faith home” attached to the church. “Faith homes” are adjoining rooms in the church’s compound where clients are admitted and treated whilst undergoing treatment. The one-branch churches carry out their treatment inside the church and if there is any cause for a patient to be kept for a few days whilst undergoing treatment, the patient sleeps inside the church.

This category of churches has not experienced much growth since the mid-1980s. One probable reason for this is that the “born-again” churches are offering less hazardous ways of healing and ways of solving solve people’s problems than these spiritual churches. This argument is used by former members of these churches to justify their decision to abandon them in favour of “born-again” churches. According to Mr. B, who is 30 years old and a former adherent of St. Peter’s Healing Church but is now a member of New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ):

After attending the Bible school, I can no longer see myself taking off my shoes when entering a place of worship. This is a health hazard as one is likely to have stomach cramps from the bare floor.¹⁰⁷

Miss K, aged 35, a former member of Mt. Zion Church at Tengbeh Town and now a member of Flaming Bible Church opined that:

I spent seven days undergoing “dry fasting”, apart from the fruits and food sacrifice I had to offer several times. All of these did not solve my problem (obtaining a visa to go to the United States). When I started attending the Flaming Bible Church, I saw a great improvement in my life style and I have been given an appointment for an interview for the visa.¹⁰⁸

Mrs. T, a former member of the Church of Assurance at Congo Town but now with the Faith Healing Bible Church at Circular Road has been married for eight years without any children. She was a member of this spiritual church for four years during which time she received different types of treatment such as stream bathing and lime bathing. She also went through a lot of different fasting exercises such as “white fasting” and “dry fasting”. Mrs. T told me that:

I spent money and time, risked my health with the exposure to stream bathing and “dry fasting”, but without any success. I heard about the wonderful miracles and healings taking place at Faith Healing Bible Church, so I joined the Church. I have been there for a year and I am now expecting a baby. Thank God for Jesus and Pastor Mambu.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Interview, Mr B (he does not want to be identified so I have used a pseudonym), 25 March 1998, at 29 Circular Rd., Freetown

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Miss K. (she prefers anonymity, so I have used a pseudonym), 25 June 1998.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Mrs. T. (She also prefers anonymity), 24 July 1998, at 15 Circular Road, Freetown.

From the above reasons it could be suggested that the slow growth rate in the Spiritual Churches is due in part to their beliefs and practices, which present health hazards, and economic constraints on the clients. The hazards include gastric ulcer which results from dry fasting, cramps and stomach pains which result from walking bare footed. The economic constraints emanates from the fact that most of the people who have to undergo these exercises are in the low-income bracket who could not afford the cost involved in carrying out the feasting and live-animal sacrifices. Live animals such as goats and sheep are very expensive in the capital Freetown. They cost between Le.15, 000 (£3 in sterling) and Le. 20, 000 (£4 in sterling) when the average worker earns not more than Le.15, 000 (£3 in sterling) a month.

Among the spiritual churches, the Church of the Lord (Aladura) is the only spiritual church that was accepted as a member of the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone (CCSL). Despite her affiliation with the Council, the relationship between this church (as well as other spiritual churches) and mainline churches is far from cordial as spiritual churches are seldom invited to participate in any activities organised by the mainline churches.

3:4:2. Neo-Pentecostal Churches

This is by far the largest category of churches in Freetown. These churches accounted for 44.3 per cent (235) of the total churches in the survey. This clearly indicates that these churches have experienced a phenomenal growth over the last fifteen years. They are mostly small, independent churches, except for six of them with branch churches that have a membership of over 250, though attendances are often much higher than that. These churches include Jesus is Lord Ministry, Flaming Bible Church (Headquarters branch) New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ), Living Word of Faith, Jesus Evangelistic Encountering Ministries (JEES) and Faith Healing Bible Church. It is worth noting that in spite of the large following in these churches, only three of them have a church building of their own. Those with Church buildings include. Jesus is Lord Ministry, Flaming Bible Church and JEES Ministry.

The growth of these churches has occurred for the most part over the past fifteen years. Indications are that a significant number of members of these churches have come from

mainline churches, and spiritual churches. Many are also offshoots of schisms within “born-again” churches.

The leadership and membership in these churches tend to be young, charismatic and relatively well educated, though not necessarily up to degree level. One of the leaders of these churches holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Political Science. Another has a diploma in Insurance Marketing. The membership tends to consist of younger, more prosperous and educated families than in the Spiritual and non-indigenous Pentecostal categories.

Seventeen out of the 235 churches in this category (the Holiness Pentecostal Church, and the Faith Healing Bible Church and its fifteen branches) are referred to as “holiness” Pentecostal churches. This is because they are opposed to wearing make-up and insist on women covering their heads when in and out of the church

Most of the churches in this category are of recent origin, having commenced work in the last fifteen years, and do not have church buildings of their own. They meet in school classrooms, rented halls and their leaders’ houses. Recently, some of these churches have begun to acquire lands to erect church buildings. Among these are the New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ) and the Wellington branch of Flaming Bible Church.

This chapter has analysed the data collected on churches in Greater Freetown and has shown that the proliferation of churches is mostly evident among the classical Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal type churches. In the YWAM survey, there were 138 churches in these categories up to 1989; within fifteen years, 232 more churches were established as revealed in the church survey. What are the possible reasons for the proliferation of churches during this particular period in Freetown? What class of people belong to these churches? These questions will be addressed in the next two chapters on the two most popular churches in Freetown.

CHAPTER 4

Case-study I: Jesus is Lord Ministry

4:1. The Establishment of the Church

This chapter will focus on the largest “born-again” church in Freetown. It will examine the social background of the founder, the peculiar characteristics of the Church and the roles it is playing in the transformation of Freetown’s Christianity by focusing on the activities and their impact in the present-day religious and social life of the people of Freetown.

Jesus is Lord Ministry started off as a home-cell¹¹⁰ in 1988 at the Wilberforce residence of the founder, Sis. Dora Dumbuya, a former member of Bethel Temple and Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC). Sis. Dumbuya is a Limba from Kamakwie in the Bombali District and her father was a *moriman*. She was trained in the United Kingdom as a Secretary. When her husband, the late Kawuta Dumbuya of the Sierra Leone Military Forces (SLMF) became a Lt. Colonel she left her job as a secretary at the Mano River Union office and became a petrol dealer and proprietress of a drinking bar (pub).¹¹¹ The late Lt. Col. had to face the firing squad in December 1992 because of his alleged involvement in a plan to overthrow the then ruling Military government of the National Provisional Ruling Council NPRC(1992 – 1996).¹¹²

Sister Dumbuya did not feel pleased with herself because as a member of Bethel Temple, she was not supposed to be operating a drinking bar. At Bethel Temple members are not allowed to consume alcohol let alone sell it. She left the church and joined Faith Assemblies of God (AOG) at Brookfields for a few months and then moved on to Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC). At DLBC, she became a part-time church worker and a leader of a home-cell, which met at her Wilberforce residence. By this time she was quite sure that she should give up the pub if she was to continue her membership at DLBC, one of the churches which practises the holiness doctrine. She

¹¹⁰ The late 1980’s and 1990’s were the era of the cell-church. Based on the pioneering work of D Yonggi Cho in Seoul Korea, that of Lawrence Kwang in Singapore and the writings of Ralph W. Neighbour, Jr., the “cell-church” strategy is widely used in the Pentecostal and charismatic movements. It is particularly effective in maintaining cohesion in the “megachurches” with its emphasis on the home-cell group as the focus of pastoral care, discipleship and evangelism.

¹¹¹ Interview with Pa Adikali, uncle of Sis. Dumbuya, 7 August, 1998, church compound at Tower Hill in Freetown.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

did give up the sale of liquor and concentrated on the home-cell. In 1988, Sis. Dumbuya claimed to have a vision:

I dreamt I was wearing a brown flowing dress with a veil on my head and Palms right in front of me made into cross I dreamt I was walking on green carpeted grass. I also dreamt I was walking home from a worship service when I came across three women, one resembled me so much. She asked where I was coming from, and I replied, I am just from worshipping the Lord ... I sincerely believed the almighty God was preparing me for a special purpose.¹¹³

She believed that God was calling her to establish her own ministry. The home-cell became the nucleus of the ministry and she named it Jesus is Lord Ministry (JLM). The Ministry continued to meet at her house, but soon it turned out to be quite small to hold the increasing crowd. In 1989, by virtue of her husband's position in the SLMF, she was granted permission to use the Transport Hall at the Wilberforce Barracks to hold services and other church activities. Dr. Robert Smith in his thesis¹¹⁴ has dealt with the Church's activities during its embryonic stage at Wilberforce.

After her husband's death, Sis. Dumbuya had to move from the military barracks to the Faith Assemblies of God Church (Limba Church) at Brookfields. The present church building was under construction as the land had only been acquired a few months before. The land was leased to the founder and her husband by the Sierra Leone government.

At Brookfields, the Church began losing some of its members because a branch church had also been opened at the residence of Sis. Dumbuya at Kola Tree in Lower Allen Town, about 10 miles from Freetown. She came to the Brookfields Church only twice a week and concentrated on her spiritual activities at the Kola Tree branch.

This situation lasted until 1994 when they started using the Tower Hill church for church services and other activities. Now constituted as the Church's Headquarters, Sis. Dumbuya then transferred her office to Tower Hill and her regular presence in the Church now served as an incentive for former members to return and also win new converts. The construction of the church up to the stage when they started using it, took a

¹¹³ New Star, 15-28 May 1992, pp. 5-6

¹¹⁴ Robert Smith, *A survey and Theological analysis*, 1992, pp. 643 – 660.

very short time when compared to the duration of building some other churches. They spent about 18 months to reach this stage. The Church has a seating capacity for about 10,000 people, an altar, rooms for offices, a basement for chain prayer sessions, a room which houses the cassette department and a baptismal pool. In the compound of the church, there are several living rooms for the church workers. The construction of the building was carried out by the members who are skilled workers in the building trade. Other members served as labourers to build the blocks manually. This situation led to the creation of a kitchen department where meals were prepared for workers during the construction. The building project was funded locally by members of the church and well-wishers. The Administrative Head, Bro. Ernest Georgestone, a Krio from Gloucester could not disclose the cost of the building to me as the Founder and Leader of the Church, Sis. Dora Dumbuya was out of the country. She had left Freetown in July 1997 soon after the military took over. The reasons are not quite clear why she left, but I suspect it was not unconnected with the Junta Chairman's membership in the Church. She feared that she would be too involved, being a Limba herself like the Chairman or not too involved which would cause severe problems for her.

In 1998 the headquarter church was not fully completed as there was still tiling of the floors and painting to be done. When it is completed, it will have a seating capacity for 10,000 people. In 1998 there were 3,000 full members on roll. Members are issued with "membership cards" on which their tithes/monthly dues are recorded. Each member is expected to pay his or her tithes regularly, the practice being based on one of the doctrines of the Church (Malachi 3:10). The membership card also serves as a sort of identity card for members. A member cannot expect to make use of the services of the Church if these dues are not paid, especially in the case of deceased members whose families cannot meet the cost of the funeral expenses which the Church usually undertakes.

4:2. Church Departments

Like most "born-again" Churches, JLM has different departments such as: Administrative, Choir/Praise and Worship, Evangelism, Helps and Visitation. In addition to the above departments, the Church has some other departments which are quite unique. These departments include: Kitchen, Cassette, Security and Chain Prayer.

4:2:1. The Kitchen department

The Kitchen department was created in 1993 during the construction of the Church. This department has as its head, Mrs Khama, an ex-police officer and a very close friend of the leader of the Church. Most of the time, items for cooking are donated by members but when there is the need to purchase items which are not donated, Mrs Khama fulfils this need with money from the proceeds of the cassette sales.

Mrs Khama supervises a total of ten cooks. The kitchen staff live in the Church's compound. The department is still in operation even though the construction of the Church is almost completed. They still prepare two meals a day for the Church Workers which include the security team, the Cassette Department staff and the gardeners who reside in the Church's compound. Jesus is Lord Ministry is the only church in Freetown which provides food every day for church workers as well as some needy members and visitors. The Catholic Church distributes food items every Friday to beggars from the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) office. The Methodist Church of Sierra Leone started this practice after the civil war broke out, but this is only confined to displaced people and not for their members.

4:2:2. The Security Department

This is the only church in Freetown that has a security team as part of their Helps Ministry. Members of the Security team are recruited from full male members of the Church, most of whom are ex-police or military officers. They are in full time employment as they receive a salary of Le.15, 000 (£3 in sterling)

The remit of the team is to secure the massive church building and compound; there is a sentry box at the entrance of the Church with security men always on duty 24-hours a day. They work on an eight- hour shift. What helps to keep them at their job is the fact that they are provided with meals everyday by the Church.

The security team does not only guard the compound, they also play a protective role of safe-guarding the property of the congregation like their hand-bags and other personal belongings, when they fall under the "anointing" or demon-possessed. In 1998, the head of the security team was Mr Tucker, a former Assistant Superintendent of Police. Through some personal misfortune, Mr. Tucker became a member of this Church and

according to him, “I had my ulcer cured in this Church through the “Prayer of Faith” without undergoing any operation”. He was 54 years old and was a former Catholic. His wife and four children have also become members of the Church.

4:2:3.Chain Prayer

Another characteristic that is unique to JLM is the Chain Prayer Group. This arm of the Church started in 1995 as soon as the new church building was in use. The chain prayer group has twenty full and committed male and female members in each shift. Each shift lasts for four hours from 6.00 a.m. to 6.00 a.m. the next day except the all-night session which begins at 10.00 p.m and ends at 6.00 a.m. all through the week.

The chain prayer session has a chain prayer leader who leads the session. Each session begins with praise and worship which lasts for approximately 30 minutes after which the first set of prayers are offered for the country, Sierra Leone. The prayers are said communally and during the prayers, if any member has a vision about the country, s(he) informs the Leader who gives the Visioner the go ahead to interpret the vision. Once this is done depending on the nature of the interpretation, communal prayers are also offered to speed up a good vision and avert a bad one. Each set of prayers lasts for about 30 minutes and they include prayers for the Government, the Body of Christ, the Founder and Head, the members of the Church and the various departments within the Church. The chain-prayer sessions can be compared to the “morning prayer” sessions in the mainline churches in the early 1950s.¹¹⁵ Every morning the women would go to their different churches to offer prayers on behalf of the state, the Body of Christ and for the members of the Church. Most women then were housewives or *fana market*¹¹⁶ traders who because of the flexibility of their pursuits, found time to embark on this type of activity just as the women at JLM, who dominate the chain prayer sessions. Most of the women too at JLM are also petty traders or in the type of employment which affords them the time to participate in the chain prayer sessions. Other charismatic churches like the Flaming Bible Church, New life Ministry (Church of God in Christ) and Faith Healing Bible Church have an “all-night” prayer session only on Fridays. Most of the members in these churches find it difficult to participate in chain prayer sessions because of their full time employment commitments. A marked difference between the “morning

¹¹⁵ Conversation held with Madam Ayo Aribaut at 62, Regent Rd., Freetown, 4 January 1998.

¹¹⁶ Wares of petty trader often displayed on a flat round device, made of plaited strips of cane.

prayer” in mainline churches and “chain prayer” sessions in charismatic churches is that it was only women who participated whereas in the latter, both sexes are fully involved.

4:2:4. Popularising the Church/Reaching Out – The Cassette Department

Operating in a context of religious competition and a climate of burgeoning “born-again” churches, the church had to “reach out” to tap the pulse of the community. Jesus is Lord Ministry is the first charismatic church in Freetown to operate a video and audio cassette department in . The department was launched in November 1994 after a crusade which was held at the Church. The proceedings of the five-day crusade were recorded on video and audio and were sold to the public. When the Founder saw that this venture was successful, she decided to start recording all church services. The audio cassettes were sold at Le 2,000 (40p. in sterling) for two tapes which covered the whole service. The video cassettes were sold at Le 10.000 (£2 in sterling) each, but only important services such as the “Special Wednesday”, crusades, anniversaries and visits of foreign and important personalities were recorded.

With the cassettes department in operation, there also developed a “do-it-yourself” healing technique with healing and deliverance cassettes. These cassettes are recorded by Sister Dumbuya and were purchased at the Church Headquarters for Le.1000 (20p in sterling). After they were recorded the Sister Dumbuya prayed over them to endow them with healing and miracle powers from the Lord. The purchaser is instructed to apply the cassette to the afflicted part of the body, for example the head, stomach, eye or the feet, and to offer fervent prayers to ensure healing and deliverance. Some members and non-members have given testimonies regarding the healing powers of these cassettes.

The cassette department is a thriving one which brings income to the Church. The blank cassettes are manufactured with the logo of JLM by a manufacturing company in Freetown and as a religious organisation the Church is exempt from paying excise duty on these blank cassettes. According to the Administrative Head of the Church who is also the director of the cassette department, over 1,000 cassettes are sold monthly. Each cassette is sold at Le. 2000 (40p in sterling) each. The cost of producing the cassette is Le.500.00 (5p in sterling) and the Church makes a profit of Le. 1,5000000 (£300 in sterling) monthly. The cassette department is one of the main financial props of the church. The proceeds from the sales of the cassettes are used to complete the church

building, pay salaries of the church workers and feed them as most of them live in the church

The Church operates a bank account at Standard Chartered Bank in Freetown and Sis. Dumbuya is the sole signatory to the account. In the absence of Sister Dumbuya, the acting administrative head, Bro. Earnest Georgestone collects and banks all the money from the cassettes sales and other sources. Money is given out only on the instructions of Sis. Dumbuya who authorises this by phone or fax from the United Kingdom where she presently resides.

If the aim of the department is to boost the financial fortunes of the Church, it has not exonerated it from some of the common charges levied against “born-again” churches, for example profiteering and money-making.

4:3. Church and State

During the period of the military junta (27 May 1997 -12 February 1998), politics and religion became closely wedded. Prayers were offered for the political stability of the junta and its Chairman, Major Johnny Paul Koroma. A Limba as well as his wife both were members of this Church and attended the Church services regularly. Each time, their presence was recognized by the Church. The Church received food items and cash donations from the Chairman and this served as an incentive for the special prayers for him. Among the items he donated were 60 bags of rice¹¹⁷, and two Mercedes Benz 200 cars. One of the cars was donated directly to the Assistant Pastor of the Church, Rev. David Bangura¹¹⁸. The other car was used as a utility car in the Church but was for most part used by an Elder in the Church, Mr. Momoh, who is also a Limba.

Before the Founder left for the United Kingdom soon after the coup, she appointed her Assistant Pastor, Rev. David Bangura who is also a Limba to pastor the Church in her absence. Most of the Elders in the Church who assist the Pastor are Limba and drawn from the Limba community; so are a large proportion of the members. In other words

¹¹⁷ Rice, the staple food of Sierra Leoneans, was a scarce commodity during the junta rule and most people lived on *gari* (farinaceous food made from grated and roasted cassava) and bulgar wheat as a substitute.

¹¹⁸ The Chairman later appointed Rev. Bangura as Minister of Religious Affairs in the junta. When the democratically elected Government of President Tejan Kabba came back to power in March 1998, Rev Bangura was charged with aiding and abetting an illegal regime to stay in power.

both church officials and laity are tied by ethnic linkages to the military junta. The government in power before the country returned to democratic rule in 1996 was also headed by a Limba, Joseph Saidu Momoh and so were majority of his ministers. The church's hierarchy used these linkages as a leverage to maintain Limba hegemony by supporting the junta. Such linkages were reinforced by conducting special "chain prayer" sessions, holding retreats in the church and praying and fasting. Whenever the junta chairman attended church, services were broadcast on the national radio and television. This soon attracted widespread concern in social circles, the church being nicknamed "the junta church".

Most of the mainline churches refused to participate in any function organized by the junta and made no pretences about their oppositions to it. Most of the leaders in the mainline churches and the anti-junta churches like New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ, Flaming Bible Church, Christian Liberty Church and some spiritual churches like the Church of the Lord (Aladura) had to flee the country because they were being hunted by the junta for not supporting them

4:4. Bible Study Classes

The Church does not operate a Bible School as some established born-again churches do such as Flaming Bible Church. Rather they hold Bible study classes which are quite similar to the lectures given at these Bible schools. In all Bible schools, fees are normally charged for tuition and the use of the library but at JLM the classes are free. These classes are divided into four groups which are Beginners, Converts, Baptism and Discipleship classes.¹¹⁹

4:4:1. Beginners' class

Since the Church attracts many Muslims, there is the beginners' class for them and another for Christians. The Muslim class is for those who do not have any knowledge of the Christian faith but who are attracted to the Church because of its good reputation for healing and preaching the Word of God without fear. They are taught the need for true worship and listen to lectures based on topics of that nature in order to build up their faith and to prepare them to receive miracles. In 1998, there were 90 members in this class.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Bro. Mahoi at Jesus is Lord Ministry's compound, Tower Hill, Freetown, 7 April 1998

They are taught in Krio because most of them are illiterate or have very little schooling. The classes last for three months after which they are sent to the converts' class.

The other class in the beginners' section is for Christians - nominal Christians. This class caters for people who are born into a Christian home but do not know much about the Christian faith. They are fed with the Word of God after which they become hungry for more. Although most of them (in 1998 there were 30 in this class) are literate, lectures are given in Krio. This course also lasts for three months. Both classes for beginners are given an oral test at the end of the course in order to ensure that they have grasped the Word of God

4:4:2. Converts' Class

In the Converts' class they are taught the basic tenets of Christianity with the ultimate aim of accepting Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. There is only one converts' class for both Muslims and Christians. These classes are also taught in Krio and the course lasts for three months. Among the most important topics taught in this class are "Salvation" and the "effectiveness of prayer". The converts are taught that as believers they should ensure their forgiveness and salvation by accepting that through Christ's death mankind is exonerated from sin. The tutors emphasize that one is saved when they are still alive and not when they die as most mainline churches believe. Their salvation is reflected in their repentance on the one hand, and in their proof of the power of God, on the other. They are taught to believe that once a person has accepted Christ's vicarious death for his own sins, he is saved and can know this. Acceptance of salvation is one of the other qualifications for membership in this church. Repentance of sin and leading a "Christian life" are generally believed to be essential conditions for salvation.

The importance of the belief in the effectiveness of prayer is also a key theme which is taught. On the one hand the converts are taught to believe that prayer is not simply a formality but rather an essential means of communication with God through which the believer may obtain God's guidance, receive his blessing and ensure the fulfilment of his own needs and desires. On the other hand, some of the converts have cited evidence of God's concern and of the granting of their prayers - healing and deliverance, gaining salvation, improved marital relations, peace of mind and gaining employment. Thus it is

not surprising that the Church has organized "chain prayer" sessions when prayers are offered round the clock and where prayer requests are addressed.¹²⁰

4:4:3. Baptism Class

Baptism classes prepare the intending members for service in God's Kingdom. The members are taught the deeper meaning of salvation, the benefits of a born-again such as material prosperity and physical health. The way this is achieved is through faithful giving. It is believed that personal donations to the Church are reciprocated by God. They are taught that people particularly born-again are not supposed to be sick; it is God's will that they have plenty and be healthy provided they follow His recipe for success. Many examples are drawn from books written by famous proponents of the Gospel of Prosperity such as Kenneth Copeland and Kenneth Hagin. Other topics taught in the class include faith, repentance, the new birth and baptism by immersion. The members are given adequate time to make up their minds, hence the class is also known as "Decision Class".

Before the students in this class are accepted for Baptism, they are interviewed individually on their spiritual and moral lifestyles and convictions. When this stage is reached, not all the members do meet the requirements as was found in the case of a few people who were living together with their partners without being married and others who were operating a liquor trade. Such people were turned down for full membership, counselled and urged to start practising righteous living before being eligible to re-apply after six months.

Unlike other born-again churches who conduct their baptismal rites in the beach for example the famous Lumley Beach,¹²¹ JLM conducts theirs in a pool, specially built for that purpose inside the church. Baptism is held twice a year. In June 1998, eighty members were baptised by immersion and the ceremony was conducted as usual by Sis. Dumbuya herself. This occasion is an important one in the lives of the members as they celebrate it with feasting. The practice of feasting after a baptismal ceremony is no doubt

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Lumley is a seaside village west of Freetown which is famous for its beach, night-clubs, hotels and entertainment complexes; a popular venue also for outings and picnics on festive occasions such as Easter.

copied from the Krio who baptise their children in the mainline churches after which they have a big feast.

The rite of Baptism is of primary importance. To the members, it represents the actual rebirth of the convert after (s)he has accepted the message of salvation and before (s)he is regarded as being "truly saved". Candidates are immersed once in the water but before immersion, prayers are said for them, while afterwards they are assured of having been cleansed of sin and that their past lives had been forgiven. They are therefore reborn (hence the popular name for these churches - "born-again churches") and can start life anew.

The baptism ceremony is usually performed quite as dramatically as a major initiation ceremony such as the rite of recognition and confirmation in mainline churches. It is therefore understandable that it is regarded by converts as representing a definite physical and spiritual break with the past and the beginning of a new life.

This view of the importance and meaning of Baptism is consistent with most of the other born-again churches which limit the sacrament to adults, who are capable of making a considered "decision for Christ". In mainline churches, baptism is done by sprinkling water on the head with the Trinitarian formula. Among the Krio Baptism takes place when the baby is between six weeks and three months old. The children have sponsors who take an oath to oversee the moral and religious lives of their god-children until they are received into full membership in their churches. This occasion is an important one in the lives of the members in born-again churches as they celebrate it with feasting.

4:4:4. Discipleship Class

There are three discipleship classes, one for illiterates and two for literates. The literates are divided into those who had been baptised before 1994 when the church moved to Tower Hill and those who were baptised after they came to Tower Hill. For most of the time, all the classes are taught the same topics, which include introduction to, definition of and objectives of Discipleship. In these classes, they are also trained for specialised vocations which include evangelism, music, intercession and pastoral care. These classes last for five months and could be compared to the final year specialisation course at Flaming Bible Institute, where these same subjects are taught for the same duration. One

great difference between the Discipleship Class and most Bible Training Schools is that when the students have completed their courses, they stay in the Church, whereas in the Bible Schools, most graduates found their own churches.¹²²

4:5. Membership

A ten per cent sample survey was carried out among the 3,000 registered members at JLM from April to October 1997. The survey was conducted in order to elicit the socio-economic background of members. It was also done to confirm or dispute the presuppositions made about this church by the Freetown community, that membership is largely confined to women particularly those in the lower class in society.

Before analysing the results of the survey conducted among ten percent of the members at JLM, I will discuss the requirements for acquiring full membership and their implications. Full membership into the Church as in most born-again churches is only conferred after satisfactory completion of a probationary period which is six months at JLM. During this period, intending members apply to the Pastor-in-charge either verbally or through written applications. A date is set for the interview to probe their religious, moral and social backgrounds. The interview is conducted by the Pastor or her assistant and two Elders. When the committee is satisfied, the aspirant receives instruction in scripture and doctrine in the different classes mentioned above. During this period, the aspirant's behaviour both inside and outside the Church is closely observed. If the aspirant conducts himself or herself in a satisfactory manner, for example attending church services and classes regularly and punctually, he or she receives confirmation of full membership by being baptised by immersion. In some cases, some aspirants do not go through this period successfully.

As full members, they can become members of the different associations within the church and participate in the chain prayer sessions. The chain prayer session is a coveted activity which people look forward to participate in. This is largely informed by the fervent prayers offered for members. They are also entitled to a full funeral and marriage service and for those whose family could not afford funeral expenses, the church takes care of that. In the mainline churches, full membership is marked by the rites of "Recognition" in the Methodist churches and "Confirmation" in the Anglican churches.

¹²² Mahoi, *op. cit.*

Having gone through these rights the members are entitled to partake in the celebration of the Holy Communion. Prior to these ceremonies candidates attend a series of classes which prepares them for their new role in the church. As full members they are assigned to class leaders who keep a record of the monthly dues for their church membership. As full members they become eligible for membership in the different organisations and committees in their churches. They are also entitled to vote in church conferences.

4:5:1.Sex and Marital Status

In the survey, 31 per cent (93) of the respondents were male, so membership of the Church was almost two- thirds female. This is roughly the proportion of men to women in the church as a whole which was observed during fieldwork thus confirming the presupposition made by the Freetown community. The survey also revealed that there were 149 respondents who were single. One can definitely say that single members are in the majority because they have a lot of time on their hands, apart from housewives, for attending church activities. Furthermore the Church can serve as a breeding ground to find marriage partners. The latter reason could also be advanced for the divorcees (16) and widow(er)s (28) and those who are separated (6). Married people (101) were also well represented in the sample. An important factor that might be responsible for this is that the Church has a weekly family service every Monday when they are taught how to maintain a stable marriage and bring up their children with love and care.

Table 4:1 Age Distribution

Total	No.	%
below 20	13	4.4
20 -29	77	25.6
30 – 39	90	30.0
40 -49	67	22.3
50 -59	30	10.0
60 and above	23	7.7
TOTAL	300	100

Source: Field data, February 1997 to October 1998.

The age distribution in the survey (Table4:1) revealed that 30 per cent (90) were between 30 and 39 years and 40 per cent were above 40 years. It does appear that the membership at JLM consists mainly of middle aged and older people. The predominance of these two categories can perhaps be explained in terms of the time church duties require, for

example attending all four church services and participating in the 24-hour chain prayer sessions. These people too might have already “had a good time” in their lives and now need salvation. Another reason which in part could account for the predominance of these two categories is that as people become more mature and settled they seek the sober and respectable associational life of the church. In contrast to other born-again churches like Flaming Bible Church and New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ), young people seem to dominate these churches. This is not to mean that they have not “had a good time” in life, but it is most likely that the youthful leadership of these churches accounts for their predominance. Furthermore these churches provide “good time” for their members in terms of the music which share the same rhythm that is played in discos and night clubs. In the church also, they encounter their peer groups with whom they talk, think and behave alike.

Table 4 2: Educational Achievement

Standard of Education	No	%
No Schooling	69	23
Primary	24	8
Secondary	157	52.3
Tertiary	36	12
University	14	4.7
TOTAL	300	100

Source: Field data February 1997 to October 1998.

Jesus is Lord Ministry is popularly regarded as a church for people from the “fringe” of society because those are the people who have time in their hands to spend at the Church where programmes and activities are never ending. This in part seems to be borne out by the data (Table 4:2); compared to other born-again churches (see section under membership in Flaming Bible Church), the church has the highest proportion of illiterates and people with little amount of schooling. Three quarters of the respondents who stated that they had secondary education did not attain to Form 3 (the equivalent to Year 9 in Britain). Many of them were brought up in either a Muslim or a low income earning home in which education was not valued. Most of these parents prefer to let their children start petty trading at an early age thereby giving them an opportunity to value money instead of education. Another reason for this distribution is not difficult to determine. Most of the members in this church are unemployed or are from the low income earning strata such as petty trading and domestic servants.

Turning now to the highest educational category, it should be noted that although this includes 4.7 per cent of the respondents, very few of them are actually in any well-paid job other than teaching and three out of the fourteen are in fact unemployed. One of the university graduates in the church is the son of the Late President Siaka Stevens who is a Limba. He decided to become a member of this church because of the ethnicity of the Founder. Among this sample also was one minister in the military junta who is also a graduate and a Limba. It would therefore be fair to conclude that the few members with a university education are members of the church because of ethnic ties.

Table 4:3: Occupation

Category	No.	%
Unemployed	57	19
Church Workers	24	8
Business	21	7
Petty Traders	75	25
Domestic Servants	7	2.3
Civil Servants	7	2.3
Messengers	2	0.7
Clerks	17	5.7
Drivers	3	1
Farmers/Gardeners	4	1.4
Hotel Workers	6	2
Housewives	13	4.3
Students	14	4.7
Security Forces	3	1
Teachers	13	4.3
Nurses	8	2.7
Skilled Workers	14	4.7
Hairdressers	3	1
Pressmen	3	1
Executive Officer	1	0.3
Cashier	3	1
Engineer	1	0.3
Seafarer	1	0.3
TOTAL	300	100.0

Source: Field Data February 1997 to October 1998.

The occupations of the respondents in the sample survey of the Church (Table 4:3) reveals that the proportion of petty traders forms the largest category. Two reasons could be advanced for this based on the views held by the Freetown community on the status quo of petty traders, that they are people with little or no schooling and that they are mostly Muslims. The proportion of unemployed forms the second largest category and most of them believe that through prayers they will succeed in securing a job. Of the members interviewed, only 0.6 per cent were in a high income level: an Executive

Officer and an Engineer. Students only account for 4.6 per cent of those interviewed which is not surprising because the Church does not appeal to the youths because of their adherence to discipline and strict morals.

Table 4:4 Ethnicity

Ethnic Affiliation	No.	%
Fullah	10	3.3
Kissi	1	0.3
Kono	5	1.8
Krio	57	19
Kru	1	0.3
Kuranko	7	2.3
Limba	70	23.3
Loko	18	6
Madingo	4	1.4
Mende	60	20
Sherbro	10	3.3
Susu	10	3.3
Temne	47	15.7
TOTAL	300	100.0

Source: Field Data February 1997 to October 1998

Thirteen out of the seventeen ethnic groups in Sierra Leone are represented in the survey of members. The ethnicity of the founder, Sis. Dumbuya is one factor which has influenced the predominance of Limba in terms of the distribution in Table 4:4. The majority of the Limba women remarked that apart from healing miracles in the Church, it is also their *Kontri uman's* (they share the same ethnicity as the leader) Church. The reverse situation operates at Flaming Bible Church where the Founder and Leader is a Limba, but the Krio seem to dominate the membership. The proportion of Mende forms the second largest category. An interesting fact which emerged during the survey was that some of the Mendes were former members of the Mende mosque situated at the foot of the Mountain where JLM is located. These people were among other things attracted to the Church by the massive turn-out of people at the Church and the discussions on the testimonies about its healing power.

The Krio are also fairly represented in the Church. Most of those interviewed became members of the Church either to pray for a partner or the blessing of the womb (to have children). A Krio woman's zenith is attained only when she bears the title "Mrs." (get

married) and also proves that she is not a *kak*¹²³. Jesus is Lord Ministry is quite notable for accelerating these two processes through the prayers of faith and at the chain-prayer sessions. It is not surprising that the Fullah ethnic group, one of the highly islamised, are beginning to embrace Christianity. This could be accounted for in terms of their exposure to western education which is synonymous to Christianity in Sierra Leone.

Table 4:5 Previous Religious Belief

Religious Affiliation	No.	%
UMC/UBC	31	10.4
Altamura	6	2.0
Catholic	30	10.0
Muslim	116	38.7
Assemblies of God	25	8.3
Methodist	34	11.4
Weslyan Church	5	1.7
Anglican	25	8.3
Born-again	22	7.3
Baptist	1	0.3
Seventh-day Adventist	1	0.3
Jehovah's Witness	1	0.3
Atheist	3	1.0
TOTAL	300	100.0

Source: Field Data February 1997 to October 1998

The previous church or religion of the sample of members is shown in Table 5:5. The large number of Muslims (38.7 per cent) and former mainline church members are its salient features. The large number of Muslims is perhaps attributed to the fact that they were healed in the church after the traditional healer had failed to cure them.

Over 50 per cent of the respondents were previously members of different mainline and spiritual churches. The Catholic denomination accounted for the highest percentage (10%) among the mainline churches. The main reason given by these former Catholic members' is that in the catholic church they are not taught the "word of God" as it is done in this Church. The other mainline church members argued that the church services were not lively and were stereotyped; in addition they lack the presence of the Holy Spirit which is always evident at JLM.

¹²³ Male of the domestic fowl and said of a woman exhibiting masculine qualities i.e. inability to bear children.

In the survey, there was only one former Baptist member and most likely due to the fact that the Baptist denomination offers their members a lot of facilities that induces them to stay in their churches. These facilities include free education at the primary school level, free Bible training courses and medical facilities.¹²⁴ Members of “born-again” churches contributed 7.3 per cent of respondents in the survey and they were from churches like for example God is our Light, Bethel World Outreach, Sanctuary Praise Church and Bethel Temple. There was only one member from Flaming Bible Church who had a mental problem and after he was healed went back to his church to become the President of the Young Adults Fellowship.

Having looked at the previous religious affiliation of the members, this leads inevitably to the question of why members in fact joined this church.

Table 4:6 Reasons for Becoming a Member

Reason	No	%
Salvation	62	20.7
Healing/deliverance	105	35.0
Way of worship	40	13.4
“Evangelised”	36	12
Problems	45	15.0
Dissatisfaction	4	1.3
Dream	4	1.3
Procreation	4	1.3
TOTAL	300	100.0

Source: Field data February 1997 to October 1998.

Table 4:6 sets out the different reasons given by respondents for joining the Church, plus the number and percentage who cited them. From the table, the tremendous importance of Faith healing is at once evident, with 35 per cent of the respondents stating that they had joined the Church because they had been healed in it. People in Freetown are still largely underprivileged in terms of medical facilities opened to them. There is only one general hospital - the Connaught Hospital. For most people efficient medical facilities are scarce and expensive, therefore they prefer to go to this Church, which has acquired a good reputation for healing without any cost. A further 20.7 per cent cited salvation, meaning that through the Church they were able to realise the benefits of being a “born-again” and living a righteous life - giving then a total of 55.7 per cent who were attracted

¹²⁴ The Mission has an eye hospital in Lunsar, 77 miles from Freetown, but satellite clinics are held all over the country monthly.

to the Church by specifically healing and salvation, two most important attributes of the Church. A few cases will be described to exemplify these reasons.

CASE 1:

Mrs. I.M.: A 45 year old Mende, a petty-trader who was a Muslim and who joined the Church in 1995. She suffered from *ale*¹²⁵ and sold all her possessions to pay witch-doctors and juju men without success. A "sister" told her about the Church and how she was cured there; she started to attend the Church regularly and through the prayers of faith she got her healing after a few months. When she got her healing she decided to become a member and vow never to return to the Mosque.

CASE 2:

Mr. A.T.: A 45 year old Limba and a messenger at the Elections Office in Freetown. He was an ardent Muslim. Up to 1998 he had been in the Church for two years. He was paralysed and a sister witnessed to him that if he believed in Jesus he will get well. He started attending the Church and was brought in a car, but after a few months he started walking to the Church himself.

CASE 3:

Mrs. M.B.: A widow who belongs to the Lokko ethnic group. She is 50 years old and works as a Nanny. She was a Muslim before she joined the Church in 1989. She had a growth in her womb and used to bleed a lot. She went to the doctor who advised her to get an operation. " I heard about the Church because I was living near it at Wilberforce. I did not have the money for the operation so I decided that I would start to attend the Church and believed that I will receive my healing. After one week of attending the Church, I had a dream in which a tall man was bathing me and a lot of *tumbu* (worm, earthworm maggot) came out of my body. When I woke up in the morning I went to take a hot bath after which I felt like something had gone out of my body, since then I was healed and never had any cause for an operation".

CASE 4:

S.S.K. is a 27 year old palm-wine tapper and Limba by ethnicity. He was a Muslim He fell from a palm-tree and became paralysed. His mother brought him to the Church and after two weeks he started to walk without any support. When he got his healing, he relinquished his former faith and became a member of the Church.

From the survey of members, 13.3 per cent of them joined the Church because they liked their way of worship. Usually the worship for the most part constitutes singing praises and dancing to choruses backed by African drums akin to those used in the *hunting* and *bondo* societies, in which some of them were former members. In most born-again churches, before full membership is granted one has to relinquish one's membership in these societies.

¹²⁵ To blow a powdered leaf of a kind with irritating effects on to someone's skin.

Twelve per cent of the respondents joined the Church when a “sister” or “brother” evangelized them through preaching or witnessing about the gospel of Jesus Christ. Evangelism at JLM, takes the form of door-to-door witnessing and prisons and hospital visitation.

4:6 .“Special Wednesday” Service

“Special Wednesday” service is a unique activity peculiar to JLM. Why is this service so special? Who are the type of people who attend this service? What is the impact of this service on the Freetown community? I will try to answer these questions by presenting an analysis of one of the many services attended during my fieldwork.

I attended the “Special Wednesday” service on 24 September 1997. The service began at 2.00 p.m. with the leader of the praise and worship team, Bro. Andrew Williams shouting “God is good” and the congregation responding “all the time”. This dialogue continued with the congregation saying “God is good” and the Leader responding “all the time”. After warming up the congregation, the band, which is a modern band with electric organ, key-board, accordion, guitars and drums, led the singing of choruses, mostly in Krio with the congregation joining. The choruses included *Jesus nar me yone* (Jesus is mine), *Natin nor dey way ee nor able do* (He can do everything) and *Jesus never fails you, but juju man can fail you oh* (Jesus never fails but the juju man does). There is an important parallel between the tunes of these choruses and the hunting masquerade songs. These parallels could be seen in the use of drums and tambourines used to accompany the music by the church as well as by the members of the *hunting* society when they perform on joyous occasions. Another significant parallel could be seen in the chorus-like repetition of phrases and shaking the body to the music. This type of rhythm send Sierra Leoneans into a joyous, lively and even dancing mood, thus creating an atmosphere of happiness and readiness to praise God. Some members applaud as they dance up and down the aisles, while others shut their eyes and pray, or sway their hands from side to side. The choruses last up to 30 minutes, after which Sis. Dumbuya appears at the altar. This is the only service in which she is present right through. At the other services, she comes in when she is ready to deliver her sermon. Immediately she appears at the altar, she shouts “Amen” several times and the congregation repeat “Amen” after her. The sister goes on to shout “Praise the Lord”, “Praise Jesus” and “Praise God”

several times and at the end of each phrase, the congregation responded with shouts of “Alleluia”. This was followed by an opening prayer by Sis. Dumbuya who prays for the success of the service so that many people will be cured of both physical, spiritual and economic problems; for the power of the Holy Spirit and anointing to descend. Her prayers fuel up the atmosphere and draw enthusiastic shouts of “in Jesus’ name”, “yes Lord” and *ee go do am* (God will do it).

Next in the service is the worship session where the ministers and entire congregation go into worship time led by the praise and worship team. During this period, Sis Dumbuya interrupts the session to pray and exhort as she feels led by the Spirit. Sometimes she breaks into tongues, frequently urging the congregation to pray so that the wonderful miracles and healing will take place. After this, one important item on the “Special Wednesday” service takes place and that is the tour of Sis. Dumbuya around the entire church building. On this tour, she warns the congregation not to touch her but to shut their eyes when she is passing by. She also tells the congregation that she is not alone, but that the Holy Spirit is with her.

This tour invests the day with its special quality because people are able to have a glimpse of her, since she is very difficult to see, let alone to talk to. Whoever wants to see her has to make an appointment for nearly a month in advance with no guarantee of being granted audience. Secondly, during this tour, she offers a special prayer for all types of diseases to come out of the afflicted who believe that her prayers are efficacious, and that the diseases will soon leave their bodies. On this “Special Wednesday”, many people especially non-members travel from the provinces to Freetown, particularly to attend this service in order to receive their own share of Sis. Dumbuya’s “unique healing powers”.

4:7. Church Services

At JLM, services are held every Sunday, Monday and Friday in the week and every last Wednesday in the month. Divine service on Sunday begins at 10.00 a.m. and ends at about 2.00 p.m. Monday service is known as “Family Service” and takes place from 4.00 p.m. to about 6.30 p.m.. The service takes the form of Bible teachings through sermons;

the topics are based on the role of the family in a Christian home and ways to keep marriages stable. The service is open to non-members who are inspired by the teachings and later opt for membership in the church. Jesus is Lord is the only church which conducts a weekly “Family Service”. Some charismatic churches like Flaming Bible Church, Word of Faith and New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ) organise seminars and workshops occasionally on “Marriage and the Family”.

The Friday service is the miracle and healing service which starts at 2.00 p.m. and ends at about 6.00 p.m. During this service a lot of people claim to be healed through the prayer of faith which is the climax of these healing and miracle services. Divine healing has been one of the major means of recruitment for Jesus is Lord Ministry. Fifty per cent of members in this church were former Muslims who claim to have lost faith in their traditional healers and Imams.¹²⁶ These members further claimed that these traditional healers and Imams have failed to cure them of *Blackman sik*¹²⁷ for example *ale*, *bellyat* (stomachache) and *fangay*¹²⁸. These members therefore abandoned their former faith to become members of this church once they have received their healing.

Jesus is Lord Ministry, unlike other churches like Holiness Pentecostal, New Testament Church and Deeper life Church, allows the use of modern drugs and treatment by scientific means of healing. The church believes that all healing comes from God. In practice, it does appear that the church’s main concern is for those diseases caused by evil spirits, demons and witches, while physical ailments are left to medical doctors. However, prayers are offered in Church and at chain prayer sessions for people who are hospitalised or have sent in prayer requests. The belief is that the prayers, in conjunction with the medical input, accelerates healing. Sometimes too, the Evangelism Team visit the patients in hospital or in their homes to pray for them.

Testimony time (in which people describe how their problems, either physical or spiritual, were solved and give thanks for that) is an important feature of church services;

¹²⁶ Result of sample survey conducted during fieldwork.

¹²⁷ Diseases caused unnaturally.

¹²⁸ To cause death by a blow on the neck transmitted supernaturally by the wind and the sorcery producing such a blow is termed as *fangay*.

particularly at the weekly Friday healing and deliverance and monthly special Wednesday services. Omenyo has observed that:

Giving testimonies is a prominent feature in programmes of Charismatic Renewal groups. Due to their emphasis on experiential Christianity, it is their tradition to create space on their programmes at all levels for members to give testimonies of what the living God has done in their lives. The belief is that testimonies stir up members' faith and confidence in God. The experience of "new birth" with its concomitant change in one's lifestyle, the effect of Bible study on one's life, the results of prayer and fasting, healing and deliverance experiences, the effect of the power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of members are common issues that form the subject of the testimonies of members.¹²⁹ (2002, p. 268)

Members and non-members who attend these services are eager to share their testimonies with the congregation. People who wish to give testimonies are first interviewed by one of the Elders who guides them how to go about it for three reasons. Firstly, for documentation purposes, secondly, to avoid using up a lot of time and thirdly to avoid any red herrings. The testimonies always receive the undivided attention of the congregation who continually interrupt with exhortations of "Hallelujah"! and "Praise the Lord", as the "Testifier" narrates how (s)he experienced the "touch of God". Most of the testimonies end up by praising God for saving or healing as well as thanking the Leader for her devotion to the Church. Four hundred testimonies over a period of eighteen months (June 1996- November 1997) were recorded in the Church's testimony book, the only Church which keeps such a book.¹³⁰ The table below shows the type of problem and the number of people affected.

¹²⁹ Cephas M.Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecost Pentecostalism; A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the mainline Church in Ghana*. Zoetermeer, Netherlands: Boekencentrum, 2002, pp. 268-269.

¹³⁰ Flaming Bible Church produces a weekly bulletin which contains some testimonies occasionally.

Table4:7 Testimonies

Type of Problem	Total	%
Accidents	12	3.0
Blessing of the womb	20	5.0
Children's Truancy	2	0.5
Court cases	4	1.0
Deaf and dumb	2	0.5
Demon Possession	17	4.3
Drugs	23	5.7
Gynaecological	22	5.5
Hard lines/bad luck	14	3.5
Housing	6	1.5
Lack of communication	4	1.0
Lumps	13	3.3
Marital instability	22	5.5
Night husband	13	3.3
Physical ailments	96	4.0
Unemployment	9	2.0
Underworld	2	0.5
Visa problem	6	1.7
Witchcraft	110	27.5
TOTAL	400	100

Source: Jesus is Lord's Testimony Book.

Most of the testimonies indicate that people have received salvation because they have been delivered from evil spirits, sorcery, misfortune, disease, poverty, bad luck or hard lines, witchcraft, barrenness - in short their concrete social problems. For the most part the Minister-in-charge of a mainline church or the Imam-in-charge of a Mosque is not interested in their members' social problems. The charismatic churches open their doors to people to bring their problems and provide a means of solving them. It is against this background, that Simon Maimela (1985) has observed that the greatest attraction of the African indigenous churches was that they gave an "open invitation to people to bring their fears and anxieties about witches and sorcerers, bad luck, poverty, illness and all kinds of misfortunes to the church leadership." (1985, p. 71).

Unlike the Aladura Churches where healing is done by stages over a period of time,¹³¹ in most charismatic churches healing is done during Church services. Among the methods for healing are :

1. The prayer of faith.

¹³¹ Identifying the cause of the problem through divination, bathing in the stream or river for a number of days or offering sacrifices e.g. ram, fruits, cooked food etc.

2. Falling under the anointing.
3. Dreams
4. Revelation.
5. Laying of hands.
6. The Word of God

At Jesus is Lord Ministry, apart from the methods mentioned above, healing is also done by the use of the telephone (hot line ministry) and the use of healing and deliverance cassettes. Healing by the use of cassettes is quite unique to JLM. These cassettes are sold in the church and they contain prayers by Sis. Dumbuya for different kinds of ailments and deliverance problems. People purchase these cassettes at Le1500 (30p in sterling) each and use them at home for healing and deliverance purposes; some people even send them to their relatives abroad and in the provinces.

Ten per cent of those who gave testimonies in the Testimony Book said that they used these cassettes and were healed or delivered either by listening to them or tying them to the affected part of the body. The healing cassette is used mostly for physical ailments like stomachache, eye problems and body pains, and the deliverance cassettes are used to ward off evil spirits pertaining to witchcraft. Below are examples from the Testimony Book showing how healing and deliverance were brought about by the use of the cassettes.

TESTIMONY N0: 247

Friday Service - 4.4.97.

Name: K.M.

Case: Cancer of the womb

Testimony: A lady called K who lives in Columbus, Ohio in the USA has cancer of the womb and the intestines. Her parents had died of cancer. She was admitted in hospital and the doctors had given her up. Her cousin sent her some of the healing cassettes which she played in the hospital. She recovered and no operation was done on her. The doctors were quite surprised and they too have requested to be sent some of the cassettes.

TESTIMONY NO:144

Name: S.T

Case: Headache and diarrhoea

Duration: 5 years

Manner of healing: Prayer of Faith and Cassette

Testimony: She started attending the church in April 1996. The headache was so severe that she was taken to the hospital, alphas, witch-doctors and *abalist* traditional healers, but there was no healing. On the first day of "Crusade '96" in November, she fell under the anointing and she saw a bright light before her which caused her to perspire a lot.

When she woke up she was healed and since then she has not had any more headaches. She also used the healing cassettes when she had stomach ache. After that when she went to the toilet she passed out cow's entrails. From that day, she was healed and has never experienced any more stomach aches. She thanks God for her healing and for the Leader's devotion to the church.

TESTIMONY NO:251

Monday service 28.8.97.

Name: R.B

Case: Breast pain (left)

Duration: 6 years

Manner of healing: Dream, Cassette, Prayer of Faith

Testimony: She had breast pain with sores on the nipples for about 6 years. She had been going to the hospital for dressing. Last night after the Prayer of Faith on Sunday, she placed the cassette on her breast. As she slept, she dreamt that white water was coming out of her breast. She knows that she has received her healing in Jesus' name. She has been in the church for about 6 years and is now in the Evangelism team. She thanks God for the wonderful provision God is making for her and her family, her healing and the Leader of the church.

TESTIMONY NO:300

Name: B.M.B.

Case: witchcraft

Duration: 4 years

Manner of healing: Cassette

Testimony: He used to *witch* (to bewitch) with his grandmother who is in Guinea. He is the pilot on the plane that he and his grandmother used to board to "witch" those who are not "born-again". The grandmother would turn into a spider while he would turn into a chicken. When they go to the meeting place, they usually serve them with meat and blood. The grandmother has taken him to about 100 demons and the demons gave him 3 knives which should be used for killing his victims. They have a satellite, video and a camera to communicate among themselves. They have killed about 75 people - 20 boys and 55 adults. All the people that they have killed are those who do not know about Jesus Christ. After each operation, the grandmother usually gives him five or ten dollars as a reward. The grandmother usually makes a record of all those they have killed on the wall. This child's mother is a member of the church and started to use the deliverance cassette. Each night before the boy goes to bed, she will put the cassette in the boy's trousers. One night when the grandmother came to collect his grandson to go on their mission as soon as she reached the door she found a man who was dressed up in white attire. The person told the boy that he was Jesus Christ and he had come to deliver him as He wanted him to start serving Him. Immediately he spoke fire came down and consumed the grandmother. The boy was not able to go on the mission alone. When they woke up in the morning, the boy told his mother about the man he had seen and how his grandmother was consumed with fire. Since that day the boy has never set his eyes on his grandmother nor any of the demons. He told his mother to bring him to church so that he can give the testimony.

Healing through the "hotline" Ministry i.e. the telephone is another method used by Sis. Dumbuya for both spiritual and physical healing. The only other Ministry which uses

this method of healing is the Shalom Ministry headed by Sis. Yarri Koroma, a Limba, the same ethnic group that Sis. Dumbuya belongs to. The “hotline” method is a 24-hour service in which people telephone about any problem and prayers are offered over the phone. For Sis. Dumbuya, this method is used mostly by people abroad who have immigration problems or in hospitals waiting for an operation. In Sis. Koroma’s case “hotline” for her is mostly used by people in Freetown because her Ministry is concerned with ante-natal and post-natal care for women and children. Her calls then are mostly from women who are experiencing difficult birth or whose children have sudden attacks.

At most special Wednesday services just before the Prayer of Faith, Sis. Dumbuya never fails to inform the congregation about the telephone calls received from abroad, especially from the United States and Britain. In one of the many services I attended, she told us about a lady who had called her from Britain the night before requesting her to pray for her child who had convulsion. She did that over the phone and before she came to church this morning the lady called again to say that the child had received her healing.

Out of the 400 testimonies in Table 4:7 above, it is quite clear that women are the most vulnerable group with a lot problems. Jesus is Lord is quite notable for solving womens’ problems, hence the preponderance of women in the Church which has earned her the nickname “Freetown Secondary School for girls”.¹³² The majority of the testimonies centred on witchcraft 27.5 per cent (110) and 25 per cent (100) of females testified to having been delivered by the different methods mentioned above. Witchcraft is quite a common phenomenon among all the ethnic groups in Sierra Leone as most problems which people face are attributed to witchcraft. Witchcraft attacks are said to originate in dreams in several ways. Among them are:-1. Being given something to “eat”, which leads to severe stomach pains. 2. Being attacked by someone or an animal.

Traditional healers and *morimen* do counteract the effect of witchcraft by the use of *lasmami*. People, particularly those who are converts in the Church have been taught the word of God which forbids visits to these healers, so they prefer to be healed in the church. The most common method of healing stated by the testifiers to heal witchcraft was “falling under the anointing”. Below are some examples of testimonies given by people who were delivered from witchcraft.

¹³² This school is situated at Brookfields and is attended only by females.

TESTIMONY NO. 49 Friday Service 12.9.97.

Name: Y.S.

Case: Stomachache

Duration: 3 months

Manner of healing: Cassette, dream and prayer of Faith.

Testimony: She had a stomachache for about three months. One night she had the attack and it was very severe. She placed the deliverance cassette on her stomach. As she prayed, she slept and dreamt that blood was coming out of her. In the dream she saw a woman who squeezed her stomach and something like liver came out of her. When she woke up in the morning, she knew that God had healed her. She thanks God for her healing, and for knowing Jesus and His healing power. She has been in the Church for one year.

TESTIMONY NO. 285. Friday Service 31.7.97.

Name: M.S.

Case: Stomachache

Duration: 5 years

Testimony: She was a Muslim and also a member of the *bondo* society. A friend told her about the miraculous healings in the Church. She started to attend the Church and after one of the "Special Wednesday" healing services, when she went home she dreamt someone doing an operation on her and a lizard come out of her stomach. She is healed in Jesus' name. She has promised never to return to Egypt but to continue with the Lord. She joined the Church in 1994.

TESTIMONY NO. 368 Monday Service 12.5.97.

Name: R.O

Case: Stomachache

Duration: 17 years

Manner of healing: Fell under the anointing and Prayer of Faith

Testimony: She was a Muslim as she came to this Church and heard the Word of God she has received her salvation. She had stomach-ache for 17 about years in which she had gone to traditional doctors as well as undergone several operations without success. In April this year when the Prayer of Faith was going on she fell under the anointing. When she went home she felt like something moving in her stomach and immediately had a bowel movement. During this process, she passed out about half a pint of blood with clots that looked like lizards. After that she had no more stomach problems. She is a member of the Friday 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. chain prayer sessions and has been in the Church for three years now. She thanks God for what God has done for her in Jesus' name.

TESTIMONY NO. 68 Sunday Service 19. 1. 97.

Name: L.M.

Case: Stomachache

Duration: 4 years

Testimony: She had stomachache for about four years. She has been to A *moriman* and witch-doctors but received no healing. On the last day of Crusade '96 in November held at the National Stadium, she felt like *fol-los*¹³³ was all over her face. As the Prayer of

¹³³ *Chicken louse* i.e. disease affecting chickens.

Faith was on, a live frog came out of her private part and fell on the ground which she immediately threw into the gutter. Since that day she was healed in the name of Jesus. She thanks God for the Church and the Leader Sis. Dumbuya. May the Lord continue to increase the anointing in the Church

Jesus is Lord Ministry is the largest church of its type in Freetown, with a capacity of 10,000. The founder Sis. Dumbuya came from a traditional African background. After conversion and membership of the AOG she started her own church as a result of several visions.

Jesus is Lord Ministry raises some important issues:

1. The role of women, not only as church leaders but also as founders of new churches, Sis. Dumbuya herself being a paramount example.
2. The relationship between church leaders and politicians. It is not clear how far the death of Sis. Dumbuya's husband by firing squad affected her Ministry, but there was a lot of justified criticism of the closeness between the Church and the Junta, led by Johnny Paul Koroma, a Limba, the same ethnic group which Sis. Dumbuya belongs to.
3. Jesus is Lord Ministry is similar in many ways to other born-again churches in Freetown, in terms of their spiritual make up, prayer and similar disciplines, but Jesus is Lord Ministry goes further than most with its Chain Prayer sessions.
4. The architecture of the main building has also come in for comment. It is not only the largest church in Freetown but it also has unique features including accommodation for members as well as a kitchen where food for members can be prepared.

CHAPTER FIVE

Case-study Church II: Flaming Bible Church

5:1 .Background of the Founder and his Call.

The Flaming Bible Church (FBC) was founded by Rev. Frederick Abu Sidique Koroma in 1986, but was officially launched on 1 January 1987, at the Church's former location, the Prince of Wales School compound, Kingtom, in Freetown. Rev. Koroma hails from a polygynous and devout Muslim family. He has three brothers and four sisters, all of whom have been converted to Christianity except for one sister who is a devout Muslim and has performed the holy pilgrimage. His eldest brother, Rev. Benjamin Koroma is the founder of another charismatic church, the Dynamic Evangelical Ministries.

Bishop Koroma is the title by which his officers and members address him, since he is the founder and the highest authority within the Ministries. Among his Pastor colleagues of other Charismatic Churches, he is known as Pastor Abu. He was born on 26 January 1955 and belongs to the Limba ethnic group and not a Mandinka-Temne as Smith claims in his Ph.D. thesis.¹³⁴ He had his primary education at the Congo Town and Syke St. Municipal schools in Freetown. He attended the Sierra Leone Grammar School in Freetown and the Magburaka Secondary School for Boys in Magburaka in the Northern Province. He graduated with a Bachelors of Arts Degree in Philosophy and Political Science in 1988 at Fourah Bay College. Bishop Koroma met his wife Patricia Kanu when she was a student at the Flaming Bible School. They were married in October 1993 but up to 1998 when fieldwork was being conducted the marriage was not yet blessed with any children.

Bishop Koroma was converted to Christianity in December 1979 at the Holiness Pentecostal Church at Congo Town in Freetown. He was a member of this church for six years during which he attended their Bible School that was run by American missionaries, Rev. and Mrs. Cover. When he left the Holiness Pentecostal Church, he attended another born-again church, the New Testament Church at Congo Cross for a brief period as an associate member. During his association with the New Testament

¹³⁴ Robert Smith, *A Survey and Theological analysis of the Spiritual and Pentecostal – Evangelical Churches*, 1994, pp. 640-643.

Church he was also a student at Fourah Bay College. During this period, he received his “Call” whilst he was a final year student at College.

About life before his conversion, Bishop Koroma confessed: “I was deeply engrossed in sin because by then I was blind, blind to the truth of the Word of God. I used to drink alcohol and also took drugs.”¹³⁵ Koroma’s social background before founding his church could in some ways be compared to Nicholas Duncan-Williams, founder of Christian Action Faith Ministries in Ghana, whose “youth was rather wild” (Gifford 1998, p. 77).

In an interview I had with Bishop Koroma, he narrated how he received his “Call” from God:

One night, I had a nightmare in which I woke up very tormented and restless. I could neither attend the interview for the Sierra Leone Government Scholarship Award for which I was scheduled nor attend lectures the following morning. I stayed in my room throughout the day, fasting and praying. The next day I was still in a confused state so I decided to continue praying and fasting for a whole week. During this period, seven of my college-mates who are now Elders of the Church joined me in my daily evening prayers. After this period of intense prayer and fasting, I found peace within myself but I continued with intensive prayers for a few more weeks when I dreamt someone tapping me on my back and saying to me that I have been called upon to “open a church and preach in His name.”¹³⁶

The theme of this Call Bishop Koroma further went on to say was premised on the following Bible verses: “But how are men to call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent?” (Romans 10:14-15).

The above account obviously heralded the birth of FBC and the fundamental aim was to clearly explain the Word of God and to help the believers as well as the unbelievers to have a great personal revival as they receive the Word of God. Bishop Koroma also told me that “my heart’s desire is to take the Gospel home to the unreached, those whose knowledge of the Gospel is very shallow, to motivate them so that they will receive and experience a deeper revelation through healing and Bible teaching.”¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Interview held with Bishop Koroma at his Charlotte Street office on 22nd August 1998.

¹³⁶ Interview held with Bishop Koroma at his Charlotte Street Office on 22nd August, 1998.

¹³⁷ Interview with Rev. Koroma at his Charlotte Street office on 22 August 1998.

5:2. Structure of the Church

During the early years of the Church's inception, much emphasis was geared towards provincial and peri-urban evangelical campaigns. This took the Founder, Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses to regions in the Provincial towns of Sierra Leone like Bo, Kenema, Kono, Makeni, Port Loko, Tiama, Lunsar, Lungi, Kangama, Tombo, Russel and Mokanji where they held mass crusades. A few years after the founding of the Church they also built up a considerable network of international relationships by holding international crusades in Guinea, Nigeria, Italy and across Great Britain. They have in turn held crusades in Freetown with guest speakers from abroad, especially from Nigeria.

Apart from the headquarters church that has its own church building at Ascension Town which they started using on 1 January 1996, there are six branch churches in Freetown. These churches are situated in Brookfields, Byrne Lane (off Aberdeen Rd.) Grafton, Kissy and Wellington (see Table 5:1. below for the dates of establishment). They also have one congregation in Bo in the southern province, a fellowship in Banjul the Gambia and one church each in Ghana and London.¹³⁸ This Church is one of the three born-again churches in Freetown, which has an international branch.¹³⁹

In addition to this rapid growth of churches, there has been a parallel development leading to the creation of specific ministries under the umbrella of the Flaming Bible Church. There are five such Ministries namely:

1. The Church's Ministry
2. The Bible School Ministry
3. The School of Deliverance Ministry
4. Evangelism/Crusade Ministry
5. Mission Ministry

5:2:1. Structure

Since the founding of the Headquarters Church in 1986, six more churches were planted in Freetown, but only four of them are still operating. Below is a table showing the number of Churches that have been planted since the founding of the Ministry.

¹³⁸ The churches in Ghana and London are mainly dominated by Sierra Leoneans.

¹³⁹ The two others are Living Word of Faith which has a branch in the Gambia and Faith Healing Ministry which has a branch in Liberia.

Table 5:1: Showing Growth of Church Ministry

Branch	Year Est.	Pastor	Present Roll	Venue
Ascension Town	1986	Bishop Koroma	2000	Church Bldg
Grafton	1989	-	-	-
Brookfields	1990	Pastor Syl Murray	150	Rented Bldg
Aberdeen	1991	-	-	-
Kissy	1995	Pastor A. Kamara	100	Sch. Room
Wellington	1996	Pastor S. Bangura	50	House
Byrne Lane	1997	Sis. J. Leigh	50	House

Source: Field Data, from February 1997 to October 1998.

The Grafton church was closed down soon after the military take over in May 1997. The main reason for this is that Grafton is found in Jui where the ECOMOG headquarters is found; it was a prohibited area for civilians. The Bishop had to close the church as everybody in that area moved out. The Aberdeen church was closed down because the Pastor had to travel out of the country and the Bishop could not identify a suitable person to take over from him. However, the members joined the Byrne Lane Church which is also found in the same vicinity.

The headquarters church is the only Church with a building at present. The land for this building was donated by a wife of a popular Krio businessman and an ex-minister in the Momoh regime. The lady, however wished to stay anonymous. The Church has now been completed and has a sitting capacity for 2500 worshippers; a very big compound which serves as both a car-park as well as sitting space for more worshippers. A plot has also been donated to the Wellington Church by one of its members and the church building will be put up shortly.¹⁴⁰

Unlike Jesus is Lord Ministry which has programmes every day including Saturdays, FBC has programmes only on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. One of the pastors

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Pastor Shek Bangura, pastor-in-charge of Wellington branch, at Nicol Street, Wellington, 20 June 1998.

in the church told me that their members need time for themselves and their families.¹⁴¹ The headquarters Church and each church branch have different organisations and Fellowship. The various organisations and Fellowships in the headquarters Church were studied in relation to their background and their activities. The weekly programme for all the Churches in the Ministry is found below, except for the Saturday programme when all the Churches in the Ministry come to the Headquarters Church.

5:2:2. The Youth Fellowship.

The Flaming Bible Church Ascension Town Youth Fellowship started in 1992 and is made up of born-again youths between the ages of 16 and 25 years. The youth Fellowship draws its members from young boys and girls in the Children's Church who have reached the age of sixteen and youths who eventually join the fellowship after follow-up/evangelism by youths of the Fellowship.

The aims and objectives of the Fellowship are: to teach and ensure that youths grow up in the love and fear of God; for youths to reach out to people searching for answers to the problems of life and give them hope through the word of God and to help members maximise their youthfulness. The main emphasis for 1998 was GOAL SETTING AND PLANNING. The Fellowship consists of a five-man executive, a Co-ordinator and his Assistant and six different groups. The Youth Fellowship meets every Sunday at the Church at 5.00 p.m.

5:2:3. The Youth Adult Fellowship.

This Fellowship is the youngest and the only one of such fellowships in the entire Flaming Evangelical Ministries (FEM). It was formed in 1996 by the President and Founder of the Ministries, Bishop Abu Koroma. Its membership comprises of committed Christian ladies and gentlemen between 25 and 33 years.

The general aim of the Fellowship is to serve as a support to the Parent organisation FEM in its Christian administration and to help its members tailor their youthful life for a brighter and challenging future. Its objectives include:

- preaching
- catering for the welfare of its members in their academic and social life
- stimulating Christian brethren to be zealous and active in the work of God

¹⁴¹ Conversation with Pastor Shek Bangura, 28 June 1998.

- Networking with other Christians and fellowships in preaching the Gospel

The programme for 1998 included: follow-up and evangelism, organising personal door-to-door witnessing, camp-meetings, conventions, rallies, seminars, symposia, retreats, mini crusades and conferences.

5:2:4. The Women's Fellowship.

The Women's Fellowship of Flaming Bible Church (WFFBC) started in 1991 because of the need of bringing closer co-operation and interaction amongst the women of the Church.¹⁴² Full membership in the church brings with it the right to become a member of WFFBC. Since its inception, the fellowship has promoted both spiritual and social activities with the aim of creating an atmosphere of unity among the members. This is evident by the use of the term "sister" to each other. The Fellowship embarks on a variety of programmes including fund raising activities, distribution of food and clothing to the poor and needy, visits to the old people's home. They have also been instrumental in finding money to contribute to the construction of the church building; they contributed towards tiling the ground floor of the church.¹⁴³

The Fellowship has a close network which has enabled it to consistently carry out follow-up work on its members. They rejoice with their members during their birthdays, weddings or any social occasion as well as weep with them during their bereavement or in time of sorrow. They operate a fund where money is contributed by all the members during their bi-weekly meetings to assist each other when the need arises. This fund could be compared to the *osusu*¹⁴⁴ which is operated among different groups of people in Freetown such as market women, female workers in the government ministries and women in a neighbourhood. They also operate the *osusu* to help each other in their communities. They hold their meetings on the first and last Saturdays in

¹⁴² Isatu Sesay, A study of Flaming Bible Church, a long essay submitted to the department of Sociology, University of Sierra Leone as a course requirement in the Intermediate Year, May 1995.

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, p.10.

¹⁴⁴ This a rotating thrift association to which a group of not less than three contribute money either weekly or monthly; at the end of the stipulated period each member draws the money at a time agreed upon before the collection starts. In cases where a member needs money for an unforeseen circumstance such as a bereavement, the affected member can swap with another member. For an insight into the role and functions of the *osusu*, see Kenneth Little, "The Role of Voluntary Associations in West African Urbanization", 1957, *American Anthropologist* 59, pp. 579-596; The Organization of Voluntary Associations in West Africa" (1959), *Civilizations* 9, pp. 283-297; "Some Traditionally Based Forms of Mutual Aid in West African Urbanization, 1962, *Ethnology* 1, pp. 196-211.

the month usually in the porch of the Church but once in a while, they hold their meetings in the houses of members. This serves as a means to fellowship with members of their families; friends and neighbours are also invited to join them at these meetings. These meetings are also part of their evangelism programme to spread the Word of God.¹⁴⁵

5:2:5. The Men's Fellowship.

The Fellowship started in 1992 with twenty members. The first President of the Fellowship was Rev. Desmond Thomas who is now Pastor of the Flaming Bible Church in the United Kingdom. In 1998, there were over 300 members in the Fellowship. Each male adult member in the church is in principle a member of this association and the large majority of them are. The main objectives of the Fellowship are:

1. To promote the Gospel of Jesus Christ through follow-up and evangelism.
2. To assist men how to maximise their manhood or potential in Jesus Christ.
3. To teach men their responsibilities in the Church, family and nation.¹⁴⁶

The Fellowship meets every Saturday in the Church at 6.00 p.m. At these meetings, they plan for the future growth and development of the Church as well as their own programmes. One aspect that cannot go unnoticed among members in this fellowship is the strong fraternal bonds that exist among them. Stratification between the rich and poor is non-evident. The President of the Fellowship, Deacon Cornelius Max-Williams who is a Banker has gone a great way to sensitise members as regards the way of behaving to each other. In this respect, the Fellowship can best be described as a "Club" in that, having been endowed with a cross-section of the society ranging from the powers that be to the ordinary man, the help and support of these strong and influential hands in society are the regular sources to guarantee and secure employment, privileges and favours to its members.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ Interview with the Bishop's wife, Mrs. Patricia Koroma, President of the Women's Fellowship, at the church office, Charlotte Street, Freetown, 25 August 1998.

¹⁴⁶ Interview held with Bro. Josh Ghanu, Secretary of the Men's Fellowship, at the church office, Charlotte St, Freetown, 25 August, 1998

¹⁴⁷ In an interview with Deacon Cornelius Max-Williams, president of the Men's Fellowship, he disclosed to me that he was instrumental in getting jobs for two of the messengers working at the bank. Interview held at his office, Sierra Leone Commercial Bank, Siaka Stevens Street, Freetown, 17 March 1998.

5:2:6. The Children's Church.

The Children's Church was born when the children attending service in one of the classrooms at the Prince of Wales School (the former location of the Church) started disrupting the Divine Service. In order to alleviate this situation, a special class was organised where they were taught basic Biblical teachings.

The Church started with about ten children in 1988 and the number on roll in 1998 was 150. The Church has three groups:

Church A for children between 10 and 15 years

Church B for children between 6 and 10 years

Church C for children between 1 and 6 years

The teaching staff has also grown from two teachers during the early days of the Church to ten in 1998 when fieldwork was carried out. Emphasis is laid on the Word of God though a balance of children's activities is maintained to keep the children happy.

5:3. Home Cells/House Fellowship.

Each branch under the Church Ministry operate vibrant Home Cells/House Fellowship. Home Cells are weekly meetings organised for members of the Church who live within half a mile radius of each other as well as that of the home cell leader, where the meetings take place.

The Headquarters Church has twenty-two Home Cells in and around Freetown. They meet every Wednesday from 6.00 p.m to 8.00 p.m during normal times and when there is a curfew which begins at 6.00 p.m, they meet from 4.00 p.m to 5.00 p.m.¹⁴⁸ The maximum number any Home Cell can contain is twenty members and the minimum is ten members. As soon as the number increases, the Home Cell organiser, Elder Jos Ghanu begins to make arrangement to open up a new Home Cell.

The Home Cell meeting starts with choruses until most of the members are present then the opening prayers are said. After the opening prayers they then move into worship time led by any of the members whom the Spirit has led to do so. The main item on the programme at these Home Cells is the Message. This is usually given by one of the Elders, Deacon or Deaconesses who reads a passage from the Bible and expounds on it.

¹⁴⁸ Freetown was under a curfew during the Military rule from May 1997 to February 1998.

Different themes are selected such as forgiveness, salvation, peace, happiness, grace and joy. After the exposition, members could ask questions based on the topic. Members needing special prayers for a particular occasion (wedding, birthday, bereavement etc.) or any type of problem can make a request and the entire membership will offer prayers for them.

5:4. The Flaming Chronicle

The Flaming Chronicle, a weekly bulletin, was borne out of a visit which the founder and leader of the Flaming Bible Church, Bishop Abu Koroma made to the United States of America, where he was invited as a guest preacher at Largo Community Church in Maryland State. He found out that their bulletin was a key feature of the church and in a conversation with the pastor- in- charge, Pastor Mark, it was revealed that the proceeds of the sale of the bulletin brought in extra funding for the church. This idea was also reinforced when he visited a few other churches in Maryland. On his return to Sierra Leone, he discussed this matter with his elders in the church and he had their full support. The first issue of the bulletin was produced on 26 January 1998 by an editorial board comprising the editor, elder Eranus Thompson, who is the head of the deliverance team and six church members (four males and two females). The bulletin is produced in English and was set out on a computer by the church secretary to get a master copy which was photocopied and sold on Sundays at church services. Since the first issue came out there has not been a break in its publication. Flaming Bible Church is the only born-again church that produces such a bulletin. Jesus is Lord Ministry started to publish the “Morning Star”, a monthly magazine, but this was short-lived as they only produced four issues, and stopped. The most likely reason is that the church does not have a high level of educated members when compared to FBC whose editorial board comprises people at degree level. Another reason might be that the church was busy trying to complete their church building and did not have time to do that. Every Sunday, not less than 500 copies are made and they were priced at Le200.00. (4p in sterling) a booklet. In August 1998, the price was increased to Le.300.00. (6p in sterling) each but subscribers were compensated with an increase in the volume and number of pages. The sale of the bulletin is one main source of the Church’s financial backstay. For a whole month, sales from the bulletin would amount to 1,200.000 Leones (240 pounds sterling). The proceeds from the sale are used to pay utility bills.

The weekly bulletin contains a mixed bag of articles, from the message for the week to jokes. There is no standard format for the bulletin as every week it contains different features. However, every edition of the bulletin contains a message from either the Bishop or one of the pastors-in-charge of the branch churches. The majority of the messages are based on themes or topics relating to the gospel of prosperity and deliverance, two characteristics of the church.

5:5. Membership.

The Headquarters Church at Ascension Town has 1000 registered members. Twenty per cent (200) were interviewed to elicit information on their socio-economic background and their reasons for joining the Church. In the branch churches at Byrne Lane, Kissy, Wellington and Brookfields, this same exercise was carried out.

Before anybody is accepted into full membership in the Church they had to renounce their membership in any associations with traditional religio-cultural societies such as *poro, oje, wunde, sande, bundo and, hunting*. Membership in these societies are not consonant with the born-again religious perception and are condemned in the sharpest of terms and summarily dismissed as “demonism”. The Church also dissuades its members from the practice of ancestor veneration for e.g. the *awujoh* and graveside visits. Furthermore, those who still avail themselves of the services of the traditional religious specialists such as the native doctors and herbalists are condemned.

In the Headquarters Church, 124 females and 76 males were interviewed. The survey further revealed that 127 interviewees were single and 66 married. There were four widowers, one widow, one divorcee and one female who was separated. Although the sample revealed that there were more women than men, from my personal observation at Church services and some other Church functions that I attended, I observed that men were also well represented in the Church membership. Perhaps two reasons for there not being represented as such in the sample was because they did not attend Fellowship meetings regularly and most of them were away from the country because their lives were threatened by the “Junta Boys”¹⁴⁹.

¹⁴⁹ Members of the Armed Forces of the Revolutionary Forces (AFRC)

The ages of respondents in the sample survey ranged from eighteen to 65 years. The average age of the interviewees was 35 and over 80 per cent were between twenty-one and 50 years of age and 38 per cent were between 30 and 40. As far as employment was concerned the following list reflects that only 16.5 per cent were economically unproductive i.e. those unemployed and the housewives. The other occupations were as follow:

Table 5:2. Occupations

Occupations	No	%.
Clerical Workers	38	19
Commerce	24	12
Forces/Security	5	2.5
Housewife	8	4.0
Messenger	8	4.0
Professional	25	12.5
Self-employed	14	7.0
Student	37	18.5
Unemployed	25	12.5
Others	16	8.0
TOTAL	200	100

Source; Fieldwork from February 1997 to October 1998

From the above table it could be deduced that membership of the church is drawn from people from all works of life. People in all the categories regard one another as “brothers” and “sisters” in and out of the church.

5:5:1. Education.

The question on education revealed that 97 per cent of the respondents had received some form of education (11 per cent of these attended university). Table 5:3 gives a breakdown of the educational status of the respondents.

Table 5:3. Educational Status of Members

Level	No.	%
Primary	27	13.5
Secondary	105	52.5
Tertiary	40	20.0
University	22	11.0
No School	6	3.0
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field data From February 1997 to October 1998

5:5:2. Ethnicity.

Nine out of the seventeen ethnic groups in Sierra Leone are represented in the survey of members at the headquarters Church. Thirty-nine per cent of the respondents were Krio and a good number of them originally belonged to either the Anglican or Methodist denomination. The three foreigners in the sample were two males from the Ibo ethnic group in Nigeria and one female Lebanese. The Lebanese became a member of the Church because she was healed during one of the Miracle and healing services at the Church, after spending a lot of money on medical bills. It is interesting to note that there is a member from the Fullah ethnic group, one of the ethnic groups who are die-hard Muslims. The table below gives a breakdown of the ethnic groups and their numbers in the sample.

Table 5:4 Ethnicity of members

Ethnic Group	No.	%
Fullah	1	0.5
Kono	3	1.5
Krio (Aku and Christian)	78	39.0
Kru	17	8.5
Kuranko	1	0.5
Limba	20	10.0
Mende	44	22.0
Susu	2	1.0
Temne	31	15.5
Foreigner	3	1.5
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field data from February 1997 to October 1998.

The length of membership of respondents in the survey revealed that 37 per cent of them joined the Church in 1996 and 28.5 per cent in 1997. This could be accounted for in terms of the establishment of the Deliverance School in 1995, when people began to realise the impact the Church was making on the Society. The survey revealed that only Four per cent and one per cent became members between 1990 and 1993 as most members who could have been considered as founder members of the Church have been assigned duties in the branch churches. The table gives a breakdown of the length of membership of the respondents.

Table 5:5. Date of Joining

Year	No.
1990	1
1992	2
1993	1
1994	19
1995	33
1996	74
1997	58
1998	12
TOTAL	200

Source: Field data from February 1997 to October 1998

5:6. The Bible School Ministry.

The Bible School Ministry began operating the Flaming Bible Centre in Freetown in 1988, in Bo in 1992 and in Kissy in 1998. The Centre in Freetown started off with eleven students (seven males and four females). Among this first crop of students was a former Assistant Commissioner of Police, Rev. Rex Johnson who is a member of the Anglican denomination and now heads St. Paul's Church in Port Loko. The other members were from Flaming Bible Church and other charismatic churches. The main reason for founding the Centre was for “teaching men to reach men” (2nd Tim. 2:2). The Centre was changed to an Institute in 1997. The reason for this change was that the School had grown so much and they were now offering courses at higher levels. The motto for the Institute is “Study to show thyself approved unto God” (2nd Tim. 2:15). The Institute is not only for Flaming members, but is open to young believers, mature Christians and Christian workers from other charismatic churches, Parachurch organisations and even members of some mainline churches.

In its formative years, the school offered courses at the foundation and preliminary levels only. As the school expanded, it offered courses at the final level with specialisation in the following subjects:

1. Pastoring
2. Teaching
3. Mission
4. Church Planting
5. Crusade Planning
6. Children's Ministry
7. Youth Ministry

5:6:1. Structure and Organisation.

The School is headed by the Director of Studies who is the Founder of the Flaming Evangelical Ministries, Bishop Abu Koroma. He is the Spiritual Overseer and also a Lecturer. Next in the hierarchical structure is the Acting Principal, Mrs. Elizabeth Sonney-Joe who also takes on the roles of Counsellor (to both Lecturers and students) and Registrar of the School. The School has a Dean, Pastor Sheik Bangura who is also the Pastor-in-charge of the Wellington Flaming Bible Church. His role as Dean of the school includes planning the curriculum, co-ordinating examinations and ensuring its security as well as giving some lectures.

Sister Julia Leigh, the Pastor -in-charge of the Byrne Lane Flaming Bible Church is the Treasurer. She keeps the school-fees and graduation fees as they do not have a bank account for the school yet. She also gives some lectures. Sister Leigh is a product of the Monrovia Bible Training Centre (MBTC) and received Christ while she was a student at the Centre. Lecturers are drawn from the Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses. The school also employs lecturers from other Charismatic Bible Schools and Churches. During the 1997 and 1998 sessions there were ten Lecturers on the staff.

The courses offered at the Flaming Bible Institute are at four levels: Foundation, Preliminary, Intermediate and Final (specialisation). Each programme lasts for six months except the Foundation course which lasts for one month. Different topics are taught at each level. Spiritual Warfare, a topic taught at the preliminary year is a very popular topic among most students attending Bible Schools in Freetown especially among those from the mainline Churches. The popularity of Bible Schools generally among members of mainline churches could be accounted for in terms of the non-academic requirements of these Bible Schools and Centres in comparison to the academic requirements of Bible Schools and Colleges run by the mainline churches. Furthermore, from interviews I had with some students both from Flaming Bible Institute and other Bible Colleges, I gathered that they could now find answers to the ideas surrounding Satan and his kingdom, as mainline churches do not entertain discussions on such topics.

The Institute is funded locally from the fees and graduation fees paid by students. From time to time past students donate cash or kind when they can. The School has a

library with approximately 50 books written by American, Ghanaian and Nigerian Evangelists. The library also holds audio and video cassettes by these authors such as Kenneth Copeland, Kenneth Hagin, Benson Idahosa and Mensa Otabil.

5:6:2.Membership

The membership of the Institute has steadily grown since its inception in 1988. Table 1 gives a breakdown of the number of students and the level over the years.

Table 5:6. Membership

Year	Level			M	F	Total
	Prel.	Inter.	Final			
1988	11			7	4	11
1989	20	11	-	14	17	31
1990	22	15	-	15	22	37
1991	37	6	-	18	25	43
1992	28	20	-	22	26	48
1993	31	21	-	20	32	52
1994	43	25	-	23	45	68
1995	27	36	20	30	53	83
1996	35	20	25	35	45	80
1997	-	-	-	-	-	-
1998	29	38	20	38	49	87
TOTAL	283	192	65	222	318	540

Source: Fieldwork from February 1997 to October 1998

The Institute since its inception in 1998 has held a graduation ceremony every year except for 1989 when the students for that year graduated with the others in the 1990 sessions. Before the church moved to its present location at Ascension Town, the graduation ceremonies were held at the Miatta Conference Centre or the Vine Memorial School Hall at Congo Cross. It was always held in the month of June. Apart from the presentation of certificates to the graduands and gifts to the members of staff, three important items were usually included in the programme:- testimonies, a speech by the best student of the year and a speech by the guest speaker for the occasion. The guest speaker was usually a Pastor from one of the Charismatic Churches.

5:7. The School of Deliverance and Demonology

The School of Deliverance and Demonology started in 1995 and the idea of founding the School was conceived by the Founder of the Flaming Evangelical Ministries, Bishop Abu Koroma. After reading a lot of books written by prominent Nigerians concerning deliverance, Bishop Koroma came to realise that there was a need for deliverance in Sierra Leone as well. There were a lot of people who were dying prematurely as a result of oppression; people whom doctors could not help out of their medical problems because they consider these problems as *blackman sik*. He also believed that there were many people who needed to be delivered. He explained to me that there were many ways in which Satan establishes legal rights in the lives of many people. According to the Bishop when some people were born, they were dedicated to spirits during their naming ceremonies and some others, because of their occult backgrounds, it is incumbent on them to become members of secret societies. Another way in which Satan claims legal rights in the lives of people is when people have problems and they seek solutions in the “White Garment” or spiritual churches. These churches take their clients to the beach for deliverance and the clients normally come in contact with water spirits. Personal names of people is another media through which Satan takes its toll on people. God attaches a lot of importance to names. In the Bible, Jacob’s name was changed from a supplanter to Israel, Abram to Abraham. Names, for the Bishop, have deep meanings, particularly among Africans. If one answers to a particular name, the spirit behind that name has the legal right to attack the owner of that name. It is a common practice among Sierra Leoneans to name their children after their ancestors.

Bishop Koroma believes that if the ancestor after whom the child is named had something to do with evil spirits, that evil spirit will be transferred to the child. One vulnerable group, he believes, who need deliverance more are children. Children see demons from their spirits. According to him, “spirit relates to spirit”, so they perceive these spirits. This group of children are referred to as *pekin way get yai* (a child with a psychic eye or third eye). This situation mostly comes about if the mothers of such children consult a diviner during pregnancy. When the child is born, the spirit whom the diviner deals with has a legal right over the child’s life. Sometimes also, the fathers or mothers are engaged in witchcraft activities and as a result, the children become eligible for initiation into the witchcraft society.

Membership into secret societies is another avenue for Satan to establish legal rights in the lives of people. As members of these societies, one has to go through initiation rites which for the most time includes a blood covenant. Satan understands the implications of a blood covenant. Once that covenant is established, he knows that a legal right has also been established for him to oppress the members and put them in bondage. At the core of every secret society are powerful demonic spirits. During initiation into these secret societies, marks are given to the initiates on their back, hands or feet. These marks serve as protection from ill-health and poverty. The devil or spirit who controls the secret society is one who does not give something for nothing and needs to be compensated. The compensation he expects is the right to oppress the member's life.

As a result of the works of Satan, people become "demon-oppressed" (the Bishop does not believe that people are demon possessed but rather it is the demon who oppresses people). People have become aware that they belong to one or the other of those categories of people being oppressed by the devil, so they crowd at the healing, miracle and deliverance services to be delivered. The Bishop believed that if people were trained in the School to widen their knowledge of Satan and the operations in his Kingdom, diagnose demonic cases as well as fully appreciate one's position and potential as a child of God in relationship to the spirit world this would ease the problem of having to cope with a lot of demonic cases in the Church. The School was therefore opened in June 1995 with 99 students mainly from charismatic churches.

The course at the School lasts for four months and classes are held every Sunday at the Church from 5 - 6.30 p.m. The topics covered during the course are as follows:

1. Origin of Satan and demons
2. Reasons why you should not fear the evil spirit world
3. How demons gain entrance into Man
4. Different forms of demonic covenants
5. Can a Christian be demon-possessed?
6. Demon obsession, oppression and possession analysed
7. How to be an effective Deliverance Minister
8. How demons leave their victim
9. Deliverance and Healing Ministry
10. Implications of renunciation and covenant breaking prayers
11. Witchcraft: the testimonies of victims, members and their confessions
13. How to keep your deliverance

14. Weapons to defeat the enemy
15. Diagnosing demonic cases: Curses - cause and cure
16. Spiritual warfare jargons: *sweh blood*;¹⁵⁰ *Gina-Musa*;¹⁵¹ *Krifi Stone*;¹⁵² *Sara*¹⁵³; stream-bathing; *awujoh* and ghosts.
17. Cult and their covenant, Freemasonry etc.

In 1996, there were 110 students (44 males and 66 females) some of whom came from the mainline denominations and Mission-related Churches. Out of the 110 students in the School, there were two students from the Roman Catholic denomination, five from the Methodist, one from Baptist and seven from the United Methodist Church. In 1997, 224 students applied but only 206 were accepted. Out of this number, 115 were females and 91 were males. When I asked the Dean of the School, Evangelist Christopher John what was responsible for the high number of women among the students, he said that “women are always full of marital and children’s problems but above all they like to know a lot of things generally.” The School of Deliverance also holds its own Graduation ceremony which takes the same format as that of the Bible School.

5:8. Healing, Miracle and Deliverance Service

Every last Sunday in the month is healing, miracle and deliverance service. This service starts at 10.30 a.m and sometimes goes on until 4.00 p.m. This is the most well attended service (from church records and personal assessment as I have attended these services several times) throughout the month, as people believe that the healing powers of the Bishop is at its height. Three days prior to this service, the Bishop goes into a retreat when he fasts and prays for the success of this service and the anointing of the Holy Spirit on him. During this retreat, he receives messages from the Holy Spirit pertaining to the Ministry as well as about its members.

The first part of the service is conducted by the Assistant Pastor, Pastor Olamide Macauley. Pastor Ola is a Krio and hails from one of the well-to-do Krio families at Leicester. He is 34 years old. Krio ethnicity is synonymous with Christianity, meaning

¹⁵⁰ A pact or bond made by two people, usually a husband and wife. It is done by partaking each other’s blood. The significance of this is that either of them will not abandon the other and will be life-long partners..

¹⁵¹ A spirit meant to bring good or evil to someone

¹⁵² It is a stone which is either in the form of a charm or a talisman and is quite popular among the Temne ethnic group.,

¹⁵³ Bits of uncooked foods deposited in the streets, often at cross-roads in order to ward off ill-luck or evil.

that you belong to one of the mainline denominations. Pastor Ola was an Anglican before he became a member of Flaming Bible Church. He is an assistant lecturer at the mechanical engineering department at Fourah Bay College. The first part of the service includes praise and worship, prayers for the State, end of the rebel war, the Body of Christ, Flaming Bible Ministries, the Bishop and his family and for members of the Church. One Elder and a Deacon or Deaconess will read the Old Testament and the New Testament Readings respectively. This is followed by the hymn for the day which is found in the weekly bulletin; this hymn is usually from one of the hymn-books of the mainline denominations. The first part ends with a praise and worship session.

The second part of the service starts with the sermon by the Bishop. He usually bases the sermon in relation to demons and the importance of deliverance for born-again Christians. After the sermon, members of the Intercessory and Deliverance teams move about in the Church praying in every corner and they are joined by the other church officials and members of the congregation. Each group prays for what they desire. The prayers go on for about half an hour, after which the Bishop begins to pray the prayer of healing. The worshippers are told to touch the affected parts of their bodies as well as pray for what they want to be delivered from. During this prayer, people who are possessed by evil spirits or demons fall on the floor. When this happens, one or two members of the Deliverance team will move towards each victim and begin to pray. Sometimes the cases require a battle with the demons, so the victims are taken by male ushers to a big room in an annexe in the Church. In this annexe, another group of deliverance team members are waiting in there for such cases. They begin to pray and cast out the demons, sometimes calling the names of different spirits which they claim the Holy Ghost has revealed to them as the spirit responsible for the victims' plight. When the victims gain consciousness, they are interviewed by a Church officer and also given a form to fill. The questions on this form elicit information on the victim's family background (religious, social and cultural), childhood experiences, health (type of ailments), dreams they usually have (e.g. having extra-marital sex consuming food and drink), membership in secret society, spiritual churches, Masonic Lodges, or the Rosicrucian Order, possession of charms or family heirlooms and victims of curses.

When these forms are completed and returned to the Ministry's office, based on the information on the forms, a date is set for an oral interview. After the oral interview is completed, the victim then begins to attend the "Faith Clinic" at the Church on Saturdays.

5:9. Deliverance, Ministration and Faith Clinic

Deliverance Ministration (Faith Clinic) is held at the Headquarters Church every Saturday from 3.00 p.m until 6.00 p.m. The first part of this session takes the form of a service where they open with praise and worship, followed by prayers by the Director of the "Faith Clinic", Elder Eranus Thompson. Elder Thompson is a Kru and a graduate from Fourah Bay College. He was a member of the Jarwlee Lewis West African Methodist Church before becoming a member of Flaming Bible Church. After the prayers, a short exposition is given by him or any member of the deliverance team on topics relating to the import of deliverance based on Bible passages. People who have been delivered at the Clinic are invited to come up to the altar to give testimonies on their healing and deliverance.

The second part of the session is the deliverance session. Victims are assigned to different groups based on the information in their forms. At least four members of the deliverance team are attached to the different groups which include: mental problems, financial, demons/spirits and chronic ailments. Each group falls into one corner of the church and begins to pray and the members of the deliverance team start commanding the spirit to leave the victim by shouting "come out now", "break loose in Jesus' name." They would also hold the victim's head and breathe over them and shout "come out now, you spirit of (for e.g. of insanity or mermaid)." They claim that the spirits are identified to them by the Holy Spirit, whom they believe does the deliverance. During this session, the Bishop will move from one group to the other and help out with any case the Holy Spirit directs him to handle. The prayers continue until the victims begin to show signs of being delivered, like vomiting, urinating or foaming. After the deliverance process is over, the victims are counselled on the importance of the sustenance of their faith. They warn the victims that the devil does not accept defeat and might want to come back but if their faith is sustained, there is no more room for the devil.

The activities at the Faith Clinic are one of the avenues through which the Church gains membership. When victims have been delivered, they apply to become members of the Church. Although one criteria for membership into the Church is that one has to go through deliverance, there are still others like: the desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit, being a born-again and seeking baptism by immersion. Sometimes it is difficult for people to meet all these criteria.

5:10. Crusades and Revivals.

Since the Church was established in 1986, it has held one major crusade every year which is termed an “Annual Breakthrough/Miracle Crusade”, and minor crusades and revivals at least three times a year. A long healing service is an integral part of every crusade and revival. I attended the Breakthrough Miracle/Crusade '98 which took place at the Ephraim Robinson Municipal School, Congo Town from 25 to 29 March 1998 and at the Headquarters Church, Ascension Town from 30 March to 4 April 1998. This Crusade was quite timely as it was held during the height of the civil war and Freetown had just been attacked by the rebels. This Crusade served as a venue where people found solace as the government had failed to secure their lives and properties. It also provided an avenue which the Freetown community was encouraged to believe that although the war had reached the capital, Freetown would be controlled by God, if only people prayed sincerely and trusted in God.

The preparation for the Crusade was carried out by the Missions and Crusade/Evangelism Ministries. The Praise and Worship team, Instrumentalists and Exalters are directly under the Crusade /Evangelism Ministry, and they are responsible for all the musical aspects of the Crusade. The Intercessory, Deliverance, Helps, Counsellors, Ushers and Usherettes who are under the Missions Ministry also played a significant role in the Crusade. Each group is assigned their different roles, which they carried out with much enthusiasm and vigour.

The first day of the Crusade at the Headquarters Church started at 5.30 p.m with choruses to warm up those present in the Church. At 6.00 p.m, Evangelist Christopher John came up the stage and before he started to build up the faith of the congregation he said: “I circle this building with the Blood of Jesus, no evil spirits can enter this building

now. All demons GO! GO! GO!.” The blood of Jesus is presented as a powerful medicine which can secure a safe area in an area manifested with hostile spirits.

Brother John then went on to use the story of the death of Lazarus and his subsequent resurrection from St John 11 to illustrate how faith in Jesus could raise the dead. He next used the story of the woman with the issue of blood as an example to illustrate that faith does work. He warned the congregation that sometimes the spirit of pride hinders our miracles. He cited John 10:10 and James 1:17 and stressed that “Every good and perfect gift comes from God” and that Jesus came to give us life and give us more abundantly. He concluded by saying that “tonight if you believe you will see the Glory of God.” The teachings lasted for half-an-hour. At the end of the teachings the Church was packed full with 963 people inside the Church (635 in the ground floor and 228 in the gallery). There were also 39 people in the porch of the Church and a further 132 in and around the compound of the Church, making a total of 1034 people including children who were at the Crusade before the start of the programme on the first day.

At 6.3 p.m, Sister Samuella Ogoo led the congregation into some choruses starting with “We are together again.” After five or more choruses were sung, Bro. Donald Opeh Nicol did the opening prayer and concluded it with a loud shout of “Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered.” (Psalm 68 :10). He asked the congregation to repeat this phrase together with him three times.

The opening was followed by a Praise and Worship session led by Sister Nancy George with the song “Our Father in Heaven we glorify your Name and we bow down before you”. This Praise session ended with a popular chorus, *Tel am tenki, tell papa God tenki*, (say thank you, say thank you Father God). At the end of that chorus Pastor Sylvanus Murray of the Brookfields Church led the Worship session. Worship session is one in which the whole congregation participates in communal prayers and pleas for the Holy Spirit to fill the Church and its environs and descend its healing powers on those who had come for healing or any other problem.

Praise and Worship time was followed by announcements and notices, which were done by Pastor Sheik Bangura, Pastor of Wellington Flaming Bible Church. He started off by asking the congregation to shout “Power! Power! Power!” and then “Jesus! Jesus!

Jesus!” These phrases are no doubt copied from books, video and audio cassettes by American Evangelists which could be found in most places in Freetown. He encouraged them to bring friends, relatives and the sick to the Crusade and to be prompt so that they would listen to the teachings which begin at 5.30 p.m, before the start of the programme.

Sister Mary Levi, one of the deaconesses in the church, conducted offering time. She started off by telling the congregation that “When you give, you receive tenfold of what you have given.” She also admonished them about the blessings behind giving to the Lord. Cajoling choruses were sung like *My God is gud* (my God is good) and *Natin nor dey way e nor able do oh* (nothing is impossible for God to do). At the end of the offering, the Sister prayed especially for those who had given, and for those who were not able to give that God would provide for them.

Before the main item on the programme for the day, the Message, was given by Bishop Abu Koroma, his wife Rev. Patricia Koroma introduced him. Bishop Koroma started his message by telling the congregation about a lady that was mentally disturbed but had now received her healing. The lady was called up to the stage and the Bishop promised that he would give her time the next day to give her testimony. The Message was from Acts 1:3-10 and the topic was, “the healing of the lame man at the temple called ‘beautiful’.” In his message, the Bishop told the congregation that so many people have failed them but Jesus will never fail them. He attacked the Aladura churches of having failed so many people and added that “Flaming Bible Church does not have mauve, green or blue gowns but they have Jesus.” He continued by telling them that “we do not burn *churai*¹⁵⁴ or give holy water, but in the name of Jesus the congregation will rise up and walk.” During the Message, 68 people came in, bringing the total number of people at the Crusade for the first day to 1102. After the Message which lasted for 30 minutes, the Bishop asked the congregation to pray and talk to God as the Holy Spirit was present in the Church right now. He told those who were ready to receive Christ as their personal Saviour to come up to the Altar and that they should not be ashamed to proclaim Christ as their Saviour. A total of 156 people received Christ and gave their lives to Jesus. Ninety, out of the 156 people were Christians who belonged to the different denominations in the mainline churches. The rest were

¹⁵⁴ scented pebbles used to ward off evil spirits.

Muslims who were convinced by the message and decided to turn to Christianity. Rev. Ken-Leigh prayed and led these people to Jesus by asking them to repeat after him “From now on I am a Child of God”. The “Altar Call” ended at 9.00 p.m.

After the “Altar Call”, the Ministration prayer was offered by the Bishop. This prayer was for great things to happen like the Anointing of God to descend and for self-declaration to destroy the work of the devil in individual lives. During this prayer, a girl of about fourteen years old who was possessed by a demonic spirit was brought forward. The Bishop asked the congregation to repeat “The Blood of Jesus” after him three times and “In the Name of Jesus” three times also and after this to bind and loose every spirit.

After this prayer, it was deliverance time, the much awaited item in any Crusade and which is the main reason for people to attend Crusades in Freetown. Prayers were again offered by the Bishop, members of the deliverance team, the Intercessors, Pastors of the different branch Churches and by the congregation. During the prayers, the following manifestations occurred:

- Religious spirit 5
- Children with witchcraft 3
- Serpentine spirit 2 (one was violent)
- Demonic spirit 7
- Spirit of lust 1

There was also a woman with a violent witchcraft spirit attack who scratched all over her body and shouted out “help me! help me”. Those people who also showed signs of being possessed were prayed for by the members of the deliverance team and the Intercessors. Some of them had to be taken to a room in the compound of the Church to be revived.

The Crusade came to a close at 9.45 p.m when the closing prayer was offered by Bro. Kingston King. The recessional chorus “I am delivered” was sung as the Bishop, visiting Pastors, Pastors of the different branches marched to the vestry of the Church.

The second day of the Crusade followed the same procedure as that of the first day. The teaching was done by Pastor Bai Sesay, Pastor-in-charge of Evangel Assemblies of God

at Murray Town. His topic was “Trust in God and Believe.” Pastor Sesay pointed out that what causes poverty in our lives is sin and to support this, he quoted Hebrews 11:1, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” At the end of the teaching, he asked the congregation to pray and ask God for anything they desire as he knew that some of them needed visas to travel but it is proving difficult to get, some people have problems in their marital homes etc. This was the time to open up their hearts to God as He is ready to answer to their needs. After this, the chorus “We adore you Holy Spirit”, was sang softly accompanied by an electric keyboard.

After the Teaching, the opening prayer was said by the Assistant Pastor of the headquarters Church, Pastor Olamide Macauley. At this point, there were 1469 people present at the Crusade, Some of them were inside the Church, others in the gallery and the rest at the porch and in the compound.

The praise and worship time on this second day was led by Bro. Kingston King who started as usual with “Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!” which was repeated by the congregation and “Power! Power! Power! which the congregation shouted out after him. He started this session with a worshipful song “Pass me not o gentle Saviour, hear my humble cry.” After the song, there was a call to worship God in which everybody joined in. This was followed by Praise time with two choruses, “All power in Heaven belongs to God” and *Jesus never fails me oh* (Jesus never fails). The songs were backed by an electric guitar, an amplifier and African drums. The congregation moved all around the Church dancing and clapping. This was followed by offering time which was conducted by Bro. Fred Jones and the choruses “We are calling Papa God” and “He is a Miracle working God” were sung.

On this second day of the Crusade, the Praise and Worship team of Flaming Church at Brookfields made a contribution by singing two songs “Jesus is everywhere” and “Come along down to the Bridge.” This contribution was followed by announcements by Pastor Sheik Bangura. He encouraged the congregation to come to the Crusade on time to listen to the teachings. He also advertised the audio and video cassettes of the Crusade which were sold at Le1000 (20p in sterling)) and Le 8000 (£1. 60p. in sterling) respectively.

After the announcements, a short exhortation was given by Elder Abdul Momoh. He admonished the people not to go back after getting their breakthrough and he quoted scriptures from Acts 7:10 and read Mark 7 to lift Jesus' Name.

The introduction of the Bishop for the day's teaching was done by Pastor Matthew Lansana, Pastor-in-charge of Joy Assemblies of God, Short St. When the Bishop took the lectern, he started off by encouraging people to come and listen to the teachings on the Blood of Jesus Christ. He also encouraged the congregation to come in promptly on the next day with whatever God will lay in their hearts as Mission offering to the Gambia where they have a fellowship. He then gave a recap of the Message for the previous day and offered prayers before he started the Message of the day on the topic "How to change your destiny." His text was from Genesis 1: 29-30 and used Jabez to illustrate his teaching. He concluded his Message by urging the congregation that through faith in God, they can be able to change their destiny for the better. As usual, after the message, the congregation was told to pray and ask God to receive their pleas and heart's desire. After this, a Call for people to give their lives to Jesus was made. A total of 130 people gave their lives to Jesus and were asked to come forward to be prayed for. Some, whose hands were not up at the time of asking, put their hands up and a total of 600 people went to the Altar for prayers. Another 30 people who were sitting down put their hands up when the prayer was going on bringing the total to 630. During the Altar Call, the worshipful song "Come Holy Spirit with Thy strength and Thy Power" was sung. Pastor Matthew Lansana led the people to Jesus by asking them to repeat the charge after him. The Ushers and Usherettes went round to take the names of those who had made the Altar Call. Unfortunately, there were not enough Ushers and Usherettes to go around before the end of the Crusade to write down the names of all the people.

Deliverance time followed immediately after the Altar Call. During this time of Ministration, a general prayer was done to bind every spirit that is contrary to the spirit of God, which was oppressing individual lives. A self declaration prayer was read by the Bishop who asked the congregation to repeat it after him. He also prayed for the destruction of any connections in individual lives to the Kingdom of darkness. The following manifestations were made during Ministration:

Violent demonic spirits	5
Ancestral spirits	1
Children with demonic spirits	2
Religious spirits	4
Witchcraft spirit	5
Serpentine spirit	1
Mental	1

As usual those victims who could not be delivered during this time were taken to a room in the compound where members of the deliverance team prayed for them. The crusade came to a close at 9.15 p.m.

Flaming Bible Church, founded by Bishop Abu Koroma, has become one of the most well-known churches in Freetown. The Church even has branches overseas, including London, an underlying theology of the Church is “prosperity teaching”, which advocates a Christian committed to the will of God will know success in every part of life. Most times Bishop Koroma uses Duncan Williams’ book, *You Are Destined to Succeed!* to illustrate his teachings. In this book, commencing from the genesis account of the world before the fall, Williams argues that God never planned that human beings would be sick, hungry or defeated. Because people disobeyed God, sin entered human experience, but if human beings turn to God and obey His spiritual laws, they will be blessed in abundance. Bishop Koroma holds himself up as an example to show that if God has done it for him, God can do it for those who believe Him because he has the latest Mercedes Benz, a lovely house and a beautiful wife.

In addition to the emphasis on prosperity teaching the Church also puts emphasis on Deliverance. The basic idea of deliverance is that a Christian’s progress and advance can be blocked by demons who maintain some power over him, despite his or her coming to Christ. This is one of the reasons why a lot of people attend the deliverance school at Flaming Bible Church. At this Church also, they believe that children are most vulnerable because naming ceremonies and secret societies make people susceptible to evil spirits. The church runs a Bible School which is well attended, even by members of mainline dominations. There is also a weekly newspaper known as the Flaming Chronicle.

For the sociologist the Flaming Bible Church is a paradigm for the new religious movements that have transformed the Christian landscape in Freetown. In my opinion we can see this in the following way:

First is the question of the personality of the leader. Flaming Bible Church is almost synonymous with the name “Bishop Koroma.”. Bishop Koroma is a university graduate. He had a religious conversion, which most observers would accept as genuine, but he had very little theological training. He owes his leadership to his charismatic personality, buttressed by the visions he had after his conversions. “Flaming” is not a one-man Church; Bishop Koroma has many trusted lieutenants whose contribution to the success of the Church is vital to the Church’s ministry. But like many other new charismatic movements, the founder who has elevated himself to the position of bishop, carries the hopes and aspirations of the group in a way that no one else within the group can. As a consequence, and this is where some people have doubts about the movement, he rides a Mercedes Benz. For many outsiders this is a symbol of success in the secular world, whereas for the believers and followers it is a sign of prosperity and of God’s blessing. Nevertheless it cannot be doubted that charismatic leaders like Bishop Koroma go out of their way to pastor their flock in a way that most ministers in mainline churches do not. Bishop Koroma and pastors like him pray and fast ardently for their congregation when their health fails and counsel them when they are in trouble.

Looking at the Flaming Bible Church with a critical eye leads one to ask why there are so many new Churches or denominations, many with exotic names.¹⁵⁵ Perhaps when we ask that question we should also ask why newly converted Christians or nominal Christians who have gone through a “born-again” experience seldom join the mainline denominations or alternatively stay in these established groups. Perhaps we need to ask the question in another way: why are there so many new groups? This, some would argue, is one of the weaknesses of the new movements. Initially they thrive on the dynamism of the leader and/or the freshness of the message. But sometimes personality conflicts occur and splinter groups come into existence. Schism is not a new phenomenon in the history of the Church but in modern times it tends to happen more

¹⁵⁵ It is important for the leaders of a new group to find a name that is different from all the others in order to preserve their own identity. It may be an interesting task by itself to do a study on how these different names are chosen and how the name is related to the character of the group or the leader(s).

often in “charismatic” Churches rather than in mainline, established ones. One should hasten to add that this has not been the fate of the Flaming Bible Church.

A third important issue raised by Bishop Koroma’s group has to do with the doctrine of deliverance, especially in relation to the “guilt” of little children. This sounds a little dodgy, to put it mildly. It is a serious problem because this is the kind of doctrine that has been misunderstood in some countries (e.g. Nigeria) leading to the death of children who have been accused of witchcraft. The problem also leads one to cast doubts on the method of Bible interpretation employed by “charismatic” Churches. But perhaps this is a theological question rather than a sociological one.

CHAPTER SIX

Sisters in Leadership: The Role of Women in the Transformation of Freetown Christianity

6:1. Introduction

In this chapter because the literature on women is quite scanty in Sierra Leone, I will briefly look at a few studies done on women in other parts of Africa. I will then focus on the role of women in the transformation of Freetown Christianity by assessing their contributions to church life in specific roles as founders, leaders, healers or participants as “ordinary” members in “born-again” and spiritual churches. This will serve to illuminate our understanding of the degree to which women’s roles in the churches have contributed to the transformation of Freetown Christianity. While the primary objective of this chapter is to demonstrate the extensive nature of the role of women in born-again churches in the late 1980s to early 1990s, some attention will be paid to women’s role in the mainline churches in the mid 1960s for comparative purposes. This comparison will enhance our understanding of the change that has taken place since the late 1980s. The role and functions of Women Intercessory Networks (WIN) in Freetown, a branch of an international women’s organisation will also be examined. The information presented in this chapter is as a result of interviews held with the different female founders and heads of branches and other church officials during fieldwork between February 1997 to October 1998.

6:1:1. Literature review

Among the most recent, detailed works that explore women, religion and gender, particularly in Africa, a few of them, such as Oduyoye (1992, 1995), Crumbley (1985, 1989, 1992), Bateye (2001,2002), Olajubu (2003), Sackey (2006), Parsitau and Mwaura (2010) stand out.

Crumbley (1992) examines the variations in religious beliefs and organisational practices associated with menstruation by comparing three Aladura denominations. In the same article she also examines the actual and perceived roles of Aladura women in church history and in church structures. Her examination of these roles are considered useful for the purpose of my research whilst her ideology of impurity caused by menstruation will serve as a possible theme to investigate.

In her analysis of women's role in the founding and development of three churches: the Celestial Church of Christ (CCC), Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) and the Church of the Lord Aladura (CLA), she noted that in the CAC, women like Mrs. Ajiri were instrumental in founding the first local Ibadan branch Parish and Mrs. Olaiya also played an important role in establishing the London parish, whilst Mrs. Bola Sodeinde, the successful business woman was represented as the "right hand" of both the founder Oshoffa and his successor. Although Crumbley gives evidence to show that the first two women actually found the Ibadan and London branches, she fails to give the actual role Mrs. Sodeinde played in the founding of the church. Her role might have been one of an economic pillar, since she was a business woman.

In the Christ Apostolic Church, Crumbley identifies Mrs. Sophie Odunlami, a school teacher at Isoyin in Igebu who played an important role in the Diamond society through her preaching and eventually laid the cornerstone for the founding of the CAC. Mrs. Odunlami's role bears striking similarities to one of the female founders Prophetess Tina Strasser-King whom I have investigated.

In the Church of the Lord Aladura Crumbley notes that although official histories document the place of women in the history of the church, there is no clear evidence that any of them founded churches as is the case of the other two churches. She also fails to give any reason why women in the CLA do not found churches. This is a significant area which I hope to investigate.

In her article "Gender and Power in African Christianity: African Instituted Churches and Pentecostal Churches" (2005), Philomena Mwaura adopts a historical perspective to focus mainly on African Instituted Churches particularly those of the spirit and the Neo-Pentecostal or Charismatic Churches. She discusses the role of women as agents of Religious Change, Founders, Healers, Evangelists, Participants in these different category of churches. She gives a wide variety of examples from churches in Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia, Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Africa. In this article she considers the founding of churches by women in Africa as the ultimate act of religious independency and self-determination, experiences which were denied them in the mainline churches. She however adds that although women's spiritual powers are recognized in these churches they nevertheless experience restriction and

have to contend with negative attitudes. In spiritual African Initiated Churches for example, women's full participation of and exercise is hampered and restricted by taboos surrounding menstruation and childbirth. She concludes that, despite its apparent contradictions, the church in Africa has created an enlarged space for women and contributed to their emancipation from oppressive cultural practices and culturally ascribed gender roles.

Sackey (2006) compares and contrasts the older (spiritual) and the newer (Pentecostal/Charismatic) churches in Ghana. She also makes cross-references with other churches in West Africa, particularly Nigeria. According to Sackey, African Instituted Churches (AIC) are gaining strong social popularity and pervasive influence in Ghana through their roles as founders, religious leaders, healers, mothers, social workers, politicians, custodians of culture and partners in development. She argues that capacity for religious experience particularly encounters with the divine is not restricted to men. For Sackey, religious experience is a universal occurrence that should not be viewed with skepticism when it happens among African women in an African setting. Through their Religious experiences, women have paved a way in the history of AIC's that in turn has effected a religious revitalization.

Sackey's ethnographic study acknowledges and places women in the relevant historical perspective in the development of AIC's and in broader process of change in gender and religion in Ghana. Her work illustrates how women used and adapted their familiar culture to challenge the legitimacy of western religious influences and hegemony.

In her conclusion, Sackey contends that women's involvement and participation in AICs is an important religious development in Africa that would not have been sustainable without the shared responsibilities of both genders. Women recognize the importance of men, while men do not hide the fact that women are equally capable of performing almost every role assigned or not assigned to them.

Parsitau and Mwaura (2010) in their "Gospel without Borders: Gender Dynamics of transnational Religious Movements in Kenya and the Kenyan Diaspora" examine Kenyan religious movement that have become transnational and feminized. Their study situates gender within the processes of globalization, migration and transnationalism.

They use Faith Evangelistic Ministries and the Teresia Wairimu Evangelistic Ministries USA Chapter; Jesus is Alive Ministries and International; and single Ladies Interdenominational Ministries to demonstrate how women in Kenya and in other geo-cultural spaces are engendering and reshaping new religious movements.

In their study they indentified six ways in which transnational links between Neo-Pentecostal congregation and ministries can take place. These are through global events and conferences that Pastors from all over the world attend; televangelism in which notable televangelists like TD Jakes, Juanita Bynum, Morris Cerullo and many more visit Kenya to hold crusades and revival gatherings; through leadership training workshops; through modern means of transport and communication creating extensive exchange of people and materials from the home church and the Diaspora; short term visits on both sides and lastly exchange visits to promote linkages and networks in gospel music.

6:2. Role of Women in Mainline Churches

From the early 1950s to the mid 1980s, only minor roles were open to women in the mainline churches. Women's roles were those of local preachers, class leaders, sideswomen and participants in the various women's associations and prayer bands. These roles however varied from one denomination to the other.

In the Methodist church women were local preachers, sideswomen and class leaders', unlike in the Anglican church where they were not allowed to perform any of these roles because they were considered to be the preserve of the males. However, an important role for women in mainline churches is that of participants in the different women's associations, which is always present in each church. These associations include the Mothers Union, the Ladies Auxilliary, Womens' Working Band, Silent Workers Association and the Dorcas Association in the Methodist and Anglican churches.

In most of the mainline denominations also, it is the minister of the church (who is fully ordained) or a guest minister (from another church in any of the mainline denominations) who would preach in the Sunday church service. In fact this means that women have little opportunity to enhance their status by evoking the deference of the whole congregation through effective i.e. "strong preaching". Preaching, however, is

not always the monopoly of the men, especially in the Methodist church where a handful of women were allowed to “ascend the pulpit” especially during their women’s associations celebrations. Apart from preaching, women are also given the opportunity to conduct church services. For example in the Methodist denomination a particular women’s association - the Silent Workers Association in each church have the opportunity of conducting the Maundy-Thursday service. They have the conduct of the whole service and normally have a female preacher from within or outside the church. Maundy-Thursday has been set aside for women to conduct the service because the Church wants to maintain the tradition that it was women who were first present at the grave of Jesus on the Resurrection morning.

The role of women in churches in Freetown has been a much-unexplored area except for Steady’s work (Steady, 1974, 1975). In her article “The Role of Women in Freetown Churches”, Steady suggests three functions of Women’s Associations. First, these associations support the church financially and with prayer. Second, they contribute to the maintenance of the male-dominated clergy (the status quo) by providing alternative avenues for the development of female religious leadership, instead of their seeking to become members of the clergy themselves. Third, they help to maintain a double standard of morality.

Two of these functions are still maintained by these women’s associations. The first function is still maintained by these associations as from time to time they undergo fund-raising activities like *munlayt picnic*,¹⁵⁶ luncheon sales and concerts to support their churches financially. They also help to support their churches by cleaning and decorating them on Saturdays for Sunday services. Fund raising is quite a common phenomenon among women in most churches in Africa as West (1975), Peil (1994) and Hackett (1989) have rightly observed in churches in South Africa, Ghana and Calabar in Nigeria respectively.

The second function does not seem to hold water any more as women are now members of the clergy in almost all the mainline churches. Steady’s suggestion was probably based on the almost literal adherence to the Pauline injunction: “As in all the churches of

¹⁵⁶ A popular form of night entertainment held in an open space especially around festive occasion like Easter, Christmas and public holidays.

Saints, the women should keep silence in the Churches; for they are not permitted to speak but should be subordinate, as even the law says” (1Cor.14: 33-34). This passage, however, should be considered in its local context. Paul was writing to the Corinthian church, which had a tradition of general discrimination against women, of which Paul himself was well aware. Moreover, the belief in female inferiority was then universal. But the situation has changed radically and women have become increasingly conscious of their capabilities. Even the mainline churches have come to realise this and have lifted the “ban”,¹⁵⁷ women can become fully ordained ministers and are no longer precluded from positions of leadership in these churches. Although the mainline churches in Sierra Leone have seized the opportunity to ordain female ministers, they are a bit wary as in 1998, the Anglican denomination had only one fully ordained female minister, Rev. Rexina Johnson who was ordained in 1994. She was the only female out of the 40 male ministers in the Anglican denomination. Rev. Johnson was a member of Christ Church at Pademba Road in Freetown before her ordination. After her ordination she was sent to Port Loko in the Northern Province of Sierra Leone to head St. James’ Anglican Church. By 1998, two other women also were ordained as full ministers. The Baptists do not have any female member of the clergy while the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) had one, Rev. Catherine Cox who was ordained in 1996. The Methodist denomination has taken full advantage of this dispensation and in 1998 they had eleven fully ordained ministers out of the 33 ministers in the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone. Among the eleven female ministers one of them is a circuit minister.

The third function is still maintained and seems to have intensified since membership in these Associations is now open to unmarried women, even in the Mothers Union, which was originally only for married women. To contribute to morality it was confined to married women. Most of the unmarried women in Freetown who belong to these associations do not generally adhere to the rule of chastity, which the Christian religion preaches. A famous adage amongst them is *wan man nor de full box*.¹⁵⁸ These Women’s Associations organise workshops and seminars to teach their members good morals.

¹⁵⁷ In 1955, the Presbyterians and in 1956 the Methodists gave full rights to women while the Anglican gave it in 1988 at the Lambeth Conference

¹⁵⁸ One partner is not enough to fill up a suitcase, meaning that a women should have several partners in order to have a wardrobe full of nice and expensive dresses.

6:3. Women in Spiritual Churches

Prior to the early 1980s, women's roles in the Spiritual churches in Freetown were confined to being elders, lay readers, members of the choir and the praying bands; they also dominated in terms of membership unlike in the mainline churches where there were equal proportions of men and women. Hackett (1987) has observed that women dominate the membership in spiritual churches because they have to cope with a lot of problems like child-bearing and child-rearing. Her observations are quite true because when the reasons for joining these churches by members in Freetown were investigated, they were quite similar to those posited by Hackett. After this period, however, the effects of social change, especially improved educational and employment opportunities, have left women with a wider choice of roles. Two of the major roles that they play in these churches are those of founders and heads of congregations. Their counterparts in other places in Africa had long played these roles. Mrs. Christianah Nku founded the St. John's Apostolic Faith Mission in Botswana as early as 1938.¹⁵⁹ In 1942, Marie Lalou founded the Deima Church in the Ivory Coast. In Calabar, Nigeria, Mrs. Lucy Harriet Harrison founded the Church of Christ the Good Shepherd in 1946.¹⁶⁰ One year after Mrs. Harrison founded her church, Mrs. Theresa Effiong founded The Holy Chapel of Miracles, also in Calabar.¹⁶¹ In 1955, the Lumpa Church in Zambia was founded by Alice Lenshina Munlenga Lubusha.¹⁶²

In Freetown, the first spiritual church to be founded by a woman was the Calvary Redemption Temple. Mrs. Dolly John founded this church in 1984.¹⁶³ Two years later in 1986, Mrs. Deborah Walters founded the St. Peter's Healing Church at Circular Road in Freetown. She was a member of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) who believed that she had special healing powers, which were revealed to her in a dream. This therefore prompted her to establish her own church. Prophetess Winstina Strasser-King, a Krio, founded Christ Healing Church in 1990. She was also a member of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) before she broke away to open her own church. Faith Healing Church, a schism from the Church of Salvation (the second spiritual church to be found in

¹⁵⁹ Leny Lagerwerf, 1982, *They pray for you... Independent Churches and Women in Botswana*, Interuniversity Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical Research (IIMO), p.76.

¹⁶⁰ Rosalind Hackett, 1987, "Women in the Spiritual Churches", in Rosalind L.J. Hackett (ed.), *New Religious Movements in Nigeria*, Lewiston/Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, pp. 191-196.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² Maria Rosa Cutrufelli, 1983, *Women of Africa Roots of Oppression*, Zed Press, p. 165.

¹⁶³ See Robert Smith, *A Survey and Theological analysis of the Spiritual and Pentecostal – Evangelical Churches in Freetown*, Chapter 6.

Freetown by Primate Edward Fofanah) was founded in 1992 by a Kono woman, Prophetess Phebean Buwanie. Sister Mary Johnson established the St Joseph's Healing Temple in Freetown also in 1992. She came to Freetown from Liberia during the war to continue with the church which she had founded while she was in Liberia.

To assess the roles of women in spiritual churches, we shall look at two of the women founders as well as one female head of a branch church of the Church of the Lord (Aladura). Smith has dealt extensively with the other two women founders in his thesis.¹⁶⁴ The remaining one of these founders was unavailable right throughout the research as she had gone back to Liberia when the war intensified in Freetown and the members were then attached to other churches.

6:3:1. Women as Founders in Spiritual Churches

6:3:1:1. Prophetess Winstina Strasser-King of Christ Healing Church

Prophetess Tina as she is commonly called among her church members, was born at Waterloo in the Greater Freetown Area on February 12, 1956. Her parents were Anglicans and they attended the St. Michael's and All Angels Church in Waterloo. Tina and her four brothers and four sisters were all brought up in the Anglican denomination. She attended the Seventh-day Adventist Primary School in Waterloo, the Pennisular Secondary School which offered free education, and her parents could not afford to pay school fees for herself and all the other eight children. Her affiliation with the SDA did not have any significant impact on her or her family as they were staunch Anglicans. Tina received her secondary education at the only secondary school in the village, the Peninsular Secondary School. She attained to the third form in the secondary school and then proceeded to the Young Women's Christian Association Vocational Institute in Freetown, where she did a catering course for three years. During her catering course, she became a member of The Church of the Lord (Aladura), attending the headquarters branch at Oniel Street in Freetown. She attended regularly and was a member of the women's association and took part in the night vigils held at the Church. She also became very prayerful and used to pray for people in and around her Cole Farm residence. She found out that her prayers were successful as word went round that those she had prayed for had their problems solved. For example she prayed for a lady who was deported from the United Kingdom and within a few months the lady had the

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

clearance to return to the United Kingdom. She was also successful in her prayers for several people who needed visas to travel to the United States, Germany and England.

In the early part of 1985, she found out that she had built up a large clientele and was no longer able to fulfil her duties at The Church of the Lord (Aladura), so she stopped attending. She continued to offer prayers for people at her residence. In October 1985, she claimed to have a dream in which a man gave her over 200 sheep, both male and female to take care of. She told the man that she could not afford to feed all of them but the man convinced her that she should collect all of them and take them to a safe place. While she was trying to collect them, a heavy wind started to blow and it became more difficult for her to collect them.

After the dream, she sought the advice of the pastor-in-charge of the National Spiritual Church at Aberdeen. The National Spiritual Church is one of the 47 Spiritual churches in Freetown and is a breakaway from the Church of the Lord (Aladura). The pastor interpreted the dream to mean that it was her calling but the wind signified that she would encounter some problems and temptation in her religious career. Tina did not pay much attention to the dream but continued to have her prayer sessions throughout the day, praying for people who had problems. From time to time she would have dreams of this same nature.

On 5 August 1989, she left her Cole Farm residence to stay with a niece at Lumley, Babadorie. When she took up residence at Lumley, she decided to “seek proof” by observing a period of nine days “dry fast.” At the end of the nine days fast, she went to Lumley Beach to “seal” it with “struggling”¹⁶⁵ and prayers. At the beach, she met five ladies who were members of the St. Peter’s Healing Church, another spiritual church in Freetown. They all prayed and “struggled” together during which certain visions were revealed to her about some of them. She told them about the visions and their interpretations. After two weeks, the ladies came to her house to invite her to become a member of their church. They told her that she was the kind of person they needed in their church, someone who could see visions quite clearly as she does and give a spiritual interpretation of them. She declined the invitation but this prompted her to start thinking of founding her own church, which she was however contemplating to do.

¹⁶⁵ Rolling on the sand from one end to the other whilst praying.

Before establishing her church, she sought one more proof to convince her that she was about to take the right decision. She decided that if she was able to cure a lady with a disturbed pregnancy, that would be her final proof. Indeed, she was cured and she gave birth to a healthy baby boy. Her effort to “seek proof” coincided with a “message” she received from Bishop Femi Forster-Jones, the Bishop of the Church of Assurance, another spiritual church. The “message” contained a vision in which the Bishop saw Tina gathering a flock of over 500 and leading them into a shelter. At the same point in time, Bishop Ilorin of Mount Zion, another spiritual church at Tengbeh Town, confirmed through a vision he had, that Tina should be ordained as a prophetess. Tina was satisfied and believed that the time was ripe for her to establish her church.

In February 1990, Bishop Ilorin anointed her as a prophetess in a grand ceremony at the Mount Zion church. In April 1990, Prophetess Tina started her own church, the Christ Healing Church with twelve registered foundation members who became the foundation members. They met for service and other church activities at her house. During the dry season in October of the same year, a structure was put up with palm fronds in her compound and this served as a temporary site for the church. When the rains started in May 1991, they moved to her sitting room and the veranda of her house. Within two years after founding the church, the membership had grown to 60 members and the house became too small to hold the growing congregation. In early 1992, one of the foundation members, Gretel Macauley donated a plot of freehold land to the church. The land was about 500 yards from the founder’s house. With self-help efforts by members and friends, a church building was erected with corrugated iron sheets. The building took four months to complete and the church was opened in April 1992.

Christ Healing Church was founded as a spiritual church and has most of its characteristics. After attending their church services for four consecutive Sundays,¹⁶⁶ I found out that their service was a mixture of the spiritual and the charismatic way of worship. Examples of the charismatic way of worship included punctuating the sermon with phrases like “Yes Lord”, “Alleluia! Amen”, “Alleluia, Praise the Lord” and interrupting the sermon with charismatic choruses like *Tell am Tenki*, “I am a Winner” and “Tell them what the Lord has done for me.” Giving personal testimony during service was another characteristic of the charismatic way of worship I found in the

¹⁶⁶ I attended services on the 6, 13, 20 and 27 April, 1997.

church. The most obvious trait of the charismatic way of worship in the church was the half hour allocated to Praise and Worship by the Praise and Worship Team, which the church has unlike the other spiritual churches. It is therefore pertinent to reason out what is responsible for this mixture. I suggest two possible reasons. Firstly, this mixture might be a result of the influence of the youths who form the bulk of the membership in the Church. Secondly, the dominance of the Krio in the membership of the Church. The Krio have always frowned upon spiritual churches and do not consider this church to be one of them because it has some of the characteristics of a charismatic church. It would therefore be interesting to see whether with this mixture of the way of worship, Christ Healing Church will change its mode of worship to an entirely charismatic one, and do away with typical spiritual church practices like “dry fast”, “struggling”, animal sacrifice, stream bathing and observing the Tabora, all of which were still being observed in the church.

In 1998, Christ Healing Church had 160 registered members. Forty (25 per cent) of the members were interviewed to elicit information on their socio-economic background and their reasons for joining the Church. The survey was also conducted to enable us to see the type of adherents that are found in a spiritual church founded by a female since this is a new phenomenon in Freetown. Furthermore the exercise would also enable us to make a comparison with the other spiritual church founded by a female that is located in the same area.

In the survey, twenty-eight females and twelve males were interviewed. The survey also revealed that sixteen were single and ten were married. There were three widows and one divorcee. Although the sample revealed that there were more women in the Church, on two occasions when I attended services at the church, there were roughly equal numbers of both sexes present. When I asked the founder the reason for this, she said that “the males come to the church with their problems and when they are solved some of them stop attending the church. I do not make it a rule that that when people have problems they must become members of the church before I get involved in their problems.”¹⁶⁷ She further quoted a famous Krio proverb, *den noba forget ol belful*.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷ Interview with Prophetess Tina Strasser-King on April 20, 1997, at her residence at Lumley.

¹⁶⁸ The proverb means that when someone is fed satisfactorily when he or she is hungry or in desperate need of food, they usually do not forget who fed them. In other words, Prophetess Tina knows that they will always support the church, even though they are not registered members.

The age of the majority of the respondents in the sample was between fifteen and twenty-nine years. Finding young people in spiritual churches is not a common phenomenon. Studies done on the age of members in spiritual churches have revealed that majority of them are middle-aged (Turner, 1967; Peel, 1968; Hackett, 1987). Table 1 below gives a breakdown of the age range of the respondents.

Table 6:1. Age range of Respondents

Age Range	No	%
Below 20	7	17.5
20 – 29	12	30
30 – 39	11	27.5
40 – 49	7	17.5
50 – 59	2	5
60 – 69	-	-
Above 70	1	2.5
Total	40	100

Source: Field Data, February 1997 to October 1998

The occupation and educational levels of the respondents in the sample reveal that the members are drawn from the middle and low classes of the society. Occupation and education are two indices that are used to measure social status in most societies. Writing on spiritual churches in Calabar in Nigeria, Hackett (1987, p.198) has observed that “all classes of women” attend spiritual churches. Tables 6:2 and 6:3 below give a break down of the occupational and educational levels respectively of the respondents in the sample.

Table 6:2. Occupational Status of Respondents

Occupation	No.	%
Carpenter	2	5
Clerk	3	7.5
Housewife	4	10
Printer	1	2.5
Skilled Worker	1	2.5
Stenographer	1	2.5
Student	10	25
Teacher	3	7.5
Trader	6	15
Unemployed	9	22.5
TOTAL	40	100

Source: Field data, February 1997 to October 1998.

Table 6.3. Educational Level of Respondents

Level of Education	No.	%
No Schooling	1	2.5
Primary	4	10
Secondary	32	80
Tertiary	3	7.5
University	-	-
TOTAL	40	100

Source: Field data, February 1997 to October 1998.

The data on membership of the Church revealed that the majority of members have some secondary education. Seven out of the seventeen ethnic groups in the country are represented in the survey. Fifteen out of the 40 respondents were Krio who were all former members of the Anglican denomination except for one who was a Methodist. The other ethnic groups were the Mende, Temne, Limba, Kono, Kuranko and Kru.

6:3:1:2. Prophet Phebean Buwanie of Faith Healing Church

Prophetess Buwanie was born on 23 April 1956 in Kono. She was an atheist although her parents were Muslims. The prophetess does not have any formal education. She is married to Joseph Buwanie who is a cross bearer at the Church of Salvation in Bo.¹⁶⁹ They have three sons and three daughters. All the children are members of Faith Healing Church. When they got married, Joseph persuaded Phebean to join his church in Bo, but she refused. Her refusal was based on the fact that she had been warned by her friends not to go to the Church of Salvation because she would be possessed by a spirit. When her husband persisted, she assured him that she would attend when it was convenient for her to do so. Meanwhile, she started praying by herself at home and found out that she could speak in tongues. Her husband noticed that and reported this to the Primate of the Church of Salvation, Primate Edward Fofanah.

Primate Fofanah visited Phebean and convinced her that she was a potential Prophetess and must go for training at their headquarters in Bo. After much persuasion by her husband and the Primate, Phebean decided to honour the invitation. The training lasted

¹⁶⁹ The Church of Salvation was the third spiritual church to be established in Sierra Leone and has the largest membership among spiritualist churches in Freetown.

for a year. When she completed the training in 1986, she was appointed as a Pastor of the Church of Salvation. Below is an extract of her Ministerial Credential:

Reverend Phebean Bo Buwanie

Born 23.04.56. Prophetess

Ministerial Credential of the Sierra Leone Conference of the Church of Salvation is duly appointed PASTOR of the Church of Salvation and authorised to perform the duties of the said office for the term ending August 31st 1986.

Dated 03.8.86

Signed: Primate Edward Fofanah.

(Original Document sighted)

Armed with her licence as a Pastor, Prophetess Buwanie was sent to Pastor the Church's branch at Kono. The membership in the Kono Church was mainly dominated by males, unlike the other branches in Freetown and Bo which are female dominated. One reason for this could be because Kono is a mining area, and mining is mainly the preserve of males. She pastored the church for less than a year after which she severed ties with the church because of problems with the members, particularly the males.

When she left Kono, she joined her husband in Bo and started evangelising on her own in and around the villages surrounding Bo town. She also conducted prayer meetings at her house. In 1990, she claimed to have had a dream in which she saw herself dressed up in a Primate's robe, sitting at the altar. She interpreted this to mean that God wanted her to start her own church. She could not do this in Bo because a lot of people had already identified her with the Church of Salvation. She decided to relocate to Freetown and establish the church.

In April 1992, she founded the Faith Healing Church with twelve members. They met at the sitting room of her residence at Lumley for services and other activities. By 1998, the church had grown to 46 members. The church has many of the attributes associated with a Spiritual Church; it emphasises faith healing, it has drums and dancing as well as baptism by immersion, it has Elders and Deaconesses, Spirit Possession and members wear a white soutan and white headscarves on all occasions.

Prophetess Buwanie is well known in the Lumley Babadori area for her problem-solving powers. The majority of members joined the church because the Prophetess always solved their problems. In a survey conducted among 50 per cent of the members, twenty females and three males were interviewed. The average age of the respondents in the survey was 42 years. This could be compared to the age of the founder who is in her early forties. This also shows that the congregation consists of middle-aged people, which appear to be typical in spiritual churches in Freetown. The occupational status of members is closely tied with their level of education. Almost 60 per cent of the members are petty traders, mainly fishmongers, unlike members at Faith Healing Church where they belong to a wide range of occupations. One reason that could be advanced for this is that Lumley village is a fishing village. Also, with their level of education, which is minimal, it proves difficult for them to earn a decent job.

Over 80 per cent of the members said they joined the church because they wanted their everyday problems to be solved. Among the problems they mentioned were: lack peace of mind; unfaithful husbands; infertility and financial difficulties. Most of them had their problems solved and so decided to become members of the church.

From the above information, it is seen that the church caters for middle aged people; people with little or no formal education and for those who are in the lower echelons of society.

One aspect in which the prophetess has contributed to the change in Freetown Christianity is in solving problems, which could not be solved by the *alphaman* or the diviner. This was clear from the interviews I held with the members of the Church who had joined because they had personal problems. The majority of them said that they had tried the *alphaman* who had failed them, but Prophetess Buwanie had solved their problems.

6:3:2. Women as Heads of branches in the Church of the Lord (Aladura)

6:3:2:1. Senior Prophetess Rebecca Grant of the Wellington branch

Senior Prophetess Rebecca Grant is a Kru and was born in Freetown in 1926. Her parents were Anglicans and belonged to St. Thomas' Kru Church at Steward Street in Freetown. Prophetess Grant had her primary education at the St. Anthony's primary

School in Freetown and the St. Mary's primary school in Lagos, Nigeria and attained to Standard 6. She had her secondary education at the Methodist Girls' High School in Freetown, Sierra Leone and left in form four. After her secondary education, she pursued a secretarial course at one of the private centres in Freetown. She has five grown up children and her husband died in the early 1970s.

Senior Prophetess Grant was an Anglican before she became a member of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in 1956. She became a member of this church because according to her "The doctors had given up on me after I suffered profuse bleeding resulting from a shock after my first baby died suddenly. I even had a major operation which was not successful." One night, she dreamt of a lady whom she could not identify asking her whether she did not know how to pray in a spiritual church. She ignored this dream but a few days later she had the same kind of dream. On the second occasion she told her husband who urged her to give it a try. They decided to go to the Church of the Lord (Aladura), since it was the most popular spiritual church in Freetown at the time.¹⁷⁰ This period coincided with the celebration of the Tabora festival; this festival is usually held in August for thirteen days during which members of spiritual churches ascend Mount Tabora for fasting and praying.¹⁷¹ Senior prophetess Grant was very weak so she asked Brother James Bora-Bora, a member of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) to pray and fast on her behalf at the Mount. During this period, she stayed at the Church's Headquarters at Oniel Street, where prayers were offered for her and she was treated with consecrated water. By the end of the Tabora festival she was completely healed and decided to become a full member of the Church. After about a year she was appointed as a lay reader in the Church.

Before Senior Prophetess Grant became a member of the Church of the Lord (Aladura), she worked as a company secretary at the then Sierra Leone Diamond Cooperation (SLDC). She was also a television presenter, radio broadcaster and a vocalist in a popular band. During this period, she attended nightclubs, movies and parties. She also drank and smoked a lot and enjoyed all the pleasures of life. After she became a member of the Church and started reading the Bible regularly, she experienced a great change in her life-style and attitude. She became disinterested in all types of social

¹⁷⁰ The other spiritual churches were the Church of Salvation and God is Our Light Church.

¹⁷¹ For the history and importance of the Tabora festival in the Aladura or spiritual churches see Turner (1967) and Omoyajowo (1984).

activities and gave up drinking and smoking. She still kept her job as a secretary but gave up her part-time job at the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBC) and stopped participating in the band. As the company secretary, she turned down official invitations to attend dinners and parties. Five years after she became a member of the Church, she resigned her job and took up an appointment as a receptionist at the Paramount Hotel at Tower Hill in Freetown. Her job as a receptionist gave her ample time to meditate and read her Bible as she had a lot of time when she finished work at 4.00 p.m.

Prophetess Grant had two visions before her final call to prophethood in Nigeria. In the first vision she told me that:

In July 1970 while I was working at the Paramount Hotel as a receptionist, I used my lunch period for some quiet meditation. During this meditation, the Lord Jesus appeared to me with a Crown on his head. He was also in a pensive mood. When I attempted to get up and touch Him, He disappeared.

In her second vision, she said that:

Two months after I had that vision about Jesus, I was going home from work and passed through Tower Hill also know as “up the greens” because a lot of trees were found there and there were no houses except the House of Parliament then I noticed that the whole area was green and then I heard a voice asking me whether I was not yet ready to take up the call. Immediately the voice stopped talking, the atmosphere returned to normal. As soon as I reached home I prayed to God to direct me.

The final call came about when she received a letter from the Headquarters of the Church of the Lord Aladura in Lagos, Nigeria inviting her to go for training to the Prophethood. She answered to this call and left for Nigeria to attend the Prophets and Prophetesses Training Institute in Lagos to pursue training. After completing her training, she also did her pastoral work in Nigeria and later established a branch of the Aladura Church at Edior Egbado in Southern Nigeria.

Prophetess Grant had to return home in 1989 because her mother was seriously ill. In 1990, she was made a senior Prophetess in the Church of the Lord Aladura and head of the Wellington branch. She took over from Prophet Kendoh who was transferred to the Headquarters branch. Prophet Kendoh had a lot of social problems with the members, particularly the female members who claimed that he was making sexual advances to them. As head of the congregation, Prophetess Grant conducts church services from

start to finish. She also administers the communion and gives the sermon for the day. Preaching (interpreting the Scriptures) in Church service by women was against the doctrines of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) as the second Primate, Primate Adejobi himself, said: “She (woman) may not interpret Scriptures.”¹⁷²

From interviews conducted with the head of the church and as a participant observer at three of their Sunday services, I came to the conclusion that the majority of the members in this church were women. I also conducted a sample survey among 50 per cent (20) of the members. The survey was to find out about the social, economic and religious background of the members in a female-headed spiritual church. Among the twenty members interviewed, fifteen were females and five were males. The preponderance of females over males in the church was one of the criteria used to determine the sample. Thirteen of the respondents were married and the rest were single. The single respondents were all females except for one male. Two out of the seven single respondents were unemployed and the rest were students.

As stated earlier, the majority of the members in the Church are women. One of the major important functions of spiritual churches is the exorcising of and protection from evil spirits, an issue which largely concerns women. The great emotional need for safeguarding from witchcraft and evil forces could not be fulfilled in the mainline churches and even by *alphamen*, diviners or *abalists*. Aside from the exorcism of evil spirits, another area where it is especially women who seek assistance is in requests for children or requests by pregnant women for safe delivery. On the relationship between women and spiritual churches, Hackett has also observed that:

A number of popular stereotypes exist with regard to the relationship between women and the spiritual churches. It is generally believed that these churches deal primarily with women’s problems and that the emotionalist style of worship appeals predominantly to women. In addition, it is thought that the often lengthy hours (from 3-8 hours) are oriented towards the womenfolk because they have plenty of time on their hands. (1986)

Hackett’s observation could be compared to women in spiritual churches in Freetown who spend as many hours in the church as their counterparts in Nigeria.

¹⁷² Deidre Helen Crumbley, 1992, “Impurity and Power: Women in Aladura Churches”, *Africa* 62, 4. pp 505-522.

The age of the members in the sample ranged from 13-61 years. The majority of them (60 per cent) were over thirty years, (three men and nine women). There were three respondents (15 per cent), two males and one female who were between 20-29 and those below twenty accounted for 25 per cent of the age of the members.

The Mende ethnic group seems to dominate the Church as 70 per cent of the respondents in the sample were Mendes. One suggestion that would account for the dominance of the Mende ethnic group in the Church could be the location of the Church, which is situated in Wellington as the majority of Mendes reside in Wellington. Three other ethnic groups represented in the survey were the Limba, Sherbro and Temne. There were no Krio members in the Church and the most likely reason for this is that most Krio live in the central part and west end of Freetown. Furthermore, the Krio who live in Wellington are old people who either belong to the Anglican or Methodist denominations.

With regards to the respondents' reasons for joining the Church 50 per cent wanted their problems to be solved. These problems included infertility, marital instability, job prospects and health. The rest of the respondents joined the Church for the following reasons: belief in their doctrine (4); converted through open air preaching (3); enjoy their service (2) and sister is head of the Church (1).

6:4. Women in Charismatic Churches

In Charismatic churches, women play more significant roles than they do in mainline churches; one such role is founding their own churches. Out of the 232 Neo-Pentecostal/charismatic churches, twelve of these were founded by women. In this section, a profile will be made of the religious, social and economic background of four out of the twelve women founders of charismatic churches in Freetown. There is no material available on these founders and for the most part, I have had to rely on interviews held with them and observation at their churches. These people have set the stage, as they are the pioneers of the charismatic movement in relation to women as founders of churches. The founders outlined here are from different ethnic groups. One of these founders was a member of the Seventh-day Adventist, one was a Methodist and

the third one was a former member of a charismatic church but had a vision to found her own church.

6:4:1. Pastor Christiana Vandi of the New Life in Christ Ministry

Pastor Christiana Vandi, a Mende, was born in 1943 at Waterloo village, twenty miles from Freetown. Her parents, both deceased, were Anthony and Beatrice Gibson. Her father belonged to the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Mission and her mother was an Anglican. She has three brothers and seven sisters who are all Christians belonging to either the SDA Mission or the Anglican denomination and Christiana followed the footsteps of her late father.

Pastor Vandi is an educationist with teaching as her favourite career. She had her primary education at the village (Waterloo) school and her secondary education at Njaluahan Methodist School in Kailahun and Harford School for Girls in Moyamba. After her five GCE O'Levels, she did two Teaching Certificate (TC) Courses at Union College Bunumbu (presently known as Bunumbu Teachers College) and Milton Margai Teachers College, which was, then at Tower Hill in Freetown. As a keen educationist, she furthered her career by pursuing a Bachelor of Education at Njala University College (one of two universities in Sierra Leone the other being Fourah Bay College) and a Masters of Education at Leeds University in England. In 1998 when I interviewed her, she was a Lecturer at the Freetown Teachers Training College at Jui in the outskirts of Freetown.

Alongside her vocation as a lecturer, Christiana used to operate an entertainment complex comprising a restaurant, a bar, and a nightclub. The complex was known as SIVANS. During the day when she was at work, one of her cousins operated the business and when she came from work, she took over. At the complex, she meets with, according to her, "people who matter in society"¹⁷³ and she socialises with them. As the manager of the complex, she slowly became a "woman of pleasure and leisure". Every night she would drink all types of alcohol and dance throughout the night with different men and eventually go to bed with one of them. On Sundays, she never thought of going to church but carried out her business.

¹⁷³ She gave examples such as doctors, lawyers, diplomats, accountants, ministers of government, senior officers in the police, military and the government.

In 1992, she met one of her female friends also a former member of the SDA Mission, Sister Shola Gilpin, who was then an administrative assistant at the Freetown Bible Training Centre (FBTC). Sister Shola invited her to attend the Light House Fellowship, which was conducted at her house at Ross Road. She did on two occasions but was still preoccupied with the “pleasures of the world”. However, Sister Gilpin continued to encourage her and pleaded with her to start attending FBTC. She enrolled in the first year of the course at the Centre but still continued to do her business. On 23 July 1993, at about 3.00 p.m. she suddenly had an urge to communicate with God. She then entered her bedroom, closed the door and windows and started praying fervently. During this prayer session, she had a vision in which she saw a very bright light and a male figure who placed a rod in her hands. When she opened her eyes, the rod was still in her hand. She became frightened and confused and found herself saying “thank you Lord, I have received”. Immediately after this, the rod disappeared and she heard a voice saying to her “go shepherd my sheep”. At the end of this vision she became tired and weak. She did not disclose this vision to anybody nor did she pay any heed to the command. She continued to live in “sin” by drinking, smoking and committing adultery. During this period she experienced some uneasiness within herself and tried to judge whether it was right to disobey the command. She started to lose interest in her business and became hostile to, and impatient with, the people with whom she used to drink and smoke. In the early part of 1994, she closed down her business and with one of her colleagues at the FBTC, they started a home cell at her bar and restaurant. This fellowship was short-lived as the members complained about the lack of devotion on the part of the colleague as well his lack of Christian attributes.

In the early part of 1996, she had a similar vision but the rod was now put on her lap instead of her hands signifying that she should not give the rod to another person this time. At this point it was quite clear that God was calling her to shepherd His people. She prayed, fasted and read the Bible for seven days in order to “seek proof” and to know exactly what her mission would involve. During this period, she claimed to have heard a voice telling her to establish a church in her surroundings where there were a lot of “unbelievers”. This second vision served as an injunction and inspired her to assemble some friends and acquaintances to form another home-cell. She closed down her business and used the complex for fellowship meetings. This home-cell grew into a

church, the “New Life in Christ Ministry”. The church was founded in May 1996 with fifteen members. Services and other activities were held in the complex. Within a year, the complex proved inadequate to cope with the growing congregation and she moved to a larger building at 12e Industrial Estate, Wellington, about a quarter of a mile from her house.

Pastor Vandi believes that she has some healing powers, as she claims to have healed several people of both physical and supernatural problems. She told me that she acquired her healing powers through another dream, which she had soon after establishing the church. Her first success in healing was with her only daughter who was suffering from sinus problems. She tried all types of medication, both local and foreign without any success but with her constant and fervent prayers her daughter was healed. Pastor Vandi’s success rate has been confirmed by three members of her congregation who testified of being healed through her prayers.¹⁷⁴ The first of them had been married for seven years without any children and within three months of joining the church she became pregnant. The second person had suffered from a foot ulcer for about two years. He was a member of a spiritual church where they prayed and fasted for him for as long as he had the ulcer but without success. He is quite grateful to the pastor because he received his healing after only three months of being in the church. The last person had been out of job for three years and within a few months after joining the church she picked up a job.

Before the late 1960s, there were only four churches in Wellington where Pastor Vandi’s church is located. These were the Tregaskis Methodist Church, the Bethel Methodist Church, St. John the Evangelist, an Anglican church and Bishop Higgins AME Church. These churches were attended mainly by the Krio who lived in the village as well as those who went there for their weekend breaks. By the early 1970s the village began to expand as people from the provinces who came to seek the “bright lights” of the city settled. As the population increased so did the number of churches. The different Missions such as the Baptist Convention, the Lutheran Church, the Missionary Church of Africa, the United Methodist Church and the Seventh-day Adventist began to establish churches in this area. By the end of the decade fifteen more churches had been

¹⁷⁴ Testimonies given at a church service I attended at New Life in Christ Ministry on 3, 10 and 17 May 1998.

planted. The decades of the 80s and 90s saw a remarkable increase in the number of churches and in 1998 there was a total of 77 churches in Wellington. The growth of churches is one significant area in which the transformation of Freetown Christianity could be seen. The establishment of New Life in Christ Ministry by a Mende could therefore be seen as one of the contributing factors to this change.

6:4:2. Sister Julie Thomas of Christ For All Ministries

Sister Julie Thomas is a Krio and was born in 1954 at Wellington village, about eight miles from Freetown. Her parents were Methodists and so was her family of orientation. Her parents died when she was in her teens and her eldest sister transferred them to a Roman Catholic Church because according to Sister Julie “my sister was frog-marched from our pew at the Methodist church, a pew which my parents used to pay for annually. When they died, we could not afford to pay for it and it was then allocated to another family.” The Anglican and Methodist churches are quite strict about ownership of pews. In these churches, members pay annually for their pews and this gives them the right to remove other members without pews and even visitors from their pews. In the Roman Catholic churches the members do not have to pay for their pews and they can sit anywhere of their choice in the church. She received both primary and secondary education in Kissy village, about five miles from Freetown. She attained to form five (Year 11 in Britain) and left school without any qualifications. After leaving school, she embarked on the production of handicrafts such as cane-baskets, and *shukublay* (basket of woven raphia) and baking cakes as a means of survival. After a year, she entered the Sierra Leone Police Force as a corporal and her rank in 1998 was that of a sub-inspector.

In 1984, Sister Julie got married to Mr Joseph Thomas, also a Krio who belonged to the Methodist denomination. It was the usual practice among female Krio to become members of their husband’s church,¹⁷⁵ so Julie had to return to the Methodist church, the Tregaskis Methodist Church in the village. Back into the Methodist Church, she admitted to being spiritually dissatisfied in the Methodist church and not really “knowing God”. As a result, she decided to take her spiritual destiny into her own hands, by studying the Bible and learning how to pray. Apart from satisfying her

¹⁷⁵ Cf. with Abner Cohen, 1981, *The Politics of Elite Culture*.

spiritual quest, she was also deeply concerned with her colleagues in the police force who always indulged in corrupt practices such as taking bribes and destroying documents and files relating to court cases. She wanted to change them through the Word of God.

During her quest for spiritual enhancement, she attended a lot of crusades held in Freetown and during Bonnke's '91 Crusade, she gave up her life to Christ. During this period also, she enrolled at the FBTC to pursue a three-year course. Attendance at Bible Schools, particularly the FBTC is a norm for the majority of church founders and intending church founders. These schools offer them courses on Faith, Obedience, Blood Covenant, Healing, Demonology, Authority and many others relating to church growth and preaching techniques. During this period also, Julie started to attend the Calvary Charismatic Church at East-end Municipal School. While she was attending this church, she had several visions in which according to her the Holy Spirit was urging her to "preach the Word of God to lost souls".

When she completed her Bible-training course in 1994, she began to experience the touch of the Holy Spirit in dreams and visions. To verify that the Holy Spirit was present in her life, she had a marvellous experience in which an operation was performed on her in a dream. She used to have continuous stomach pains for which she had an operation without any success. In the dream, a spiritual operation was performed on her in which a piece of iron was removed from her stomach. Since she had this dream, she has never experienced this type of stomach-ache again. When she experienced this spiritual operation, she became convinced that the time was now ripe for her to carry out the spiritual injunction which was given to her during her visions. She first of all started a house fellowship and within three months, she founded a church, Christ For All Ministries in June 1995 with twenty members. They met for church services and other activities at the Kissy Primary School at Kissy Dockyard. In 1998, the membership of the church had grown to 70 including twenty-five children.

The church is a faith healing church and according to Sister Julie "membership in the church has not grown much because I want committed members. I do not accept those who come into the church for a purpose, mostly healing, and then leave after they have achieved their aim."

As the founder of a church, Sister Julie has grown spiritually and morally when compared to when she was a member in the Methodist Church. In the Methodist Church, she could not pray for herself and she indulged in the vices of life such as drinking, smoking, attending movies and nightclubs. She was also in the company of a “bad lot”. She has become aware that as the founder of the church, she has a great responsibility to look after her “flock” i.e. her members. She claims to be a “good example to them in her words and in her deeds.”

6:4:3. Sister Angela Sahid-Kamara of Born-Again Christ Healing Temple

Sister Angela was born at Tiama in the Southern Province of Sierra Leone on 28 June 1973. She belongs to the Temne ethnic group. Her late father was a Catholic and her mother was a Muslim but became a Catholic after she got married. Her mother now lives in London and is no longer a Catholic, but a member of Born-Again Christ Healing Temple. Angela was brought up in a Christian environment and as a Catholic. The whole family were members of the Holy Cross Parish at Low-cost Housing Estate.¹⁷⁶

Angela received her primary education at Fourah Bay College Primary School and her secondary education at the Freetown Secondary School for Girls (FSSG). Her born-again experience dates back from her days at the FSSG boarding home when the boarding home mistress, Mrs. Claudia Beckley-Lines, used to conduct fellowship meetings on Saturday mornings. During these meetings, she taught them about salvation, sin, repentance, forgiveness and the merits of being a born-again. As boarders, they attended crusades and revivals, which were held at the National Stadium, a few yards away from the school. Further religious experience was also gained from her membership in the school’s Scripture Union (SU) group of which she was the group leader from 1990 to 1991.

When Angela left school in 1992, she did computer studies at Taiwo Chandis Computer Institute, at Kissy. Whilst she was at the Institute, Martha, a cousin and a colleague, invited her to a service at the Chapel of Grace, one of the charismatic churches found in Kissy. She honoured the invitation and was quite impressed with everything about the Church. She stopped attending the Catholic Church and became a regular worshipper at

¹⁷⁶ Interview held with Angela 31 January 1998, at 140 Bai Bureh Road, Wellington.

the Chapel of Grace. When she received Christ as her personal Saviour in June 1994, she became a full member of the church.

Her quest for spiritual enhancement was so great that she decided to do two Bible study courses concurrently. She enrolled at FBTC (East School) for the three-year diploma course from 1994 to 1997 and entered a Bible correspondence course in England with the International Bible Institute. Bishop Molera, the Bishop of her mother's church, arranged the latter course for her. He also sent books, audiotapes and other reading materials of famous evangelists like Benny Hinn for her to go through.

During her Bible study courses, Angela began experiencing a rather strange closeness to God and began to evangelise people in the markets, at the *podapoda*¹⁷⁷ station and in every nook and cranny she had the opportunity to do so. She also organised a home-cell at her house with members ranging from ten to fifteen. During her Bible study courses, she always dreamt that she was worshipping God and also praying and preaching in front of a large crowd. She told her mother about her dreams who in turn told the Bishop of her church. The Bishop believed that Angela's visions were "her calling" and an indication to establish a church.

When she completed both courses, she felt that she was capable and fully equipped spiritually to establish a church. This period also coincided with a request from Bishop Molera to open a branch of his church, Born Again Christ Healing Temple, in Freetown. Sister Angela agreed and the church was opened in 1997 with twenty members. They met at her house for services and other church activities. Within a year, the church had grown to 95 so they had to move to a more spacious location at 151 Bai Bureh Road, Wellington. In 1998, Sister Angela acquired a piece of land a few yards away from the site of the church with funds sent from the headquarters in London. A plan was drawn and was awaiting approval from the Ministry of Housing and Country Planning before construction of the Church would commence.

One of the common goals of most born-again churches is to be affiliated with another charismatic church abroad particularly in the United Kingdom, the United States of

¹⁷⁷ Private mini bus doing passenger transport, most times they are mechanically unreliable and uncomfortable. In Nigeria it is known as *tro tro*.

America and Germany. The large majority of charismatic churches in Freetown do not have church buildings and the leaders of these churches search for this opportunity to be linked with a church abroad so that they could get funds from them to build their churches and even provide other facilities like a car for the pastor and a mini bus for the church. Some of them even anticipate that their affiliation with a church abroad might enable them to set up workshops, conduct vocational skills training for members and non-members, which will bring the church some income. In Freetown there is only one Pentecostal church, Jesus Evangelistic Encountering Ministry (JEES) that has benefited from such a link with a church in Germany. The church in Germany sent a mini bus for the church and some sewing machines for a vocational training centre.

6:4:4. Sister Felecia Kamara, of Shekinah Glory Assembly

Sister Felecia as she is popularly known among her “brothers and sisters in Christ” at Evangel Assemblies of God, came to Freetown from Benin in 1985 with her fiancée. Her fiancée is a Benois (from Benin) and they met in Nigeria while he was at University. Sister Felicia is an Igbo and was born in 1960 in Onitsha, Anambra State in Nigeria. She was a member of the Deeper Life Bible Ministry in Nigeria before she came to Freetown.¹⁷⁸

Two years after they arrived in Freetown, Sister Felecia’s fiancé abandoned her with their two children, a boy and a girl. She had to engage in petty trading to survive and take care of her children. One day while she was selling her wares a lady evangelised her and invited her to worship at Evangel Assemblies of God. She accepted the invitation and started to worship at the church regularly and in a few months, she became a full member and started to play an active role by becoming a member of the Intercessory Team. As a member of the Intercessory Team, she always prayed to God for direction in her religious life.

In 1990, she began to have dreams and visions, which led her to believe that God had something in store for her. For example, on one occasion while she was praying, she heard a voice, which told her to read Acts of the Apostles chapters 1 and 2. She obeyed the voice, but she did not fully understand what that meant. On another occasion, the voice referred her to Ezekiel chapters 1 to 10. She read the passages and according to

¹⁷⁸ Interview held with Sister Felecia, 18 January 1998 at her 6 Macauley Street residence.

Sister Felicia “I noticed that I had the zeal but not the Word.” After the second vision, she then decided to pursue a two-year course, at FBTC. At the Centre, she began to understand the “Word” but according to her “not fully.” After she completed her training, she did a catering course at the Brookfields Hotel Catering Institute (BHCI). During her training at BHCI she shared her visions with a sister-in-Christ who told her that she should obey what God wanted her to do. At the end of her training at BHCI she enrolled at the Evangel Bible Training College for the three-year diploma course from 1994 to 1997. Evangel Bible College is the Assemblies of God Mission Bible School in Freetown. This School is affiliated to the Evangel Bible College in Tennessee in the USA. During her training at Evangel, the Church organised a home cell at her 6 Macauley Street residence in Murray Town. The home cell was short-lived because there was a problem about leadership. One male member of the intercessory team wanted to become the leader but the majority of the members preferred Sister Felecia. To avoid further conflict, the home cell was closed down. During her training, Sister Felecia met her present husband, Mr. Moses Kamara, who was also a student at the College. They got married in 1995 and have a daughter.¹⁷⁹

When Sister Felecia completed her course at Evangel, she claimed to have another vision in which she was told to “go and win souls for Christ”. After this vision, which she took to be the final one from God, she organised a revival in March 1997 at the Murray Town Football Playing Field. The turnout was great and this gave her the zeal to open her church. She established her church on 22 April 1997 with thirty members, mostly converts from the revival. She named the church “Shekinah Glory Assembly” (SGA). When I asked her why she chose this name, she told me “Shekinah” means the dwelling of God in Hebrew and anyone who comes to the Church for any type of problems, God is always there to solve them.”¹⁸⁰

The church holds their services and other church activities at the Murray Town Municipal School at High Broad Street in Murray Town. The Church has a full programme of activities during the week. They have two services on Sunday, prayer and intercessory sessions on Monday when they pray for their church and the State. Tuesday is praise and worship and when also people give testimonies. Every Friday the members

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

go out to evangelise and win souls. Sister Felecia told me that her team has won a lot of souls.

The Church tends to attract youths, mainly males who are unemployed. In September 1998 the church had grown from thirty members in 1997 when it was found to 95. In September 1998, the average attendance was 65.¹⁸¹ Sister Felecia explained that she used to have as many as 100 worshippers at church services, but because September is one of the wettest months, people do not turn up a lot.

Tithing is one of the basic requirements for membership in born-again churches as the founders insist and often quote the Bible passage, “Bring the full tithe into the storehouse” (Malachai, 3:10). These churches distribute envelopes monthly to their members to ensure that their tithes are paid regularly. Some members such as businessmen and traders opt for the weekly envelopes and civil servants and professionals opt for the monthly ones. At Shekinah Glory Assembly, Sister Felecia does not stress the fulfilment of tithes. According to her “I know that members are willing to pay their tithes but the socio-economic climate in the country prohibits them to fulfil this as they have to make ends meet.”¹⁸² She said that she has designed other means of funding for the church to survive. She pays an annual rent of Le.100, 000 (£20.00 in sterling) to the Municipal authorities for the use of the school. This money is usually contributed by the Women’s Fellowship from the money collected during their annual celebrations.

6:5. Women’s Intercessory Networks

Despite the small number of women as leaders and founders of churches, women in the mainline, Pentecostal and charismatic churches are quite active and vocal with regards to their roles in the transformation of Freetown Christianity. They have organised themselves into a group known as the Women’s Intercessory Network (WIN) and the majority of members are from born-again churches. This organisation was the outcome of a conference held in Lagos, Nigeria in 1996. The conference was organised by the DLBM on behalf of the International Christian Women’s Leaders’ Conference. Sierra Leone was represented by twenty-one women, all of them holding leadership positions

¹⁸¹ Church attendance record file.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

in the Church and the State. The theme of the conference was “Influencing Christian Women to Change their World.” During the conference, the wife of the leader of DLBM in Sierra Leone, Sister Boseh Akinola, brought up the idea of establishing WIN to find ways and means to alleviate the atrocities of the civil war which Sierra Leone was then experiencing.

When the delegation returned to Freetown after the conference, WIN was inaugurated with the twenty-one members who attended the conference as foundation members. Later on in the year, the membership expanded to about 100 members. The aims and objectives of the Network are:

1. To assist Christian women to take their positions of authority in Christ and to influence their society for Christ.
2. To teach women how to pray effectively and receive definite answers; to be able to disciple other women to pray.
3. To implement the operation PUSH programme that will enable women through communal prayers to speed up the urgent spiritual awakening which the country needs.
4. To establish a Network of Intercession among women across the country so that during crisis periods, women will be praying everywhere.

The main activity of WIN is conducting bi-monthly workshops and seminars to sensitise women on the roles they can play in intercession, not only in the Church but also in the home, the office and in prayer cell groups. Since the inception of the Network, five such workshops have been held in Freetown.

At the workshop held in May 1998, the programme “Operation Push 714” was launched. This programme was based on the promise in Chronicles 7:14 - “If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins and will heal their land.”

The programme Operation Push 714 has created a lot of awareness among women in the mainline denominations, the Pentecostal and born-again or charismatic churches.

They have organised sessions in their different churches based on the theme “Urgent Spiritual Awakening in Sierra Leone.” These sessions served as a means of teaching

women WHEN and HOW to pray for their country. According to the co-ordinator, Sister Bose Akinola, the programme is quite successful as “women are getting to know their authority in prayer over the devil.”

In July 1998, another session was held at the Vine Memorial School Hall from the 25th to the 26th. The theme for this workshop was “Pulling Down the Strongholds and Prevailing over Territorial Powers.” On the first day more than 250 women and five men attended the workshop and on the second day about 300 women and seven men attended. At this workshop, women, not only from the Church, but also from the State took part by giving messages on the topics relating to the theme.

On the first day, Rev. Rexina Rex-Johnson of the Anglican denomination gave the message. The topic was “Satan’s Strongholds.” In her message, she reminded the participants that “we are in the hottest phase of the battle between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan and as “Believers”, we must not continue to be in ignorance of all the devices of our arch-enemy, Satan.” She added that “we should arise from our spiritual slumber, arm ourselves with the full authority and power that the Lord Jesus Christ has given to us and challenge, rebuke and destroy all strongholds of Satan and advance Christ’s course in our nation.” She further went on to identify the strongholds that act as barriers to peoples’ faith and spiritual progress. Among the strongholds she pinpointed were personalities, practices and policies. She also highlighted how these three barriers could serve as impediments and the effects they could have on peoples’ faith and spiritual progress.

Speaking on personalities, she quoted from the Bible (Daniel 10:12-13, 20; Ephesians 6:10-12) and gave examples of men like the Prince of Persia, Goliath and Esau who tried to hinder God’s plan and progress. She said, “each of these men had an evil personality in a human vessel.” She warned the participants that as Christians, they should not allow Satan to plant an evil personality, which will destroy God’s plan for them and the Nation.

In relation to practices, she pointed out that some of our traditional and cultural practices are of demonic origins designed from the satanic kingdom to enslave, dominate and rule the lives of those who practice them. She quoted an example from Act of the Apostles

17:22, “Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ hill, and said, ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.” To exemplify this she went on also to enumerate such practices as membership in the secret societies, ancestor veneration and consulting diviners.

With regards to policies, she warned the participants that “as Christians, we should not support philosophical, political, religious ideologies and dogmas that cause the creation of social, political or religious structures and institutions to fulfil their purposes and destroy our faith in the true and living God.”

Rev. Rex-Johnson further went on to outline the effects of Satan’s stronghold on individuals and groups. These effects were:

1. Preventing progress in life.
2. Keeping people in bondage and fear hindering successful achievements.
3. Frustrating one’s endeavour in individuals and communities.
4. Withstanding the word of God and hinder the salvation of a targeted individual and groups.
5. Hindering answers to prayer.
6. Bringing sickness and infirmity without natural cause, mysterious events that cripple success, victory and joy etc..
7. Promoting and effecting defeats, destruction and death in homes, community and in the Nation.

She concluded her message by appealing to the participants to be consistent and persistent in their prayers unitedly and individually. She emphasised that it was only through prayers that they would be able to combat these strongholds and avoid their effects.

On the second day of the workshop, the acting Governor of the Bank of Sierra Leone, Mrs. Yvonne Gibril gave the message on “Wanted: Women With Divine Mandate.” In her message, she catalogued the basic requirements needed to fulfil the divine mandate. Among the basic requirements were Salvation, Sanctification, Consecration, Courage, Boldness, Faith and Prayerfulness. She illustrated the success of the divine mandate by using female characters in the Bible who have carried out this mandate successfully. She gave examples like Esther, Ruth, Rahab, Mary and Martha, Sheba and Abigail. She challenged the women of Sierra Leone to step into the roles of these biblical characters

with faith and righteousness. With these two virtues they too can carry out the divine mandate and bring peace to Sierra Leone. The workshop ended with a session on identifying the causes and effects of the strongholds in Sierra Leone and suggests ways to eliminate or avoid them.

Although WIN was in its infancy when fieldwork was being carried out, it had already achieved a few successes. Among them were the establishment of prayer cells in Freetown, Port Loko, Makeni and Kenema. These home cells were borne out of the various workshops and seminars. Another success that is worth pointing out is the intercessory sessions, which they held during the military regime. These sessions were held to pray fervently for the return to democratic rule and within a month when they commenced, Sierra Leone returned to democratic rule.

This chapter set out to investigate the role of women in churches in Freetown in recent years. The picture that emerges is fascinating primarily because Christian women have emerged out of the shadows of playing second fiddle to their men folk to becoming leaders in their own right. There is still a debate about whether some leadership roles are suitable/permitted for women, particularly if some passages of scripture (Old Testament and New Testament) are interpreted literally and dogmatically.

CHAPTER 7

Training and Church Leadership: Bible Colleges and Schools of Demonology

7:1. Introduction

The proper training of Christian leaders (ordained ministers, lay leaders) will always be an important ingredient in the growth of the Church in numerical terms and its effectiveness in spreading its message to the wider community. For the Church to be effective and relevant to the society in which it finds itself, it needs, *inter alia*, to provide effective and relevant preparation for those who are to be entrusted with the responsibilities of leading services such as carrying out initiation ceremonies (baptisms, confirmations), counselling those about to get married or ministering to the bereaved and those with other problems.

Interestingly, Freetown has a unique place in the history of theological education in West Africa. Fourah Bay College (FBC) was founded by the CMS in 1827¹⁸³ specifically for the training of clergy, some of whom were to be sent to the mission field in other (British) West African countries like the Gambia. By 1964 the Methodists had opened a similar institution, the Sierra Leone Bible College (SLBC) and these two colleges carried the brunt of clergy training until the mid-20th century. Prior to the establishment of the SLBC, training for church leaders especially those in the Methodist and Anglican denominations was done on a denominational level, whereby each denomination conducted training within their churches when funds were not available to send their pastors-in-training to Fourah Bay College. The other denominations like the Baptist, the Missionary Church of Africa (MCA), the United Brethren in Christ (UBC) and the Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone (WCSL) had no need for such training because most of the leaders manning the churches were foreign missionaries.

¹⁸³ FBC was opened even before there was a secondary school in Freetown. It was to bridge the gap between primary school level and theological training that led the CMS to found the CMS Grammar School in 1845. Fourah Bay College started a degree programme in the 1870s under Durham University, attracting students from Ghana and Nigeria. The first registered student of FBC was Samuel Ajayi Crowther who went on to become the first Black Bishop in British West Africa.

This chapter aims to look at the development of theological education in the nation's capital from the 1970s to the beginning of the new millennium. I shall endeavour to give a general picture of the calibre of students registered in the various colleges as well as of the staff and their qualifications. I will also present case-studies of a few of the more recently-opened Bible and Deliverance schools and examine their areas of emphasis, curriculum and the qualifications required for entry.

One factor that is responsible for the establishment of so many Bible Schools in Freetown in the late 1980s is the proliferation of charismatic churches. The leader of a charismatic church does not feel that his/her church is complete if it does not have a Bible School. The pastor-in-charge of this type of church tries to acquire the number of members that meets government requirements for the establishment of a church, after which he/she embarks on the establishment of such a school.¹⁸⁴ A number of Bible and Deliverance schools has emerged under this pattern, although most of them are short-lived. In 1998, there were fifteen Bible Schools run by born-again churches.

In the early 1990s, Bible Schools and Demonology Schools began to proliferate in conjunction with the born-again churches. Unlike the Bible Colleges established by the mainline Churches which offered academic subjects like Theology, Hebrew, Greek, English and Sociology, these Bible and Demonology Schools only offered courses relating to the Bible.

7:2. The Sierra Leone Bible College

The Sierra Leone Bible College (SLBC) came into being as the result of at least ten years of prayer and conversations among evangelical church leaders. It was recognised that one of the acute needs of the church in West Africa was trained African Leaders. The prolonged discussions led to the consensus that an independent Bible College, intended in the first instance for those who had completed at least Form 3 (Year 9 in Britain), and located in Freetown or its vicinity, would best meet the needs of the church. The search for land led to the Jui Peninsular near Hastings (12 miles from the centre of Freetown). The college leased from the Sierra Leone Government a 27-acre portion of a former British Royal Air Force (BRAAF) base with some buildings already standing. The first

¹⁸⁴ According to the laws of Sierra Leone, a church should register with the Ministry of Rural Development and Social Services and should have a minimum of twenty-five members with 75 per cent participation before the church is allowed to operate.

official meeting of the Board of Governors took place in December 1963 and the renovations of the buildings began in January 1964 with funds given by Methodist and the Church of England missions in the United Kingdom. The college opened in September 1964 with the Rev. Warren Woolsey as the first Principal.

The SLBC is a residential one and from 1964 to 1987, the college offered programmes on two levels, Certificate and Diploma. During this period it turned out over 150 students; most of whom now serve all over the country as heads of churches, pastors, chaplains, teachers and in various other ministries. During this period also, there was a felt need among the sponsoring denominations for degree-level leadership in the church in Sierra Leone. The staff and board of governors began exploring the need and possibility of a degree programme in the late 1970s. In a series of eight board and committee meetings, between May 1983 and December 1984, active plans were set in motion. The last crop of students in the Certificate of Pastoral Training programme graduated in June 1987. On 8 September 1987, the first eight degree candidates registered at the College and seven of them were awarded the Bachelor of Theology degree on June 30, 1991. A significant milestone for the development of the SLBC came in August 1998 when the College attained the status of a university because it had met all the requirements and standards of a university as recognised by the University of Sierra Leone. Among the requirements that the college met were holdings at the Library with not less than 12,000 books and residential quarters for both lecturers and students.¹⁸⁵

In the early 1980s the Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone (BCSL), the MCA, the UBC, and the WCSL became the joint proprietors of the SLBC. The College operates under the guidelines of a Constitution and is directed by a Board of Governors made up of representatives of the joint Proprietors and members at large selected from a cross section of the Christian community in Sierra Leone.

The college is a member of the EFSL. It also has formal relations with the Accrediting Council for Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA)¹⁸⁶ and is a founding member of the ACTEA Commission for Theological Colleges. In July 1990 the college was granted registered Candidate status in its pursuit of full post-secondary accreditation for both

¹⁸⁵ "Sierra Leone Bible College Attains University Status", Independent Observer, 24 September, 1998.

¹⁸⁶ ACTEA is a department of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and the Madagascar (AEAM).

Bachelor of Theology and Diploma in Theology Programmes under the Accrediting Council of Theological (ACT) Standards and Procedures.

The SLBC is also affiliated with London Bible College (LBC) and is the branch school of LBC in Sierra Leone. Up to the late 1980s, the college was staffed by expatriate personnel from the LBC. Students in the college are drawn from any denomination as long as they meet the college's requirements. The entry requirements emphasised non-academic or spiritual qualifications in addition to the academic. The former requirements include "a personal testimony of Christian conversion and Faith in Jesus Christ, a call to Christian service, an active involvement in Christian witness and service within the church community, mature goals and vision for the church and personal ministry and a positive recommendation from suitable acquaintances."¹⁸⁷

At the Bible colleges operated by the born-again churches, there are no academic requirements, only spiritual requirements are needed. Some of these Bible colleges do cater for non-literates who meet the spiritual requirements. This group of students are taught in the lingua franca, Krio and an oral examination is conducted for them. Although some members in the born-again churches do have the academic requirements, they seldom attend the SLBC. One possible reason that can be advanced for their lack of interest in this school is that the academic subjects offered at this school for example Greek and Hebrew are not useful to them.

The SLBC offers courses at both university and post-secondary levels for degree and diploma and certificate in Theology. The courses cover biblical, historical, theological and pastoral subjects, plus missions and Christian Education. The programmes of study at the college include:

1. Bachelor of Theology (B.Th.).
The Bachelor of Theology is a four-year, university level course of study with majors in two areas: Pastoral Ministry and Christian Education. This programme is designed to prepare students for professional ministry in the church and community. Applicants must meet the equivalent standard for entry into degree programmes at the University of Sierra Leone. Normally the minimum requirements

¹⁸⁷ Sierra Leone Bible College Prospectus, September 1991, p. 6.

include passes at General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary Level (or the equivalent) in five subjects or passes at G.C.E. Advanced Level in two subjects. English Language with a minimum G.C.E. grade of “6” must be included as one of the subjects.

2. Diploma of Theology (Dip. Th.).

The Diploma of Theology is a three-year, post-secondary level course of study which is designed to prepare men and women in biblical theological and pastoral subjects in order to serve in various church ministries. Applicants must meet the equivalent standard for entry into post-secondary teacher training colleges in Sierra Leone. Normally the minimum requirements include passes at G.C.E. Ordinary Level (or the equivalent) in three subjects.

In addition to the above programmes, three more programmes are included in the college’s programme of studies. They include the following:-

1. Special Studies.

This is a one year specialised course in biblical and theological Studies. This programme is open to those already engaged in a certain vocation, but who at the same time feel the need to have further education for more effective service and witness for Christ.

2. Partners in Ministry Programme.

This is a two- year programme designed to provide the wives of students with basic biblical, practical, and spiritual preparation so they will be better equipped to be partners in ministry with their husbands.

3. Vacation Bible College.

This is a special two-week option offered during the long vacation period as a ministerial refresher or a lay training enrichment course.¹⁸⁸

The Bible College operates on a term system based on the British pattern. Normally the first term is from September to December, the second term is from January to March, and the third term is from April to June. The teaching staff comprises of full-time, part-time and visiting lecturers. The Principal of the college since 1990 is Rev. Sylvanus Valcarcel, a Krio and a graduate of the College. He also studied in the Liberia Baptist Theology Seminary where he got his first degree and the Southern Baptist Theology Seminary, USA, where he got a Master of Arts in Theology.

¹⁸⁸ Sierra Leone Bible College Prospectus for 1997/1998 academic year.

7:3 .The Church of Christ Bible Training Institute

The Church of Christ Bible Training Institute (CCBTI) was first established in 1970 and was run by American Missionaries from the USA. It offered short diploma and certificate courses. The Diploma courses lasted for two years and the certificate for one year. This Institute was short-lived as the Missionaries had to leave Freetown in 1973, when the church gained autonomous status.

In 1998 the Institute was re-opened and is manned by a group of indigenous church officials. It offers a three year programme at three levels. Each level has two stages and each stage lasts for six months.¹⁸⁹ The School focuses on the Bible because according to the Director of the School Bro. Theophilus B. Kartusche, a Mende, “the Bible is the basis for preaching and evangelism.”¹⁹⁰ The curriculum covers the different books in the Bible as well as English. The CCBTI is the only School, apart from the SLBC and the Sierra Leone Theological College and Church Training Centre (SLTCCTC) which is discussed below, that offers English as a subject in their curriculum.

During the research period, the Institute had just re-opened and it was not possible to do a thorough study of it. However, there were 30 students in Level 1 stage 1 and most of them were members of the Headquarters Church and its branches. Classes were held on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 6p.m. to 8p.m. at the Church Headquarters, Priscilla Street in Freetown.

7:4. Sierra Leone Theological College and Church and Training Centre

The Sierra Leone Theological College and Church Training Centre (SLTCCTC) was founded in November, 1975 by leaders of the Sierra Leone Church comprising the heads

¹⁸⁹ In Level 1, stage 1 the following courses are taught: English, Introduction to the Bible 1, Book of Acts 1 and the Epistles 1 (General & Pauline).

In Level 1 stage 11 - Introduction to the Bible 11, English 11, Book of Acts 11 and the Epistles 11 (General and Pauline).

In Level 11, stage 1 - World Religions, Christian Evidence, The Epistles 111 (Pauline) and Life of Christ 1.

In Level 11, stage 11 Life of Christ 11, Church History 1, English 111 and The Epistles 1V (General and Pauline).

In Level 111, stage 1 - Old testament History 1, Church History 11, Revelation 1 and New Testament Church 1.

In Level 111, stage 11 - Revelation 11, Hermeneutics, New Testament Church and Old Testament History.

¹⁹⁰ Interview held with the Director of the School on 5. May 1998 at his Priscilla St office in Freetown.

of the Anglican and Methodist denominations. The head of the Anglicans during this period was the Most Rev. M.N.C.O. Scott (deceased), Bishop of Sierra Leone, and Archbishop of West Africa, the head of the two Methodist denominations were the Rev. S.L. Wallace, President of the Methodist Church Sierra Leone and the Rt. Rev. B.A. Carew (deceased), who was the Bishop of the United Methodist Church.

The main purpose of founding the college was to have an institution, a seminary to equip graduates with the competency necessary to relate the gospel to the current issues faced by Christians. They chose as a motto: “The Light of the Worlds” and the crest is the unending circle dotted by a chapel, a village, a farm, a cross, an office with equipment and a secretary, a wooded jungle, a Bible, a communion element and the sun. This is to emphasise the fact that no matter what time or place, from sunrise to sunrise, from the thick jungle to the arid desert, the graduate of the SLTCCTC should be confident of the “Light of the World” who monitors man’s time and wisdom and shapes the character that effectively controls man’s dreams, actions, reflections, feelings and experiences. The College and Centre is a member of the West African Associations of Theological Institutions (WAATI) and the Conference of African Theological Institutions (CATI).

The aims of the College are:

1. To prepare candidates for ordination and provide training for other ministries in the church.
2. To stimulate research into the religious and social factors that prevail in Sierra Leone in the context of the practical issues of Christian evangelism.
3. To assist the participating and other churches to understand and fulfil their mission to Sierra Leone through seminars, conferences and retreats.
4. To provide literature relevant to theological and evangelistic work.

The college is a residential one offering both diploma and certificate courses that include the following:

1. Diploma in Theology (Dip Th.)
2. Certificate in Pastoral Studies.
3. Certificate of proficiency in Pastoral studies by extension (Theological Education by Extension).
4. Certificate in Lay Ministry.
5. Certificate in Chaplaincy and Counselling.

The Diploma in Theology is a three-year full-time course (both morning and evening). It is mainly for those seeking ordination with the view to strengthen their theological understanding and mastery of biblical and theological disciplines of their life and work.

The Certificate in Pastoral Studies is a three-year part-time course designed for students interested in the Christian ministry but who are employed in various fields. The difference between this certificate and the Diploma in Theology course is that the latter is meant for those seeking ordination into the Ministry while the former is open to Lay people.

The Certificate of Proficiency in Pastoral Studies by Extension is also a three-year programme with students coming in for a residential course every August. The rest of the duration of the course is carried out on a part-time basis when the students have to complete workbooks based on correspondence.

The Certificate in Lay Ministry is a two-year course of mainly evening classes designed to provide training for those wishing to serve the church part-time or full-time as church visitors, evangelists, catechists, lay preachers, women worker, local church workers or lay readers.

The Certificate in Chaplaincy and Counselling is a one-year course comprising two terms of full-time study at College and one term internship based in an institution (military, hospital, school, prison etc.). It is designed to equip students with the skills necessary to provide for clients including Spiritual, Educational and Vocational Counselling.

The entry requirements into any of the programmes emphasised spiritual qualifications in addition to the academic. The academic requirement to the College is five passes at the GCE Ordinary level or West African School Certificate, a Higher Teachers Certificate or a Degree. For the spiritual qualification, “the applicant must be sure of his/her salvation, have a stable Christian life, be an active church member, have a clear call into Christian service, and be willing to undergo the disciplines of training.”¹⁹¹

¹⁹¹ Sierra Leone Theological College and Church Training Centre Prospectus: 1995-96, 4.

The College is an ecumenical institution although it has three main sponsors - the Anglican Church, the MCSL and the UMC. Students who have graduated from this College include members of the following denominations and Christian groups:

African Methodist Episcopal Church
Aladura
Anglican
Apostolic Church
Assemblies of God
Christ Pentecostal Church
Church of Salvation
Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion
God is our Light Church
Lutheran Church
Methodist Church of Sierra Leone
St. Peter's Healing Church
United Methodist Church
West African Methodist Church

From the above list, it was interesting to note that members from spiritual churches like the Aladura (Church of the Lord), Church of Salvation and St Peter's Healing Church are students in this College. Before the 1980s, it was unheard of for members of spiritual churches to attend Bible Colleges because they were said to come from the nondescript category in society. The first set of students from spiritual churches to attend this College was from the Church of the Lord (Aladura). By the end of their training for the Diploma in Theology, all three of them had severed ties with their churches and had gone into the Methodist denomination. All three are now heading different circuits in the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone. It is quite a common occurrence for members of spiritual churches who have completed any of the programmes at this College not to return to their churches because according to one of them "I see no use in burning candles any more."¹⁹²

7:5. Bethel Temple Training Institute

The Bethel Temple Bible Training Institute (BTBTI) was established in 1982 as a full time institution. It is one of the many arms of Bethel Temple which was formerly run by the Assemblies of God mission. In 1984, Bethel Temple severed ties with the AOG

¹⁹² Mr. Adewole John, former member of the Church of the Lord (Aladura), at Cafe de la Rose, Lightfoot Boston Street, 9 September 1998.

mission. The church also runs a nursery school in its church compound which caters for children of members and non-members. The function of the Institute is to provide quality education in areas of Bible and Pastoral Ministry. Its goal is to train men and women in the word of God and send them forth to reach a lost and dying world.¹⁹³ The Institute is affiliated with the International Bible Institute of London (IBIL). This Institute had to close down in 1984 because they did not have enough students.

The Institute re-opened in 1992 on a part time basis. Classes were held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 4-7p.m. It offered two types of courses i.e. the international Diploma,¹⁹⁴ a two-year course and the Advanced Diploma,¹⁹⁵ a one-year course. The Institute is opened to members and non-members. Unlike the SLBC the SLTCCTC, the BTBTI does not have any academic requirement. The only requirement is that the student should “have a personal commitment with the Lord Jesus Christ and be willing to receive a Bible Education.” The International Diploma is administered by the IBIL. This institute was founded in 1977 by Colin Dye. The institute is also affiliated with Kensington Temple in London where the founder is the Apostolic Leader. Bethel Temple Institute does not benefit financially from IBIL except for the tapes, workbook and an international certificate which is given to its graduates. The course is set out in a course guide and work book for each of the 48 topics covered in the first and second years of the course. Apart from the registration and tuition fees of Le.5,500 (£1.10. in sterling) per year the students had to purchase the course guide and work book at Le.200 (4p in sterling) per topic. In 1998, two new courses were added to the diploma programme - Cults and Occults and Know Your Enemy. The latter course is equivalent to Spiritual Warfare, a very popular course in born-again churches. When I asked the Assistant pastor, Rev. Ulric Crowne why they have included these two courses on demonology, he told me that they wanted to keep abreast with the other Bible Schools which teach these same subjects. The Institute does not teach Greek and Hebrew, two core subjects whom members of the mainline churches claim are very vital for an

¹⁹³ Bethel Temple Training Institute Brochure.

¹⁹⁴ In the International Diploma class the following subjects are taught during the first year: Old Testament Survey; Leadership Awareness; Holy Spirit Power; Homiletics; Prayer Power/ Worship; Survey of Christian Doctrine 1&11; Evangelism/ Discipleship; Spiritual Gifts; New Testament Survey 1&11. In the second year they are taught - Acts of the Apostles; Christianity is true/ Teaching to Learn; Cults and Occults; Healing; St John; Know your enemy, Church Growth; World Religions; Managing your Life God's Way and Small and group Leadership.

¹⁹⁵ In the Advanced Diploma class the following subjects are taught: Eschatology; Church History; Christian Counselling; Leadership; Homiletics; Church Planting/ mission; Christian Ethics, Music and Typology.

understanding of the Bible. However, homiletics one of the courses offered in Bible Colleges run by the mainline churches is taught at this level. In an interview I had with the Principal of the School, Rev. Dr. Rita Caesar, she admitted that the Institute did not teach theology as such but offered the very best in Bible and Bible-related studies.¹⁹⁶

The Advanced Diploma course is conducted locally and is for one-year duration. This course focuses on the main frame of the Ministry and Pastoral training. Twenty -four subjects are taken in this course, most of which are taught through audio cassettes. The main reason for the use of the cassettes in the course is to ensure uniformity with the Institute's international affiliating body, IBIL. From time to time handouts are sold to the students at Le.500 (10p in sterling) per subject to complement the audio cassette lectures. Since the reopening of the Institute in 1992, 102 students have completed the International Diploma, and 60 in the Advanced Diploma courses. A breakdown is given in Table 7:1 below.

Table7:1. No. Of Graduates From 1992 - 1998

Year	Int. Diploma	Adv. Diploma	Total
1992 – 1994	15	20	35
1995 – 1996	25	15	40
1996 – 1997	23	15	38
1997 – 1998	39	10	49
TOTAL	102	60	162

Field data, February 1997 to October 1998

The Table above shows that there has been a steady growth in the number of students who graduated from the Institute since its reopening. It is interesting to note that during the period of the junta regime in Freetown, the highest number of students enrolled for the international diploma course. This perhaps could be accounted for in terms of the fact that the people of Freetown sought solace in religion amid the gun shots, killing and raping which accompanied the junta rule.

The Director of the Institute is the founder of Bethel Temple, Rev. A.E.W. Jones. He is now blind and most of his job is done by the Principal of the Institute, Dr. Rita Caesar. In 1998, Dr Caesar was the deputy commissioner of income tax department in Freetown.

¹⁹⁶ Interview with Rev. Dr. Rita Caesar, 16 June 1998, at her Wilkinson Rd. residence.

She studied in England, Canada and the United States of America. She holds the Associate of Certified Institute of Secretaries (ACIS) from London and a Tax Field Audit diploma from Canada. Apart from her profession as a tax officer, Dr. Caesar is a fully ordained minister of religion. She was ordained at Bethel Temple in 1989. She holds a Master in Divinity from Emmanuel Baptist Seminary in the USA and a Doctorate in Ministry from Covington Theological Seminary in Florida, USA. Apart from the doctorate she gained at Covington Theological Seminary; she was awarded two honorary doctorates from Emmanuel Baptist seminary (Honorary Ph.D. in Religious Education) in 1994 and from the International Seminary, USA (Honorary Ph.D. in Divinity) in 1997. The current prospectus (1997-1998) indicates that all the teachers in the Institute are on a part time basis, except for the Assistant Pastor, Rev. Ulric Crowne who is full-time.

In the late 1970s, some members of Bethel Temple left the church because they were dissatisfied with the way the pastor-in-charge, Rev. A.E.W. Jones was handling the affairs of the church. This situation was reported to the Assemblies of God Mission who decided to sever ties with Bethel Temple and sought an alternative base in Freetown.¹⁹⁷ The AOG established the Evangel Bible Training Institute (EBTI) in 1980 and operated it in the same pattern as the BTBTI. The establishment of the Bible College was followed by the founding of the Evangel AOG Church in 1981.

7:6 Freetown Bible Training Centre

Freetown Bible Training Centre was founded by Bro. Russ Tatro of the Living Word Missions Inc. USA in 1990 with 509 students.¹⁹⁸ Bro. Russ Tatro and his wife Wendy are graduates from Rhema Bible Training Centre in Oklahoma in the USA. After graduation, they spent a year in training on the Mission field with Jim Zirkle and the Ministry of Living Water. Russ's vision was to establish international Bible training centres in the capitals of every West African country. His vision has been partially fulfilled as he has done so in Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, Liberia¹⁹⁹ and Cameroon. He also organises teaching seminars in Senegal, Mali, Nigeria and Togo as a step in expanding into Bible training centres. When Russ came to establish Bible Training Centres in West Africa, he did so under Zirkle's Living Water Ministry. In Sierra Leone the Bible Training

¹⁹⁷ For an insight into the causes leading to the schism, see Robert Smith's, *A Survey and Theological analysis*, 1994, pp. 524-527.

¹⁹⁸ The Freetown Bible Training Centre Souvenir Brochure, 5th Anniversary Celebrations, p.2.

¹⁹⁹ For the activities of this Bible Training Centre in Liberia see Gifford, *Christianity and Politics*, pp. 179-182.

Centre is not only limited to the capital city, Freetown, similar centres have been opened at Lunsar and Kono in 1994; Bo, Kambia, Lungi, Port Loko and Makeni in 1996. However, the Kambia Bible Training Centre has closed down because of the rebel war. All the Bible Training Centres in Freetown and the provinces offer the same courses from first to third year.

The Freetown Bible Training Centre also operates a children's Bible School which comes directly under the Children's Ministry, one of the various arms of the Living Water Ministry. The School meets at the West African Methodist Collegiate School at Wilkinson Road on Saturday mornings from 9.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. like the Training Centre. It was opened in 1993 with 350 children. In 1995 two more schools were opened, one in the East end of Freetown and they met at the Bishop Johnson Memorial Secondary School and the other in the West end at the Police Barracks, King Tom.

In 1998, the Children's School had its own Director, Mrs. Dorothea Thomas who is also the Matron at the El Shaddai Orphanage run by the Living Waters Ministry. When this children's school is compared to the only other children's Bible school in Freetown, the Pentecost Children's Bible School, it turns out the largest number of children during graduation. One likely reason for this is that the Freetown Bible Training Centre Children's Bible School has international links that sponsors the orphanage. These sponsors provide food and clothing not only for in-mates of the orphanage but also members of the children's school.

Freetown Bible Training Centre is one of the most popular Bible Schools in Freetown which turns out a significantly high number of graduates at its annual graduation ceremony held at the National Stadium complex every last Sunday in the month of May. The programme of studies before 1994 included first and second year classes. The third year was created in 1994 to give students who had qualified from the second year an opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the Bible and also gain practical experience in their areas of "calling". Classes are held every Saturday from 9.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. in two centres - the East School, at the Annie Walsh Memorial Secondary School and in the West School at the Vine Memorial Secondary School. The East School caters for people

living as far as Allen Town, some ten miles from the capital, Freetown. The West School caters for people living as far as Goderich which is also ten miles from Freetown. Students in the third year have additional classes on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at the Missions office at 51, Circular Road, Freetown.

The Freetown Bible Training Centre is headed in Sierra Leone by a National Director, Rev. Lionel Betts. Betts is a graduate from this training centre and a member of King Memorial UMC before he became a “born-again” in 1990. He is still a member of the Methodist church but seldom attends their church services as he is always engaged in preaching assignments in “born-again” churches all over Freetown. He was a clerk at the Law Officers department in the High Court of Sierra Leone and when he became Director of the School he resigned from his job. He is married and has two children.

Rev. Betts is assisted by an Administrator, Sister Shola Gilpin who is an Anglican but an associate member of the New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ)²⁰⁰. The two other members of staff who are in full-time employment are the Receptionist and the Secretary all of whom are graduates of the Centre. In the first two years of the establishment of the Centre, the teaching staff were mostly foreign missionaries from the USA and they included Bert and Carolyn Farrias, Eric Crowley and the International Director, Russ Tatro and his wife Wendy. In 1992, a year soon after the rebel war broke out in Sierra Leone these missionaries left and they were replaced by some pastors who had gone through the Centre and were heading churches of their own. Among these pastors are Rev. Akintayo Sam-Jolly, founder of Living Word of Faith, Samuel Buyabe, Founder of Winners Chapel and Gerald Keister-Campbell, Founder of Calvary Charismatic Church.

The students at the Centre are drawn from the mainline, mission-related (these include UPC and CPC), born-again and spiritual churches. The Table below gives a breakdown of the number of students and their denomination for the 1996/1997 session.

²⁰⁰ This Church is one of the most popular born-again churches in the East end of Freetown.

Table 7:2: Denominational Affiliation of Students 1996-1997

Denomination	No.	%
Anglican	45	7.0
AME	11	1.7
AOG	46	7.2
Born-again	364	57
Baptist	24	3.8
Catholic	29	4.5
CIA	13	2.0
Methodist	76	12
Mission	22	3.4
New Apostolic	9	1.4
TOTAL	639	100

Source: Field Data, February 1997 to October 1998.

From the table above, the majority of students are from born-again churches. Most of these churches do not have a Bible School of their own. Jesus is Lord Ministry had the highest proportion of students (15 per cent) during the period under review. Bethel Temple Bible Training Institute and Evangel Bible Training Institute (EBTI) are among the first Bible Schools to be established in Freetown yet their members (12.6 per cent) prefer to attend the Freetown Bible Training Centre. A large majority of them said that the Centre offered them a longer duration of three years intensive theoretical and practical training in the “Word” instead of the one-year course offered by the above mentioned Bible Schools.

The students from the mainline churches - Catholics, Anglicans and Methodists²⁰¹ had 150 students out of the 579 who graduated from the first year in the 1996/1997 session. Most of them said that their thirst for the word was not fulfilled in their churches and attending the Centre has made them into “committed” Christians and also versatile in the “Word”. It is quite an uncommon practice for members of the Baptist denomination to attend Bible Schools except for the correspondence course run by the Mission. Nevertheless, they represent 3.7 per cent of the students in the first year of the 1996/1997 session, an appreciable number when compared to their attendance in other Bible Schools.²⁰²

²⁰¹ Methodists include the African Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Church of Sierra Leone, United Brethren in Christ, United Methodist Church, Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone and West African Methodist Church of Sierra Leone,

²⁰² For example at Flaming Bible Institute, they contributed 1% during the 1996/1997 session and in some other Bible Schools they were less than 0.2%.

An interesting development in the transformation of Freetown Christianity is the attendance of members of some Spiritual Churches at Bible Colleges. Prior to the late 1980s, members of Spiritual Churches did not see the need for an in-depth study of the Bible neither any training for specialised roles such as Evangelist, Pastors or Teachers. Most of their dealings with the Bible was centred around the Psalms, the book most frequently used in healing in all their churches. With the establishment of the different Bible Schools, they began to see the need to be trained in the different “calling” and also taught the “Word” in depth. They also saw the need to eradicate some of their rituals like life-exchange sacrifice, stream bathing and bathing with lime and salt.

A twenty per cent survey was conducted in the Centre among final year students in the 1997/1998 session. The survey was done mainly to elicit the reasons for their preference of the Centre and their future plans as graduates. Among the reasons given for their preference were:

1. That the Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers who had gone through the Centre were showing good examples through their moral behaviour.
2. The Centre supplies many text-books and reading materials.
3. My wife who brought me to the Lord attended the Centre so I also did.
4. The Teachers are blessed with the “anointing”
5. I have seen positive changes in the lives of my fellow church members who had gone through the Centre.
6. I was carried away by their graduation ceremony.

As regards their future plans as graduates of the Centre, 60 per cent of the students stated that they would like to establish their own churches, because they are now well grounded in the Bible. Twenty per cent stated that they wanted to spread the “Word” by evangelising and winning lost souls for Christ. Ten per cent out of the remaining twenty per cent said that they will share their knowledge with others by conducting home cell meetings. Five per cent said that the “Word” will serve as a guide to their way of living which will serve as an example to others. The remaining five per cent said that they will use their knowledge gained in the Centre to become better workers in their churches.

The curriculum for all the programmes in the Centre is a standard one used for all the training centres found in West Africa and its course structure is American. The courses for the different levels are compiled in a booklet form and is included in the fees charged

for every student. In the first year²⁰³ and the second year²⁰⁴, each student pays Le.16, 500 a year (£3.30. in sterling), this amount covers tuition, books, outlines and the graduation fees. The Centre has devised a payment plan whereby the student can pay Le 1,500 (30p. in sterling) monthly. The fees for the third year²⁰⁵ is Le.22, 000 (£4.40. in sterling) a year with a payment plan of Le.2,000 (40p in sterling) monthly.

Unlike the SLBC and the SLTCCTC, the FBTC requires no academic qualification for entry except spiritual qualifications: born-again conversion, evidence of dedication to Christ and emphasis on a morally upright life “No one smokes, drink alcoholic beverages, abuses drugs or is involved in immoral sexual relations.”²⁰⁶

The popularity of the Centre could perhaps be reckoned in terms of the day for classes. Saturday which is a free day in Freetown, that is, most government and private business workers do not go to work. Most of the other Bible Schools, except the New Life Ministry School of Demonology which meets on Sundays, meet on week-days which perhaps is one of the main reasons that people prefer FBTC. Another significant factor for the popularity of the Centre in the early 1990s is the support it receives from the Living Word Missions Inc. and international Missions. The Living Word Missions provides all of the reading materials, course workbooks and text books used in the Centre. The provision of these materials at a minimal cost has motivated students to flock to this Centre and little wonder that in its first five years it turned out 3867 students.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ The following topics are included in the first year curriculum: Bible Doctrines; Blood Covenant; Character of God; Christian Stewardship; Demonology; Discipleship; New Testament Survey; Divine Healing; Evangelism; The Holy Spirit; Introduction to Ministry; Obedience; Practical Ministries; Prayer; Righteousness and Understanding Authority.

²⁰⁴ The following topics are included in the second year curriculum: Faith 11; Holy Spirit 11; Prayer 11; Minister and Family; Lab Class 1 & 11; Leadership 1, 11 & 111; Praise and Worship; Teaching Techniques; Life in the Spirit; Old Testament Survey; Old Testament Men of Faith and Preaching Lab.

²⁰⁵ The following topics are included in the third year curriculum: Missions and Church Planting; Administration (Church); Scriptures Interpretation; Practical Teaching and Preaching; Pastoral Ministry; Teaching Ministry; Cults; Bible Doctrines 2&3; Old Testament Survey 11; New Testament Survey; Evangelism; End Times; Prayer 111; and Prayer 1V.

²⁰⁶ Interview with the Director of Living Water Ministry, Rev. Lionel Betts, on June 16, 1998 at the Missions office, 51, Circular Road, Freetown.

²⁰⁷ The Freetown Training Centre Souvenir Brochure, 5th anniversary celebrations 1990-1995 gave the following statistics:

- 1991 - 389 students
- 1992 - 704 students
- 1993 - 773 students
- 1994 -1008 students
- 1995 - 993 students

Other Ministries and Centres who contribute books and materials to the Centre include:

Kenneth Copeland Ministries
Lester Sumrall Evangelistic Association
Charles and Frances Hunter
Crenshaw Christian Centre (Dr. Frederick Price)
Victory Christian Centre
Willie George Ministries
Christian Faith Centre (Pastor Casey Treat)
Hands for Christ
Christ for the Nations World Missionary Press.

In the 1990s through the FBTC and other well established Bible Schools and Schools of Deliverance and Demonology,²⁰⁸ a thorough insight into the “Word” has gained a wider acceptance among “born-again.” In the mainline churches, the “Word” is elucidated only during the sermon. Much of this is from the theological and doctrinal perspective, which makes it quite boring for the congregation. This has been one of the main reasons given by “born-again” for their preference of “born-again” churches over the mainline churches. These Bible Schools have become gateways for their graduates to obtain a “visa” to establish churches of their own.

7:7 Schools of Deliverance and Demonology

The School of Deliverance and Demonology has assumed remarkable prominence among the born-again community in Freetown. One pre-condition for membership in most born-again churches is that intending members should have gone through the rite of deliverance before being accepted as a full member.²⁰⁹

In the early 1990s these schools have assumed a high priority in the society. Two factors could be advanced for this situation. Firstly, the downward socio-economic climate prevailing in Freetown during this period has resulted in a lot of social problems. These problems include unemployment, hunger, malnutrition and lack of medical facilities. This situation has left a lot of people with the idea that demonic forces are responsible for

²⁰⁸ Among the well established Schools are: Flaming Bible Institute, New Life Ministry School of Deliverance and Demonology, Bethel Temple Training Institute and Evangel Training Institute.

²⁰⁹ For example question 4 on the application form for membership at Flaming Bible Church is “Have you gone through deliverance” and at Bethel World Outreach Ministry, question 6 asks the same question.

this. Secondly, in African cultures belief in spirits, witchcraft and the underworld plays an important role in the lives of many people.²¹⁰

These beliefs have contributed to the need for people to be delivered in order to live “right” with God. In the early 1990s, this deliverance thinking has led to the establishment of some schools of Deliverance and Demonology. Three of these schools are quite popular although there are some more which are beginning to find their feet. The three very popular schools are: Flaming Bible School of Deliverance and Demonology, New Life Ministry School of Deliverance and Demonology and Calvary Charismatic School of Deliverance and Demonology. Flaming Bible School of Deliverance and Demonology has already been dealt with in chapter five.

7:7:1 New Life Ministry School of Deliverance and Demonology

The New Life Ministry School of Deliverance and Demonology (NLMSDD) was founded in 1996 with twenty students. The idea for the school was conceived by the Founder of the Church. According to Pastor Cole, the School was founded for two reasons. Firstly, with Sierra Leone being a black African nation with “strong devilish and demonic associations” there was a need to impart knowledge about Satan and his demonic crew and put Christians on their guard. Secondly, he was upset by the downward trend of the socio-economic and moral climate in the country, in part due to the civil war which started in 1991. He believed that Satan and his underworld crew were responsible for the situation and as he was a man of God he believed that a spiritual battle should be waged against them. The answer to all of these was to open a School where people could be taught about Satan’s kingdom and how to take one’s authority against them.

The School meets every Sunday from 4.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. at the National Workshop Canteen, Cline Town, the same venue for Sunday services. In September 1998, two branches were opened, one at Wellington in the heart of the East end of the city, and the other at Wilkinson Road in the West end. The school at Wellington met in one of the classrooms in a primary school and the school at Wilkinson Road met at the West African

²¹⁰ Cf. With Brouwer, Gifford and Rose, 1966, “The New Christianity in Africa: The Charismatic Explosion” in *Exporting the American Gospel: Global Fundamentalism*, Routledge: New York and London, p.169.

Methodist Collegiate School's hall. Both schools hold classes on Sundays between 4.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m.

In common with other Schools of Deliverance and Demonology as well as Bible Schools/Colleges, the NLMSDD has a simple organisational structure comprising of the Director who is the founder of the Church, an Administrator, co-ordinator and a graduation committee.

The Director is the Head of the School and he designs the curriculum assisted by his second-in-command, the Administrator. The Assistant Administrators for both the East and West Schools are responsible for running these schools but they have to liaise with the Administrator who is in charge of the parent school at Cline Town. The Administrative Assistant, Finance, audits and controls the finances of the three schools. The finances of the School are got mainly from the registration and tuition fees paid by the students.

The Graduation ceremony is an important occasion in the School's calendar. The Graduation Co-ordinator who is the fourth in command liaises with the Graduation Officer and members of the Graduation committees to plan for this all-important occasion. Since the inception of the School in 1996, the School has observed four graduation ceremonies up to the time I was conducting my fieldwork. Although most schools of deliverance and demonology ask in their application forms whether the applicant has gone through deliverance, this school insists that they go through it with the Church itself as well as a rigorous interviewing session. The interview is about the applicant's family history, particularly the family's involvement, if any, in traditional worship, including any possible curse or family covenant with a deity.

The School conducts three sessions every year and each session lasts for eight weeks which is further divided into two terms. Among the different subjects taught during each session are: Spiritual Diagnosis; Sources of Contact; Spiritual Warfare; Operation of Spiritual Gifts/Ministration; Personal Attitude and Counselling.

The courses are taught by the Pastor and four teachers who are members of the Church. The School does not employ teachers from outside as it is done in the other Schools. In

1998, the teachers were Brothers Eldred Samuels, Eustace Samuels, Christopher Sawyerr who are Krio and Bro. James Abu who is a Mende; they attended the FBC. The main text book used in the different courses is Heaven U. Heaven's *How to Cast out Demons or Evil Spirits: A practical Guide to Deliverance*. The School does not have a library so the lectures are printed as handouts which are covered by the fees which was Le, 2000 (40p in sterling) per session. The students also had to pay Le. 500 (10p in sterling) as registration fees. The teachers also made use of Derek Prince's *Blessing or Curse: You can Choose*; Sunday Adekola's *Understanding Demonology*²¹¹ to illustrate their points.

In the September 1998 session, there were 245 students, 155 females and 90 males enrolled in the school. They were from mainline, mission, spiritual and born-again churches (Table 7:3)

Table 7:3 Denominational Breakdown of Students

Denomination	Males	Females	Total
Aladura	8	19	27
AME	-	1	1
Anglican	4	10	14
AOG	15	17	32
Born-again	54	90	144
Catholic	2	5	7
Methodist	4	7	11
Mission	2	6	8
UMC	-	1	1
TOTAL	89	156	245

Source:Field data, February 1997- October 1998.

Table7:3 above shows that the majority of the students in the School are from born-again churches. The bulk of the people in this category come from the church itself (20.1%). There were eighteen students from Jesus is Lord Ministry which is quite popular for its miracle and healing services. This church does not have a Bible School nor a

²¹¹ Among the other books on deliverance consulted by the teachers were: Kaniaki and Mukendi, 1991, *Snatched from Satan's Claws:An Amazing Deliverance by Christ*, Nairobi:Enkei Media Services, Symons Onyango, 1979, *Set Free from Demon :a Testimony to the Power of God to Deliver the Demon Possessed*, Nairobi: Evangel,; Zacharias Tane Fomum, *Deliverance from Demons*, Yaoundé: IGH (Box 6090, Yaoundé), Kaluy Abosi, 1990, *'Born Twice': From Demonism to Christianity*, Benin City; Joint Heirs Publications, John Cudjoe-Mensah, 1989, *Satan and his Tricks*. St Mary's.; Victoria Eto, 1981, *How I Served Satan Until Jesus Christ Delivered Me: A True Account of My Twenty-one Years Experience as an Agent of Darkness and My deliverance by the Powerful Arm of God in Christ Jesus*. Warri: Shalom Christian Mission, and Emmanuel Eni's *Delivered from the Powers of Darkness to* illustrate their points. (Some of these books were not easily accessible in Freetown but were sent from Ghana and Nigeria).

Deliverance School and this is perhaps the main reason for their members to attend the NLMSDD in such a large number. The other born-again churches whose members attended the school included Living Word of Faith (5 students), Bethel World Outreach Ministry (eight students), Bethel Temple (five students), Bread of Life (five students), TRANSCEA (two students) and from a host of smaller churches. Among the Mission churches whose members attended the School were the United Pentecostal Church, Jesus Christ of latter Day Saints and the Church of Pentecost.

An interesting new phenomenon now appears to be taking shape. A list of students recently enrolled shows that twenty-seven students (nineteen females and eight males) were from two spiritual churches (St. Peters Healing Temple, Tower Hill and the Church of Salvation). These students included the Spiritual Head of Saint Peters Healing Temple, Patrick Ansumana Ngouni, the Acting Spiritual Head, Mrs. Alice Wilson and other church officials like the Church Mother, the Secretary of the Church, Disciples, Elders, Deacons, and Deaconesses. From the Church of Salvation, there were only two males who were just ordinary members of the church. When I spoke to the Spiritual Head of Saint Peter's Healing Temple about his motive for enrolling in the School with his church officials, he told me that their enrolment in the school is a precursor to a more profound change in their ways of worship and other paraphernalia associated with the church for example wearing shoes in places of worship, bringing into the main church corpses and stopping the practice of burning candles. He expressed the wish that by the completion of the course, his spiritualist church would have abandoned some of its more controversial practices like the use of consecrated water and florida water, life-exchange sacrifice etc. and adopted more of born-again church practices especially in the area of healing and deliverance.

With regards to the students from mainline churches, there was the pastor-in-charge of an Anglican church, Bishop Crowther Memorial Church, Rev. S.A.J. Pratt. It is not clear why but one can only conjecture that the Reverend gentleman who is an epileptic might have chosen this path for personal rather than ideological reasons.

7:7:2 Calvary Charismatic School of Deliverance and Demonology

Calvary Charismatic School of Deliverance and Demonology started off in 1995 as an arm of the Calvary Charismatic Church. This Church was founded by Pastor Gerald

Keister-Campbell who is a Krio. The School meets every Thursday from 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. in a classroom at the Eastend Municipal School at Kennedy Street. The location of the School is a heavily Muslim-dominated area. According to the Director of the School, Pastor Keister-Campbell, Muslims are into a lot of fetish and they need to be delivered from it. This is one of his reasons for establishing the School in that area and this reason has come to fruition as there are a lot of former Muslims in the School. The Director is assisted by the Principal who takes care of both the financial and administrative functions of the School. He collects the fees which is Le. 6000.00. (£1.20. in sterling) per session for each student. The fees includes handouts which are printed out for each topic in the course.

The Director and the Principal are the only full-time members of staff. The other lecturers are on a part time basis as most of them are heads of their churches and two out of the five lecturers also run their own Schools. The two lecturers who run their own schools are Rev. Ade Beckley,²¹² and Rev. Archibald Cole.²¹³ Pastor Gerald also reciprocates by teaching in the two schools run by his colleagues. There is also quite a lot of interaction going on among leaders of the different Schools of Deliverance and Demonology. They support each other by being guest speakers in crusades, revivals and conferences organised by their colleagues.

In the second session for 1998 there were 60 students on roll. I conducted a survey among 50 per cent of them (Tables 7:4 to 7:8). The survey was conducted to elicit their socio-economic background in order to see the type of people that the School caters for.

Table:7:4 Age Range of Students

Age Range	No.	%
Below 20	3	10
20 - 29	11	38
30 - 39	7	23
40 - 49	4	13
50 - 59	3	10
60 - 69	2	6
TOTAL	30	100

Source: Field data February 1997 to October 1998.

²¹² Rev. Ade Beckley is founder of Liberty Christian Church and also the Liberty Christian School of Deliverance and Demonology at Lumley.

²¹³ Rev. Archibald Cole is founder of New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ) and its School of Deliverance and Demonology.

The survey revealed that the majority of students are young people in their twenties (38 per cent). The youngest student is fourteen years and the main reason for enrolling in the School is that he is very sickly. He believes that he needs deliverance from an ancestral curse which has caused him to absent himself from School most of the time. He is a member of the Church and so are his parents both of whom subscribe to the fact that he needs deliverance from this curse.

Table 7:5 Occupational Status of Students.

Occupation	No.	%
Carpenter	1	3.3
House-wife	2	6.7
Labourer	1	3.3
Minister	1	3.3
Nurse	4	13.4
Pensioner	1	3.3
Student	8	26.7
Teacher	3	10.0
Trader	6	20.0
Unemployed	3	10
TOTAL	30	100

Source: Field data, February 1997 to October 1998.

A breakdown of the occupational status of the students revealed that they are drawn from the middle and lower classes in the society. This situation could be accounted for in terms of the location of the School, the east end of Freetown, where a lot of these people are found.

Table 7:6 Ethnicity of Students.

Ethnicity	No.	%
Krio	10	33.3
Limba	5	16.7
Loko	1	3.3
Madingo	1	3.3
Mende	7	23.4
Temne	2	6.7
Susu	1	3.3
Yoruba	3	10
TOTAL	30	100

Source: Field data, February 1997 to October 1998.

The table above shows that seven out of the seventeen ethnic groups in Sierra Leone are represented in the sample. The majority of them are Krio (four Christian Krio and six

Aku/Muslim Krio). One reason that might be responsible for this situation is that the founder of the School is a Krio and Krio always support and respect their leaders. All the Yoruba in the sample are ECOMOG soldiers serving in Freetown.

Table 7:7 Previous Religious Affiliation of Students

Religious Affiliation	No.	%
Anglican	4	13.4
AOG	1	3.3
Born Again	2	6.6
Catholic	4	13
Methodist	8	26.6
Muslim	11	36.6
New Apostolic	1	3.3
TOTAL	30	100

Source: Field data, February 1997 to October 1998.

The table above shows that majority of the students in the sample were Muslims before they were converted. The location of the School in a heavily Muslim dominated area could be responsible for this situation. All of these people in this category are now members of the Calvary Charismatic Church.

Table 7:8 Educational Background of Students

Category	No.	%
No School	2	6.6
Primary	3	10
Secondary	16	53.4
Tertiary	8	26.6
University	1	3.4
TOTAL	30	100

Source: Field data February 1997 to October 1998.

The educational background of the students in the sample showed that sixteen out of the 30 respondents (53.4 per cent) had a secondary education. This could be expected as most parents try to give their children educational opportunities which they were not privileged to have. There were only two students without any schooling. This did not pose any problems as they were given special classes in Krio and did not have to take a written examination as the rest. The medium of communication in the School as a whole is English.

7: 8. Prayer Schools

The Prayer School is a new phenomenon when compared to Bible Schools. In 1998, there were only two of these schools in Freetown. The first of these, the Gethsemane Prayer School was founded in 1992 by Evangelist Cyril Luke. He is also the founder of Christian Life Era Ministry which was founded in 1990. It was not possible to investigate this School because my field work period coincided with the junta rule in Sierra Leone and the Evangelist was out of the country throughout the period. The other school is the Shalom Prayer School.

7: 8:1. Shalom Prayer School

The founder of Shalom Prayer School is Sister Yarri Koroma. She founded Shalom Ministry on 25 March 1986, and the School as an arm of the Ministry in 1993. She was born in 1960 and belongs to the Limba ethnic group. Yarri was a member of the National Limba Pentecostal Church and both of her parents still belong there. She received her “call” after she was saved on 8 September 1985 at her former church. She believes that this church is not a “believers” church, because it only preaches the “Word” but does not practice it as born-again should. When Yarri became saved, she told her Pastor that she wanted to share the “Word” and help others to be “saved”. Wednesdays and Saturdays in the Church’s programme were allocated to her for this purpose. On Wednesdays she held prayer meetings where she taught members how to pray and the importance of prayer and on Saturdays she conducted Bible Studies. Both activities were not met with success because the older members felt threatened as this was quite a new phenomenon within the Church. Furthermore, they felt that the younger generation wanted to take over the leadership. The Pastor was pressurised so she stopped both activities. Yarri had no choice but to attach herself to a church which would help her fulfil her vision. She joined the Bethel Temple, another AOG church, which she believed was a “believers” church. At this church, her zeal was dampened, but her followers urged her to start her own ministry. She yielded and started off as a house fellowship with fifteen females. After a few months, she had a vision that the ministry should be called “Shalom” ministry. When she started the Ministry, they were all women but later on she began to have male members.²¹⁴

²¹⁴ Interview, Sister Yarri Koroma, at her Charles Street residence, 11 August 1998.

Shalom Ministry is not a church, all the members belong to different born-again churches, but Sister Koroma does not belong to any particular one. She visits different churches including Christian Life Era, Flaming Bible Church, Endtime Evangelical Ministries, Manna From Heaven and Faith Healing Bible Church. She plays important roles in these churches as she is called to preach for them, send members of her Ministry to take part in their crusades and revivals and advise them on any problems they encounter. Sister Koroma told me that she played a very vital role in the establishment of the Gethsemane Prayer School as she was a friend of Evangelist Cyril Luke.²¹⁵

The Shalom Prayer School was established in 1993 and offers a one-year programme for people from all denominations and Christian institutions, except the Aladura and Hare Krishna. The curriculum for this programme covers topics on “Making one an instrument of Prayer.” Twelve topics are covered throughout this programme.²¹⁶ In 1996, Yarri saw the need for a deeper insight into areas she felt was important for “born-again” to have. She then extended the programme into a two-year course. During the second year four main topics are taught, these include: Deliverance, Blood Covenant; Spiritual Warfare and Intercessory Prayer.

The School meets on Wednesdays from 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. at Yarri’s compound, 51, Charles Street. There are four teachers in the School, two males and two females. The two males are part-timers and have established churches of their own.²¹⁷ The two females are Sister Koroma and Sister Elvera Thomas who are full time. Sister Thomas is also the secretary of the School. She is responsible for registering students and collecting fees which is Le. 2500 (50p in sterling) per year. Since the inception of the School it has turned out 220 graduates.²¹⁸ According to Sister Yarri she could not admit more than 50 students because of sitting space “otherwise the number of

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

²¹⁶ The topics include: The 4 Cardinal Points of Prayer; The Divine Intercession of Christ; In Spirit and in Truth; The Sense of Need and the leading of the Holy Spirit in Prayer; Prayer Points: Meeting with God - The Inner Chamber, Practicals; Reasons why God answers Prayer; Friendship and Prayer; Expectancy and Prayer; Utterances in Prayer and attacks in Prayer and how to deal with them.

²¹⁷ Pastor Benjamin Koroma, founder of Dynamic Evangelical Church and Pastor Dennis Jalloh, Jalloh founder of Manna From Heaven.

²¹⁸ 1994 - 36
1995 - 42
1996 - 45
1997 - 47
1998 - 50

students would be double every year.”²¹⁹ She is looking out for a spacious place which can accommodate at least 100 people.

The picture that emerges from this chapter is that theological education in Freetown has intensified over the last forty years. One could even talk of a proliferation of Bible colleges. A new phenomenon (those colleges specialising in the study of demonology) has also made its impact. The suspicion is that this development is another effect of the war, with many people still feeling psychologically exhausted and battle-scarred.

For this writer, there are three main trends:

1) Theological colleges in Freetown could be divided into those that are mainly academic and those that concentrate on “pastoral” issues. The “academic” colleges will offer traditional theological subjects like Biblical Theology (in the case of FBC and Jui Bible College²²⁰ this may include the study of the original Biblical languages), Church History, Pastoral studies, Homiletics etc.

2) With reference to the staff at the various theological colleges, there is also a difference in academic qualification between the more traditional colleges and the more recent “charismatic” ones. To lecture at FBC, Jui or the Theological Hall a lecturer will probably have a degree in Theology and/or a related subject (e.g. History, Philosophy). On the other hand, whilst a University degree will not disqualify someone from lecturing at a college run by a charismatic church the major criterion will be whether that lecturer has a proven track record in spiritual disciplines like fasting, prayer and casting out demons.

3) Women are playing a more involved role in Freetown’s theological colleges, both as lecturers and as students. Forty years ago Freetown’s theological colleges were mainly for men, although some wives took complementary courses designed to help them fulfil their role as pastors’ spouses. Those women who did attain degrees in Theology and related subjects in the 1960s and 1970s usually went on to teach Religious Studies at secondary school level. But with the ordination of women now accepted even in

²¹⁹ Interview with Sister Yarri Koroma at 51, Charles Street on 12 August 1998.

²²⁰ In the late 1970s and early 1980s Jui Bible College introduced Linguistics as a key component of their curriculum. This was presumably to help students appreciate and contribute to the work of translating the Bible into Sierra Leonean languages. Theological students at FBC can likewise include Linguistics or the study of a modern language (English, French) as one of their main subjects.

traditional, established Churches women can take their place as lecturers in Freetown's theological institutions.²²¹

²²¹ The Theological Hall has a female lecturer Revd. Olivia Wesley and the College is also headed by a woman, Rev. Mrs. Doris Lenga-Koroma.

CHAPTER 8

United we stand: Parachurch Organisations and their Contribution to Freetown Christianity

Parachurch organisations are “generally non-profit, non-denominational religious institutions that operate very much like multinational corporate businesses.”²²² These organisations have contributed immensely to the transformation of Freetown Christianity in the last few decades through the following activities:- Evangelisation, Provision of Relief (medical care, shelter, food and clothing) particularly during the Civil War and Education by setting up vocational and training centres for youths and drop-outs. To bring out the roles and contributions of these organisations to the transformation of Freetown Christianity, a number of them will be discussed below.

8:1. Council of Churches in Sierra Leone and its Structure

The Council of Churches (CCSL), formerly known as the United Christian Council (UCC),²²³ an association of Protestant, Mission and Spiritual Churches was formed in 1924. The purpose of its formation was co-operation in various projects - education, pastoral training, provision for the distressed and needy, urban ministry and above all fostering and expressing the fellowship of unity of the Christian Church in Sierra Leone. When the civil war broke out in Sierra Leone in 1991, the Council embarked on a relief and rehabilitation programme, in addition to the above projects.²²⁴

According to the Council’s constitution, membership is open to Churches, Missions and Church Organisations working in Sierra Leone which accept its basis and satisfy the criteria as approved by the General Council, the highest policy making body. The basis of the Council is “to confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and fulfil their common calling to the Glory of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”²²⁵ In 1998, the council had a membership of eighteen denominational churches and twenty-six affiliated bodies.

²²² Brouwer, Gifford and Rose, 1996, “Spreading the Word: Organisational Techniques, Theological Emphases and Pastoral Power” in *Exporting the American Gospel: Global Christian Fundamentalism*, New York and London: Routledge, p.183.

²²³ The change from UCC to CCSL took place in 1990.

²²⁴ A detailed analysis of the programme will be discussed below.

²²⁵ Council of Churches in Sierra Leone (CCSL) Revised Constitution, 1995.

The CCSL is funded locally by its members and supported internationally by its overseas partners and ecumenical funding agencies.²²⁶ However, in 1995, World Council of Churches (WCC), their main funding agency stopped funding them. When the relief and rehabilitation department was created, the Council collaborated with local and international non-governmental organisations working in Sierra Leone who provided funds for the Council to implement some of its relief programmes.

The CCSL operates through different departments. Each department is headed by a coordinator and a complement of staff. Council's overseas partners fund most of the programmes and activities undertaken by these departments. From time to time, representatives of overseas partners come to Freetown to monitor the projects that they fund. In some cases these representatives have discovered some financial anomalies and threatened to stop their funding. Corruption and financial malpractices are not ruled out even among religious organisations. These vices it could be said, were heralded and condoned by the President of the First Republic, the late President Siaka Stevens. Stevens made it quite clear that *usai den tie cow nar dey ee for eat grass*.²²⁷

In 1997 Council restructured the various departments and programmes by adding new ones and replacing existing ones. Before the restructuring, the secretariat was responsible for most programmes and projects within the Council. Below is a discussion on the various departments and programmes in the Council and their activities.

8:1:1. Development and Environment Department

This department was initially established in 1979 but was known as the Committee for Development when the Council was restructured in 1997. This department is entirely dependent on the Council's overseas partners for funding their programmes. In 1997 the following were undertaken: Agro-forestry, Tool-making and Environmental Health and Sanitation Education.

²²⁶ The names of the overseas partners and ecumenical funding agencies are found in the pages below together with the programmes, which they support.

²²⁷ A Krio proverb literally translated, the grazing field is where a cow is supposed to graze. In Sierra Leone this means that when one finds oneself in an office or organisation where there is plenty of money, one is entitled to help oneself to it through any corrupt means.

The Agro-forestry programme is a three-year programme. Workshops are conducted in different parts of the country since the programme covers Freetown and the three provinces in Sierra Leone. In Freetown, the workshops are held bi-monthly and last for two days each in different parts where a Farmer's Association is found. At the workshops, the participants receive both theory and practical skills; the workshops usually end with practical demonstrations on farmers' tree nursery. Tools (wheelbarrows, shovels, lining ropes, watering cans) and nursery materials (polythene bags, fast growing seeds) used for demonstrations are provided by CCSL and given as "take-home" packages to the participants. Field officers do follow-up visits to these nurseries to ensure the continuity of the programme.²²⁸

Tools for Self Reliance (TFSR)²²⁹ UK funds the Tool-making programme. The whole programme consists of seven pilot projects located in different parts in Freetown. Workshops are held for the pilot groups where they are taught to produce locally made tools. The aim of these workshops is to ensure the production of better quality tools by both blacksmiths and tinsmiths. The tools include hoes, blades for carpenters, axes, wheelbarrows, knives, cutlasses, rakes, shovels, traps, hinges, watering cans, head pans, boxes, hammers and pots. At the end of the workshop, the beneficiaries are supplied with full tool kits as a means of encouraging them to produce better quality tools. The Council hoped that the tools would serve as a source of inspiration to learn and share new experiences with other artisans on their uses and production of new model products²³⁰.

Church World Service (CWS)²³¹ funds the Environmental Health and Sanitation programmes. The aim of the programme is to assist rural population to get portable water through sinking wells and reduce incidence of disease through hygiene education and provision of toilet facilities. However, due to the insecurity and inaccessibility of roads leading to the rural areas during the civil war, the target area

²²⁸ Interview with Mr. Minkailu Sesay, Field Officer for Agro-forestry programme at CCSL at the King Harman Road, Brookfields, 6 February 1998.

²²⁹ TSFR is a United Kingdom based charity which provides tools and skills to get poor Africans out of poverty and into work.

²³⁰ Interview with Mr James Conteh co-ordinator for the programme, at CCSL compound, King Harman Road, 6 August 1998.

²³¹ This organization has its headquarters in New York. They work with other partners in the USA and around the world to build interfaith and intercultural conditions to eradicate hunger and promote peace and justice. Source-Wikipedia.

was changed to sub-urban areas. Portee and Quarry communities found in Wellington were identified as the target areas for implementation of the programme. In implementing the programme a series of workshops were held in the target areas for representative of social and religious groups. The primary aim of the workshops was to identify the health and sanitation problems in their communities. The workshop was also used to sensitise the target population through their representatives about the impact of poor sanitation on the development of their communities.

Among the problems identified in the target areas were:

1. Poor toilet facilities
2. Inadequate tools for environmental cleaning
3. Poor water supply
4. Inadequate dustbins and other refuse disposal kits
5. Lack of maintenance of existing facilities
6. Inadequate support by Government and the City Council
7. Lack of social awareness.

When these problems were identified, the Council set up a committee, which embarked on the programme to alleviate the health and environmental problems in the two communities. Prior to the 1970s health and environmental programmes were carried out by the government and NGOs like the World Health Organisation (WHO) and United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF).

8:1:2. Church Relations, Theology and Research Department

The Church Relations, Theology and Research Department was formerly known as the Department of Missions and Evangelism which was established in 1985 with a view to working in collaboration with churches and other parachurch organisations.²³²

This department organises and conducts national programmes such as thanksgiving services to mark historical events in the country. Alternatively, prayer sessions were held when the country faced a crisis or needed to celebrate important anniversaries for example Republican day and the President of the Republic's birthday. On 10 March 1996, a service of praise and thanksgiving was held for the smooth conduct of the

²³² Church Relations, Theology and Research Department files gleaned at CCSL headquarters, King Harman Road, Brookfields, Freetown.

Presidential and Parliamentary elections, which was held on 26 February 1996. This service was held at the Council's conference hall at King Harman Road in Freetown. The former President of the Methodist Church Conference, Rev. C.V.A. Peacock, conducted the service and delivered the sermon, which was based on "Forgiveness and Reconciliation." The President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Alhaji Ahmed Tejan Kabba did not attend, but the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Dr. John Kerefa-Smart and his wife did.

The CCSL through this department maintains links with three local Theological Institutions - SLBC, SLTCCT and the Department of Theology at Fourah Bay College. The need for these links is the Council's concern for the uniformity of the kind of theology taught at these institutions to which most of their member bodies send their pastors-in-training. The Council is quite concerned about the mushrooming of Bible Schools by the founders of charismatic churches and indicated that they would be liaising with the president of council of Pentecostal churches.

In June 1997, the research section of the department embarked on a church profile project. This project entailed documentation of the historical background, doctrinal statements, numerical strength and development programme of the eighteen full member bodies of the Council. This project, which was completed at the end of 1997, has been quite useful not only to the Council but also to donor agencies who might want to assist these members.

Soon after the rebels attacked Freetown during the May 1997 coup, the Acting Director of the department and some representatives from Council's member bodies made several visits to the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) combatants at different checkpoints²³³ in the out-skirts of Freetown. At these checkpoints, the combatants made life very uncomfortable for passengers travelling from the Provinces to Freetown. These passengers were harassed, maltreated and sometimes their food and clothes were taken by force by the combatants. To ameliorate the sufferings and problems of passengers, Council mandated the Acting Director and his team to pray and share the Word of God about Justice, Unity and Peace with the combatants. They were also

²³³ These checkpoints were at Orogu Bridge, Jui, and Yams Farm in the outskirts of Freetown.

counselled on the effects of drugs,²³⁴ which was one of the causes for the behaviour of these combatants.

8:1.3. Relief and Rehabilitation Department

This department was created in the early part of June 1990 when Liberian refugees started migrating to Sierra Leone. The department registered them and tents were put up in the Council's compound to serve as a temporary accommodation for them. They were also provided with ration cards, which entitled them to cooking oil, bulgur and condiments. In early September 1990, the department had registered 60,000 refugees and the temporary accommodation proved inadequate to house this large number.²³⁵ The old airfield at Waterloo village, about twenty miles from Freetown was identified to construct a camp, which would accommodate this large number of refugees. The camp was completed at the beginning of December and all the refugees transferred to this site. The CCSL continued to provide food and clothing for the refugees until the war broke out in Sierra Leone on 23 March 1991 and people from the provinces began to make their way to Freetown as displaced people. Since "charity begins at home", CCSL took up the responsibility of the displaced Sierra Leoneans while the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Commission of the Red Cross (ICRC) took over the full management of the Liberian refugees.

Since its establishment, the department has been working in collaboration with member-churches and national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Its activities were originally concentrated in the provinces but when the war intensified and the roads to the provinces proved dangerous, they concentrated their attention in the Western Area. The provision of food, non-food items, Medicare and educational placement for refugees and displaced people is among the greatest concern of this department.

In providing food for displaced people in Freetown, CCSL is aided by World Food Programme (WFP)²³⁶ and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) who provide the bulk of the

²³⁴ Interview with Mrs. Florella Hazley, Co-ordinator of Church Relations, Theology and Research Department held at CCSL's office, King Harman Road, Brookfields in Freetown, February 1998.

²³⁵ Interview with Mr. Alimamy Koroma, secretary general of CCSL at his King Harman Road office, on 6 February 1998.

²³⁶ Established in 1961 as an international humanitarian agency fighting hunger. It is also the food assistance branch of the United Nations.

food items. The Council also subsidises these items with funding from their overseas partners. The food items received by the displaced people residing in the camps on a monthly basis included rice or bulgur wheat, milk, vegetable oil, groundnuts, tomato paste, onions, maggi cubes, salt, sardines and protein biscuits.²³⁷ The food items were distributed according to the degree of the household. If a household consists of five people, it receives a bag of rice or bulgur wheat and a gallon of vegetable oil. If the number in the household is less, it receives half a bag of rice and half a tin of oil. The supply of the food items to non-residents in the camp is done on a weekly basis.

Although representatives of WFP and CRS are usually present when distribution of food items is carried out in order to combat favouritism and misappropriation,²³⁸ the beneficiaries have nevertheless made a lot of complaints. There have been cases in which the Council's officials have been accused of diverting either cash or the food items - mostly bulgur, oil and milk to their own use. These items are found in the markets in Freetown although they carry the label "NOT FOR SALE". This situation has led Council to be criticised by the local press, which in turn led it to terminate one of its relief workers.²³⁹

8:1:3:1. Non-Food Items

Non-food items such as foam mattresses, cooking utensils, and used clothing were bought locally from funds donated by Dutch Interchurch Aid (DIA)²⁴⁰ and Christian Aid (CA) to the Council. These items were distributed to the camp beneficiaries, each family receiving a package containing blankets, buckets, plates, knives and mats. second-hand clothing,²⁴¹ footwear and uniforms were also provided for schoolchildren, both at the camps and at the Council's Headquarters, one of the distribution centres for relief items to displaced people who are not in the camps.

²³⁷ I was present at the distribution held at CCSL head quarters at King Harman road, where the food items were being distributed.

²³⁸ Relief workers tend to favour the displaced people from their areas of origin by giving them double ration. They even sometimes use them to divert the food items that are later sold in the markets.

²³⁹ Standard Times, 17 July 1995, captioned "CCSL Relief Secretary in Shady Deal".

²⁴⁰ A non- governmental organisation with headquarters in the Netherlands which aid countries affected by war.

²⁴¹ Second-hand clothing is popularly referred to as "Kennedy" because they first started to be imported to Sierra Leone in the early 1960s from the USA during the reign of President Kennedy. People who wore them then were frowned upon. Nowadays, this is not the case as both poor and rich alike put them on.

8:1:3:2. Medicare

The Council takes the health status of the displaced very seriously. Each of the three camps (Chanrai, Ross Road and Kissy Dockyard Camps) has a health centre and severe cases are referred to specialists in their private clinics or in the government hospital. For the non-camp beneficiaries the Relief department started operating a satellite clinic at the Council's compound at King Harman Road in 1994. Before the Council started operating the clinic, these people were treated at the MCSL Clinic in the same compound as the Council's. In 1995, the MCSL agreed on a joint operation with CCSL for two reasons. Firstly, both institutions are in the same compound. Secondly, the MCSL is a member body of the CCSL. With the joint venture, a permanent staff of thirteen²⁴² was appointed and this cut down the cost of referrals tremendously.

The CCSL/MCSL Clinic offers free curative treatment to displaced people in Freetown and its environs. Among the most prevalent diseases treated at the clinic are malaria; coughs and colds; pneumonia; skin infection; diarrhoea; sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), hypertension and malnutrition. The clinic also carries out immunisation programmes for children under five and women in the childbearing age group. This programme is carried out in collaboration with United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organisation (WHO). A family planning programme was also offered to the displaced by the Marie Stopes Clinic.²⁴³

Overseas Development Association (ODA)²⁴⁴ through Christian Aid (CA) donated equipment for the clinic. The drugs used at the clinic were donated by different sources including The New Apostolic Church (NAC),²⁴⁵ AFRICARE, an international NGO which provided essential drugs such as panadol, vitamins, worm tablets etc. and CCSL provided specialised drugs such as atenolol for hypertension. There is also a cordial relationship existing between the relief department and other medical institutions like the UMC Eye Clinic at Kissy.²⁴⁶

²⁴² This included the following: 2 Doctors (a Physician and a Surgeon Specialist); 1 Administrative Officer; 1 Midwife; 2 State Enrolled Registered Nurses; 2 State Enrolled Community Health Nurse; 2 Nursing Aids; 1 Janitor; 1 Lab Technician and 1 Secretary.

²⁴³ It is an international non-government organisation based in the United Kingdom who provides reproductive and health-care services in 37 countries including Sierra Leone.

²⁴⁴ Formerly Overseas Development Agency is an independent think tank on international Development humanitarian services.

²⁴⁵ This Church, a member body of CCSL has its Headquarters in Germany from which the funds were available to purchase the drugs.

²⁴⁶ Displaced people with eye problems are treated free of charge because the UMC is a member

8:1:3:3. Educational Placement

The CCSL Relief established the Educational Placement programme in 1992 as one of its numerous forms of assistance to displaced people from war-affected areas. Most of the displaced children were denied access to schools in Freetown but through this programme the Council was able to place them in both primary and secondary schools. The programme entailed placing and sponsoring these children in both primary and secondary schools. The programme was operated jointly by the Council and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). The package for each student includes tuition and an allowance of Le.12, 000 (£2.40 in sterling) for uniforms. Since the programme started, it has catered for 2,214 students in Freetown.²⁴⁷

8:1:3:4. Shelter

When the rebel war started in 1991, CCSL in collaboration with UNHCR established three camps for displaced people in the East end of Freetown. These camps were the Chanrai, Ross Road and Kissy Dock Yard camps. All of these camps were dilapidated buildings which the Council refurbished with funds from WCC, one of the Council's overseas partners.

Apart from the three main camps, CCSL also established twenty-six mini camps in different locations in Freetown. These camps were co-ordinated by Clergy of the different member bodies of the council who were in charge of these camps. They collected the food ration for these displaced people and distributed them on a weekly basis. These camps comprise mainly of youths who were not able to trace their parents or relatives. In 1995, there were 1,130 mini camp beneficiaries.²⁴⁸ The majority of relief beneficiaries were Muslims, but that did not deter CCSL to pursue its relief programmes. Through the provision of relief for this group of people, a lot of them have converted to Christianity. This was revealed in non-formal interview I conducted at the three main camps (Chanrai, Ross Road and Kissy Dock Yard) in Freetown in

body of the Council.

²⁴⁷ 1992/93 academic year 600 students
1993/94 academic year 800 students
1994/95 academic year 500 students
1995/96 academic year 314 students

²⁴⁸ Data from CCSL Files.

August 1998. Fifty per cent of the camp beneficiaries were interviewed at each location and the table below reveals the findings.

Table 8:1. No. of Converts at Three camps in Freetown

Camp Location	Beneficiaries		Interviewed		Muslims		Converts	
	males	females	males	females	males	females	males	females
Chanrai	100	300	50	150	50	120	25	116
Kissy								
Dockyard	60	110	30	55	25	50	18	45
Ross Rd	40	110	20	55	15	52	10	47
TOTAL	200	520	100	260	90	222	53	208

Source: Field data February 1997 to October 1998

Out of the 360 people interviewed, 312 (86.6 per cent) reported that they were Muslims. Two hundred and sixty-one (83.6 per cent) out of the 312 Muslims in the three camps converted to Christianity because of the help they received from the Church. Their main reason for converting was that the Church provided for them when they were in dire need which the Mosque had not done. They further went on to say that through the revivals and Bible-study sessions conducted by different member bodies of the Council, they were able to know a lot about Christianity. From the above, it could be clearly stated that the war opened up new grounds for church growth in Sierra Leone as has happened in other countries in the sub-region.²⁴⁹

8:1:4. The Role of CCSL in the Peace and Democratisation Process

The rebel war started in Sierra Leone on 23rd March 1991 at Gobaru, a Sierra Leone/Liberia border town in the Kailahun District. For the majority of Sierra Leoneans this war was a spill over of the Liberia conflict, because Sierra Leone was part of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group's (ECOMOG)²⁵⁰ contingent and was also used as a base. The chief rebel leader of Liberia, Charles Taylor was incensed by Sierra Leone's involvement and therefore went into open alliance with Foday Sankoh who became leader of the dissident group known as The Revolutionary United Front (RUF). This conflict resulted in great destruction of

²⁴⁹ For the Liberia situation, see Paul Gifford, *Christianity and Politics*, for the Nigeria situation, see Rosalind Hackett, *Religion in Calabar*, and Friday Mbon, "Public Response to New Religious Movements in Contemporary Nigeria" in *New Religious Movements in Nigeria*, (ed.) 1987, Rosalind Hackett, The Edwin Mellon Press, Lewiston/Queenston.

²⁵⁰ This is the military alliance of some West African states such as Nigeria, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

human lives, property and social structure. Gruesome murders, amputation of hands and feet, burning of houses and looting became widespread during the civil war²⁵¹.

In a bid to carry out its Biblical obligations for Peace in its mission and recognising the need to play a leading role in the process and that of the return to democratic rule, the Council appointed a seven-man committee.²⁵² This committee was appointed on 25 June 1995 and was mandated to pursue initiatives and actions aimed at ending hostilities and bringing about reconciliation and lasting peace. With this mandate, the committee was thoroughly involved in the peace process, not just sending representatives to the peace talks held in Guinea and the Ivory Coast, but also organising seminars in collaboration with the Advocacy Desk of the Council. It also held meetings, workshops, television (TV) and radio programmes to sensitise the masses on the way forward to peace.

Among its programmes and activities, the greatest impact was made through the TV and radio discussions, which were in the different vernaculars, and the peace awareness drives through banners. Through these activities the masses were sensitised on the religious and socio-economic impact of peace and the benefits it would hold for them as well as for the country. These activities unfortunately were restricted to Freetown and not extended to the provinces because of lack of transportation and other logistical support.

The CCSL in collaboration with the EFSL and PCC issued a press release on the Democratisation process to prominent and important groups on 8 February 1996.²⁵³ They commended the NPRC for their positive achievements during their four-year rule but urged them to “pull out of active politics and governance by handing over to the democratically elected government and thereafter, building up a strong disciplined and

²⁵¹ For the full impact of the war. see Lansana Gberie, 2005, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, London: Hurst & Company.

²⁵² The members of the committee were drawn from the different member denominations of the Council and included: Rev. D.H. Caulker (Chairman) from the United Methodist Church, Mr. George Coleridge-Taylor (Vice-Chairman), Rev. A.C. Temple and Rev. F.S. Nabieu from the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone, Rev. J.E.Davies, from the West African Methodist Church, Rev. E.P. Clarkson and The Very Rev. Hastings-Spaine, both from the Anglican Diocese of Freetown.

²⁵³ These groups include: the National Provisional Ruling Council, the military government which ruled Sierra Leone from 1992 to 1996, the Revolutionary United Front, rebels fighting against the Sierra Leone government; the thirteen registered political parties contesting for the elections and the Interim National Electoral Commission .

dedicated military institution that the nation would be proud of.” They confessed that they were greatly shocked by the level of vengeance, destruction and cruelty of man to man in the four-year-old war. They admitted that as religious bodies they share the blame and responsibility of the present as legacies and results of a society they all created by being silent and passive when they should have been champions of justice. They however implored the RUF and Corporal Foday Sankoh “to continue without any disruption the initiative and dialoguing with the government of Sierra Leone towards a negotiated settlement of the war.” They expressed grave disappointment at the large number of parties for a nation with only an electorate of about two million. This they said clearly were tendencies of selfishness and pride, which they hope, will not undermine the urgent agenda of the day for Sierra Leone, which is “to unite and reconcile as one cohesive nation.” Finally they commended INEC for their independence, fair play, dedication and uncompromising execution of duty.

Six months before the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, which took place on 26 February 1996, CCSL probably made their greatest contribution to a peaceful transition from military to democratic rule. It formed a Monitoring Group by enlarging the composition of the Peace Committee and involving all the departments in the Council. This group provided some voter education for the masses through television and national radio programmes and through leaflets. This voter education stressed “electoral principles” – which indicated that every citizen has a right to vote; a candidate must exhibit proper credentials, all must accept the outcome, and elections are for the common good of the entire nation. They urged voters to avoid “selling”²⁵⁴ their votes to the highest bidder but to attend rallies to form an opinion of the candidates and parties. They pleaded with the voters to co-operate fully with law enforcement agencies. They also called on churches and mosques to observe the Sunday and Friday preceding the elections as a day of prayer.

On September 1995 a one-day workshop was also organised by the Monitoring Group in collaboration with the Development and general Administration departments for legally registered political parties. The workshop was well attended by five representatives from each of the seventeen parties except one. The purpose of the

²⁵⁴ From personal observation most candidates for elections give money or drugs to electorates to vote for them. This situation led to groups of young men termed as “thugs” who disrupt activities at polling stations on elections day.

workshop was to sensitise these parties on CCSL's role in such matters as democratisation, sound caution on the large number of parties, warning against the former evil and violent practices, which characterised past elections. It was also meant to encourage all parties to take on tolerance and promote fair play. The workshop, was according to the secretary-general of the Council, Mr. A.P. Koroma, "a success and had a resounding impact as evidenced in the reactions and contributions of the party representatives."²⁵⁵

With funds from World Council of Churches 400 nationals (mostly church leaders) were trained to monitor the elections by observing procedures at all polling stations on Election Day. At the request of the Council, its overseas partners sent eleven international observers as well to observe the elections.

After the elections, the monitoring Group embarked on a Post-Election Monitoring and Democracy Consolidation project in collaboration with the Advocacy Desk of the Council. As part of their programme, they organised a bi-weekly seminar at the Council's conference hall at King Harman Rd., Brookfields. These seminars took the form of experience sharing by panellists drawn from a cross-section of the Christian and Muslim community.

In one of the sessions held on 1 April 1998, the theme was "The Role of Political Leadership in a Democratic State". The Managing Director of a Fishing Company in Freetown, Mr Sanusi Deen who is a Muslim, said, "the political leadership must be blamed for the May 25 tragedy. Our politicians have for far too long failed to take cognisance of the existence of people outside Freetown and thereby making their participation in the state machinery very minimal." Mr. Sanusi also blamed former leaders of the country for not respecting traditional authority as the colonial masters did. He was however hopeful that the next government would take into account these two factors which will contribute to peace and stability in the country.²⁵⁶

In another seminar held on 12 August 1998, the theme was "Justice and Reconciliation: the Role of the Civil Society towards achieving lasting Peace". The panellists included

²⁵⁵ Interview held at the Council's Headquarters with Mr. A. P. Koroma on 6 October, 1998.

²⁵⁶ For Di People, Monday 6 April 1998 article captioned "Church Panel Blasts Rulers." p. 1.

the former President of the Methodist Conference, Rev. C.V.A. Peacock, Mr Crispin Cole, General Secretary of EFSL and Alhaji Unisa Alimamy Sesay, a member of the Fourah Bay Mosque Jamaat. Rev. Peacock suggested that “before reconciliation, there must be an agenda to finish the war and a commitment to capture those in the *bush*, noting that during the Apartheid period in South Africa, reconciliation was not being preached until after the war.”²⁵⁷ In his contribution to the seminar, Cole suggested that “reconciliation should begin with repentance, which involves four aspects such as remorse, confession, restitution and retribution, which must be done according to the law of the land.”²⁵⁸

The contributions and suggestions by panellists at these seminars were documented and distributed in churches and mosques; through these media, the Peace Committee was able to share with the masses the way forward to peace.

After the May 25 coup, the Advice Desk started an International Agency Forum (IAF) in June 1997. The IAF comprises of international NGOs, local NGOs and numerous Community-Based Organisations (CBO). It started off with four members and increased to 60 by October of the same year. This Forum, co-chaired by CCSL, met weekly to discuss the security situation, humanitarian assistance, plan strategies for addressing needs, solicit humanitarian assistance for communities and groups, and monitor the development in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Peace Plan.²⁵⁹ It organised an Emergency Preparedness Training facilitated by the Red Cross.

In an Advocacy Appeal statement to the Commonwealth secretary-general on 12 June 1997, the IAF expressed grave concern about the deteriorating political and security situation in the country. The Appeal stated that:

this situation has worsened following the May 25 coup and majority of the people in Sierra Leone are suffering, traumatised and increasing numbers are internally displaced or seeking refuge outside the country. The coup has hindered their operations in providing humanitarian assistance to the people of Sierra Leone. As a result of this crisis, the members of the IAF are appealing to the secretary-general of the Commonwealth, Chief Emeka

²⁵⁷ Daily Mail, Saturday 15 August 1998, p. 6. Article captioned “Churches in Experiencing Sharing”.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.6

²⁵⁹ The ECOWAS Peace Plan is a document stating the terms and conditions for the government of Sierra Leone and the warring factions to adhere to during the war until peace is restored.

Anyaoku with the help of mediators including Ghana, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, United Kingdom, USA, France, Canada and Germany to take a leading role in bringing all stakeholders to the negotiating table in order to resolve the current impasse in Sierra Leone.

This appeal helped the situation in the country as those to whom the appeal was made played an important role in the final peace plan that was signed in Abidjan in 1998.

8:2. Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone

The Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone was formed on 21 August 1959 as a protest group by five denominations within the UCC.²⁶⁰ These denominations were protesting against the decision of the UCC to:

- a. Accept into membership any denomination regardless of its affiliation with secret societies, freemasonry, lodges etc.
- b. Not to aggressively promote evangelism.
- c. The failure to maintain the evangelical tenets of the faith.

The aims of this Fellowship are to provide a means of fellowship and co-operation in: Prayer; Bible Study; Total Evangelisation; Discipleship and Training; Witness to the Scriptural and Evangelical Truth and Social Ministries.²⁶¹

The EFSL is a member of the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF) and the Association of Evangelicals of Africa (AEA). Membership to the Fellowship is open to Denominations or Conferences, Churches, Indigenous Churches, Missions and Christian Organisations who accept unreservedly the statement of Faith. In 1997 there were 33 members.²⁶² Each member pays an annual subscription to maintain its membership in the Fellowship. The amount subscribed ranges from Le.120, 000 (£24 in

²⁶⁰ The United Christian Council, now known as the Council of Churches of Sierra Leone held a meeting at Bo, the headquarters for the Southern Province in Sierra Leone. Five denominations held a protest meeting at Bumpe, the headquarters of the United Brethren in Christ Mission, one of the five denominations. Bumpe is located sixteen miles from Bo. The other denominations included the American Wesleyan Mission, United Pentecostal Assemblies of God, Missionary Church of Africa and the Assemblies of God.

²⁶¹ Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone, Revised Constitution, 1995, p. 1.

²⁶² Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone, United Brethren in Christ, Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone, Assemblies of God Sierra Leone, Christians in Action, Free Gospel Mission, Maranatha Pentecostal Mission, Missionary Church of Africa, Paidon West African Mission, Free Pentecostal Mission, Korean Presbyterian Mission, The Church of Pentecost, Nigerian Baptist Convention, Great Commission Movement, The Institute of Sierra Leone Languages, Scripture Union of Sierra Leone, Sierra Leone Bible College, Youth For Christ Sierra Leone, Youth With a Mission, Christian Literature Crusade, Community Health Evangelism, Child Evangelism Fellowship, Freetown Youth Centre, Gospel Recordings Sierra Leone, Health Care Christian Fellowship, Sierra Leone Fellowship of Evangelical Student, Christ Apostolic Church, Harvest Time Ministries, Four Square Gospel

sterling) to Le. 20,000 (£4 in sterling). The higher the amount a member subscribes the more number of votes it is entitled to. The members are grouped into different categories depending again on their annual subscriptions.

In order to carry out its aims and objectives, the organisation has different departments that include the following:

- Evangelism and Church Ministries
- Women's Ministry
- Relief and Development
- Rapid Engagement in the Acquisition of Skills (REAPS) Vocational Training Centre.

8:2:1. Evangelism and Church Ministries

Evangelism and Church Ministries were the first ministries to be created after the founding of the organisation in 1959. In 1997, the co-ordinator for these ministries was Rev. Tom Simbo and he was assisted by four other members of staff. The co-ordinator plans the programmes on a quarterly basis and these have to be approved of by the secretary-general of the organisation. Usually the programmes include seminars, training and conferences.

The department organises training sessions for counsellors who are drawn from member and non-member churches, parachurches and religious organisations. These counsellors are trained to prepare converts who would have answered to altar calls during various activities organised by the organisation. They prepare the converts through Bible study sessions, counselling and giving testimonies about the good things that have happened to them through faith in God.

Seminars are held monthly for different categories of people. In March 1997, a seminar on Leadership was held at the Fellowship's office at 35 Circular Road in Freetown. The seminar was held for Christian leaders, pastors and their spouses. The primary aim of the seminar was to offer participants tips on how they could improve their leadership qualities with the aim of winning souls for Christ.

The evangelism ministry also sponsors the different parts of the “Jesus Films” which are shown in Freetown and the provincial towns. During the first quarter (January to April 1996), these films were shown for two consecutive days at Hastings, Lumley and Goderich. At the end of each show, an altar call was done and local pastors and counsellors did a follow-up of those who had received Christ. The follow-up is carried with the aim of absorbing them into their churches. After a few weeks, the evangelism team monitors the progress of the converts through the pastors who are expected to give them a feedback on the progress of the converts. This programme has enhanced church growth in Freetown as a lot of converts were won.

8:2:2. Women’s Ministry

The women’s ministry was established in conjunction with Pan African Christian Women Alliance (PACWA) to help restore the dignity of women as well as address women’s issues from a Christian point of view. It all started when three women delegates went to represent EFSL at a pre-PACWA conference in Ghana in March 1989. These delegates were greatly challenged by the experience and on their return they began to lay the foundation for the launching of the ministry. In November 1991 the launching of the EFSL Women’s Ministry/PACWA took place at the EFSL office at Circular Road in Freetown. The aims of the ministry were twofold. Firstly, to strengthen the various women’s ministries within the EFSL constituencies, encouraging the stimulation of such ministries where they do not exist and training and encouraging leadership among women folk in their member churches; Secondly to identify, highlight and respond to issues important to women folk such as polygyny, prostitution, female circumcision, wife battering, unjust legislation, illiteracy, single parenthood and economic deprivation.²⁶³

In 1998, the co-ordinator in the ministry was Mrs. Elizabeth Mensah and her assistant was Miss Enitor Jones. They both draw up the programmes for the ministry on a quarterly basis although some programmes are held on an annual basis. The programmes are centred on issues relating to the aims of the ministry. Also included in their activities and programmes are seminars on different topics such as “Christian women and democracy”, “Home and Family Life”, “Violence against Women” and “Teenage Pregnancy”.

²⁶³ Brochure of Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone, Women’s Ministry, 1996, p. 7.

Every year the ministry also holds a seminar on Leadership for leaders of different member and non-member women's ministries/organisations. The seminar serves as a forum for teaching and sharing of ideas among the leaders. According to the co-ordinator for the ministry, "the leadership seminar has served as an eye-opener to women in terms of their rights and also left them with great challenges for the future."²⁶⁴

The roles of the wives of pastors are considered quite significant for the development and growth of the Church. The women's ministry therefore conducts a seminar on a quarterly basis for these people. In the third quarter of 1996, the topics for the seminar were "Partnership in Ministry" and "Pastors' Wives and Financial Management of the Home".

The Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone as a religious organisation was deeply concerned with the large amount of female dropouts due to teenage promiscuity and pregnancy. This concern led the secretary-general to mandate the co-ordinator of the women's ministry to include this group of people in their programmes. Seminars are held once in every school term at the Sierra Leone Library Board. They attract representatives (teachers and students) from different secondary schools. The deliberations of the seminars are taken back to their schools in the form of a report. The report is made available to the rest of the school during their morning assembly. Through this medium teenagers have been sensitised on the effects of teenage pregnancy and the problem of school dropouts has been greatly minimised since 1996.²⁶⁵

8:2:3. Relief and Development Ministry

The relief and development ministry was created in 1991 soon after the civil war broke out in Sierra Leone. The ministry was created to serve displaced people in the Western Area, especially those from the provinces whose towns and villages had been captured by the rebels. With the assistance of national and international donor agencies, the

²⁶⁴ Interview held at EFSL office, 35 Circular Road on 2nd September 1998 with Mrs. Mensah.

²⁶⁵ In personal conversations, I had with the five teacher representatives at two of these seminars I was informed that before the seminars started they had at least three pupils per year who were pregnant and had to drop out of school. They also added that these seminars were indeed fruitful as there has been no such incidents in their schools after the seminar.

ministry is one out of the many organisations providing relief for displaced people in Freetown and the provinces. Among the relief items are food, shelter, cooking utensils, clothing and medical facilities. The displaced people from all the affected districts registered with their Paramount Chiefs (PC)²⁶⁶ who submitted the list to the Sierra Leone Red Cross (SLRC) for verification. The final list was then submitted by SLRC to EFSL for service. Emergency relief was also extended to needy people in the Western Area who had registered with EFSL through the ministry.

The World Food Programme (WFP) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) were the two main donors of the relief items but EFSL acted as a distributor of the relief aid. The food provided includes bulgur wheat, rice, cooking oil and milk for children less than a year old. World Relief Canada (WRC)²⁶⁷ provided eight containers of pinto beans in response to an appeal for food assistance made by EFSL. In 1996 emergency relief was provided for about 277,000 displaced people from the twelve districts in the country and about 10,000 needy people in the Western Area. In 1997 relief aid was provided for 12,490 displaced people.²⁶⁸

The provision of medical facilities for the displaced people was a high priority in the ministry's programme. They set up a health care unit a few yards from the Clay Factory Displaced Camp. The unit offered free medical services to the displaced. In January 1996, an average of twenty patients attended the clinic daily.²⁶⁹ In cases where surgery was needed the patients were referred to the appropriate medical doctor for treatment and EFSL footed the bills. At the displaced camp itself, a clinic was held from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. This clinic was run by officials from Medicins Sans Frontiers (MSF), Marie Stopes (MS) and Planned Parenthood of Sierra Leone (PPSL).

²⁶⁶ Paramount Chiefs are the representatives of the different chiefdoms in the Sierra Leone Parliament.

²⁶⁷ World Relief Canada is an international relief and development organization which partners with Christian networks all around the world and aims to help build communities in tough situations.

²⁶⁸ In an interview with the Secretary-General of EFSL, Mr. Crispin Cole in his office at 35, Circular Road., Freetown. He disclosed to me that 6120 displaced people were residing in the Clay Factory Camp and were issued with ration cards whilst the remaining 6370 were unregistered but resident in the Camp.

²⁶⁹ Report from the Relief and Development Ministry to the Executive Committee meeting held on 31 January 1996.

8:2:4. Rapid Engagement in the Acquisition of Skills (REAPS)

In the late 1980s Sierra Leone experienced a downward trend in its socio-economic climate. This led the United Nations to class Sierra Leone as the least developed nation in terms of the quality of life expectancy and human resources development.²⁷⁰ One possible reason for this situation might be the lack of trained and skilled manpower resulting from the type of educational system inherited from their British colonial masters. This type of system produced students versed in English and the humanities to fill white-collar jobs rather than skilled middle level manpower. The curriculum of this system was in no way in consonance with the development needs of the country. This among other reasons led EFSL to establish REAPS as a vocational centre. This Centre would serve as a means to reduce poverty, dropouts, unemployment and enhance human resource development. The Centre was opened in January 1995 and is situated at Tower Hill in Freetown.

The Centre has among its aims and objectives:

1. To produce certified skilled workers who can enter the workforce after completion of training.
2. To assist graduates to set up their own enterprises as far as we possibly can.
3. To provide graduates with basic tools required in setting up their own enterprises on loan.
4. To integrate skills acquisition with capacity building programmes, management, entrepreneurship and leadership based on Bible principles.
5. To undertake and transact production contracts thereby generating income for limited sustainability.²⁷¹

The Centre was built from funds donated by TEAR Fund UK²⁷² and by the European Economic Community (EEC), which funds micro projects in developing countries. The equipment for the different workshops in the Centre was provided by Christian Services International (CSI) and Hilfe Für Brüder (HFB), both in Germany. The Centre is maintained through the tuition fees paid by students. Some of the students have grants-in-aid, which are provided by HFB in Germany and Plan International Sierra Leone.

²⁷⁰ United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 1991.

²⁷¹ Rapid Engagement in the Acquisition of Skills Brochure, 1995.

²⁷² Tear Fund UK is an international Christian-based development charity established in 1968 in response to the terrible famine caused by civil war in Nigeria. It works through local Churches in developing countries to end poverty and rebuild poor communities.

The Centre caters for youths between the ages of 15-18 who have completed form three (Year 9 in Britain) in a recognised secondary school or acquired the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).²⁷³ Older applicants with the relevant academic requirement are also considered for admission.

The staff at the Centre comprises of both administrative and teaching members. In 1998 the head of the administrative staff was Mr. Foday Khabenja, a graduate from Fourah Bay College and an optician by profession. He co-ordinates the four courses done at the Centre and has held this position since the establishment of the Centre in 1995. He is a member of the Korean Presbyterian Church, one of the recently established mission churches in Freetown. The other members of the administrative staff are an office assistant, a storekeeper, an office secretary, a general maintenance officer/caretaker and a watchman.

The teaching staff has a complement of nine tutors, five full-time and four part-time.²⁷⁴ Each unit has a training supervisor and an assistant except the office duties unit, which has in addition, a tutor in communication skills. All the supervisors are holders of the City and Guilds certificate, awarded by either Trade Centre or the Technical Institute.

The Centre offers courses in typing and office duties, dressmaking/tailoring, metal work and woodwork. Each course runs for two academic years (six terms) on a full time basis from September to July (parallel to the normal school calendar). Trainees receive both theory and practical training. In addition to the four full time courses, the Centre also offers informal evening classes in dressmaking, office duties, computer literacy and do-it-yourself modules for housewives and busy executives²⁷⁵. These classes are held from time to time and do not last for less than a month and not more than a year.

In 1995 when the Centre was opened, the typing and office duties unit started off with sixteen trainees, but as the year progressed it increased to nineteen. During the first term of the year, the training supervisor found out that two of the trainees were not office duty material and would benefit more from a different component. After a

²⁷³ This certificate is awarded by the Ministry of Education as part of the 6-3-3-4 system of Education introduced in the country in the 1991/1992 academic year.

²⁷⁴ REAPS brochure for 1995, p.23.

²⁷⁵ Interview with Foday Khabenje, held at EFSL office on 2 September 1998.

thorough study of their background and progress so far, coupled with their intelligence quotient (IQ), the trainees were transferred to the dressmaking/tailoring unit. After a few months in the unit, there was all indication that was where they belonged. By the end of the academic year, four trainees had dropped off the course; three of them because of the distance from the Centre and the fourth one because of ill health. At the end of the course, thirteen trainees graduated from the unit. In the 1996/1997 academic year, the unit included commerce, word processing and entrepreneurial skills development in their curriculum.²⁷⁶

When the Centre was established in 1995, there were fifteen trainees in the woodwork unit including one female. In Sierra Leone carpentry is considered as a male occupation but the Centre has broken this myth by producing the first female professional carpenter in Sierra Leone. Training at the woodwork unit is combined with production for commercial purposes. The proceeds from the sale contribute to the self-sustainability of the Centre.

During the first academic year at the Centre, the metalwork unit was not adequately equipped. There were insufficient training materials and basic hand tools such as files, hammers, cutters etc. for all of the sixteen trainees who were enrolled in the course. This impeded the level of performance of the trainees because they did not have adequate practical training. This situation was ameliorated in the third academic year when the Centre purchased these tools.

The dressmaking and tailoring unit had twenty-two trainees in the January 1995 when the Centre was opened. During the course of the year, six trainees dropped out because they were not able to cope with the practical training. This unit also experienced some setbacks in terms of the insufficiency of sewing machines and sewing materials even though the trainees were divided into groups.

8:3. Scripture Union

An Englishman, Joseph Spier, started Scripture Union (SU) in 1867 under the name “Children’s Special Service Mission” on the beaches of Britain during the summer. The national headquarters is still in Britain, with an African headquarters in Nairobi.

²⁷⁶ Graduation Programme , October 1997.

Scripture Union in Sierra Leone dates as far back as 1884 when an English Missionary introduced it to the country. It started with the introduction of special Scripture Union Cards, which gave Scripture readings for each day of the year. Interest was awakened and soon SU groups were started in Freetown at the Church Missionary Society (CMS) Grammar School and the Annie Walsh Memorial School.²⁷⁷ Rev. Canon John Taylor-Smith, an English Missionary who not only became the first President of the SU, but also the Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Freetown, supervised these groups. In 1895, William F. Smith who was fondly called “Bible Smith” was employed as Travelling Secretary. He was a Sierra Leonean who had a great interest in promoting the Christian religion. By 1901, “Bible Smith” was supplying reading notes and cards to about 3,000 members who made up the 73 branches of Scripture Union. Sierra Leoneans acted as Secretaries to these branches, which had sprung up in different places throughout the country. The death of “Bible Smith” in 1927 almost marked the end of Scripture Union in the country (at least for a while). Although the union was able to go on for a few more years, the vitality which inspired the work ended with the demise of “Bible Smith”²⁷⁸.

After a long period of “silence and very little activity”, the first Scripture Union camp was held in January 1958 at Kabala, in the northern province of Sierra Leone. The need was felt for the establishment of a committee to manage the growing activities of the Union. In November 1961, the first National Committee was established with Dr. Daniel Jonah as the Chairman, a post he held for ten years. In 1970, the London Council sent Mr. Bill Roberts to Sierra Leone as travelling secretary, taking over from Frank Tischi, an American. At the Africa Regional Council meeting held in Freetown on 19 March 1976 under the Chairmanship of Commodore P.F.Quaye of Ghana, Scripture Union Sierra Leone was officially declared autonomous. Mr. Roberts served for nine years during which he laid the new foundation on which SU’s activities are built today. He left Freetown in 1985 after which Scripture Union was left entirely in the hands of local staff.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ These schools were the first male and female secondary schools to be opened in Freetown in 1845 and 1849 respectively.

²⁷⁸ Hazel James, a study of Scripture Union of Sierra Leone, a long essay submitted to the department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Science (Sociology), 1994.

²⁷⁹ He was replaced, among others, by Aureola Jones (now Mrs. Enwezor) and Emerson Thomas (now Canon of the Anglican Cathedral and Chaplain of FBC).

The aims and objectives of Scripture Union are quite diverse. The Union seeks to achieve them through various specialised activities and programmes. Among them are:

1. To aid the Christian church in its ministries by specialist services whereby the word of God is presented especially to children, young people and families; so that those to whom it is presented may be led to personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. That through their faith, they may be encouraged and instructed in the development of Christian character and witness.
2. To co-operate as far as possible with school authorities without compromising on matters of doctrine. Emphasise the unity of all true believers in Christ without distinction as to race, language, colour or social position and their equal worth in the sight of God.
3. To lay emphasis on the importance of the Bible in the life of a Christian by teaching him/her to read it regularly, thoughtfully and systematically; such reading is not seen as an end in itself but as leading to repentance, faith, worship, obedience and to balanced understanding of its teachings.
4. Fulfilling the strategy of appointing a relatively small number of full-time specialist staff whose task is to motivate, train and support a much larger number of part time voluntary helpers.
5. To encourage its staff and voluntary helpers to share the gospel in terms suitable to the culture of their hearers and to use methods adapted to local needs.
6. To promote thoughtful Bible reading amongst people of all ages with a view to furthering personal discipleship, Christian community and social concern.²⁸⁰

When the Scripture Union became an autonomous body in 1976, the London Council, its main funding agency, stopped funding them. The Union depended on two main sources of funding - local contributions and proceeds from the printing services. Occasionally few overseas well-wishers donate cash or kind to them.

8:3:1. Organisational Structure

There are two wings of the organisational structure of Scripture Union. One is the administrative or back-up wing and the other is the itinerant wing. The administrative staff includes the secretary-general who stands as the overall co-ordinator of the programmes and plans of the organisation. His function is that of overseeing and co-ordinating the various project undertaken by the organisation and administration. Suggestions, plans and programmes made by the members of staff and the public are directed through him. He endorses the yearly financial budget and serves as a check on the rest of the administrative staff. The secretary-general is appointed on the basis of

²⁸⁰ Scripture Union Handbook, p.3.

his educational qualification (he must be a degree holder from a university or theological college), he must have a “born-again” experience and adequate working knowledge in administration. In 1997, the secretary-general was Mr. Donald Manley who holds a degree from the University of Sierra Leone and fulfilled the other criteria.

The chairman is next in the hierarchical structure and he serves as a liaison officer between the secretary-general and the administrative staff. He shares responsibilities with the secretary-general and acts as a co-ordinator between the Executive Committee of the International Council and Scripture Union of Sierra Leone.

The rest of the staff, including the administrative secretary, are responsible for the administration of the organisation, the communication secretary being the one who heads the communication department. He is responsible for the co-ordination and maintenance of the library,²⁸¹ the publication of the monthly newsletter and the publicity of the organisation’s programmes. He has two assistants, one for communications and the other for the library.

The itinerant wing of staff are referred to as travelling secretaries and each of the four regions - the Western Area, Eastern, Northern and Southern Provinces, each Province has a travelling secretary. They are responsible for checking on the different SU groups of the various primary and secondary schools and ensure that the aims and objectives of SU are met. They suggest suitable programmes for the groups and see that they are implemented. These travelling secretaries also act as counsellors to youths in society generally and encourage them to meet for fellowship and to study the word of God in a non-denominational atmosphere every week.

8:3:2. Departments

Scripture Union has three main departments, namely communications, administrative and schools. Each department has a head and a secretary. The communications department undertakes the printing of 1,000 “Daily Guide” Bible reading notes annually. These daily Bible reading guides have proved to be very useful in helping people of all ages develop the habit of daily, thoughtful and systematic Bible reading,

²⁸¹ The SU library is the first public Christian library in the country and holds over 6,000 volumes of mostly religious books. The library is open to members and non-members of Scripture Union.

leading on to a desire for more Bible study. It also prints hymnbooks for funerals, souvenirs for weddings and handbills for different church occasions. The proceeds from the sale of “Daily Guide” and fees for the printing jobs contribute to maintaining the organisation financially. All the printing jobs are done on a duplicating machine, which makes it difficult to expand the printing department. In an interview with the communications secretary, he said “it is quite tedious to do printing on a duplicating machine as it takes up so much time and energy particularly when you have a deadline and there is no electricity.”²⁸² He however hopes that in the near future, the Union will be able to acquire a printing machine and they will start producing books as the Union does in the sub- region.

The administrative department is responsible for drawing up plans, programmes and policies as well as to ensure that they are implemented. This department is also responsible for co-ordinating Scripture Union’s programmes in the different schools.

They review the reports of the travelling secretaries and those from the leaders of the different fellowship groups. The schools department is the domain of the travelling secretaries. They co-ordinate SU activities in the different primary and secondary schools. They deal directly with young people by encouraging them to live a victorious Christian life. The department organises camps and retreats where youths are provided with an environment that is conducive to growing up as Christians.

One main activity of Scripture Union is establishing Bible Study groups in schools. These groups meet weekly after school. In 1997, these groups existed in thirteen primary schools,²⁸³ and seventeen secondary schools.²⁸⁴ Each school has a school’s group leader as well as a sponsor who is normally one of the teachers in the School. The sponsors were also members of the SU during their school days. In the primary

²⁸² Interview with Mr. Joseph Taylor, communications secretary for the communications department at Scripture Union, at 72, Pademba Road, Freetown on 28 August 1998.

²⁸³ They were Akibo Betts Municipal School; Ronsab Preparatory School; Tabernacle Primary School; Regent Square Municipal School; Buxton Primary School for Boys; Buxton Primary School for Girls; Sierra International School; Merewether Primary School; Kissy Police Primary School; Christ Primary School; Becklyn Preparatory; Tower Hill Municipal School and Herman Gmeina.

²⁸⁴ They were Albert Academy; Methodist Girls High School; Government Model Secondary School; St Helena Secondary School; Government Secondary Technical School; Vine Memorial Secondary School; Bishop Johnson Memorial School; YWCA Vocational Institute; Laura Dove Memorial Secondary School; Annie Walsh Memorial School; Sierra Leone Grammar School; Government Rokel Secondary School; Methodist Boys High School; West African Methodist Collegiate School; Services Secondary School and Government Independence Secondary School.

schools an average of twenty pupils is in each group and in the secondary schools, an average of 35 is in each group.

The Organisation conducts weekly video shows at their 72 Pademba Road office. These shows draw a large crowd of old and young, Christian and non-Christian. These films are mostly recorded crusades of famous evangelists such as Benny Hinn, Jimmy Swaggart, Billy Graham, Reinhard Bonnke etc. Sometimes also, films of crusades held in Freetown are featured. The essence of showing films on crusades is to bring out the healing power of God through the testimonies recorded at these crusades. In a society where medical facilities are beyond the reach of the masses, they are ready to be cured for free through faith, which is all, what these testimonies are about. Most times these people opt to become Christians and begin to attend the weekly Bible Study sessions held in the office. During these sessions the evangelism team do a follow-up and help nurture them into Christian maturity after which they are attached to one of the charismatic churches. Through the video shows then, one can say that church growth in Freetown is increasing.

8:3:3. Camps

Among the programmes and activities of Scripture Union is an annual weeklong residential camp where participants are taught how to become evangelists and disciples. It is held in three boarding homes i.e. the Annie Walsh Memorial School for those in the east end of Freetown, the Albert Academy for those in the central and the Methodist Girls High School for those in the west during the Christmas vacation. These camps provide the opportunity where male and female youths can interact as “brothers” and “sisters” at close quarters perhaps for the first time in their lives in a Christian-like atmosphere. Some of those who attend the camps have never attended a church service or taken part in any religious activity, but by the end of the camp, they are convinced that Christianity is the religion for them. Young people who attend these camps are given the opportunity to ask questions of diverse nature and share their experiences with one another.

Scripture Union camps put one in mind of the initiation ceremonies carried out in African traditional societies among young boys and girls. The girls are taken to the

*bundo bush*²⁸⁵ where they are taught to live with each other, to sew, to cook and to do other household chores. Many girls on their first camp can compare the excitement that these other girls have before they are taken to the *bundo bush*. During camps, a lot of clapping, singing and dancing are done as in the *bundo bush*. The boys also go through the same experience in their *poro bush* and at the camp. At the *bondo* and *poro bushes*, young boys and girls are made to go through physical initiation rites. At the camps, the boys and girls go through spiritual and moral rites through the Bible study sessions, lectures and exchange of ideas they have. The atmosphere at these camps is one in which the boys and girls are made to see themselves as newly born. The major difference is that whilst SU campers are free to talk about their experiences those in the *bush* have to keep their experiences a secret.

Couples Fellowship is another programme organised by SU. Attendance at this fellowship normally consists of married couples, both old and young. Couples who intend to get married (i.e. they are already engaged) are sometimes invited to attend and receive counselling which is the main thrust at these sessions. At these meetings, couples share their problems and they all brainstorm on how to solve them. Apart from counselling and providing solutions, prayers are also offered for couples with problems. This programme is counted as a success for Scripture Union as the divorce rate in the country has greatly reduced. The records for divorce rates were not available during the time of the research²⁸⁶ but I interviewed three judges, two magistrates and four lawyers dealing with this sort of case who expressed the same opinion.

Scripture Union also conducts training programmes for school group leaders three times a year during vacation and a weekly Central meeting of secondary schools SU groups. These programmes serve as an ideal forum for the training of the group leaders who in turn share the knowledge, skills and experience gained at these sessions with their colleagues during SU meetings.

In 1994, SU introduced a project known as Aid for AIDS. This programme was embarked upon to tackle the problem of AIDS in Sierra Leone. The approach used is intensive teaching among the least-affected group of people (i.e. the 11 - 19 years) of

²⁸⁵ A secluded place in a village where the initiation ceremony is conducted.

²⁸⁶ This period coincided with the military junta rule in Sierra Leone where a civil disobedience was also observed by majority of government workers by not going to work.

the value of abstinence based on Bible passages. The goal of this programme is “Towards an AIDS-Free Generation”.

Most of the programmes and activities of Scripture Union are geared towards implanting Christian values and morals. In the mainline churches, this was done at Sunday school, which was held on Sunday afternoons for about three hours. During this period there was enough time to do Bible studies and prepare the members for Sunday school exams.²⁸⁷ In the early 1970s when the Methodist Church in Sierra Leone became autonomous, Sunday school was combined with the divine service in the morning and was for only half an hour. This period was so short that they did not have time for either Bible studies or lessons for the Sunday school exams; they were only taught Biblical stories. The Bible Schools of the Charismatic churches have now replaced what formerly used to be done at Sunday school.

8.4. Youth For Christ

Youth for Christ (YFC) is found in 127 countries all over the world. The World headquarters is in Singapore. There is also the ministry’s arm in Denver, Colorado i.e. Youth for Christ International Ministries. Youth for Christ International has been in existence since the late 1940’s. Each national programme is chartered with YFC International.²⁸⁸

Youth for Christ was started in Freetown by the AOG in the mid 1950s. The pioneer was Rev. John Kennedy, an American Missionary sent to Sierra Leone by the AOG. He started off by holding rallies in the different AOG churches in Freetown. The main objective then was to attract youths to church to form a youth group. The rallies involved talks and musical concerts. Rev. Kennedy laid a good foundation for the spread of YFC and through his zeal and enthusiasm a lot of young people became members of this group. Unfortunately, the organisation did not continue to function as it started after the pioneer left Sierra Leone in the late 1950s.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁷ This was organised by the Methodist Mission overseas and held annually in Freetown. The different circuits of the Methodist Church conducted it for Sunday School members. Successful candidates were presented with certificates during their annual thanksgiving celebrations.

²⁸⁸ Florence Kabba, A study of Youth for Christ, a long essay submitted to the Department of Sociology, University of Sierra Leone as a course requirement in the Intermediate Year, May 1995.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.* p. 10.

In December 1970 the first West African Youth Leadership Training School sponsored by YFC International, was held in Liberia. Four participants from Sierra Leone²⁹⁰ attended this conference where they gained a lot of experience, which prompted them on their return to establish a formal YFC fellowship in Sierra Leone. During the first few years, the fellowship struggled to gain recognition, not only among the Assemblies of God churches but also among the other denominations. In 1974, with the assistance and encouragement of Mr. Len Rogers, the Regional Area director for Youth for Christ, a National Board was formed. This Board registered with the YFC International and received its Charter on 7 December 1974. This affiliation with the parent body put the organisation in a good stead to carry out its goals, which include:

1. To promote by every scriptural means an outreach to youths so as to lead them to a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, to a life of Christian service in their churches, community and nation.
2. To promote and organise Christian Leadership Training for young people and also for paid volunteer adult staff engaged in youth work.
3. To co-operate with and complement the Ministry of local Christian churches; the various Fellowship groups and above all, will have no social, racial or ethnic limits.²⁹¹

Apart from their aims and objectives, YFC has a mission statement which is “to participate in the Body of Christ in responsible Evangelism of youths, presenting them with the person, work and teachings of Christ and disciplining them into the church.”²⁹² From the mission statement, it could be seen that the Fellowship is for Youths, which caters specifically for young people and youths between the ages of ten and thirty years. There is no ethnic or class barrier. Educated as well as uneducated youths participate in this Fellowship.

8:4:1. Organisation and Structure

A National Director who is accountable to the Board of Directors heads Youth for Christ. The Board of Directors is headed by the Chairman and consists of not less than seven members and not more than fifteen people including the National Director. This Board is socially, denominationally and regionally represented. Each member serves for a term of two years and is eligible for re-election with no limit to the number of terms he or she may serve.

²⁹⁰ They were Mr. Billy Simbo, Mr. Victor Clayton-Johnson, Rev. Philip Cleave and Mr. Sam Kargbo; all of them were members of different Assemblies of God churches.

²⁹¹ The Youth for Christ Constitution, April 1990.

²⁹² *Ibid.*

The responsibilities of the National Board are:

1. To set the course of the National YFC Ministry as a movement and formulate major policies and long range plans and goals.
2. To appoint the National Director.
3. To approve the appointment of all full-time staff in the country.
4. To provide advice, counsel and assistance to the National Director and other staff.
5. To raise funds for the Organisation and approve the budget.
6. To approve any major capital expenditure.
7. To review the progress of the Organisation, evaluate the performance of staff and to take appropriate action.
8. To create adequate machinery for fulfilling Board responsibilities including the perpetuation of a healthy Board.²⁹³

In 1997, the National Director who is also the Chief Executive Officer was Mr. Hilary Lewis-Nicol; he holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Sierra Leone. He is in charge of the office staff, ten of them, as well as the associate staff who are termed volunteers. The organisation does not function without the help of volunteers; the effectiveness of the organisation depends to a great extent on them.

8:4:2. Departments

The organisation has four major departments namely, The Youth Clubs, The Youth Guidance, The Music and The Prayer Departments. These different departments have contributed to the transformation of Freetown Christianity through their programmes and activities, which are discussed below. In addition to the programmes and activities of the departments, the Organisation also embarks on other activities and programmes as occasion demands.

The Youth Club department co-ordinates all the youth clubs within the organisation. One of the youth clubs is known as “Partners Club”. Partners Clubs are formed in boarding home institutions in order to reach the students with the gospel. These clubs meet weekly for fellowship, Bible study, games and discussion at their different boarding homes. Each boarding home meets on different days as the co-ordinator or his assistant has to attend these meetings. In 1992, there were six partners clubs²⁹⁴ but this had to be reduced to three in 1997, because the boarding homes were closed down.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁴ They were: Albert Academy, Annie Walsh Memorial School, Freetown Secondary School for Girls, Huntingdon Secondary School, Methodist Girls High School and Young Women’s Christian Association Vocational Institute.

The Partners Club could be compared to the Youth Fellowships found in mainline churches. The differences between the partners club and the youth fellowship are that the former caters for both Christians and non-Christians and the latter for Christians only. In the former also meetings are held in a secular atmosphere and the latter in a religious one. A similarity between the two groups is that they carry out the same type of objectives and activities.

The Youth Guidance department deals with problem and delinquent youths in corrective institutions. In 1997, it included “children in conflict with the law” in their programmes. The department organises sessions with inmates at the Remand Home at King Tom and the Approved School at Wellington. Approved School is a corrective institution for under-aged youths who have been sentenced for different crimes. Remand Home is remand prisons for youths that are awaiting trial and who if they are found guilty are sent to the Approved School. The department organises sessions with the inmates in which they help them to develop positive interaction with their peers; experience satisfying relationships with mature and caring adults; developing self-esteem and self-worth and learning basic Christian values. Since there is an established club at the Remand Home, the co-ordinator or his assistant attends the juvenile court sittings every Tuesday when the children are being tried. Their main reason for doing so is that it helps to provide them with a background on how to counsel the culprits.²⁹⁵

The department also visits the parents of the delinquents to counsel them in preparation for the return of their children. It also carries out follow-up visits to those who have been discharged to ensure that they are not committing any more offences or repeating them. The youth guidance co-ordinator makes periodical visits to different police stations to find out whether under-aged children are in cells. If cases of such a nature are discovered, the co-ordinator makes a recommendation to the Inspector- General of Police for the victims to be sent to the remand home. Youth guidance with a religious flavour is a new phenomenon, which was introduced in Freetown in the early 1980s. Before this period, it was mainly confined to schools and in rare cases the home. The establishment of parachurch organisations like YFC has taken cognisance of the diverse

²⁹⁵ Interview with Mr, Moses Belmoh, Youth Guidance Department Coordinator, 6 February 1998, at his Garrison St. Office.

problems youths are going through. The downward socio-economic trend in the country has left a lot of youths to be exposed to social problems like gambling, drug-addiction, prostitution, teenage pregnancy, pilfering etc. This organisation has created an avenue through the Youth Guidance Department to assist youths in combating some of these problems while at the same time imparting to them basic Christian values.

The Music department consists of a recording studio, a music school and an outreach arm. The recording studio is one of the financial pillars of the organisation and produces both audio and video recording. Youths who love writing, singing and playing musical instruments are encouraged to take their pieces of writing or songs to the studio where they are developed and produced. Many Christian artists have used the services of this studio to produce their songs on audiocassettes, which are sold in the market in Freetown. Through these gospel songs, youths are attracted to the charismatic churches where they can see these artists perform, unlike in the mainline churches where the hymns are stereotyped.

The music school trains young people to read and write music as well as to play different instruments like the guitar, the keyboard and the drums. This school is the most popular among members of the praise and worship teams and choirs of most charismatic churches as most of them attend it. Those who have an interest in studio operation are also trained in it.

Three volunteer music teams conduct the outreach programme. Their targets are schools, streets, and the rural areas. The programme is conducted through songs and drama. These teams also undertake fund-raising activities in schools by putting up mini rallies. The funds raised are to subsidise the annual "Encounter" camp meeting, which is discussed below. Prior to the 1980s, music in mainline churches was the sole responsibility of the Choir who sang hymns from the church's hymnbook and sometimes Negro spirituals. On important occasions, it would render an anthem from Mendelson's Oratorio, Handel's Water Music, Bach's Concerto and the like. Gospel music and songs in reggae, jazz and African rhythm were introduced in Freetown in the mid-1980s when charismatic churches began to proliferate. They also began to become

popular when YFC started operating its studio where gospel songs were produced on audiocassettes.

The Prayer Movement department is housed at 72 Wellington Street in Freetown. It is headed by a co-ordinator who is a full-time member of staff. A team of volunteers who act as Intercessors assists him. At the Wellington Street office, the “power house” is the most important place. People go there to pray and meditate for as long as they want. Different Christian organisations also use it as a retreat centre.

The co-ordinator receives prayer request letters and requests for prayer through the telephone. He and his team of intercessors act on the letters at their “prayer time” which is held every evening. Prayer request through the telephone is done by the co-ordinator and is followed up with additional prayers at “prayer time”. In an interview with the co-ordinator he said:

I receive about ten calls a day from old as well as young for different problems; for a week I receive about 40 letters, for problems ranging from success in business to good health. Our success rate is good because we get a feed back from those we have prayed for about how their problems are over.²⁹⁶

Apart from the activities and programmes undertaken by the different departments, YFC also conducts special programmes which are held on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis. These activities and programmes include mass rallies, youth leadership training and camps.

Mass rallies are held quarterly at the Youth Centre. They are designed to bring youths together and introduce the life-changing Good News of Jesus Christ. At these rallies, volunteers and the youth groups, which the Organisation works with, churched and unchurched youths, all participate. It takes the form of praise and worship with a lot of current gospel songs by members in the music department and a talk based on themes like “forgiveness”, “grace” and “restitution”.

²⁹⁶ Interview with Bro. Fred Johnson, 6 April 1998 at 72, Wellington Street, Freetown.

8:4:3. Youth Leadership Training and Camps

This training is held every year from July to September. The main aim of this programme is to develop good leadership and to equip youth leaders of churches and social groups for effective service. The organisation does not charge the participants any fees. Training manuals sent to the organisation from Youth for Christ Upper Africa Office in Nairobi, Kenya and are given free of charge to the participants. Three courses are offered during the training - Leadership Basics, Leadership Development and Advanced Seminar. Certificates are presented to the participants at the end of the training session.

Camps are held every year during the long vacation.²⁹⁷ These camp meetings are termed as “Encounter”. They are held in one of the boarding homes for a week. At these meetings, programmes such as Bible expositions, group Bible studies, drama, games and discussions on practical Christianity are conducted. These activities create an atmosphere where youths come to have a deeper insight into Christianity; learn to work with their peers; learn how to grow into Christian maturity and how to become effective and responsible church members.

8:4:4. The Freetown Youth Centre (FYC)

One major contribution to Freetown Christianity by Youth for Christ is the pioneering of the building of a Youth Centre. The Freetown Youth Centre is a massive five-storey building situated at 33 Garrison Street in the heart of Freetown. Youth for Christ and other Evangelical Fellowships jointly own this building. Youth for Christ contributed the lion’s share in the construction of the building and as such oversees its use.

The construction of the centre started in early 1981 and was completed at the end of the same year. The building was opened on 13th January 1982. The centre is used as a base for providing street youths with recreational facilities, organise meaningful activities for unemployed youths as well as a 24-hour counselling service, and especially youths involved with drugs, alcohol and single parenthood. The centre is also rented out to Christian organisations or religious groups for different purposes such as workshops, seminars, conferences, Bible training schools, receptions and committee meetings. There are a lot of office spaces, which are rented by different religious

²⁹⁷ This is normally in July when schools break up for the end of the school year.

organisations such as Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone (BCSL), and Sierra Leone Evangelical Fellowship of Students (SLEFES).

Youth for Christ runs a cafeteria on the first floor of the building. The cafeteria provides jobs for unemployed youths, thus fulfilling one of the objectives of putting up the building. They also transmit gospel music and news on current Christian activities from the recording studio during lunchtime at the cafeteria. From time to time they also broadcast religious talks, a device designed to evangelise and gain converts.

Before the coup on 25 May 1997, YFC used to operate a welding workshop at the basement of the Youth Centre. The workshop had to close down because the equipment was looted. This workshop was not only an income-generating one; it was also a training one in which male youths were taught to weld and serve as apprentices. They went through the course and obtained certificates on completion. During this period, they were also given allowances as an incentive.

8.5. The Great Commission Movement of Sierra Leone

The Great Commission Movement of Sierra Leone (GCMSL) was established in Sierra Leone in 1981 by an American couple, David and Sandra Tisdale at Fourah Bay College campus. This movement is a local ministry of the worldwide Christian organisation known as Campus Crusade for Christ International. The founder of this organisation is Dr. Bill Bright. Campus Crusade for Christ International was founded by him in 1951 when, as a young businessman and seminarian studying theology, it became clear to him what God was calling him to do. Quite clearly he was to help carry out the Great Commission on the campuses of his native land, America, and the whole wide world.²⁹⁸ Today Campus Crusade for Christ has a full time staff of more than 2000 including Dr. Bill Bright who is its President. There are groups and individual workers all over the world witnessing through this ministry the life-transforming power of Jesus Christ for all men everywhere.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁸ Kayode Coker, A study of The Great Commission Movement of Sierra Leone, a long essay submitted to the Department of Sociology, University of Sierra Leone as a course requirement in the Intermediate Year, May 1995.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, preface.

The Great Commission Movement of Sierra Leone is a Christian organisation registered with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare³⁰⁰ and their office is situated at 90 Pademba Road in Freetown. The main goal of this organisation is its commitment to serving the Lord Jesus Christ through faithful witnessing and service to humanity and works with churches and individual Christians in all works of life. The staff comprises of people from various works of life and backgrounds, but they must be born-again Christians. The campus of the University of Sierra Leone is their foremost recruiting ground, particularly members of the Campus Ministry. In 1997 there were thirty members of staff, fifteen full-time workers and fifteen volunteers. Twelve out of the fifteen full-time workers are field workers who work in different campuses across the country and also in Banjul, the Gambia, where they were hoping to set up an office. The remaining three workers are the Director, Mr. Boscoe Kai-Kai, and two administrative officers who oversee the office. All staff members go through a nine-month period of training in a Great Commission Training Centre either in Ghana or Nigeria.

8:5:1. Ministries

There are four ministries within the GCMSL: Campus, Jesus Film, Professionals, and Life-Net Ministries.

The Campus Ministry operates in the different college campuses³⁰¹ throughout the country. In 1998, there were ten ministries in Sierra Leone, eight in Freetown and two in the provinces. In each campus, members of the GCMSL are trained to live and share Christ with non-members through personal witnessing and follow-up discipleship groups. Through personal witnessing, members meet non-members during different activities at the colleges like lunch breaks, after lectures and at the bus stop.

The Jesus Film is a two-hour film on the life and Ministry of Jesus based entirely on the Gospel of Luke. It has been used around the world to bring millions of people to the knowledge of who Jesus Christ really is. It is also used to teach the “Word” of God to new believers and people who cannot read and write. Before it is shown local

³⁰⁰ The registration number is Government of Sierra Leone/No. 386. Registration with the Government empowers the organisation to carry out its aims and objectives and also exempted from excise duty.

³⁰¹ Fourah Bay College; Milton Margai College of Education and Freetown Teachers’ College.

Christians are trained to follow-up those who will be converted or respond to the gospel after watching it.³⁰²

“Jesus” is the most translated film in the world because when people see and hear it in their language, it breaks through spiritual barriers and quickly identifies those who are ready to respond to the Gospel; in my opinion also, the acting is well done and the message is straight forward. It has already been translated into two Sierra Leonean languages - Krio and Mende- and hopefully in the not too distant future it will be translated into four more languages, Limba, Temne, Kuranko and Kono.

The Great Commission Movement of Sierra Leone always seeks to have an impact on executives and professionals. The Professionals Ministry does this through seminars, conferences and regular study groups. Many times this sector of the society is isolated from the Gospel but “when reached for Jesus Christ, they can help open doors for God in the rest of the community.”³⁰³

The Organisation operates training centres known as New Life Training Centres, formerly known as Here’s Life Training Centres. These are an important part of GCMSL’s strategy for reaching Sierra Leone for Christ. These centres exist to provide vision, training, strategy and materials for evangelism and discipleship of Christians within their neighbourhoods. They are designed to produce dedicated workers in the “Lord’s Vineyard”. The training sessions last for two weeks annually if participants “live-in” or they meet two evenings a week for several months in a year. The latter option generally makes it possible for Christians who have difficulty in leaving their jobs to attend full-time study to receive training. Those who are trained at these centres are equipped to lead others to Christ and help them grow, with the aim of building on-going movements of spiritual multiplication within their environments.

8.6. Health Care Christian Fellowship

Before the late 1970s, ministering to the sick in hospitals (visiting, healing, sharing the “Word” and counselling) by Christian organisations was not a common phenomenon. In fact, visitation was done only by organisations in the mainline denominations at

³⁰² *Ibid.*

³⁰³ Interview with Mr. Boscoe Kai-Kai at 72 Pademba Road, Freetown on 4th September 1998.

Christmas when food and gifts were presented to the patients. In the early 1960s, the Church of the Lord (Aladura) sent evangelists to preach at the Connaught and Princess Christian Mission hospitals³⁰⁴ every Sunday. When the charismatic churches began to proliferate in the mid-1980s, hospital visitation was an important item on their programmes. Their main objective was to comfort the sick by sharing the Word of God with them but at the same time winning souls for Christ. Most of these churches did it on a monthly basis. The Hospital Christian Fellowship (HCF) is the only organisation which does hospital visitation, healing, conducts Bible Studies and counselling on a full-time basis.

The Hospital Christian Fellowship was inaugurated in Freetown on 26 April 1979 by the co-ordinator, Rev. Theresa Temple. The headquarters of the Fellowship is in Kempton Park in Johannesburg, South Africa. It is an international and inter-denominational organisation founded in 1936 by two brothers, Francis and Carl Grim. The idea came about when they visited their sick father in the hospital and thought that people can work for the Lord by turning the hospital into an evangelistic ground. The organisation is found in 107 countries including countries in West Africa such as Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria and Togo. Before 1990 the organisation was known as the Hospital Christian Fellowship. The name was changed because the founders realised that many health workers are employed professionally outside the hospital from where they can still carry out counselling, one of the objectives of the fellowship.

Training is an important phenomenon in this organisation. It has two training centres in South Africa and Holland where hospital workers are trained. Although they have full-time workers, they also train health workers to minister to patients. One main reason for this is that the full-time workers may not be at their locations when a patient needs counselling and the like.

Every year the organisation holds an international conference for co-ordinators and some members of the different branches. Different themes are chosen and for the past

³⁰⁴ The Connaught hospital is situated at Wallace Johnson Street in Freetown and the Princess Christian Mission hospital is situated at Fourah Bay Road, also in Freetown. Both hospitals are manned by the Sierra Leone Government.

three years the following themes have engaged their attention: “Abortion and the Bible”, “Drug Addiction” and “Care for the Dying”.

Before the inauguration of the Fellowship in Freetown in 1979, there was the Nurses Christian Fellowship whose membership was entirely nurses. When Rev. Temple returned to Freetown after attending a conference of the Hospital Christian Fellowship in Wales in 1978, she came to realise that not only nurses can minister to patients but also people (doctors, radiographers, dieticians, porters, clerks etc.) working in the hospital generally can. She started the Fellowship with nine members, which included two doctors and seven nurses.³⁰⁵

The evidence in this chapter is of a vibrant non-denominational sector of the church which has made a significant contribution to society as a whole. The *modus operandi* varies from group to group. Generally speaking, each one has its target group from youths who are still in school (as with Scripture Union) to those who have left school or never had the chance to finish (Youth for Christ). Meanwhile CCSL had to deal with elected governments and military juntas and participated in crucial events in the nation’s difficult years. From this writer’s perspective there are three lessons which we can take from the parachurch organisations’ contribution to Church in Freetown from the 1960s to the 1990s:

1. The parachurch organisations in Freetown especially during the war years have demonstrated the importance of the slogan “unity is strength.” Within a civil war situation there was no time for denominational squabbles, rather, the emphasis was on united witness. Whilst individual congregations would concentrate on weekly services and the general rituals such as baptisms, weddings, confirmations and funerals, the parachurch organisations could concentrate on socio-political witness.
2. The parachurch organisations clearly bring out the message that religious belief should be accompanied by effective social action. The parable of the Good Samaritan and other biblical passages have challenged Christians to take up the challenge of helping others in need. Such social action becomes more effective when churches work together.
3. The events in Sierra Leone over the last few years remind us that the Church is a worldwide association. In a country where mega-inflation was rampant, the Church in

³⁰⁵ Interview held with Rev. Theresa Temple at Connaught hospital, 16 April 1998.

Sierra Leone had to depend on financial contribution from overseas aid agencies, many of which were Church-based organisations. At the same time, a group like CCSL could benefit from the experiences of the Church in other areas of the world that had gone through the trauma of war and oppression but had emerged with credit as a contributor to post-war reconciliation. In particular one can mention post-Apartheid South Africa³⁰⁶ and Europe after World War II.³⁰⁷ The problems in Sierra Leone are far from over but there must be hope if the parachurch organisations continue to do the type of work they did during the period of conflict. At the same time the sociologist may want to display some scepticism and question whether the conversions that happened during the war would have happened if some people were not dependent on the aid that was being offered.

The parachurch organisations, many of which were started abroad, have played a significant part in the life of the Christian Church in Freetown. This chapter has shown that these groups have generally been effective in spreading the gospel, sometimes through direct evangelism but more often through social service. This is especially true of the contribution of parachurch groups during the civil war. Most were instrumental in providing aid to refugees from Liberia and misplaced Sierra Leoneans. In addition, the CCSL, a group uniting the different denominations in the country, was able to challenge both civilian, democratically-elected governments as well as military juntas when it was deemed necessary. This and other similar groups have a very important role to play in the country's healing process.

³⁰⁶ See, for example Hugo van der Merwe, "The role of the Church in promoting reconciliation in post TRC South Africa" in Chapman, A. & Spong, B (eds.) 2003, *Religion and Reconciliation in South Africa*, pp.269-811 Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press,

³⁰⁷ See Linda Bloom, "At 50 year milestone, WCC has cause to celebrate", downloaded from <http://www.umc.org.umms>.

CHAPTER 9

The Church and the Civil War: Theological Response to Political and Military Turmoil

9:1. Introduction

This chapter assesses the roles played by churches, pastors, the laity and different religious institutions in the civil war in Sierra Leone in general and in Freetown in particular. The chapter opens with a brief background of the war and a discussion of some theories put forward by some scholars about the causes of the war. This is followed by an analysis of the impact on the role of religion in the displaced camps in Freetown; disruption of religious activities; the Church in Sierra Leone as a medium to cry out with one voice; an assessment of the double standards practised by some churches, leaders and members; new forms of religious expression and the religious role of the media.

9:2. The Outbreak of the Civil War

The civil war³⁰⁸ broke out in March 1991 when armed combatants crossed the border from Liberia into the south-eastern part of the country, attacking and subsequently occupying the border town of Bomaru in Kailahun district. Since then, the country has suffered war, terror and a deep unrelenting humanitarian crisis, which have left it devastated. The war has curbed agricultural production drastically, cut government revenues from mining and seen the destruction of hundreds of schools and health clinics, and administrative facilities. Forced displacement has effected more than half the population estimated at 4.5 million. Between 20,000 and 75,000 people were killed and thousands mutilated. Dislocation of people, the brain drain compounded by the war, and destruction of schools exacerbated the educational crisis in the country, which has a literacy of about 20 percent.³⁰⁹

Before the outbreak of the war, corruption and mismanagement in the diamond sector was one of the main reasons why Sierra Leone became, according to UN figures, the poorest country in the world. With the breakdown of state structures and the effective suppression of civilian opposition, wide corridors were opened for

³⁰⁸ This war is commonly known as “the rebel war” among Sierra Leoneans because as far as they were concerned those who were engaged in the war were all rebels.

³⁰⁹ British Broadcasting World News at 7 a.m., on 26 May 1997, a day after the Armed Forces of the Ruling Council’s (AFRC) coup took place.

trafficking of arms and ammunition and drugs, all of which eroded the national/regional security and facilitated crime within the country and between Sierra Leone and Liberia and Guinea (Reno, 1998).

There has been a heated debate among scholars about the reasons for the war in Sierra Leone. Paul Richards looks at the war in Sierra Leone and sees it as a crisis of modernity linking it to an underlying “crisis of youth” which he argues, prompted large numbers of socially marginalized young people to embrace conflict in a desperate search for empowerment.³¹⁰ According to Richards, “these youths found common cause with the ‘excluded youths’ who led the Revolutionary United Front (RUF)³¹¹ be made to feel the destructive anger of those for whom patrimonialism no longer works.”³¹² He criticises Kaplan’s (1994) “New Barbarism” thesis which sees wars in the post-cold war period as small-scale conflicts fought with cheap arms easily available to small religious, cultural and criminal organisations.

Some other scholars including Richards (2000); Abdullah (2004); Gberie (2005) and Keen (2005) have argued that the war originally had a legitimate political pedigree based on student-led opposition to the repressive and corrupt one-party regime of Siaka Stevens. This opposition was led by former Fourah Bay College student radicals and lecturers like Abu Kanu and Rashid who were thrown out of the University. In the 1980s after a series of protest actions they headed for exile in Ghana under the government of Jerry Rawlings. They later went to Libya for military training, where they met fighters of Charles Taylor’s National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). In Libya and in Burkina Faso many more youths were trained and took much of their inspiration from the Green Book of Colonel Gaddafi and according to Richards these groups later formed the RUF who initiated the insurgency war in Sierra Leone on 29 March 1991. Kastfelt (2000) in contrast, emphasises the religious element and tries to draw parallels from the Nigerian civil war where much of Biafran propaganda stressed the difference between the Christian south east and the Muslim north; and the Liberian

³¹⁰ See Paul Richards, “Rebellion in Liberia and Sierra Leone: a Crisis of Youth” in O.W. Furley (ed.), 1995, *Conflict in Africa*, London: I.B. Tauris, pp. 134-70 and Paul Richards, 1996, *Fighting For the Rainforest: War Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*, Oxford: International African Institute/James Currey.

³¹¹ The RUF was formed as early as the 1980s in response to the All Peoples Congress and the regimes of President Siaka Stevens (1968-85) and his successor President Joseph Momoh (1985-91). Fighters were trained in Libya along with Liberian forces that included Charles Taylor.

³¹² Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest*, p.161.

war where traditional African religion came into play (Samuel Doe was supposed to have protection from bullets).

All these theories can explain some aspects of the civil war, but in my opinion the war resulted from a combination of factors: continued bad government; inadequate and unequal distribution of the nations' mineral and other resources; the absence of proper social services and some amount of interference from outside interest (for example weapons for diamonds, see Reno, 1998). Religion *per se* may not have played a part in starting the war but religious attitudes did affect the course, for example there was the belief in being protected by a supernatural "bullet proof" by becoming a member of a secret society known as *kofo*,³¹³ however, some might call it superstition rather than religion.

9:3. The Impact of the War

During the war period, many regular types of religious activity were suppressed, stimulating new forms of religious expression. This new religiosity found a ready audience during this period, as people, traumatised and insecure, sought an outlet for new social and religious needs. The war of course was a disruptive factor notably in relocating people as displaced people and as refugees; such effects had lasting consequences for religious growth, fervour and innovation.

Another significant impact which the war had on religion, was the killing of about twenty people at The Church of Aladura in Bo in 1997 by rebels.³¹⁴ These people had gone to attend a church service when the rebels opened fire inside the church and killed those who were not able to escape. The rebels were informed that the church and its members were praying for a military intervention that would oust them from power. This is the first time in the history of Sierra Leone that such a thing had happened, unlike other countries in the sub-region such as Liberia and Nigeria where this was quite common.³¹⁵

³¹³ A secret society which enables its members to become invisible in times of crises.

³¹⁴ "20 People Massacred in Church", For Di people, 11 April 1997.

³¹⁵ For an insight into the massacre of people in a church in Liberia see Joseph Njoh, 1996, *Through The Liberian Storm*, London: Minerva Press, pp 190 –218 and for Nigeria see Harneit-Seivers et al, 1997, *A Social History of the Nigerian Civil War: Perspectives from Below, Enugu, Nigeria: Jemezie Associates*, pp. 110-111.

When the civil war broke out in the provinces in 1991, the people of Freetown did not take it seriously. Two reasons could be adduced for this. Firstly, they believed that the war would be short-lived. Secondly, that Freetown was well secured and the war will never spill over to the city. Both reasons were far from true, as in the following year the war had spread to the three provinces and eventually reached the city in 1997.

During the civil war, Sierra Leone encountered three military coups. The first of these took place in April 29 1992, by the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) coup led by Captain Valentine Strasser, then another in 1996, a palace coup that led to Strasser's replacement by his deputy Brigadier Maada Bio, and then the most destructive in May 1997, a bloody putsch that temporarily terminated the democratically elected government of President Ahmed Tejan-Kabba and which led to a complete normative collapse. The role played by religion in these coups was quite significant. During the first of these coups, the Church in Sierra Leone issued a press release urging the coup makers to hand over power to the government. This release was not met with much enthusiasm as the coup had the support of the large majority of Sierra Leoneans who had grown dissatisfied with the government. To confirm that the coup was most welcome by the population, one writer observed that "...the soldiers spread over much of the city, mixing with a population that was by now visibly jubilant for what was happening." (Koroma, 1996:177). The All People's Congress (APC) government had failed the population, particularly in the manner which they had prosecuted the war. The change of government was most welcome, even though they knew the imminent consequences.

Although religion did play a role during the civil war in the provinces, this was not quite outstanding as it did in the capital city, Freetown. Among the most significant impact was the provision of food, shelter, clothing and medical facilities in the three provincial headquarters, Makeni, Bo and Kono. The items were provided by various international organisations such as World Council of Churches (WCC), Tear Fund UK, (TF-UK), The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA-UK) and different arms of the United Nations but were mainly distributed by EFSL and CCSL.

9:4. The Displaced Camps

The civil war left close to about 750,000 people as displaced persons.³¹⁶ About a third of them sought refuge in Freetown and the rest went as refugees to Guinea, Liberia, Ghana and some European countries. Those who came as displaced people to Freetown were sent to three displaced camps at Cline Town, Clay Factory and Waterloo. The large majority of these displaced people came from the provinces and were mainly Muslims.

People in these camps were provided with food, shelter and clothing, three basic things that they needed as most of them had spent several weeks and months in the *bush* (the thick forest in the hinterland). Life in these displaced camps was centred on Bible studies; devotion and prayer sessions organised by the CCSL and EFSL who were managing the camps. These occasions were attended by both Christians and Muslims residing in the camps and opened up avenues for the founding of churches, ministries and home cells.

At the Cline Town Displaced Camp, Borbor Vandi from Kailahun founded the Cline Town Displaced Christian Ministry in 1996 with ten members from his hometown. They met in the leader's house in the camp every Sunday for church services and on Wednesdays for Bible studies in one of the member's house that happens to be the only literate member in the ministry. During the Bible studies sessions, he would read passages from the Bible and explain to the members in their mother tongue, Mende. In 1998 the ministry had grown to 50 members who came from other ethnic groups such as the Kono, Limba and Temne. By this time the leader's house was too small to hold the growing congregation and visitors. As a result of this, they began to hold Sunday services at the Director's office in the Camp. This ministry later registered with the Ministry of Rural Development to gain the status of a church.

In an interview I had with the founder of the ministry on his motive for founding it, he told me that his grand parents and parents were staunch Muslims and so was he. He continued by telling me that when they were attacked by rebels in their villages, the only form of help they had was from Christian organisations who provided food and clothing for them as all their houses and belongings were looted or burnt by the rebels.

³¹⁶ "Rebel War '*Wahala*' (trouble)", For Di People, 4 March 1997.

He added that the Muslim organisations had never provided any form of help to anyone during the war. They were very thankful and believed that the Christian religion was a good religion which took care of people when they were in dire need. He confessed that the Christian religion was worth emulating and that was his main motive for founding the Ministry. He hoped that he would be able to propagate the gospel and bring people together to believe in a religion that provides assistance and care for its people in crises.³¹⁷

Apart from the Ministry, four home cells were formed by the EFSL. These home-cells met every Friday in different houses in the camp and were conducted by members of staff of EFSL.

Similar accounts were given by the founders of churches in the other two displaced camps for founding their churches. At the Clay Factory Displaced Camp, Amara Bangura founded the Displaced Christian Fellowship and at the Waterloo Refugee Camp, Joseph Vamboi founded the Waterloo Refugee Christian Fellowship. In addition to these churches, four home-cells were formed in the Clay Factory Camp and ten at the Waterloo Refugee Camp.

9:5. The National Intercessory Prayer Group

In 1994, the extent of the war became a grave concern for a group of five women who came together to form the National Intercessory Prayer Group. They were Clara Robbin-Coker, Anne Marcus-Jones, Bertha During, Angela Gooding and Elizabeth Perry. All of them were members of Bethel Temple. The brains behind the formation of this group was Clara who claimed she had a vision based on 2 Chron: 7:14 “If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and forgive their sins and will heal their land.” She informed the others about this and they all prayed and fasted for three days together at Anne’s residence. At the end of the prayer and fasting, they came up with the idea of having a “Praise March”. Clara contacted the First Lady, Hannah Momoh to assist them in using the National Stadium as the meeting point for the “Praise March” and return there to launch the Prayer Group. The First Lady did

³¹⁷ Interview with Borbor Vandi, at Cline Town Displaced Camp at Wellington on 19 June 1998.

arrange it and the “Praise March” and launching of the National Intercessory Prayer Group took place on 8 April 1994.

The launching drew a crowd of approximately 700, including male, female and children. Out of this crowd, 50 people opted to become members of the group. This group started to meet every Saturday morning at the YWCA school hall. At these meetings a topic was chosen relating to the Bible and people volunteered to speak on the topic. After the talk, a general discussion took place among them and they later split up into groups of five. These groups would then go into an intensive prayer session for about an hour, praying for peace in the country and an end to the civil war. The meeting ended with sharing of visions, messages and ideas.

The National Intercessory Prayer Group continued to meet on a regular basis until May 1997 when the coup took place and the majority of members fled the country. The few members who were left held the fort. They met in one of a members’ house where they held only prayer sessions and fasting as it was not considered safe for the public to know about their prayer and fasting activities.

9:6. The Intercessory Prayer Network

When the war started in 1991, Pastor Mambu of Faith Healing Bible Church went on a retreat at Fourah Bay College campus. At the end of the retreat, the Spirit of God revealed to him that “the body of Christ is sick”, he took this to mean that Sierra Leone had a serious problem. He then went into another retreat in June 1997 immediately after the May 25 coup and he was reminded of the words of the Spirit of God six years earlier. This time, he said the Spirit actually revealed to him to start a prayer network. On his return from the retreat, he discussed this idea with the pastors of International Holiness Pentecostal Church at Wellington and Evangelical Full Gospel Church at Kissy. They all agreed that it was a good idea and sent out invitation letters to pastors of 50 other churches, thirty of these replied in the affirmative. Another meeting was convened and the Network was launched. It was decided to start holding prayer sessions twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1.00 p.m. They decided to hold the sessions at that time because schools and colleges were not in session, people did not go to work, most of the shops were closed, in short, there was a “civil disobedience” in the country.

The Intercessory Prayer Network held their first session on 6 July 1997 at Rokel Secondary School. This session drew a crowd of 800 and ten pastors from different born-again churches. The theme for this session was “disunity and conflict”. Five of these pastors gave their views based on the Bible on this theme and the congregation asked them questions at the end. The rest of the session was devoted to prayers and choruses.

For the other sessions, they came up with different prayer points each time and had pastors discussed it. Among the prayer points they discussed in the other sessions were prayer for the Nation, the Church, the Body of Christ, the Christian Family, Financial and Personal Breakthrough and Salvation (of children, relatives and friends).

On 8 February 1996, the Church in Sierra Leone, represented by Pentecostal Churches, Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone (EFSL) and the Council of Churches (CCSL) issued a press release on “The Democratisation Process”. The statement was addressed to prominent and important parties and groups that were in the arena of shaping the course of the destiny of Sierra Leone. These groups included the (NPRC), the (RUF), the thirteen registered political parties, and the Interim National Electoral Commission (INEC). They stated clearly that:

The Church has been following the events of recent weeks affecting the socio-political, religious and economic well-being of our nation. As a body called to bear witness to the eternal truths of Scripture binding us with the responsibility of being light and salt in a decaying society, they were forced to exercise this sacred duty by addressing this statements to the above groups.

The Church statement started of by recognising and appreciating the positive achievements of the NPRC over the past four years, notwithstanding the considerable difficulties they have had in fulfilling their objectives in overthrowing the APC government.

They added that:

at this point in time the NPRC would receive honour by pulling out of active politics and governance by handing over to a democratically elected government. And thereafter build up a strong disciplined and dedicated military institution that the nation would be proud of.

The release further went on:

The Church affirms the dignity of man created in the image of God having an inalienable right to associate, to freedom of speech and the essentials of life. We are greatly shocked by the level of vengeance, destruction and cruelty of man to man perpetuated during the four year old war, which could have been avoided if dialogue and redress had been encouraged in our society quickly.

They admitted that:

they share the blame and responsibility of the present legacies and results of a society we all created: - by the Church being silent and passive when they should have been champions of justice; by the judiciary system denying the rights of citizens to fair, speedy and uninfluenced trials in our courts of law, by the politicians exercising excessive abuse of privilege in perpetuating tribalism, nepotism and greed at the expense of national interest.

They further implored the RUF and Corporal Foday Sankoh to continue without any disruption, the initiative and process of dialoguing with the government of Sierra Leone towards a negotiated settlement of the war. In addition, they implored the RUF to keep an open mind so that preconditions would not serve as an embargo to the peace process

9:7. The Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone (IRCSL)

In January 1997, the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) in New York brought together religious leaders for a consultative meeting. One important item on the agenda was to introduce the idea of forming a forum for dialogue to look at the way forward of solving the political crisis in Sierra Leone. As a result of this on 1 April 1997, at a one-day The idea of forming the IRCSL was conceived during a meeting of the Council of Churches of Sierra Leone (CCSL) with representatives of the WCRP. This Council was formally launched on 1 April 1997, and comprised all the major Muslim and Christian umbrella organisations in Sierra Leone. These included the Roman Catholic Church, the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone, the Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone, the Pentecostal Churches in Sierra Leone, the Supreme Islamic Council, Muslim Congress, and Federation of Muslim organisations in Sierra Leone, Council of Imams and the Sierra Leone Muslim League. It is an advisory body for inter-religious co-operation among the above groups. The objectives of the IRCSL that were agreed upon in conjunction with WCRP were:

1. To equip and mobilise cooperative efforts among the religious communities in Sierra Leone and to take concrete steps in restoring stability, reconsideration, and renewal to Sierra Leone.
2. To promote cooperation among the religious communities of Sierra Leone for peace while maintaining respect for religious differences.

3. To identify common religious commitments and principles conducive to the peace of the human community.
4. To undertake actions for peace.

The civil war in Sierra Leone brought a new awareness of the imperative to explore new and creative ways to reengage Sierra Leoneans in a meaningful relationship and dialogue. The formation of IRC SL was a step in the right direction. Among the foremost aims of this Council is to establish a durable peace based on truth, justice and common living, and to collaborate with all people of good will in the healing tasks of reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation for Sierra Leone.

One of the first activities embarked upon to foster the above aim was to organise a workshop in collaboration with the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP). The theme of the conference was “The Role of Religion on Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation”. The workshop was largely funded by WCRP. Other contributions came from all taskforce members (in the form of time, transportation and logistics) and CCSL (telephone, faxes, air travel for two international participants).

Participants were drawn equally from the Christian and Muslim Communities, both from Freetown and the Provinces. A total of 244 people attended the workshop session in full. This number included the General Secretary of WCRP and three WCRP Vice Presidents from Cameroon, Nigeria and Kenya.

Two presentations, one from a Muslim perspective and the other from a Christian perspective were given by two external speakers. They both focused on religious tolerance and the need to work together to address issues affecting society.

Other special contributions were made by the UN Resident Representative, UNICEF Representative, CCSL Representative and Muslim Representative on the Theme of the workshop. The workshop ended with the signing of the “Shared Moral Concerns” document, which was presented to the Head of State (President Ahmed Tejan-Kabba) after the workshop.

Shortly after the inception of the IRC SL, the democratically elected Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) government was ousted in a military *coup d’etat* on 25 May 1997.

The IRCSL wasted no time in condemning the action of the military on international radio broadcasted station, and demanded the return of power to the legitimate government. After nine months in power, the coup plotters were removed in a countercoup and the SLPP government was reinstated in March 1998. The IRCSL held a joint Muslim – Christian service that was attended by thousands of people at the national stadium in Freetown in thanksgiving to God for the restoration of the SLPP government.

After the 6 January 1999 “Day of Infamy”, when the joint forces of the disbanded Sierra Leone Army and the RUF rebels entered Freetown and reined unfathomable atrocities on the city’s people, once things eventually calmed down, the IRCSL called a consultative meeting that was attended by hundreds of leaders and dignitaries to seek a mandate to pursue peace mediation between the rebels and the government. The meeting unanimously mandated leaders of the IRCSL to pursue peace between the rebels and the government. The IRCSL succeeded not only in bringing together the head of state, rebel leaders, and all those who had a part in the conflict, but was able to persuade the warring factions to agree to talk and find a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Seeing the willingness of the warring factions to pursue peace, the Economic Organisation of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU), the Commonwealth, and the United Nations (UN) agreed to facilitate peace talks in Lome, Togo. These international facilitating groups and the sides in the conflict granted the IRCSL “Track One” status in peace negotiations (Khanu 2001, 59). The IRCSL proceeded to formulate guidelines based on generally accepted moral principles and the relevant rules of law. The Lome peace Accord was signed on 7 July 1999.

In January 2000, the IRCSL came up with a working proposal for the reconstruction and renewal in Sierra Leone to be implemented by Muslims and Christians. The proposal covered six areas in which the council intended to participate in the process of reconstruction and renewal:

- Disarmament and demobilisation of the estimated forty-five thousand ex-combatants.
- Unearthing and investigating human rights abuses during the war.
- Addressing the democratisation and special needs of ex-rebels.
- Integration, rehabilitation, and healing of ex-child soldiers

- The provision of strategic human assistance for ex-soldiers in terms of skill training and reintegration into society.
- National campaign for confession, forgiveness, reconciliation and renewal.

IRCSL has fully participated in these projects, and the national programme coordinator is proud to report that the council has successfully completed its assignment.

The IRCSL was a driving force in implementing the peace accord signed in November 1996 by President Ahmed Tejan-Kabba and Foday Sankoh. In a statement issued on 1st April 1997, the Council issued a “Statement of Shared Morals”, and it was addressed to all believers of religious communities, to all citizens of Sierra Leone and to His Excellency Alhaji Dr. A.T. Kabbah, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone. This acknowledges the enormous suffering the people of Sierra Leone have gone through and commended the two parties for signing the peace accord. The statement went on “Our task now is to establish a durable peace based on truth, justice and common living, and to collaborate with all people of good will in the healing tasks of reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation for Sierra Leone”. In spite of the religious differences among the different religious communities, all of them however, “recognises that human dignity and human value is a gift of God; each in its own way recognises the fundamental rights of each person. Violence against each person or the violation of their basic rights is breaking God’s law”. The Council therefore, in mutual respect of the recognition of all religious differences, condemns all violence against innocent persons and any form of abuse or violation of fundamental human rights. Specifically, they condemned “Acts of hatred based on political, ethnic or religious differences and expressed special concern at the burning of houses and property, and the destruction of religious buildings; the obstruction of the free right of return; any acts of revenge and the abuse of any media by any agency or entity with the aim of spreading hatred”.

On May 30, 1997, the IRCSL met at the CCSL compound to discuss the May 25 coup. The meeting was convened with a view to seeing what could be done to persuade the military junta to hand over power to the democratically elected government, prevent the situation from getting worse in the country and stop ECOMOG forces from implementing a military intervention.

Opinions expressed at the meeting indicated that the military junta should be persuaded to hand over power to President Kabba within the shortest possible time. There was also indication that everyone deplored the military intervention, as that would result in a further loss of souls. It was also agreed that: a statement should be made to the public about the concern of the Council; an appointment is made to talk to the leader of the military junta; to convince him to hand over power and to call for the observance of a three day of fasting and prayer to touch the hearts of those who were fighting.

On June 1, 1997, the IRCSL put out a statement condemning the coup and urged the junta chairman, Johnny Paul Koroma to hand over power to President Tejan Kabba. The statement was read the following Sunday at services but not over the National radio as all radio announcement had to be censored by the junta's minister of information and broadcasting. Newspapers did not also carry the statement because soldiers barricaded most of their offices.

A second statement was put out by the IRCSL on behalf of all peace loving Sierra Leoneans. This time they expressed the following concerns that since the May 25 coup:

1. The security situation in the country has deteriorated considerably.
2. There has been acute shortage of food, fuel and other basic necessities in the country;
3. This Council has made several attempts to meet with the Chairman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) but he has so far been unavailable.
4. The country has been in a state of anarchy for nearly three weeks.

In the light of the above, the IRCSL:

1. Reiterates its earlier statement denouncing the military coup of 25th May, 1997, calling for the restoration of power to the democratically elected government.
2. Urges the AFRC to recognise the current undue suffering of the people;
3. Continues to offer its services in the negotiation process for a peaceful and just solution to the present impasse and
4. Reiterates its call on the international community to continue its effort in searching for appropriate ways of solving the problem urgently.

This statement was also read the following Sunday in services; copies were sent to the United Nations in New York, and countries, which had diplomatic ties with Sierra Leone.

9:8. Johnny Paul Koroma and the May 25 Coup

In spite of the statements of appeal by the IRCSL, the chairman of the AFRC did not hand over power to the democratically elected government, but used religion as a means of reinforcing his position. He claimed that he was a born-again Christian, he visited born-again churches frequently, he held thanksgiving services to mark all types of events, he also wielded the support of a handful of churches and in August 1997 declared Sierra Leone a “Christian Nation”.³¹⁸

The chairman of the junta claims to be a born-again Christian after renouncing his membership in a spiritual church, the United Church of Salvation for over a decade. The chairman gave a testimony to this effect during a thanksgiving service he attended at Jesus is Lord Ministry. In his testimony, he confessed how he used to burn candles and incense every day and also go to the beach barefooted to “struggle”. These two activities are typical of spiritual churches in Freetown. He confessed that he has found out that the spiritual churches are demonic and decided to relinquish his membership. Since he became a born-again Christian, he has found a lot of improvement in his life and sincerely believes that God destined him to be the present ruler of Sierra Leone. He further elaborated on the significance of his name, Johnny Paul that he shares with the present Pope, Pope John Paul, and an indication that he too is a religious person. Since he assumed office as chairman in May 1997, until he was kicked out of power in February 1998, Koroma attended different born-again churches at least once a month. Among the churches he attended were: Jesus is Lord Ministry; Bethel Temple; Evangelical Church, Murray Town and a few of the Assemblies of God Limba Church found in Freetown. These churches were nicknamed “junta churches”. Other churches supporting the junta were Sanctuary Praise Church and the United Church of Salvation. Although the chairman did not attend these churches, the leader and some of the church members paid him regular visits to pray for him.

On June 8, 1997, the AFRC held their first religious activity, a prayer service for “peace, forgiveness, reconciliation and thanksgiving.” This service was held at the National Stadium at Brookfields. The chairman of the AFRC, Johnny Paul Koroma did not attend but the secretary-general represented him. The service was poorly attended and the congregation was made up mainly members of the armed forces and members

³¹⁸ Cf. Paul Gifford’s, *African Christianity Its Public Role*, pp.197-205.

of the Limba ethnic group, the same ethnic group to which the Chairman of the junta belongs. The total number of worshippers was approximately 3000. Most Sierra Leoneans did not attend for two main reasons. Firstly, they were not in favour of the military government so most of them had gone out of the country. Secondly, the atmosphere in the country was tensed, as there was continuous shooting by the rebel soldiers all over Freetown; so a lot of people did not want to risk losing their lives. The service was however broadcast on national radio.

The band of the Sierra Leone Military Forces was in attendance and the chaplain of the military forces gave the sermon. His text was from Psalm 75:6-7, “No-one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt a man. But it is God who judges: He brings one down, he exalts another.” He deliberated on the point that that one cannot be a leader until God approves and God has approved the chairman’s appointment. In this sermon, he appealed to the public to give the chairman a chance to rule. He continued “we are just fourteen days in power and it is a short time to determine whether we would make a good government, I want to assure you all on behalf of the chairman of the AFRC, that he is determined to cure all the evil practices in the country, wipe out corruption and give all Sierra Leoneans a way to decent living.” He concluded his sermon by pleading with the nation “to pray for the chairman and his team for wisdom and understanding to steer the ship of state.”

A statement of appeal followed the sermon from the secretary-general, Alieu Kamara to the international community on behalf of the chairman. The statement read “it now only remains for me to appeal to the international community to hear the cry and concern of the nation against the imminent threat of invasion of our country, which will no doubt bring more destruction of life and property to our historic city.” The statement assured the international community that “the alliance between the military and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) had restored peace to the country and that it was now safe to travel anywhere in the interior.”

Two weeks after their first prayer and thanksgiving service, the AFRC held another service at their military headquarters at Wilkinson Road in Freetown. This service was broadcast on both national radio and national television. There were no newspaper reports on any of the activities of the AFRC. This was due to the fact that some of the presses had been burnt down, looted or damaged. Furthermore most of the journalists

had fled the country, as they were targets for the “junta boys”. They were sought after so that they could support the junta and write positive things about them.

The service was attended by the chairman and members of the Supreme Council (made up of military officers responsible for the different ministerial portfolios), a few businessmen, some heads of President Kabba’s government, and an estimated crowd of 1000. The service was again led by the Military Chaplain and assisted by Rev. David Bangura. None of the heads of the different denominations did attend, although they were invited.

In his sermon, the Military Chaplain told the congregation that Rev. Bangura, in his prayers spoke of the impending military intervention by ECOMOG and “for God to confuse them and foil their plans”; and the lasting peace which the AFRC had brought by bringing the rebels from the *bush* (the interior); praying for the preservation of peace, promotion of happiness for the Nation and economic blessings.

9:9. Sierra Leone declared a “Christian Nation”

On 28 August 1997, only three months after the military overthrew the democratically elected government of President Ahmad Tejan-Kabba, in a nation-wide broadcast on the national radio, Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS), Johnny Paul Koroma, Chairman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), announced that he had handed over Sierra Leone to the Lord Jesus Christ.³¹⁹ He noted that “the AFRC/RUF alliance is deeply embroiled in deep spiritual darkness and it was necessary to turn a new leaf by asking the Lord Jesus for forgiveness.” He confessed that the sins of murder, rape, killing, arson, backbiting, and many other evil activities, were responsible for the state of affairs in our country. He quoted 2 Chronicles 7:14: “If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and forgive their sins and will heal their land.” On behalf of the people of Sierra Leone, he was repenting and asking for forgiveness and mercy for all the corrupt and evil practices they have committed. He concluded the broadcast by declaring that he and all Sierra Leoneans have now entered a covenant with God and was submitting the Government and the entire nation of Sierra Leone to God. He said that a one week of prayer and fasting will soon be declared to

³¹⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 197-205

allow members of religious sects and organisations to participate by letting the doors of their churches, temples, mosques and other prayer venues open to the public for observance of the special week of devotion to God.

Even before the junta chairman declared the one week of prayer and fasting, some religious groups had already started to pray and fast. One commentator said that the chairman's declaring the Nation as a "Christian Nation" was not a genuine move by the chairman because it was said that he had his *moriman* in whom he believed. This commentator went on to say that if the chairman's intentions were not genuine "Governor Clarkson's Prayer" will affect him.³²⁰ Sierra Leoneans believe that this prayer is a powerful and genuine one which could harm anyone with wicked intentions for the country. A lot of copies were sold out all over Freetown, (see Appendix III for a copy) so that people could use it to pray for the junta to hand over power to the democratic leader.

9:10. Pro junta churches

In spite of the fact that an inter-religious body was formed to assist in bringing peace to Sierra Leone and played a great part in doing this during the junta regime, there were some churches that were assisting the junta to remain in power. These churches were often referred to as "junta churches". Among these churches were Jesus is Lord Ministry, Bethel Temple, Deeper Life Bible Church, United Church of Salvation and Sanctuary Praise Church. These churches kept all night vigil in their churches and even in some of the members' houses to get the junta stay in power.

The most culpable of the "junta churches" was Jesus is Lord Ministry. The founder of this church is a Limba, the same ethnic group to which the chairman belongs. The chairman of the AFRC attended this church five times during his nine months in power. Two of these occasions were thanksgiving services to celebrate the Conakry Peace Accord and the junta's eighth months in office.

The church also organised a chain prayer session round the clock since the junta took over. However when this was becoming more noticeable and the FM 98.1 radio

³²⁰ Governor Clarkson was a committed abolitionist, a promoter of the Sierra Leone colony and first Governor-General of Sierra Leone after the abolition of slave trade.

station³²¹ reported this, they changed the venue for these prayer sessions to a member's house who is a Limba. They however continued to hold prayer sessions among those who were residing in the church, and they included the elders, some members and the pastor-in-charge. One interesting incident happened at the church when I went to conduct my research that is worth mentioning to establish the fact that this church was truly pro-junta. On 24 August 1997, I was at the compound of the church when the ECOMOG jet fighter hovered around the church, as soon as one of the elders, Mrs. Khama saw it, she shouted for everybody in the church to come out, which they did. Immediately they all went into a prayer session, praying for the jet to crash.

The church also organised monthly thanksgiving services for the junta chairman and members of his cabinet who were all Limba as well. In one of these sessions, the preacher devoted his entire sermon to the junta regime. He explained that the chairman was destined by God to rule Sierra Leone. Quoting Ex. 14:14 "By strength of hand, the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage" he explained to the congregation that the chairman had been appointed by God to deliver Sierra Leone from the brink of collapse. God has brought him to replace the corrupt politicians who allowed Sierra Leoneans to suffer in spite of all the riches the country possesses in gold, diamond, bauxite and fertile land for agriculture. He assured the chairman that he was another Moses and should not fear, but stand still and see the salvation of God. He pleaded with the congregation to be steadfast in their prayers for the chairman and his team to steer the ship of State in a godly manner, since through the chairman's wisdom and fear of God, he has handed over the State to God. The church's effort was not in vain as the chairman compensated them with two Mercedes Benz cars. One of these cars was given to the pastor, Rev. David Bangura for his personal use and the other was used as a utility car by the church.

The next of the pro junta churches was Sanctuary Praise Church whose leader was Pastor Victor Ajisafe, a Nigerian. Ajisafe was charged to court for building his church on State land during the Kabba regime. He had appeared in court several times and was

³²¹ This station was also known as "radio democracy", because it broadcasts all the sinister activities of churches and groups who were pro-junta. This radio was opened a few days after the junta took over. The location of this station was not disclosed to the public and the junta made several attempts to bomb it although they did not know the actual location. They believed it was at the only international airport at Lungi and attempted to burn it, but were unable to do so because it was heavily guarded by ECOMOG troops. This attempt resulted in the loss of lives of over 500 rebel soldiers of the RUF.

awaiting the verdict. He also had another case in court for which he was charged for public nuisance. The neighbours at Brookfields where his church was located complained to the police that the church's activities were affecting their peace and quietness. When the junta took over, Ajisafe saw it as a good opportunity to support them with the hope that the court cases he had would be thrown out of the court. He conducted all-night vigils with only a handful of his church members as most of them had left the church because they did not want to be identified with the junta.

Pastor Ajisafe did not hide his bitter feelings for the Kabba government. During one of his sermons at his church, he told his congregation that as long as he was a true Christian the ECOMOG will not succeed in their military intervention to bring Kabba back to power. If that were to happen, he would use his Bible as a toilet tissue. His statement created a lot of tongue wagging among Christians in Freetown and he had to go into hiding. When democratic rule was restored in February 1998, Ajisafe was charged with treason and was awaiting his trial.

One pastor in Kissy, Primate Bundu, founder of United Church of Salvation was another confidante of the junta chairman. Primate Bundu was issued with a diplomatic passport, which he was supposed to use to travel abroad to smuggle diamonds out of the country for the junta chairman.³²² During this period there was a ban on all diplomatic passport holders so Primate Bundu was unable to use this passport. He however used his ordinary passport to smuggle out the diamonds, which he sold for the junta chairman and kept the money abroad for him.

9:11. Sierra Leone's first Secretary of State for Religious Affairs

In September 1997, the chairman of the AFRC appointed Rev. David Bangura as Secretary of State for Religious Affairs. Rev Bangura was the Assistant Pastor of Jesus is Lord Ministry but was suspended from his post by Sister Dumbuya, the founder of the church. His suspension came about because the church was termed as a "junta" church and the founder wanted to dissociate herself from the junta regime although she too had fled to the United Kingdom. Much difference was not made to the suspension as a large number of supporters of the junta were members of the church.

³²² "Church Pastor in Diamond Scandal", For Di People, 4 December 1997; "Pastor and Junta 'Boss' in Diamond Scandal", The Diplomat, 4 December 1997.

Rev. Bangura’s appointment was condemned by the majority of Christians in Sierra Leone who felt that there was no need for this as the country had never experienced any inter- religious conflicts or religious intolerance like in some countries in the sub region.³²³ Given the rampant corruption, which dominated past governments, these Christians viewed this appointment as an avenue for the chairman and the Secretary of State to defraud the country and continue the corruption and financial malpractice of the former regimes. The background to this appointment was quite easy to deduce since the chairman and his wife are Limba and were members of Jesus is Lord Ministry.

One newspaper, *The Democrat*, gave a breakdown of the department’s estimated budget for one year. The total amount, which they presented to the Establishment’s secretary, was fifty eight million, four hundred and fifty-six thousand, five hundred Leones (approximately £.11,700.00). The newspaper termed the budget below as a “shopping list”.

Travelling (local)	Le. 10,000,000.00
Office and general expenses	Le. 8,000,000.00
Professional fees/honoraria	Le. 6,000,000.00
Transport/fuel/oil	Le. 10 456,500.00
Electricity and water charges	Le. 2,000,000.00
Communications (telephones etc.	Le. 3,000,000.00
Printing, Publicity, Advertising	Le. 3,000,000.00
Building (repairs and maintenance)	Le. 5,000,000.00
Receptions/Entertainment	Le. 5,000,000.00
Miscellaneous	Le. 6,000,000.00
Total	Le . 58,456,000.00 ³²⁴

The money was allocated and paid into the ministry’s account, but was never utilised for any of the above items. It was later found out that the money was shared between the junta leader and Rev. Bangura.³²⁵ When democracy was returned all those who worked as secretaries of state, including Rev. Bangura were charged for treason and were awaiting trial.

³²³ For example in Nigeria where there has been several instances of clashes between Muslims and Christians.

³²⁴ The Diplomat 1 December 1997, captioned “Shopping List *comot nar doe*” (has been exposed).

³²⁵ For Di People, 1 December 1997, captioned “Jesus is Lord Ministry’s Pastor *nar tiffman* (is a thief). There was also a discussion on “Radio Democracy” on “How to retrieve the money” on 8 December 1997.

Rev. Bangura was not the only minister of religion who was involved in corruption and malpractice during the junta regime. The chaplain of the Armed Forces, Rev. Josiah Pratt was also involved in corruption as one of the newspapers in its weekly edition had the caption “Rev. *tiff bulgar*” (a minister of religion stole bulgur wheat).³²⁶ Rev. Pratt was not only involved in stealing bulgur wheat which was to be distributed among displaced people he was also involved in stealing a welding machine belonging to the Armed Forces of the Sierra Leone Government.

9:12. Disruption of religious activities

During the invasion of Freetown by rebels prayer and fasting sessions were the order of the day. A lot of churches organised these sessions either in the churches or in a member’s house.

The disruption of religious activities by the State or any other body was a rare phenomenon in the history of Sierra Leone. There has never been any cause for Sunday services to be cancelled but on the day of Sierra Leone’s sixth coup (May 25, 1997) all the different types of churches had to cancel their services because the AFRC took over the country in a bloody coup and the whole country was in chaos. Holy Communion service usually took place at 7.30 a.m in the Methodist and Anglican churches and worshippers who had not heard about the coup were on their way but had to return home because all the churches were closed.

On Sunday, 17 August 1997, the IRCSL had to cancel a prayer meeting to pray for the country. The meeting was to have taken place at the National Stadium at 4.00 p.m. As Sierra Leone was under a state of emergency, those who wanted to hold public meetings had to first obtain permission from the Inspector General of Police. Permission was obviously not granted to the IRCSL. They were not told why they were refused permission. The most likely reason for this would be that the AFRC understood the motive for holding the meeting, which was to condemn them and urge the nation not to support the military government. This meeting was however held on the same day for 30 minutes at the CCSL hall at Brookfields and about 250 people attended it. The “junta boys”(rebel soldiers) were informed about the meeting but by the time they to the venue the service had ended and the main entrance to the CCSL office was closed.

³²⁶ “Rev. *Tiff* (stole) *Bulgar*”, *For Di Pipul*, 18 August 1997, p.1.

The EFSL were also a victim of the “junta boys”. On September 7, 1997, they organised a prayer session which was to be held at the National Stadium also. Permission was also not granted to them. However a handful of members decided to do all-night prayer session in their office at Circular Road in Freetown on the same day. The “junta boys” were informed about this and surrounded the area with armed soldiers who not only fired shots but also barricaded the entrance to the office with their military vehicles.

On March 15, 1998, five days after President Kabba returned to Sierra Leone from Guinea where he spent nine months in exile, the IRCSL held a service of Praise and Thanksgiving. This service was held at the National Stadium at Brookfields. The service was in two parts, the first half was conducted by Muslims led by Alhaji Osman Sesay, and the second half by Christians led by the Bishop of the Anglican Diocese, Bishop Olotu Lynch. The service was attended by President Kabba, the Cabinet, the Chief Justice and Judges of the Appeal and High Courts. The British High Commissioner was the only diplomat who attended the service, as the other diplomats had still not returned to the country. The British diplomat played an important role in the return to democratic rule in Sierra Leone. The International community was represented by representatives from ECOWAS, ECOMOG, UN, UNHCR and WFP. Representatives from indigenous organisations such as the Teachers’ Union, the Trade Union, Association of Journalists and the Labour Congress also attended the service. According to the bi-weekly newspaper, *For Di People* 50 percent of the Freetown population comprising Christians and Muslims also attended the service.³²⁷ The estimated population of Freetown is 400,000, but half of them had still not returned home since they sought refuge in other countries.

The first part of the service was conducted in Arabic and Krio by the Muslims and lasted for 45 minutes. Dr. Idris Alami, a Muslim scholar, delivered the message in Krio. He spoke on the theme “Reconciliation”. Alami urged Sierra Leoneans to forgive, forget and press forward. He warned Sierra Leoneans who had benefited from the nine months of terror and instability to repent and be prepared to work in the interest of country. After the message, Imam Bashir prayed for peace in the entire country and

³²⁷ “President Kabba attends Thanksgiving Service”, *For Di People*, 18 March 1998.

for the whole of Africa whilst Alhaji Osman Sesay prayed for national development and prosperity.

The second part of the service, the Christian service, started with congregational singing mostly choruses in Krio thanking and praising God for saving the Nation. Among the choruses sung in Krio were *tell am tenki*, (we are saying thank you) *we gladi way Jesus save we* (we are happy Jesus saved us), *if noto bin Jesus usai we go dey?* (if it was not for Jesus, where would we have been?) and *so so wondar, Jesus day do* (Jesus is just doing wonderful things for us). These four choruses are the most popular and sung on almost all occasions in born-again and Pentecostal churches. After these choruses the following set of prayers were offered: for Sierra Leone; the displaced; for all those who died during the senseless war resulting from bullet shots, fire, fragments, gun shots and drowning³²⁸ and for those unclassified but suffered during this period.

Rev. Leslie Shyllon, Rev. Alvaline Vincent, Rev. Moses Khanu and Rev. Christian Peacock offered these prayers. These prayers were followed by the sermon, which was given by Bishop Olotu Lynch. He based his sermon on the theme of “justice”. He said that God is a just judge and has brought the legitimate ruler back to his seat. He pleaded with the President and all those concerned to bring to justice all those who were responsible for bringing misery, hunger, and poverty to well meaning Sierra Leoneans. He called on the government to tighten security so that there would be no more room for another coup. During the course of the sermon, the Bishop praised the ECOMOG for returning the country to democratic rule. He concluded his sermon by praying for wisdom and understanding for the President and his Cabinet so that they could handle the affairs of State in the best interest of the Nation. The service ended with an anthem, the Hallelujah Chorus sung by an amalgamated choir comprising the choristers of different born-again, Pentecostal and mainline churches.

Soon after the May 25 coup, FM 99.8-radio station (also known as “radio democracy”) broadcast a weekly programme, *weytin di Bibul say* (what does the Bible say). This programme was set out to specifically expound the Bible on themes relating to topics concerning the war. Among the topics discussed were reconciliation; forgiveness; truth;

³²⁸ During the war a lot of people tried to escape by boats to Guinea, at least four boats capsized in which the majority of people on board these boats drowned.

peace; leadership; love; mercy and justice. The regular panellists on this programme were Rev. Martin Dixon, Rev. Raymond Attawia, and Sia Domingo, a radio broadcaster and born-again Christian.

This chapter has chronicled the major events of Sierra Leone under military rule, and the Church's response to such activity. There were different responses to the years of military rule in Sierra Leone. On the whole the Church was balanced and united in its response, even forming an alliance with Muslim groups in calling for restraint, reconciliation and understanding. The documents that were published were well thought out and as neutral, as was possible. However, there were some groups who blatantly sided with the regime, even when that regime was physically oppressing people. This raises the question of how Christian leaders should interpret the Bible vis-à-vis political issues and how personal advantage could cloud our judgement on issues to do with the general public. It also raises the problems of tribal alliances taking precedence over the national good.

CHAPTER 10

Conclusion

The evidence offered in this thesis strongly supports the underlying proposal that the landscape of the Church and other religious institutions is radically different from what it was 40 years ago and has led to the transformation of Freetown Christianity. The Church in Freetown is no longer a pale imitation of Western Christianity. In terms of liturgy, music and patterns of leadership the Church in Freetown (and for that matter in Sierra Leone as a whole) could well and truly be seen to be indigenous. This is mainly due to the founding of a lot of churches, especially some Classical Pentecostal and the Neo-Pentecostal ones started by Sierra Leoneans, who have become disillusioned with the “mainline churches” brought to Sierra Leone from Britain and USA in particular. The effect of these “home-grown” Churches has in turn, been felt in the mainline denominations, especially in terms of the relaxation of the liturgy. The established Churches (Anglican, Baptist, Methodist and Roman Catholic) still follow a mainly written liturgy, similar to what obtains in Britain and the USA, but there has been an attempt to relax worship patterns and some spontaneity is now allowed and even encouraged.

The Church in Freetown is no longer a Krio phenomenon. Whilst there are certain ethnic groups which, for historical reasons, are still closely connected with Islam (e.g. Fullah, Madingo, Susu and Yalunka) it is no longer anathema for people of these ethnic groups and many others to become converted to Christianity. In the mainline churches, the leadership is no longer mainly a Krio affair. There are more non-Krio pastors in the Anglican and Methodist denominations than there were forty years ago. In fact, Rev. Francis Nabieu, a non-Krio, has been the Chairman of the Methodist Conference since 1999 much to the dissatisfaction of some Krio pastors. Rev. Nabieu’s appointment gave rise to one top Krio member of the Clergy to relinquish his membership in the Methodist denomination.

However, the greater impact of non-Krio in the church life in Freetown is to be seen in the Neo-Pentecostal churches. This may be an indirect result of urbanisation and the drift of many people from the provinces to Freetown, the

metropolis, where job prospects and educational opportunities are (supposedly) better than elsewhere. In addition, the war forced many people to seek refuge in the relative safety of Freetown. Whatever the reason for the process of urbanisation, an important consequence of this is that there has been an increase in inter-tribal marriage among Christians.

Even in mainline churches, non-Krio believers are becoming more and more involved in leadership circles. The most obvious differences between church and society in Freetown vis-à-vis female leadership is that there are more female preachers and teachers than there were 40 years ago. In addition, the leaders who claim to have visions regarding their apostleship are more readily accepted whereas 40 years ago these same women would probably have their sanity questioned. The question this leads to is whether these visions claimed by these women reflect the imprint of African traditional religion or whether it is a consequence of better educational standards among women.

The character of the women involved in the higher echelons of church leadership is a bit varied. A few are illiterate or semi-literate, for example Pastor Buwanie. The majority have secondary school education like Sister Julie Thomas of Christ for all Ministries; and there are a handful with university degrees like Pastor Vandi of the New Life for Christ Ministry. This suggests that while education can play a part in women's ministry the important factor is a person's personal and not educational life. One's individual circumstances or personal crises may be a trigger for a woman to start a ministry which sometimes results in founding her own ministry or church.

With reference to women's ministry, there are some marked differences between mainline churches and the newer born-again churches. Whilst there are many women who are leaders, (some have actually founded their own churches) there is still reluctance in the mainline churches for women to become bishops. The Anglican and Methodist denominations already have women bishops in places like USA and Canada, although this has become a divisive issue. There are two main reasons for objections to female bishops. First, Scripture does not seem to permit this and second there is the vexed question of lesbians in the ministry.

Nevertheless, equality of gender in leadership seems to be accepted more readily in the newer churches than in the mainline churches.

The findings of this dissertation have helped us to know something of the changes, which have affected the Church in Freetown, and the social and other factors, which have led to such changes. But, in my opinion, there are two important topics which were not covered by our investigation but which are related to it and which would benefit from further scholarly investigation.

First, the relationship between Christians and Muslims in post-war Sierra Leone should be re-examined. Sierra Leone has always prided itself in freedom of religious expression and affiliation. Indeed, some will argue that it was a blessing in disguise that the war was triggered by bad government and socio-political issues such as the unequal distribution of wealth rather than with religious sectarianism. Sierra Leone has never had the type of religious conflict that has affected some parts of Nigeria, for example. Nevertheless, it can be said that as a result of the war, and because some Christian groups used the opportunity to do intensive evangelism, many Muslims in Sierra Leone have converted to Christianity (see Chapters 8 and 9). One cannot deny that the conversion to Christianity from a Muslim or traditional African religious background never happened before but it was minimal. Previously, Muslim children and children from African traditional religious backgrounds who were adopted by Christian families often got baptised. Alternatively, conversion from Christian to Muslim was connected with marriage (Christian woman marries into Muslim family). Nowadays, however, conversion is a deliberate personal act, usually because of attending one of the many evangelistic services, which have become part of the religious landscape of Freetown. It may take a new census to determine how many Muslims in Sierra Leone have converted to Christianity over the last twenty years but the number of pastors and Church leaders with traditionally Muslim family names has definitely increased

Secondly, the personal and corporate trauma which has affected Sierra Leone as a result of the civil war is a big challenge to the Church as a whole. But the

Church's ministry to the victims and its message for the country can be summarised under the following:

The amputees and all those physically and psychologically scarred as a result of the military conflict need special pastoral attention. The ultimate aim does not need to be conversion to Christianity (if they are Muslims or adherents of traditional tribal religions) but it has been shown that genuine and practical love can reduce, if not totally eradicate, the pain and suffering which these people are going through.

A lot has been done to rehabilitate the thousands of child soldiers who were forced to participate in horrible crimes and atrocities, usually under the influence of hard drugs. The Church has, and should have, a part to play in re-shaping the lives of those child combatants, some of whom are now adults and many of whom still suffer nightmares as a result of the acts they committed and/or were forced to witness. In addition, it has always been a biblical injunction to take care of widows and orphans (cf. Ps.146:4), who are often victims of war.

The Church in Sierra Leone also has some serious thinking to do about its overall role in society and its attitude to socio-political issues. To their credit the Sierra Leone Church leadership did not hide from political issues when it came to the crunch (see, for example, Chapter 9) but as part of the inquest into the main reasons for the civil war and the brutality that was its hallmark, the Church needs to re-examine its message on such issues as the distribution of wealth and the Church's relationship with those in power. Perhaps the Church's most important task is to lead the way in the reconciliation process (as in post-Apartheid South Africa) and contribute to the spiritual aspects of re-building the country. Whilst NGOs and overseas aid organisations have an important role to play in the country's reconstruction, (particularly in providing finance) the Church has the important challenge of providing the moral and theological framework for this rebuilding process. These are important tasks for the Church in Sierra Leone and they would need to be tackled.

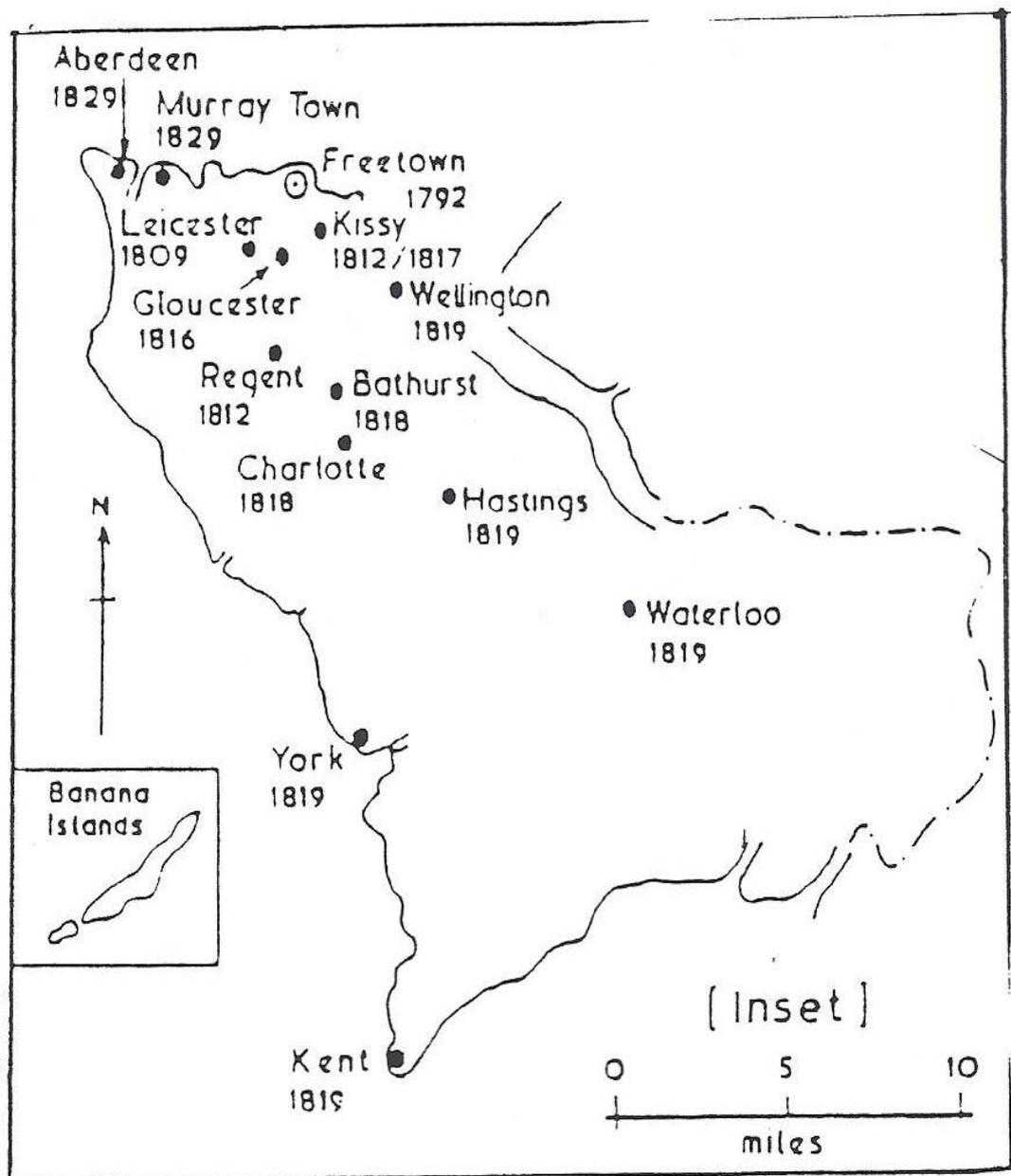


Fig. 1: GREATER FREETOWN

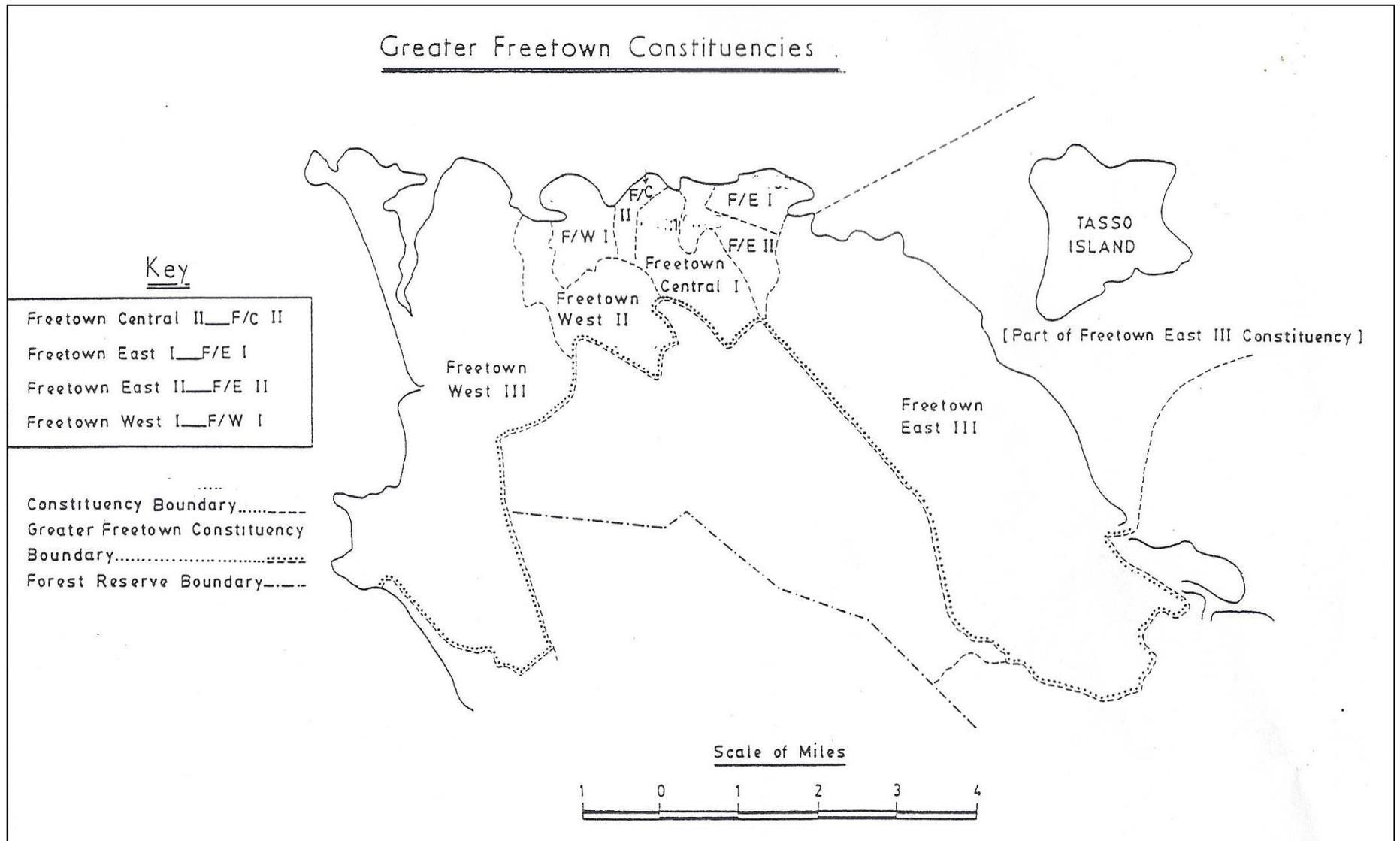


Fig. 11

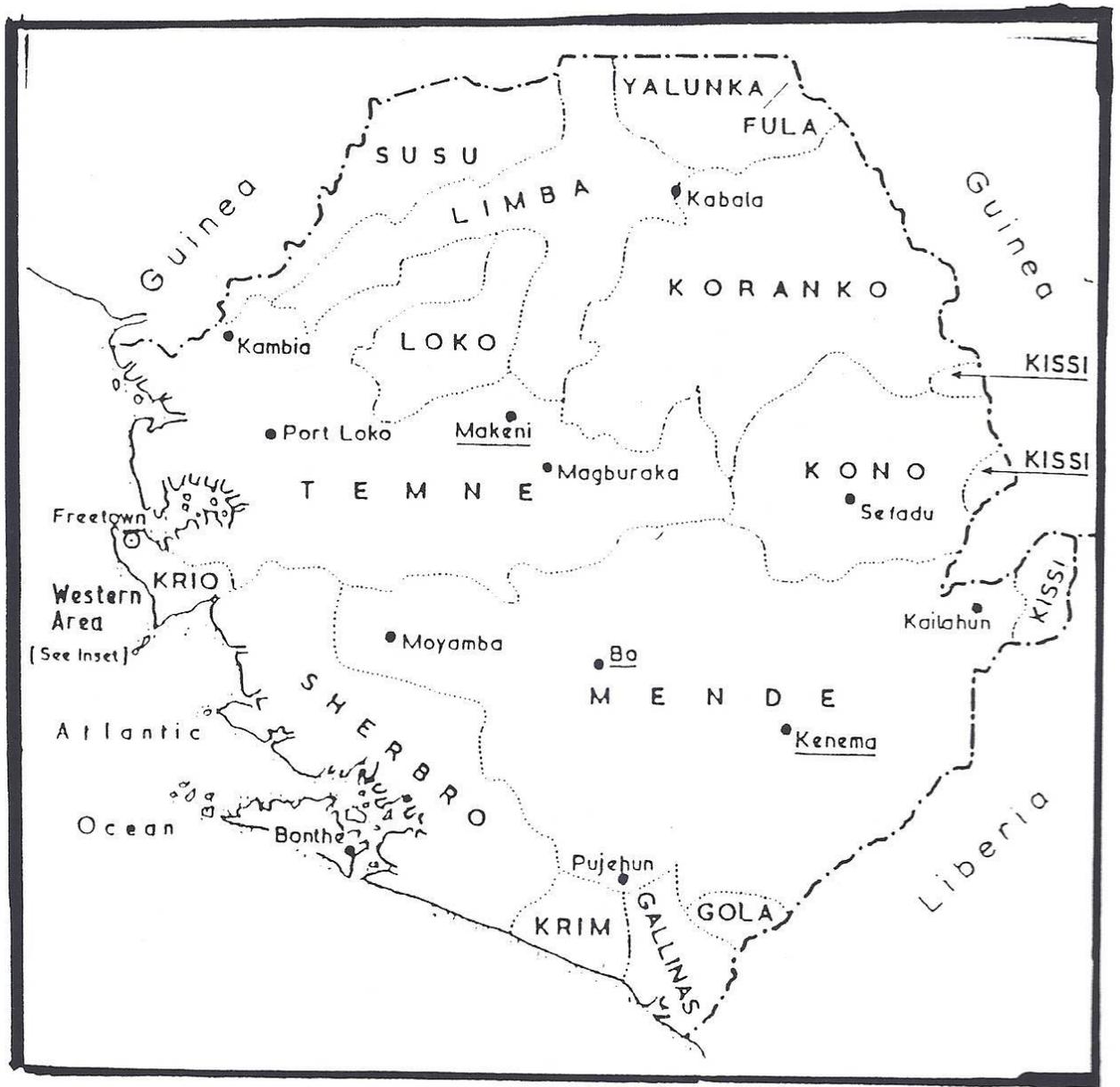


Fig. 111 : The ETHNIC GROUPS

Appendix 1

Questionnaire for Churches/Ministries/Para-church Organization.

1. Name of Church/Ministry/Organization
2. Full address of Church /Ministry /Organization
.....
.....
3. Classification of Church/Ministry:- (a). Classical Pentecostal (b). Neo-Pentecostal
(c). Mission. (d). Other (Specify).
.....
4. When was the Church founded?
7. Name(s) of founder or pioneers.....
8. Origin of Church: (a). Breakaway from parent church (b). Split from within church
(c). Out-station of an existing Church (d). Headquarter (e). Other (state)
9. No. of branches in Freetown S/Leone Abroad
10. Where do you hold your Church services?
(a). Owned Church Building (b). Community Centre (c). Hotel (d). Tent
(e). Dwelling House (f). School Chapel (g). School room (h). Any other, please specify
.....
11. Weekly Programmes:-
No. of Sunday service(s) Time(s)
- Monday Time(s).....
- Tuesday Time(s).....
- Wednesday Times(s)
- Thursday Time(s).....
- Friday Time(s).....
- Saturday Time(s).....
12. How many ordained Pastors are in charge of your Church?
(a). Full Time (b). Part Time
- 13.Membership: No. of registered Members
- 14.Attendance: Average number in a normal service
- 15.Language: In what language is your services conducted ? Tick where appropriate.
(a). English (b). English interpreted to (c). Krio
(d). Other(state).....

16. Describe the type of Worship service in your Church/Ministry.

.....
.....
.....

17. What form of Baptism do you practice?

(a). Immersion (b). Infant Baptism

18. Does your Church use drums? Yes. No.

Dancing in the services? Yes. No.

Heal the sick? Yes. No.

Ropes/Water/staff or rods? Yes. No.

Cast out demons Yes. No.

Speaking in tongues? Yes. No.

19. Does the Church practice any of the following?

(a). Sacrifices? Yes. No.

If yes, to whom? God. Ancestor. Both.

(b). Reverence of the ancestors Yes. No.

(c). Polygamy? Yes. No.

(d). Visioning? Yes. No.

20. What type of Ministry is your Church involved in? Tick where appropriate.

(a). Door to door witnessing. (b). Open air Evangelism (c). Crusades

(d). Hospital Ministry (e). Church Planting (f). Visitation

(g). others (state).....

21. Links with Local or International bodies

22. Do you have a Women's Association? Yes. No.

23. How is your church financially supported?

(a). Locally (b). Internationally (c). Others (specify)

.....

Appendix II

Questionnaire for Church Members

1. Name of Church.....
2. Name of Interviewee (optional).....
3. Address.....
4. Occupation.....
5. Age.....
6. Sex: Male..... Female
7. Ethnicity.....
8. Place of birth - Name of Town/Village:
9. Martial Status: - (a). Single (b). Married
(c). Divorced (d). Widow(er)
10. No. Of children:
11. Monthly Income: (a). Under 20,000 (b). 21.000 – 30.000
(c). 31.000 – 34.000 (d). 41.000 – 50.000.000
(e). 51.000.000 – 100.000 (f). 101.000 - 150.000
(g). Above 150.000
12. Educational Status:- (a). No schooling (b). Primary
(c). Secondary (d). Tertiary (e). University
13. When did you become a member of this Church?.....
14. Why did you become a member of this Church?.....
15. What Church did the following belong to:
(a). Your Father..... (b). Your Mother.....
16. Why do you prefer this Church to other Churches?.....
.....
17. What type of membership do you hold in this Church?
(a). Full member (c). Visiting member
(b). Associate member (d). Any other, specify.....
18. What was your religion affiliation?
(a). Christian (b). Muslim (c). Non-believer
19. Have you been baptized? Yes..... No.....
If the answer is yes, what type of Baptism?
(a). Immersion (b). Infant baptism
If the answer is no, Why?.....
20. Have you been baptized by the Holy Spirit?
(a). Yes..... (b). No.....
21. Have you ever spoken in tongues
(a). Yes..... (b). No.....
22. Do you do any of the following?
(a). Drink alcohol Yes. Why?..... No. Why?.....
(b). Smoke Yes. Why?..... No. Why?.....
(c) Attend Movies Yes. Why?..... No. Why?.....
- 23a. How many times in the week does your Church hold services?

23b. How many times in the week do you attend Services?

24. Do you hold any position in the Church?

Yes..... No.....

If yes, which position, and what are the functions that go with this position?

.....
.....

25. What Church activities are you regularly involved in?

.....
.....

Appendix III

Governor Clarkson's Prayer for Sierra Leone

O Lord, I beseech thee favourably to hear the prayer of him who wishes to be thy servant, and pardon him for presuming to address thee from this sacred place. O God, I know my own infinity and unworthiness, and I know thine abundant mercies to those who wish to be guided by thy will. Support me. O Lord, with thy heavenly grace, and to enable me to conduct myself through this earthly life that my actions may be consistent with the words I have uttered this day. Thou knowest that I am now about to depart from this place, and to leave the people whom it has pleased thee to entrust to my care. Guide them, O merciful God, in the paths of truth and let not a few wicked men among us draw down thy vengeance upon this Colony.

In graft into their hearts a proper sense of duty, and enable them through thy grace to conduct themselves as Christians, that they may not come to thy house without that pleasing emotion which every grateful man must feel when paying adoration to the Author of life. But I have a great reason to fear, O Lord, that many who frequent thy church do not approach thy presence as becomes them, and that they may partly be compared to the Scribes. Pharisees, and hypocrites. Pardon, O God, their infirmities, and as thou knowest their weakness from the manner in which they have formerly been treated, and the little opportunity they have had of knowing thy will and getting acquainted with the merits of thy Son, our saviour Jesus Christ, look down upon them with an eye of mercy and suffer them not to incur thy displeasure, after they have had an opportunity of being instructed in the ways of thy commandments.

Bless, O Lord, the inhabitants of this vast continent, and incline their hearts towards us that they may more readily listen to our advice and doctrines, and that we may conduct ourselves towards them as to convince them of the happiness we enjoy under thy almighty protection. Banish from this Colony, O Lord all heathenish superstition and let the inhabitants know that thou art the only true Lord in which we live and move and have our being. If these people who protest thy religion will not be assured of thy superior power, convince them. O God, of Thine anger for their profession without their practice, for thou knowest I brought them here in hopes of making them and their families happy, both in this world and to all eternity.

But I fear they may not be governed by my advice, and that they themselves and their children forever by their perverse and general behavior. I entreat thee not to let their evil example ruin the great cause in which we have embarked, but I would rather see that place in ashes and every wicked person destroyed, than that the chance we have now an opportunity of bringing to the light and knowledge of thy holy religion should, from the wickedness of a few individuals will continue in their accustomed darkness and barbarism. They know that I have universally talked of their apparent virtue the goodness, and have praised thy name for having permitted me to be the servant employed in so great and glorious a cause. If I have been deceived, I am sorry for it, and may thy will be done; but I implore thee to accept the sincerity of my intentions and my best endeavours to improve the talent committed to my case. Only pardon the intuition of my nature, and I will trust to thy mercy.

Should any person have a wicked thought in his heart or do anything knowledge to disturb the peace and comfort of our Colony, let him be rooted out O God, from off the face of the earth; but have mercy upon him hereafter.

Were I to utter all that my heart now indicates, no time would be sufficient for any praise and thanksgiving for all the mercies. Thou has vouchsafed to show me, but as thou art acquainted with every secret of my heart, accept my thoughts for thanks. I have no words left to express my gratitude and resignation to thy will. I entreat thee, O God, if nothing I can say will convince these people of thy power and goodness, make use of me in anyway thou pleasest, to make an atonement for their guilt. This is an awful and I fear too presumptuous, a request; yet if it should be thy will that I should lay down my life for the cause I have embarked in, assist me, O Lord with thy support, that I may resign it in such a manner as to convince these unbelieving people that thou art God indeed. May the heart of this Colony, O Lord, imbibe the spirit of meekness, gentleness, and truth; and may they henceforth live in unity and godly love, following as far as the weakness of their mortal natures will admit, that most excellent and faultless pattern which thou hast given us in thy Son our Saviors, Jesus Christ, to whom with thee and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, now and forever. Amen

APPENDIX IV

CHURCHES IN ZONE A

Name of Church	Location	Category
1. Aberdeen Christian Fellowship Cape Rd	Thomas' Compound	N.Pent.
2. Abundant Life Fellowship	Sierra Leone Grammar School, Murray Town	N.Pent.
3. Anchor of Hope Ministry	32 Sir Samuel Lewis Rd., Off Aberdeen Rd.	N.Pent.
4. Bethel World Outreach Ministries	Mallama, Lumley	N.Pent.
5. Balmer Memorial Methodist Church	Lumley Health Centre	Mainline.
6. Celestial Church of Christ	Gbendembu, Goderich	C.Pent.
7. Chambers WAM Church	Gbendembu, Goderich	Mainline
8. Charles Davies Memorial UMC	Regent Rd Lumley	Mainline
9. Christ Family Church	Murray Town Barracks Canteen	C.Pent.
10. Christ Healing Church	Lumley	C.Pent.
11. Christians in Action	Johnson St., Aberdeen	C.Pent.
12. Church of Christ	Aberdeen Village	Miss.
13. Church of Christ	No. 9 Area, Lumley	Miss.
14. Church of Pentecost (Murray Town Assembly)	Murray Town	C.Pent.
15. Church of Pentecost (Funkia Assembly)	7 Kumbar Lane, Goderich	C.Pent.
16. Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion	Freetown Rd., Lumley	Mainline
17. Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion	Goderich	Mainline
18. Dayspring Evangelical Church	Murray Town Barracks	N.Pent.
19. Deeper Life Bible Church	Lumley	C.Pent.
20. Deeper Life Bible Church	Murray Town	C.Pent.
21. Deeper Life Bible	Goderich	C.Pent.

Name of Church	Location	Category
Church		
22. End Time Church	9a Babadorie, Lumley	N.Pent.
23. Ebenezer Methodist Church	Highbroad St. Murray Town	Mainline
24. Emmanuel WAM Methodist Church	Juba	Mainline
25. Endtime Evangelical Ministries	179 New York Drive Mallama, Lumley	N.Pent.
26. Evangel AOG	Fraser St., Murray Town	C.Pent.
27. Faith Healing Bible Church	Beckley's Compound, Lumley	N.Pent.
28. Faith Healing Church	9 Access Rd., Lumley	C.Pent
29. Faith UMC Church	Regent Rd. , Lumley	Mainline
30. Flaming Bible Church	Byrne Lane, off Collegiate School Rd	N.Pent
31. Garden of Winners	34 Lower Pipe Line Wilkinson Rd	N.Pent.
32. Gathsemene Evangelical Ministries	Collegiate School Hall	N.Pent
33. Glory Gospel Ministry	9 Spur Rd., Wilberforce	N.Pent
34. Grace Bible Church	Person St., Aberdeen	N.Pent
35. Grace Evangelical Church	Military Barracks, Murray Town	N.Pent
36. Greater Evangelism World Crusade	Kelly Drive, Lumley	N.Pent.
37. Herald for Christ	Collegiate School Rd	N.Pent
38. Hephzibah Methodist Church	Byrne Lane, off Collegiate	Mainline
39. Holy Ghost Redemption	24 Regent Rd., Wilberforce	N.Pent.
40. Hope AOG	Decker Lane, Off Babadorie, Lumley	C.Pent.
41. House of Victory Fellowship	23 Gooding Drive, Lumley	N.Pent.
42. Jehovah's Witness	Wilkinson Rd	Miss.
43. Jesus Evangelistic Encounter Ministry	27 Babadorie, Lumley	N.Pent.
44. Jordan WAM Church	Macauley St., Murray Town	Mainline
45. Judea WAM Church	Wilberforce	Mainline
46. Life of Christ Pentecostal Ministries	Murray Town	N.Pent.
47. Lokotie Baptist Fellowship	UN Drive, Wilkinson Rd.	Mainline
48. Liberty Christian Church	Babadorie, Lumley	N.Pent.

Name of Church	Location	Category
49. Living Word of Faith Outreach Ministry	Marjay Town, Goderich	N.Pent.
50. Lumley Evangelical Church	Babadorie	N.Pent.
51. Lutheran Evangelical Church	Lumley Health Centre	Miss
52. Ministry of Light	Goderich	N.Pent.
53. Missionary Church of Africa	Army Services MissSchool, Wilberforce Primary	
54. National Limba Pentecostal Church	Lumley	C.Pent.
55. National Spiritual Church	Dance Troupe Complex Aberdeen	C.Pent.
56. Mount Zion Healing and Deliverance Ministry	192 Wilkinson Rd., Lumley	C.Pent.
57. Mount Calvary Outreach	Aberdeen Ferry Rd.	N.Pent.
58. New Apostolic Church	Aberdeen	Miss.
59. New Apostolic Church	Goderich	Miss
60. New Jerusalem Fellowship	Regent Rd., Wilberforce	N.Pent.
61. New Life Outreach Ministry	24 Spur View Estate, Wilberforce	N.Pent
62. New Testament Church	Wilberforce	C.Pent.
63. Our Lady Star of the Sea	Juba	Mainline
64. Paidon West Africa Mission	Army Services Primary School, Wilberforce	Miss
65. Peace Korean Presbyterian Church	Babadorie, Lumley	Miss
66. Pentecost Evangelical Deliverance Church	39f Regent Rd., Lumley	N.Pent.
67. Salem Methodist Church	Aberdeen	Mainline
68. Restoration Assembly	32a Lower Pipe Line Wilkinson Rd	N.Pent.
69. Seventh Day Adventist	Lumley	Miss.
70. St. Augustine's Faith Healing Church	Wilberforce Barracks	C.Pent.
71. St. George's Catholic Church	Juba Barracks	Mainline
72. St Luke's Garrison	34 Military Hospital Compound, Wilberforce	Mainline
73. St. Luke the Evangelist	Goderich	Mainline
74. St Paul's Parish	1 Signal Hill Rd., Wilberforce	Mainline

Name of Church	Location	Category
75. St Mark's Church	Lumley	Mainline
76. St Matthew's Church	Aberdeen	Mainline
77. The Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints	Goderich	Miss.
78. The Church of the Living God	Aberdeen	N.Pent.
79. The Door Christian Fellowship	Wilberforce Barracks	N.Pent
80. The Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints	Lumley	Miss.
81. The Lord is Our Saviour	Babadorie, Lumley	C.Pent.
82. The Ministry of God Church of God	26 Sherrif Drive, Lumley	N.Pent.
83. The Bible Way	186 Wilkinson Rd.,	N.Pent.
84. Transcea Charismatic Ministry	Collegiate School Rd.	N.Pent.
85. United Brethren Church	Cole Farm	Mainline
86. Unity in Christ	28b Wilkinson Rd.	N.Pent
87. United Pentecostal Church	Aberdeen Rd. off Cockle Bay,	C.Pent.
88. United Pentecostal Church	Gbendembu, Goderich	C.Pent.
89. United Pentecostal Church	Wilberforce	C.Pent.
90. United Pentecostal Church	25 Regent Rd., Lumley	C.Pent.
91. Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone	Freetown Rd., Lumley	Mainline
92. Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone	Mallama, Lumley	Mainline
93. Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone	Wilberforce	Mainline
94. Whosoever Will May Come	Wilberforce Barracks	N.Pent.
95. Wilberforce Evangelical Church Army	Services Primary, Sch., Wilberforce	N.Pent
96. Wonders Church	28b Wilkinson Rd.	N.Pent.

CHURCHES IN ZONE B

Name of Church	Location	Category
1. Abundance of Light	June Holst-Roness Primary School, Syke St.	N.Pent.
2. Ascension Town Baptist Church	St. Thomas' Municipal School, Ascension Town.	Mainline
3. Bethel Temple Outreach Dworzak	Dworzak	C.Pent.
4. Bethel World Outreach Ministries	National Stadium	N.Pent.
5. Bishop Baughman UMC Bright St.,	Brookfields	Mainline
6. Calvary Convention Congregation	Brookfields, YWCA (new hall)	N.Pent
7. Calvary Redemption Temple	112 Pademba Rd.	C.Pent
8. Christ Pentecostal Church	Henneson St., New England	C.Pent
9. Christians in Action	Syke St.	C.Pent.
10. Christian Life Era	YWCA Hall, Brookfields	N.Pent.
11. Christian Science Church	YWCA school-room, Brookfields	Miss.
12. Church of Assurance	Water St., Congo Town	C.Pent.
13. Church of Christ	Old Railway Line, Tengbeh Town	Miss.
14. Church of God Of Prophecy	Off Beckley Lane, Tengbeh Town	Miss.
15. Church of the First Born	Training Unit Hall, Technical Institute, Congo Cross	N.Pent.
16. Church of the Lord (Aladura)	25 Main Rd., Congo Town	C.Pent
17. Congregational Assembly	40b Water St., Congo Town	N.Pent.
18. Daniel Sarwee Memorial Church	Old Railway Line, Brookfields	C.Pent.
19. Daily Life Chapel	Brookfields Hotel	N.Pent.
20. Deeper Life Bible Church	Technical Institute, Congo Cross	C.Pent
21. Deeper Life Bible Church	Prince of Wales School, King Tom	C.Pent.
22. Dominion Power Church	YWCA Schoolroom,	N.Pent.

Name of Church	Location	Category
23. Ebenezer WAM Church	Brookfields	Mainline
24. Emmanuel AME Church	Macdonald St	Mainline
25. Faith Healing Bible Church	Ephraim Robinson Municipal School, Congo Town -	N.Pent.
26. Faith Healing Bible Church	King Harman Rd., Brookfields	N.Pent.
27. First Korean Presbyterian Church	Technical School Congo Cross	Miss.
28. End Time Evangelical Church	Brookfields	N.Pent.
29. Eternal Life Church	Baryoh School, Tengbeh Town	N.Pent.
30. Faith Assembly	Bath St.	C.Pent.
31. Faith Covenant Church	Provilac Restaurant, Congo Cross	N.Pent.
32. Flaming Bible Church	Off Syke St.	N.Pent.
33. Freetown Christian Church	YWCA schoolroom	N.Pent.
34. Full Gospel Assembly	National Stadium, Brookfields	N.Pent.
35. Faith in Action Ministry	Brookfields	N.Pent.
36. Gateway Victory Church	Ephraim Robinson Mun. School, Congo Town	N.Pent.
37. Grace Baptist Church	Former Ben Kanu's Residence, Tengbeh Town	Mainline
38. Grace of God Ministries	3 Saunders Drive, Faiya Corner, Brookfields	N.Pent.
39. God is Our Light	Jomo Kenyatta Rd.	C.Pent
40. Good News Assembly	Bass St., Brookfields	C.Pent.
41. Good News Prayer Group	Old Railway Line, Tengbeh Town	N.Pent.
42. Holiness Pentecostal Church	Water St. ,Congo Town	N.Pent.
43. Holy Ghost Fire Ministries	President's Lodge, Brookfields	N.Pent.
44. Hillside Baptist Church	George Brook, Dworzak	Mainline
45. Hosanna Praise Ministry	Miatta Conference Centre	N. Pent.
46. International Christian Fellowship	3 Old Railway Line, Tengbeh Town	N.Pent.
47. Jehovah Shammah Methodist Church	Main Rd., Congo Town	Mainline

Name of Church	Location	Category
48. Jehovah's Witnessess	Smart Lane, New England	Miss.
49. Jubilee Christian Assembly	Dworzak Farm	N.Pent.
50. Life of Light Ministry	Smart Lane, New England	N.Pent.
51. Light of Faith	President's Lodge, King Harman Rd	N. Pent.
52. Living Waters of Life	1 King Harman Rd	N.Pent.
53. Living Word of Faith	National Stadium, Presidential Lounge Brookfields -	N.Pent.
54. Loko Baptist Church	9f Beckley Lane Tengbeh Town	Mainline
55. Mount Carmel	SLBS Canteen, New England	N.Pent.
56. Mount Zion Church of the Lord	5e Old Railway Line , Tengbeh Town	C. Pent.
57. Mount Zion Church of the Lord	41 Water St., Congo Town	C.Pent.
58. National Limba Pentecostal Church	28 Main Motor Rd., Congo Cross	C.Pent.
59. New England Christian Fellowship	Prison's Canteen New England	N.Pent.
60. New Testament Church	College Rd., Congo Cross	C.Pent.
61. Pentecost Evangelical Church	3 Elliot St., Brookfields	N.Pent.
62. Price Memorial UMC	George Brook, Dworzak Farm	Mainline
63. Prison's Fellowship of Sierra Leone	Prisons Compound,	N.Pent.
64. St Anthony's Catholic Church	Syke St.	Mainline
65. St. Charles Healing Temple	12 Willoughby Lane	C.Pent.
66. St. Peter's WAM Church	Main Rd., Congo Town	Mainline
67. Sanctuary Praise Chapel	Off King Harman Rd., Brookfields	N.Pent.
68. Seventh-day Adventist	Technical Institute, Congo Cross	Miss.
69. Unification Church	College Rd., Congo Cross	Miss.
70. United Pentecostal Church	Brookfields	C.Pent.
71. United Pentecostal Church	Dworzak	C.Pent.
72. United Pentecostal Church	Tengbeh Town	C.Pent.

Name of Church	Location	Category
73. Vine Memorial Baptist Church Hall	Vine Memorial Sch. Congo Cross	Mainline
74. Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone	CCSL Hall, Brookfields	Mainline
75. Winners Assembly	Bath St., Brookfields	N.Pent.
76. Winners Chapel	Miatta Conference Centre, Youyi Bldng, Brookfields	N.Pent.
77. Wonder Life Gospel Church	YWCA (old hall), Brookfields	N.Pent.
78. Word of Reconciliation	Josben Complex, Brookfields	N.Pent.
79. Zion Pentecostal Church	Former residence of Ben Kanu, Tengbeh Town	N.Pent.

CHURCHES IN ZONE C

Name of Church	Location	Category
1. Bethesda Methodist Church	Dundas St.	Mainline
2. Buxton Methodist Church	Charles St.	Mainline
3. Celestial Church of Christ	10 Fergusson Lane	C.Pent.
4. Christian Victory Church	Berwick St.	N.Pent.
5. Christians in Action	Pademba Rd	C.Pent.
6. Church of Christ	33 Priscilla St.	Miss.
7. Church of Salvation	12 Edward Lane	C.Pent.
8. Deeper Life Bible Church	Prince of Wales Sch., King Tom	C.Pent.
9. Dominion Chapel	Public Works Dept. Canteen, Pademba Rd	N.Pent.
10. Dynamic Evangelical Church	Dr. S.M. Broderick Municipal School Fergusson St	N.Pent.
11. End Time Harvest Ministries	Fatta Rahman Mun. Sch., Fergusson St.	N.Pent.
12. El-Shaddai Triumphant	Police Barracks Canteen, King Tom	N.Pent.
13. Emmanuel AME Church	Macdonald St.	Mainline
14. Elohim Church International	Public Works Dept Canteen, Pademba Rd	N.Pent.
15. Emmanuel Baptist Church	28 Battery St, King Tom	Mainline
16. Flaming Bible Church	Williams St	N.Pent..
17. Foursquare Gospel	PWD Canteen, Pademba Rd.	C.Pent.

Name of Church	Location	Category
18. Grace Brethren	Campbell St.	Mainline
19. Jarwee Lewis WAM Church	Adelaide St.	Mainline
20. Kroo Church, AOG	Campbell St	C.Pent.
21. Life of Christ Pentecostal	Fatta Rahman Mun. Sch., Fergusson St	N.Pent.
22. National Church of Christ	Dr. S.M. Broderick Municipal School Fergusson St.	N.Pent.
23. New Life Outreach Redemption Ministry	7 Fergusson St.	N.Pent
24. New Pentecostal Church	West St.	N.Pent.
25. Overcomers Assembly	Girl Guides Head- quarters, Tower Hill	N.Pent.
26. Portuguese Town Methodist Church	Campbell St.	Mainline
27. St. Edward's Catholic Church	May Park, King Tom	Mainline
28. St. Joseph's Healing Temple	1 Chadwick St	C.Pent.
29. St. John, the Evangelist	Savage St.	Mainline
30. St. Paul's Congregational	7 Hennessy St., King Tom	Mainline
31. St. Philip's Healing (Evangelical Mission)	17b Savage St.	C.Pent.
32. The Door Christian Fellowship	Kroo Court House, Kroo Town Road	C.Pent.
33. The Lord's Church of Holiness	Victoria St.	C.Pent.
34. The Holy Temple of Faith	Savage St.	C.Pent.
35. Trinitarian Church	Dillet St	N.Pent.
36. Victory Christian Church	6 Handel St., King Tom	N.Pent
37. Warren Methodist Church	Kroo Town Rd.	Mainline
38. Way of Truth	King Tom	N.Pent.

CHURCHES IN ZONE D

Name of Church	Location	Category
1. Abraham's Seed Gospel Assembly	Dundas St.	N.Pent
2. American Calvary Baptist Church	Soldier St.	Mainline
3. Angom Praise Chapel	Liberty Hall, Walpole St	N.Pent.

Name of Church	Location	Category
4. African Christian Fellowship	30 Percival St	N.Pent
5. Balmer Memorial Meth. Church	59 Roberts St.	Mainline
6. Bishop Howard AME Church	Wellington St.	Mainline
7. Central Assembly (AOG)	15 Liverpool St.	C.Pent.
8. Christ Apostolic Church	5 Priscilla St.	C.Pent.
9. Christ Ambassadors Mission	Bi-Centenary Hall, City Council, Wallace-Johnson St.	N.Pent.
10. Christ Church	Pademba Rd.	Mainline
11. Christian Gospel Ministry	Pademba Rd.	N.Pent
12. Gathsemane Kroo Pentecostal	Settra Kroo St.	C.Pent.
13. Greater Evangelism World	June Holst-Roness, Crusade Mun. Prim. Sch, Syke St.	N.Pent.
14. Greater Refugee Temple	17 Charlotte St.	N.Pent.
15. Harvest Time Ministries	Regent Square Municipal School, Wallace-Johnson St	N.Pent.
16. Holy Innocent Church	Little Kroo St.	Mainline
17. Jane Bloomer AME	Fort St.	Mainline
18. New Apostolic Church	Wellington St.	Miss.
19. New Evangelical AOG	Wellington St.	C.Pent.
20. New Zion AME	41 Pademba Rd.	Mainline
21. Robert St Baptist Church	Robert St.	Mainline
22. Sacred Heart Cathedral	Siaka Stevens St.	Mainline
23. St. George's Cathedral	George St	Mainline
24. St. John's Maroon Church	Siaka Stevens St.	Mainline
25. St. Thomas' Kroo Church	10 Steward St.	Mainline
26. Samaria WAM	39 Waterloo St.	Mainline
27. Trinity Full Gospel	Regent Square Municipal School, Wallace-Johnson St	N.Pent.
28. Upper Room	St. Edwards Primary, Sch., Fort St	N.Pent.
29. Victory Church of God	20 Big Waterloo St.	N.Pent.
30. Victory Evangelical Church	89 Fort St.	N.Pent.
31. Wesley Methodist Church	Lamina Sankoh St.	Mainline

CHURCHES IN ZONE E

Name of Church	Location	Category
1. Army of God	40 Garrison St.	N.Pent.
2. AOG Temne Church	Ambrose St.	C.Pent.
3. Bethel Temple	Tower Hill	C.Pent.
4. Bethel Temple Maroon Outreach	Pademba Rd.	C.Pent.
5. Bethel WAM Church	Circular Rd	Mainline
6. Bishop Elwin Memorial Church	Macauley St.	Mainline
7. Celestial Church of Christ	James St.	C.Pent.
8. Centenary Tabernacle	Circular Rd.	Mainline
9. Church of Humble Followers	Beige St., off Circular Rd	N.Pent.
10. Church of the Lord (Aladura)	19 Oniel St.	C.Pent.
11. College Chapel	Rawdon St.	Mainline
12. Deeper Life Bible Church	Model Secondary Sch., Circular Rd	C.Pent
13. Ebenezer Methodist Church	Circular Rd.	Mainline
14. El-Shaddai Charismatic Temple	Tower Hill	N.Pent.
15. Gospel Ministry Campus	Fourah Bay College	N.Pent.
16. Holy Fire Church	Youth Centre, Garrison St	N.Pent.
17. Jesus is Lord Ministry	Tower Hill	N.Pent.
18. Joy AOG	1 Short St.	C.Pent.
19. King Memorial UMC	Regent Rd.	Mainline
20. Living Word Mission	Akibo-Betts Mun. Sch., Tower Hill	N.Pent.
21. Loko Baptist Church	10 Circular Rd.	Mainline
22. Manna From Heaven Ministry	Tower Hill	N.Pent.
23. National Pentecostal Limba Church	Fort St.	C.Pent.
24. New Bethel Church of God in Christ	Sumaila Town, off Circular Rd	N.Pent.
25. Regent Rd. Baptist Church	Regent Rd.	Mainline
26. St. Peters' Healing Church	Circular Rd.	C.Pent.
27. St. Peters' Healing Church	Tower Hill	C.Pent.
28. St. Philips Evangelical Ministry	86 Soldier St.	N.Pent.

Name of Church	Location	Category
29. Seventh-day Adventist	Circular Rd.	Miss.
30. The Lord's Church of the Holy Ghost	14a Oniel St.	N.Pent.
31. United Christian Church	Tower Hill	N.Pent.
32. United Church of Sierra Leone	Tower Hill	N.Pent.
33. United Pentecostal Church	Sorie Town, Pademba Rd	C.Pent.
34. United Pentecostal Church	Tower Hill Mun. Sch., Tower Hill	C.Pent.
35. Unto the Glory of God's Son Ministry	Cathedral Girls Sch. Garrison St	N.Pent.
36. Zion Methodist Church	Wilberforce St.	Mainline
37. Zion Methodist Church	Wesley St.	Mainline
38. Zion Redemption	Tower Hill	N.Pent

CHURCHES IN ZONE F

Name of Church	Location	Category
1. Bethel Temple Eastend Fellowship	Bishop Johnson Memorial School Fourah Bay Rd.	Pent.
2. Bethel World Outreach Ministry	Cline Town	Pent.
3. Bishop Crowther Memorial	Ross Rd.	Mainline
4. Bishop Campbell AME	Ross Rd	Mainline
5. Calvary Charismatic Church	Eastend Municipal Sch., Kennedy St.	Pent.
6. Faith Healing Bible Church	Laura Dove Memorial Sch., Guard St.	Pent.
7. Faith Healing Bible Church	Goree St.	Pent.
8. Christians in Action	Laura Dove Memorial Sch., Guard St.	Pent.
9. Church of Pentecost (Fourah Bay Assembly)	34 Malta St.	Pent.
10. Church of Pentecost (Mt Aureol Assembly)	19 Upper Easton St.	Pent.
11. Deeper Life Bible Church	Laura Dove Memorial School, Guard St.	Pent.
12. Faith Healing Bible Church	Laura Dove Memorial School, Guard St.	Pent.
13. International Christian Fellowship	Cline Town Refugee Camp, Cline Town	Pent.
14. Jehovah's Witnessess	Guard St	Miss
15. Life of Christ Pentecostal Ministries International	Cline Town Refugee Camp, Cline Town	Pent.

16. National Limba Pentecostal Church	Garawani St., off Fourah Bay Rd.	Pent.
17. New Life Ministries (Church Of God in Christ)	National Workshop Fourah Bay Rd.	Pent.
18. St. Philips Church	Patton St.	Mainline
19. Seventh Day Adventist	Bishop Johnson Memorial School Fourah Bay Rd.	Miss.
20. The Way Baptist Church	Eastend Municipal Sch., Kennedy St .	Pent.
21. United Pentecostal Church	Fourah Bay Rd.	Pent.
22. Victory Christian Centre	Eastend Municipal Sch., Kennedy St.	Pent.
23. Victory Bible Church	J.F. Kennedy Prep. Sch., Cline Town	Pent.
24. Wholeman's Salvation Ministry	J.F.Kennedy Prep. Sch., Cline Town	Pent

CHURCHES IN ZONE G

Name of Church	Location	Category
1. All Saints Church	Kissy Rd	Mainline
2. Abundant Life Faith Centre	Annie Walsh Mem. Sch., Kissy Rd	N.Pent.
3. Bethlehem Ministries (House of Bread)	1b Lemon Lane	N.Pent.
4. Faith Healing Bible Church	Dan St.	N.Pent.
5. Faith Healing Bible Church	Goree St.	N.Pent.
6. Church of the Lord (Aladura)	9 Dunkley St.	C.Pent.
7. Church of the Lord's Temple	Mount Aureol Terrace	C.Pent.
8. Endtime Ministries (Bread of Life)	Hagan St.	N.Pent.
9. Gibraltar Methodist Church	Kissy St.	Mainline
10. Holy Trinity Church	Kissy Rd.	Mainline
11. St. Anthony's Healing Temple	15 Rowe St.	C.Pent.
12. Truscott Memorial WAM	Kissy Rd.	Mainline
13. Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone	Upper Dan St., Ginger Hall.	Mainline

CHURCHES IN ZONE H

Name of Church	Location	Category
1. All Nations Assemblies of God	Moyiba, Kissy	Pent.
2. America Africa Baptist Church	Mayemi	Mainline
3. Anchor of Life	Wellington	Pent.
4. Asbury UMC	Bottom Oku, Wellington	Mainline.
5. Assembly of Victory	Kissy Brook	Pent..
6. Au Memorial UBC	Old Blackhall Rd.	Mainline
7. Bethel Church of God	Independence Memorial Sch., Kissy	
8. Bethel Methodist Church ((Granny Church	City Rd., Wellington	N.Pent.
9. Bethel WAM Church	Kissy	Mainline
10. Bethel World Outreach Ministres	Upper Parsonage St., Kissy	Mainline
11. Bethel World Outreach Ministries	Wellington	N.Pent.
12. Bethesda Methodist Church	Blackhall Rd., Kissy	N.Pent.
13. Bethlehem Christian Ministries	First St.,Kissy	Mainline
14. Bishop Campbell AME	5 Blackhall Rd	N.Pent.
15. Bishop Higgins AME	GerberSchool Thunder Hill, Kissy	Mainline
16. Bishop Humper UMC	20 Taylor St., Peacock Farm	Mainline
17. Born-again Christ Healing Church	197 Bai-Bureh Rd., Calabar Town	Mainline
18. Brotherhood of the Cross and Star	22 Peacock Farm, Wellington	N.Pent.
19. Brown Memorial UMC	Kissy Bye Pass Rd.,	C.Pent.
20. Calvary Evangelical Lutheran	Up Mount, Peacock, Farm Wellington	Mainline
21. Celestial Ministry	Schoolroom, Black hall Rd, Kissy	Mission
22. Chapel of Grace	31 Rokupa Estate, Wellington	C.Pent
23. Chapel of Peace	39 Adolphus St, Kissy	N.Pent.
24. Christ Ambassadors	2 Consider Lane,	N.Pent.

Name of Church	Location	Category
	Calabar Town	
25. Christ Ambassadors Mission	Wellington	N.Pent.
26. Christ Apostolic Church	16 Williams St., Kissy	N. Pent.
27. Christ for all Ministries	9 Job St., Kissy	C.Pent.
28. Christ Land Ministry	Calabar Town	N.Pent.
29. Christ Land Ministry	Old Wharf, New Town, Wellington	N.Pent
30. Christ Pentecostal Church	50 Old Wharf, Wellington	N.Pent.
31. Christ Pentecostal Church	Municipal Sec. Sch., Kissy Dockyard	C.Pent.
32. Christ the Physician	19 Teneba Rd., Upper Approved Sch, Wellington	C.Pent.
33. Christian Life Era (Praise Chapel)	Wellington	N.Pent.
34. Christian Revival Fellowship	Approved School Wellington	N.Pent.
35. Christian Revival Fellowship	Independence Memorial Sec. Sch Kissy	N.Pent.
36. Christians in Action	Cassell Farm, Kissy	N.Pent.
37. Christians in Action	25 Collier St., Wellington	C.Pent.
38. Christians in Action	UBC School, Black, Hall Rd., Kissy	C.Pent.
39. Church of Christ	Trade Centre, Kissy	C.Pent.
40. Church of God of Prophecy	Alpha Lane , Wellington	Miss.
41. Church of God of Prophecy	71 Main Rd., Loko Town, Calabar Town	C.Pent.
42. Church of God of Prophecy	Old Blackhall Rd., Kissy	C.Pent.
43. Church of Pentecost (Ropoti Assembly)	Calabar Town	C.Pent.
44. Church of Pentecost (Old Wharf Assembly)	Kolleh Lane,	C.Pent.
45. Church of Pentecost (Calabar Town Assembly)	Momoh Lane, Old Wharf,	C.Pent.

Name of Church	Location	Category
	Wellington	
46. Church of Redemption	19a Falcon St., Kissy	C.Pent.
47. Church of Salvation	Samuels Lane, Kissy	N.Pent.
48. Church of Salvation	Thunder Hill, Kissy	C.Pent.
49. Church of the Gospel of Christ	Coker St., Wellington	C.Pent.
50. Church of the Holy Spirit	Rose St., Kissy	N.Pent.
51. Church of the Lord (Aladura)	12 Bowen St., Kissy	C.Pent.
52. Church of the Lord (Aladura)	21 Old Rd., Calabar Town	C.Pent.
53. Church of the Lord (Aladura)	22 Whenzle St., Kissy	C.Pent.
54. Church of the Lord Jesus Christ	Wellington	C.Pent.
55. Church of the Lord Temple (Holy Ghost Mission)	34 Adolphus St., Kissy	N.Pent.
56. Cornerstone Church	Main Rd., Upper	N.Pent.
57. Cornerstone Foundation Ministry	67 Main Motor Rd., Wellington, Allen Tow	N.Pent.
58. Deeper Life Bible Church	Kissy Police Barracks	N.Pent.
59. Deeper Life Bible Church	Upper Beccles St., Wellington	C.Pent.
60. Displaced Christian Fellowship,	Clay Factory, Kissy.	C.Pent.
61. Door of Hope Ministry	Upper Allen Town	N.Pent.
62. Ebenezer Methodist Church	Upper Allen Town	N.Pent.
63. Elijah Spiritual Church	24 Cox St., Kissy	Mainline
64. Emmanuel Christian Fellowship	Labour Exchange,	C.Pent.
65. Emmanuel WAM Church	2 City Rd., Wellington	N.Pent.
66. Emmanuel WAM Church	Kissy Police Barracks	Mainline
67. End Time Revival and Evangelical Ministry	16 Williams St.,	Mainline
68. Evangelical Full Gospel	Kissy Primary Sch., Kissy	N.Pent.

Name of Church	Location	Category
	Dockyard	
69. Evangelistic Outreach Ministry	Calabar Town	N.Pent.
70. Faith Assembly of God Church	35 Teneba Rd. Wellington	N.Pent.
71. Faith Evangelistic Ministry	3b Carew St.,	C.Pent.
72. Faith and Deliverance Ministry	20 Upper Nicol Terrace, Kuntollor	N.Pent.
73. Faith Healing Bible Church	Boston Community Centre, Kissy	N.Pent.
74. Faith Healing Bible Church	Bottom Oku, Wellington	N.Pent.
75. Faith Healing Bible Church	Industrial Estate	N.Pent.
76. Faith Healing Bible Church	Mayinkeneh Wellington	N.Pent.
77. Faith Healing Bible Church	Calabar Town Moyiba, Kissy Brook	N.Pent.
78. Faith Healing Bible Church	Old Wharf, Portee	N.Pent.
79. Faith Healing Bible Church	44d Peacock Farm Wellington	N.Pent.
80. Faith Healing Bible Church	Palma Ronko Allen Town	N.Pent.
81. Faith Healing Bible Church	Shell Lane, Kissy	N.Pent.
82. Faith Tabernacle Congregation	Bai Bureh Rd, Calabar Town	N.Pent.
83. Flaming Bible Church	Kissy Prim. Sch., Kissy Dockyard	N.Pent.
84. Flaming Bible Church	4b Taylor St., Wellington	N.Pent.
85. Florence Hailey UBC	2 Main Motor Rd. Wellington	N.Pent.
86. Freedom Evangelical Ministry	9c K. Turay Lane, Kissy	Mainline
87. Free Grace Garden Mission	9a Thunder Hill,	N.Pent.
88. Full Gospel International	16 Blackhall Rd., Kissy	Miss.
89. Greater Evangelism World Crusade	30d Mayenkineh Rd.Calabar Town	N.Pent.
90. Glad Tidings of God Assembly	Newcastle St., Kissy	N.Pent.
91. Glorious International Ministry	Wellington	N.Pent.

Name of Church	Location	Category
92. Glorious International Ministry	Whenzle St.,Kissy	Pent.
93. God is Able Church	Samuels, off K. Steps,Kissy	Pent.
94. God's Covenant Church	Wellington	Pent.
95. God's Endline Army Ministry	Wellington	N.Pent.
96. Golgotha Baptist Church	Palma Ronko	N.Pent
97. Good News AOG	Wellington	Mainline
98. Gospel Assemblies of God	City Rd., Wellington	C.Pent.
99. Gospel Chapel	Kissy	C.Pent. .
100. Halleluya Worship Centre	47 Old City Rd. Wellington.	N.Pent.
101. Harrison Bryant AME	Peacock Farm, Wellington.	N.Pent.
102. Hill Top Apostolic Church (PAW)	Wellington	Mainline
103. Hennessy Methodist Church	170 Blackhall Rd. Kissy.	Mainline
104. Hill Top Baptist Church	Peacock Farm, Wellington	Miss.
105. Holiness Calvary Church	Peacock Farm, Wellington	Mainline
106. Holiness Pentecostal Church	Palma Ronko Calabar Town	N.Pent.
107. Holiness Pentecostal Church	Peacock Farm, Wellington	N.Pent.
108. Holy Cross Parish	Lowcost Housing Kissy	N.Pent.
109. International Christian Fellowship	Kissy	Mainline
110. International Pentecost Holiness Church	13 Gassama St., Calabar Town	N.Pent.
111. Jehovah's Witnessess	25 Lunar St., Kissy	N.Pent.
112. Jesus is Lord Ministry	Kola Tree,	Miss.
113. Jesus is the Answer	55 Gassama Rd.,Loko Town Wellington	N.Pent
114. Kenstone Church	Kola Tree, Allen Town	N.Pent.
115. Kissy Baptist Church	Newcastle St., Kissy	N.Pent.
116. Korean Presbyterian Church	Trade Centre,	Mainline

Name of Church	Location	Category
117. Latter Rain Evangelistic Ministry	Kissy 47 Old City Rd., Wellington	Miss.
118. League of Christians Church	30 Mayinkineh Rd., Calabar Town	N.Pent.
119. Life of Christ Pentecostal Ministries	Kissy	N.Pent.
120. Living Word of Faith Centre	Boston Community, Kissy	N.Pent.
121. Living Word of Faith	Old Railway Line, Portee	N.Pent.
122. Loko Town Baptist Church	Loko Town Wellington	N.Pent.
123. Lord's Church of Holiness	TV Pole, Off Cox St. Kissy	Mainline
124. Lutheran Church	3a Mellon St. Wellington	C.Pent.
125. Mende Church	Congo Water, Old Rd, Wellington	Miss.
126. Ministry of Light	Mayemi, Lower Allen Town	Mainline
127. Missionary Church of Africa	Wyse-Moore St. Wellington	N.Pent.
128. Mount Glory Ministry	44 Teneba Rd., Kuntollor	Miss.
129. Mt Sinai Healing Temple	64b Blackhall Rd.,	N.Pent.
130. Mount Zion Church	Upper Allen Town	C.Pent.
131. National Pentecostal Limba Church	Davies St., Kissy	C.Pent.
132. National Pentecostal Limba Church	Nicol Terrace Wellington	C.Pent.
133. National Spiritual Church	6a Nicol Terrace	C.Pent.
134. New Apostolic Church	Kamara Lane Clabar Town	C.Pent.
135. New Apostolic Church	69a Kissy Bye Kissy	Miss.
136. New Apostolic Church	Lower Allen Town	Miss.
137. New Bethel Church of God In Christ Apostolic	32 Cox St., Kissy	Miss.
138. New Bethel Pentecostal Church	Thunder Hill Rd., Kissy Mess Mess	N.Pent.
139. New Bethel Pentecostal Church	Upper Nicol	N.Pent.

Name of Church	Location	Category
	Terrace Wellington	
140. New Christian Fellowship Ministry	9 Crowther Lane Wellington	N.Pent.
141. New Evangelical Ministry	K-Turay Lane, Wellington	N.Pent.
142. New Life Calvary	Looking Town, Kissy. Mess Mess	N.Pent.
143. New Life in Christ	12e Industrial Area Wellington	N.Pent.
144. New Life Outreach Redemption Church	Kissy	N.Pent.
145. New Word of Faith Church	Loko Town, Wellington	N.Pent.
146. Old Wharf Baptist Church	Old Wharf,	N.Pent.
147. Old Wharf UMC	16 Old Wharf Rd.,	Mainline
148. Olivette Baptist Church	Peacock Farm	Mainline
149. Palmarcy Faith in Christ	Summer Time Club Rose St., Kissy	Miss.
150. Pastor A.S.Kargbo's Church	19 Robis Rd., Wellington	N.Pent.
151. Peace of God Miracle Ministries	Kissy	N.Pent.
152. Pentecostal Assemblies of the World	26 Canton St. Wellington	N.Pent.
153. Redeemed Church of God	Kissy Primary Sch.,Kissy	Miss.
154. Richard Allen AME	Richard Allen High Chapel School, Kissy	C.Pent
155. Ropoti Pentecostal Church	Lower Portee	Mainline
156. St Augustine's Evangelical Church	1 Alpha Lane Wellington	C.Pent.
157. St. Helena AME Chapel	St. Helena Sec. Sch.,Kissy	N.Pent.
158. St. John the Baptist	Upper Allen Town	Mainline
159. St John the Evangelist	Wellington	Mainline
160. St. John's Healing Church	5 Magazine Court, Wellington	Mainline
161. St. Luke's Evangelical Church	St Helen Sec. Sch.,Kissy	C.Pent.
162. St Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church	4a Consider Lane Calabar Town	N.Pent.
163. St. Mark's Pentecostal	Mayemi, Lower	Miss.

Name of Church	Location	Category
164. St. Martin's de Porres	Allen Town Blackhall Rd., Kissy	N.Pent.
165. St Patrick's Church	Kissy	Mainline
166. St Paul's Faith Healing Church	Industrial Estate Wellington	Mainline
167. St. Peter the Rock	Calabar Town , Pipe Line	C.Pent.
168. St. Thomas' Healing Temple	10 Smith St.,Wellington	Mainline
169. Seventh-day Adventist	Kissy Mess Mess	C.Pent.
170. Seventh-day Adventist	Peeler St., Wellington	Miss.
171. Sierra Healing Temple	Peacock Farm, Wellington	Miss.
172. Sierra Leone International Mission	24 Momoh Lane, Old Wharf, Wellington	C.Pent.
173. Swedish Free Pentecostal Church	Kuntollor, Welling -ton	N.Pent.
174. Swedish Free Pentecostal Church	Lowcost Housing Kissy	Miss.
175. The Acts of the Apostles Ministry	Hill Top, Kuntollor	Miss.
176. The Berean Fellowship	27 Alusine St., Calabar Town	N.Pent.
177. The Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints	Kissy	N.Pent.
178. The Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints	Wellington	Miss.
179. The Door Christian Fellowship	Ferry Junction	Miss.
180. The Glory of God Healing Temple	Teneba Rd., Wellington	C. Pent.
181. The Heart of Christ Church	6a Taylor St.,	C.Pent.
182. The Lord's Missionary Church	10c Upper Mellon St. Wellington	N.Pent.
183. The Praying Name of Jesus Christ	11 Bangura St., Calabar Town	N.Pent.
184. Thunder Hill UMC	Thunder Hill, Kissy	N.Pent.
185. Tregaskis Methodist Church	Peeler St. Wellington	Mainline
186. Union With Christ	33 Williams	

Name of Church	Location	Category
187. United Brethren in Christ Church	St.,Kissy Kola Tree	Mainline N.Pent.
188. United Brethren in Christ Church	Kuntollor, Wellington	Mainline
189. United Church of Salvation	48b Leaden Hall St.,Kissy	Mainline
190. United Methodist Church	Approved School	C.Pent.
191. United Methodist Church	Mayinkineh Rd.Calabar Town	Mainline
192. UMC Bambara Town	Bambara Town, Kissy,	Mainline
193. UMC Mende Church	Blackhall Rd., Kissy	Mainline
194. UMC Mondaima	Mondaima, Brook Kissy	Mainline
195. United Pentecostal Church	Newcastle St., Kissy	Mainline
196. United Pentecostal Church	3 Sesay Lane Calabar Town	C. Pent.
197. United Pentecostal Church	Thunder Hill, Kissy	C. Pent.
198. Universal United Church of Christ	Lowcost Housing,Kissy	C.. Pent.
199. Victory Bible Church	Wellington	N.Pent.
200. Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone	King George Ave. Ferry Rd., Kissy	N.Pent.
201. Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone	Looking Town, Kissy Mess Mess	Mainline
202. Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone	Power Magazine, Grassfield Kissy	Mainline
203. Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone	Taylor S,Wellington	Mainline
204. Wesley Methodist Church	Main Rd., Lower Allen Town	Mainline
205. Word Aflame Ministry	3 Conteh Drive Calabar Town	Mainline
206. Word of Faith Ministry	Kissy	N.Pent.
207. Word of Life Ministry	7 Mellon St.,Wellington	N.Pent.
208. World Evangelistic Outreach Ministry	293 Bai Bureh Rd Calabar Town	N.Pent.
209. World Evangelistic Outreach Ministry	Kissy Primary School Kissy	N.Pent.
210. World Evangelistic Outreach Ministry	Old Wharf Rd.,Wellington	N.Pent.
211. Young Christian Prayer Group	Old Rd., Wellington	N.Pent.

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“Rev. *Tiff* (stole) Bulgar”, For Di Pipul, 18 August 1997.
“Jesus is Lord Ministry’s Pastor *nar tiffman*” (is a thief), For Di People, 1 December 1997.
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- “Shopping List *comot nar doe*” (has been exposed). The Diplomat 1 December 1997.
“Pastor and Junta “Boss” in Diamond Deal”, The Diplomat 4 December 1997.

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“Sierra Leone Bible College attains University Status”, The Independent Observer, 24 September 1998.

Church Services Attended

- Born-again Christ Healing Temple, 8, 15 and 22 February 1998.
Calvary Charismatic Church, 28 June 1998.
Calvary Charismatic Church, 12 July 1998.
Christ for all Ministries, 5, 12 and 19 April 1998.
Christ Healing Church, 6; 13; 20; 27 April 1997.
Flaming Bible Church 10, 17 and 24 August 1997.
Flaming Bible Church, 21 June 1998.
Jesus is Lord Ministry 13, 20, 27 July 1997.
Jesus is Lord Ministry 24 September 1997 (Special Wednesday Service).
Jesus is Lord Ministry 26 November 1997 (Special Wednesday Service).

Jesus is Lord Ministry, 5, 12, 19, 26 October 1997
Liberty Christian Church, Babadorie, Lumley, 7 September 1997
New Life in Christ Ministry, 3, 10, and 17 May 1998
New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ) 16 and 23 November 1997
New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ), 19 July 1998.
New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ) 30 August 1998
New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ) 4 October 1998
Shekinah Glory Ministry, 6, 13 and 20 September 1998.
The Church of the Lord (Aladura), 8, 15 and 22 March 1998
TRANSCEA, Collegiate School Road, 26 April 1998

Crusades and Seminars Attended

Door Christian Fellowship, Crusade held at National Workshop Grounds at Cline Town, 19-21 March 1998.
Flaming Bible Church held a Crusade at Ephraim Robinson Municipal School, Congo Town from 25 to 29 March 1998 and at the Church Compound, Ascension Town. 30 March to 4 April 1998.
Four Square Gospel Crusade, Public Works Department Compound, Palembang Road, Freetown, 27 March 1997.
Glorious Ministry's Seminar on "Biblical Economics" held at Vine Memorial School Hall, 2-5 March 1998.
Jesus is Lord Ministry Crusade held at Brookfields Stadium, 22-25 June 1998.
Living Word of Faith Seminar, Miatta Conference Centre, Youyi Building, Brookfields 15 September 1997.
New Life in Christ Ministry (COGIC) Crusade held at Brookfields Stadium, 15-17 May 1998.
Seminar organised by Women's Intercessory Network 25-26 July 1998 at Vine Memorial School Hall. Seminar on the theme "Enter and Plunder" organised by New Life in Christ Ministry (COGIC) at Miatta Conference Centre, Youyi Building, Brookfields, 17 July 1998.

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 The Youth for Christ Constitution, April 1990

Interviews

- 20 April 1997: Prophetess Tina Strasser-King, at her Lumley residence.
- 21 April 1997: Pastor Gerald Keister-Campbell, founder of Calvary Charismatic Church, at his residence, 5 Heddle Lane, off Circular Road Freetown.
- 23 April 1997: Sister Felecia, at her residence 6 Macauley Street, Murray Town.
- 6 July 1997: Rev. Archibald Cole, Pastor of New Life Ministry (Church of God in Christ), at the church office, Fourah Bay Road, Freetown.
- 1 September 1997: Sister Felecia Kamara, founder of Shekinah Glory Ministry, at her residence 2 Macauley Street, Murray Town.
- 14 September 1997: Sister Julie Thomas, leader and founder of Christ for all Ministries at the church's compound, Wellington.
- 14 September 1997: Prophetess Rebecca Grant, pastor-in-charge of Church of the Lord Aladura, (Wellington Branch), at the church compound, Wellington.
- 15 September 1997: Sister Angela Sahid, pastor-in-charge of Born-again Christ Healing Temple, at the church's compound, New Road, Wellington.
- 15 September 1997: Pastor Christiana Vandj, Founder of New Life in Christ Ministry, at her residence, Wellington.
- 22 September 1997: Mr. Bunting Thompson (legal representative for the "heathens"), at 10A Thompson Bay, Cockerill North, Freetown.
- 3 November 1997: Rev. Ade Beckley, founder of Liberty Christian Church, Grassfields, Lumley.
- 3 November 1997: Prophetess Phebean Buwanie, leader and founder of Faith Healing Church, at her Babadorie residence, Lumley.
- 1 December, 1997: Pastor Bangura, Assistant Pastor of Jesus is Lord Ministry, Jesus is Lord Ministry compound, Tower Hill, Freetown.
- 4 January 1998: Madam Ayo Aribaut, 62 Regent Road, Freetown. 18 January 1998: Sister Felecia, at 6 Macauley Street, Murray Town.
- 23 January 1998: Rev. Moshope Pratt, General Superintendent of West African Methodist Church in Sierra Leone, at Samaria Church, Big Waterloo Street, Freetown.
- 26 January 1998: Rev. Ulric Crowne, Assistant Pastor Bethel Temple, at Bethel Temple office, Tower Hill, Freetown.
- 27 January 1998: Mr. Fred Johnson, Coordinator Prayer Movement at Youth for Christ, at Youth for Christ House, Garrison Street, Freetown.

31 January 1998: Sister Angela Sahid, at 140 Bai Bureh Road, Wellington.

5 February 1998: Moses Belmoh, Coordinator of Guidance Department at Youth for Christ, at his Garrison St. Office.

6 February 1998: Mr. Minkailu Sesay, Field Officer for Agro-forestry programme at CCSL, at CCSL office, King Harman Road, Brookfields.

6 February 1998: Mrs. Florella Hazeley, Coordinator of Church Relations, Theology and Research Department at CCSL, at her office.

6 February 1998: Mr. Alimamy Koroma, secretary-general at CCSL, at his office.

6 February 1998: Mr. Fred Johnson, Coordinator for Prayer Movement Department at Youth for Christ. 72 Wellington Street, Freetown.

6 March 1998: M Pastor Kendoh, one of the Elders at the Church of the Lord (Aladura), Oniel St. branch, at the Church compound.

17 March 1998: Magistrate Senior Magistrate of the Sierra Leone Judiciary Service, at Café de la Rose, Wallace-Johnson Street, Freetown.

17 March 1998: Deacon Cornelius Max-Williams, president of Men's Fellowship Flaming Bible Church, at Sierra Leone Commercial Bank.

24 March 1998: Magistrate Emile Davies, Senior Magistrate of the Sierra Leone Judiciary Service, at Café de la Rose, Wallace-Johnson Street, Freetown.

24 March 1998: Mr. Franklyn Kargbo, Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of Sierra Leone, at his chambers Siaka Stevens Street, Freetown.

24 March 1998: Mr. Eke Halloway Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of Sierra Leone, at his chambers Siaka Stevens Street, Freetown.

25 March 1998: Mr. B. (he does not want to be identified so I have used a pseudonym), at 29 Circular Rd., Freetown.

7 April 1998: Bro. Mahoi at Jesus is Lord Ministry's compound, Tower Hill, Freetown.

7 April 1998: Pa David Robinson retired teacher at his residence, 4 Settra Kroo Street, Freetown

8 April 1998: Pastor Laggah pastor of Bethel World Outreach Ministry, at 22 Circular Road.

13 April 1998: Pastor Milton Marah pastor-in-charge of Church of Christ at Wilberforce at his residence.

16 April 1998: Rev. Theresa Temple Coordinator Health Care Fellowship, at Connaught Hospital Freetown.

12 April 1998: Mr Ayo Sawyer, member of Jehovah's' Witnesses, at his residence, 36 Wellington Street, Freetown.

18 April 1998: Pastor Duncan Edem Archbong of Free Grace Garden Mission at the Church office Thunder Hill, Kissy.

27 April 1998: Honourable Mr. Justice Samuel Beccles-Davies, Appeal Court Judge in Freetown, at his residence 3 Regent Road, Freetown.

5 May 1998 Director of Sierra Leone Theological College and Church Training, at his office at Fort Street, Freetown.

8 May 1998: Brother Daniel Lewis, at 8 Upper Waterloo Street, Freetown.

- 9 May 1998: Pa Roberts, a renowned *abalist*, at his traditional “clinic”, Block 12, off King Harman Road, Brookfields.
- 12 June 1998: Administrator-General of the High Court in Sierra Leone, Ms. Sally Koroma at her office, Roxy Building, Walpole Street, Freetown.
- 16 June 1998: Rev. Lionel Betts, Director of Living Waters Ministry, at 51 Circular Road, Freetown.
- 16 June 1998: Dr. Rita Caesar, at her residence 149 Wilkinson Road, Freetown.
- 17 June 1998: Rev. Moses Khanu Secretary General Baptist Convention and National Programme Coordinator, Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone (IRCSL), at Youth For Christ building Garrison Street, Freetown.
- 18 June 1998: Crispin Cole, Secretary-General of Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone, at EFSL office, Circular Road, Freetown.
- 19 June 1998: Borbor Vandi, leader and Founder of Cline Town Displaced Christian Ministry, At Cline Town Displaced Camp, Wellington.
- 20 June 1998: Amara Bangura, Founder and Leader of Clay Factory Christian Displaced Fellowship, At Clay Factory Displace Camp, Clay Factory, Wellington.
- 20 June 1998: Pastor Shek Bangura, pastor-in-charge of Flaming Bible Church, Wellington Branch at Nicol Street, Wellington.
- 21 June 1998: Joseph Vamboi. Founder and Leader of Waterloo Refugee Christian Fellowship, Waterloo Refugee Camp, Waterloo Village.
- 22 June 1998: Sister Bose Akinola, WIN, at her residence Canon Street, Freetown.
- 22 June 1998: Pastor Felix Akinlola at his Canon Street residence.
- 25 June 1998: Bishop Olutu Lynch, Bishop of the Archdiocese of Sierra Leone, at Cathedral House, Gloucester Street, Freetown.
- 25 June 1998: Miss K (she prefers anonymity, so I have used a pseudonym). at her residence 22 Regent Road, Freetown.
- 27 June 1998: Honourable Mr. Justice Abel Stronge, High Court Judge in Freetown, at Shell Petroleum Station, Merewether Road, Freetown.
- 7 July 1998: Rev. Theresa Temple, at her Fort Street residence, Freetown.
- 14 July 1998: Mr. Centus Macauley, Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of Sierra Leone, at his chambers, Lightfoot Boston Street, Freetown.
- 24 July 1998: Mrs T. (She prefers anonymity so I have used a pseudonym) at her residence, 15 Circular Road, Freetown.
- 7 August 1998: Mr, Ernest Georgestone, administrative head at Jesus is Lord Ministry, at the church compound, Tower Hill, Freetown.
- 6 August 1998: Mr. James Conteh Coordinator Tools for Self Reliance programme at CCSL, at CCSL office, Brookfields.
- 8 August 1998: Pa Moses Levi, Headman of Hamilton Village, at his residence.
- 11 August 1998: Sis. Yarri Koroma founder of Shalom Ministry, at her residence, 51 Charles St., Freetown. .
- 12 August 1998: Sis. Yarri Koroma, at her residence, 51 Charles St., Freetown.
- 22 August 1998: Bishop Abu Koroma, Founder and Leader of Flaming Bible Ministries, at his Charlotte St. Office.

- 20 August 1998: Mrs. Patricia Koroma president of the Women's Fellowship at Flaming Bible Church, at the Church office, Charlotte Street.
- 25 August 1998: Bro. Josh Ghanu at Flaming Bible Church office, Charlotte St. Freetown.
- 28 August 1998: Mr. Joseph Taylor, communications secretary for the communications department at Scripture Union, at 72, Pademba Road, Freetown.
- 27 August 1998: Dennis Wright, married to a provincial woman and both of them are entrepreneurs, interview was held at their Bathurst Street residence.
- 2 September 1998: Mrs. Elizabeth Mensah Women's Ministry Coordinator EFSL, at her Circular Road office.
- 2 September: Foday Khabenje, REAPS coordinator at EFSL, at his Circular Road office.
- 4 September 1998: Mr. Boscoe Kai-Kai, Director of Great Commission Movement of Sierra Leone, at his Pademba Road office.
- 9 September 1998: Mr. Adewole John, former Member of the Church (Aladura), at Cafe de La Rose, Leightfoot Boston Street.
- 6 October 1998: Mr. Alimamy Koroma, secretary-general at CCSL, at his office.

Conversations

- Conversation held with my great-aunt, Mrs. Morkeh Barber at Allen Town who gave me an insight into this ceremony and meaning of names.
- Conversation held with my mother, Madame Ayo Aribaut after the traditional visit on Christmas day, 1997, to the graves of our deceased family members at Racecourse cemetery at Cline Town, Freetown.
- Conversation held with my mother, Madam Ayo Aribaut at 62 Regent Rd., Freetown, 4 January 1998.
- Conversation held with my husband, Mr Bunting Thompson, past master of Lodge Mount Aureol 1612 (Scottish Constitution), at 10a Thompson Bay, Cockerill North, Freetown.
- Conversation held with Honourable Mr Justice Freddie Short, Judge of the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone, who is not a member of the Masonic Lodge, at his Smart Farm residence in Freetown.
- Conversation held with Mrs. Dorcas Coker, a fishmonger at Tombo village.
- Conversation held with Pastor Shek Bangura, 28 June 1998.
- Conversation held with Prof. Akintola Wyse.

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