

**Diversity of Ghanaian Diaspora in the USA:
Ministering to the Ghanaian Communities through Ghanaian Congregations**

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Abstract

Ghanaian community in the United States is culturally and generationally diverse, which creates both opportunities and challenges. Ministry challenges require confronting cultural, linguistic, and generational diversity in the midst of multicultural society. Ministry opportunities also exist, as Ghanaian congregations are founded, motivated, and mobilized for mission. In the end, ethnic networks can be used to reach beyond the US, back to the native land of the Ghanaians diaspora. The purposes of this paper are: 1) to provide an ethnographic description of the cultural and generational diversity among Ghanaian diaspora in the US, and 2) to explain the missiological dimensions of ministry to Ghanaian communities through Ghanaian diaspora congregations in the US.

Key Words: Migration, Diaspora, Socialization, Enculturation, Acculturation, Ethnicity, Culture, Cultural Pluralism, Mother Tongue, Assimilation, Adaptation, Absorption.

Introduction

The reality of cultural and generational diversity among the Ghanaian communities in the USA cannot be overemphasized. There is a two-fold purpose of this paper. First, the paper will provide an ethnographic description of the cultural and generational diversity among Ghanaian diaspora in the US. Second, it will explain the missiological implications of ministry to Ghanaian diaspora communities through the Ghanaian congregations. In this paper, the term, “Ghanaian diaspora” refers to Ghanaians scattered from their homeland settling in foreign lands.

Ghanaian Immigrants in the US

The influx of Ghanaian immigrants to USA since the 1960’s, is due to two major factors:

- First — the “push” factor in Ghana. Due to political instability and serious poverty, there has

been large scale Ghanaians leaving the country for decades.

- Second — the “pull” factor in the US. With the perceived opportunities that abound in USA, Ghanaians feel attracted and pulled. An example is the opening up of “the floodgates” through the Diversity Visa Lottery Program (DVLP). Moses Biney stated,

Ghanaian immigrants in New York...first migrated between the 1950s and the early 1990s, whereas the second came after 1990...Many Ghanaians in the second group...came through the Diversity Visa Program, as a recent publication of the New York City Department of City Planning points out.¹

As Biney’s statement indicate, there has been a categorical US official attempt to attract Ghanaians into the US economy since the 1990s. For instance, a Ghana News Agency (GNA) item reported,

Chief of the Consular Section...explained that the D Visa Lottery programme was instituted by the US Government to give opportunity to non-Americans...the annual programme had offered opportunities to many people around the world to become American citizens by choice and in Ghana about 7,000 winners were declared in the previous entry, which indicated a lead in the winning race worldwide.²

Consequently, one of the pull factors is favorable immigration conditions which contribute to the massive exile of Ghanaian diaspora.

Ghanaian Cultural and Ethnic Diversities in USA

Ethnic groupings vary widely in cultural patterns and selected areas of Ghanaian cultural diversity are discussed in this paper.

Worldview

Robin Horton³ developed a model (i.e. ‘intellectualist’ or ‘cognitive’) for interpreting religious

¹Moses Ohene Biney, “‘Singing the Lord’s Song in a Foreign Land:’ Spirituality, Community, and Identity in a Ghanaian Immigrant Congregation,” in Olupona, Jacob K. and Gemignani, Regina, eds. *African Immigrant Religions in America* (NY: New York University Press, 2007), 26.

²GNA, “US Embassy Opens DV Visa Lottery,” <www.ghanaweb.com>, October 21, 2009.

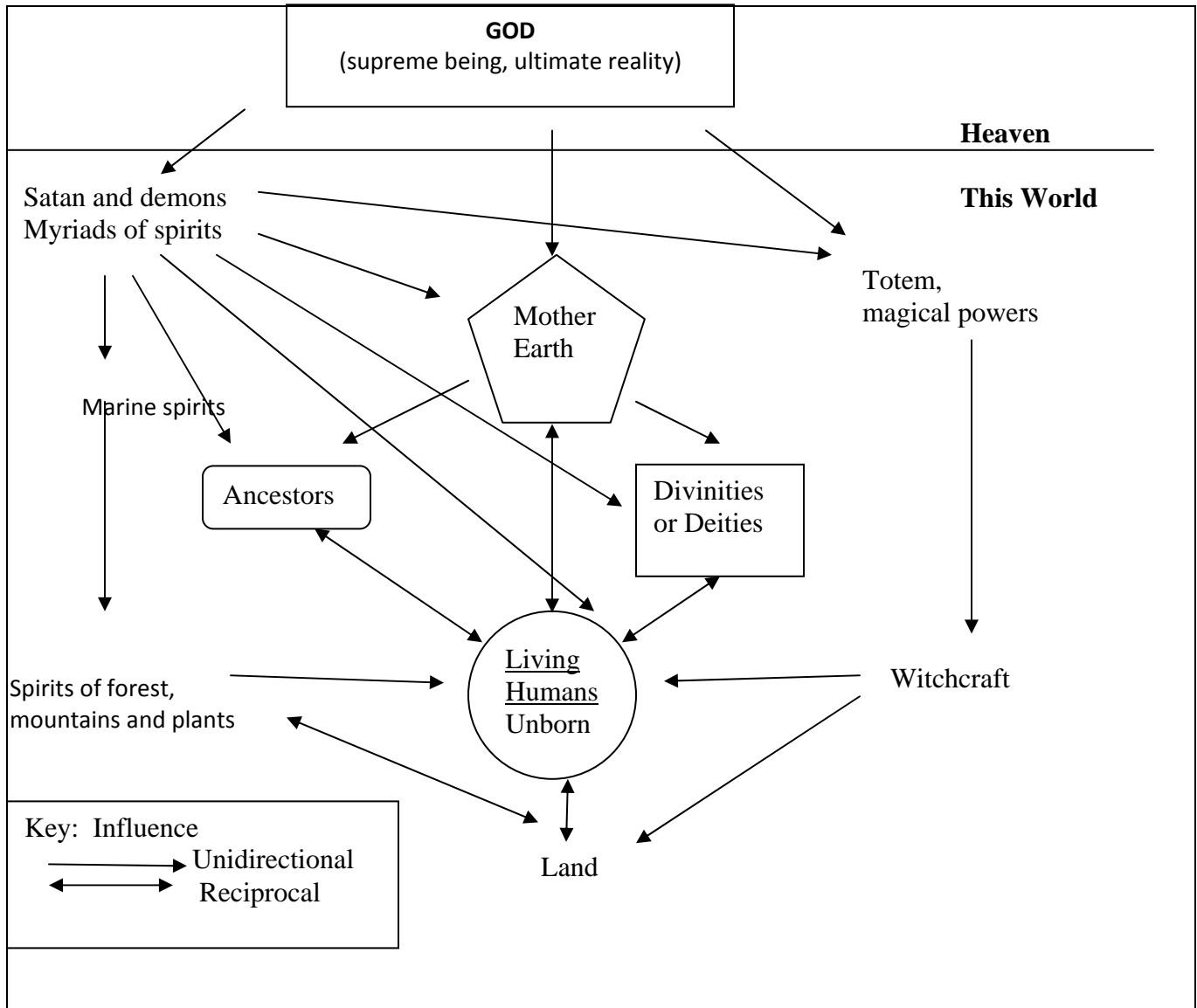
³Robin Horton, “African Conversion,” in *Africa*, 1971, vol. 41, no. 2, 91-112.

change in modern Africa. According to his theory, there is a two-tier pattern (i.e. two levels) of African cosmology. Level one is microcosmic. In this tier devotion to divinities in which activities of adherents are underpinned by events and processes of the local community exists. Ancestral, deity, and natural spirits occupying marine bodies, rocks, trees, and forests operate at this level. Adherents at this level often lack formal education. In the macrocosmic level two, adherents support the idea of the Supreme Being whose relationship with humanity is underpinned by universal events and processes. With these two levels, Horton was able to develop a center-periphery analysis. At the microcosmic level the lesser spirits are prominent and are shifted into the center of adherence. The Supreme Being is relegated to the periphery. However, at the macrocosmic level two knowledge and adherence to the Supreme Being are highly developed; the Supreme Being is moved to the center while the deities are shifted to the periphery. Adherents include the educated, the economically well to do, and urbanized people. Based upon this analysis the Ghanaian cosmology is generally placed in a hierarchical order with God at the top. God, the Supreme Being, or the Ultimate Reality is separated from all others in the pantheon. God's attributes cannot be shared by the others. God's transcendence and immanence influence all others in the cosmology because God is the Creator. The human being is caught up in the operation of all and is influenced by them. The devil and his agents (demons) exercise influence on every aspect of the natural world. The composition of the cosmology consists of God as Absolute Reality, mother earth, ancestors, deities, and myriad of spirits. The offering of libation—an *Akan* traditional prayer—illustrates the cosmology. Its beginning as invocation and ending as doxology are provided:

Otumfuo Onyankopon Kwame, nsa; Saturday born Almighty God, a drink;
Asaase Yaa Obeatan, nsa; Thursday born mother earth, a drink;
Yen Nenanom nsamanfo, nsa; our ancestors, a drink;
Abosom ahorow, nsa; etc. various deities, a drink...
 Anyone who wills this family ill is cursed. We call on you elders,
 our gods, and spirits to strike such a person with thunder.

Figure 1 illustrates the *Akan* worldview representing Ghanaian traditional cosmology.

Figure 1 — The *Akan* (Ghanaian) Cosmology and Worldview⁴



⁴ Paul G. Hiebert, et. al., *Understanding Folk Religion: A Christian Response to Popular Beliefs and Practices* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books House, 1999), 81. The general idea of this figure has been adopted from Paul Hiebert and colleagues with the necessary changes. They write from an *etic* perspective. However, writing from an *emic* perspective, there are few caveats with their figure. First, though the ancestors are living dead, the *Akan* do not lump them with themselves. Thus for our purpose the ancestors who are venerated are separated from humanity even though they are their nearest and highly influential beings. Second, the idea of including the animals, plants, and land in the pantheon is problematic. They are animate and inanimate objects created by God to be respected, tilled, and keep. For the *Akan*, it is the spirits which possess these objects that are part of the pantheon not the physical animals and plants which are used for food and medicines. The land, even though in its created earthly form is next to God, is used for production of food for humanity and serves as the hiding place for human dead bodies.

In figure 1, God (the Supreme Being) is separated from the capricious evil spirits. Linguistically, the divinities, deities, or lesser gods are not gods at all. They are called *abosom*. Etymologically, *abo* means stones and *som* means worship. Thus, those involved with them are worshipping stones not *Onyankopon*—Almighty God. Only God deserves human worship. Having explained this Ghanaian worldview, a comparison between the traditional Ghanaian and Western mindsets is made in figure 2 with four themes or dispositions.

Figure 2 — Comparison between Ghanaian Traditional and Western Mindsets⁵

Ghanaian (<i>Akan</i>)	USA (Western)
Cognition and Emotion	
Conservative - always repeating. Emotional - individual lives on emotions; gives expression to feelings. Mystical, fantasy and meditative. Intuitive and imaginative – emotional, mental acceptance, and responsive.	Dynamic - always creating. Volitional - individual expresses own will; lives under control of will. Empirical - preoccupied with details. Independent - self-sufficiency, self-reliance, and self-determination.
Individual in Social Organization	
Communal – community-oriented, family emphasis, nobody an island. Content with and passive to reality. Tribal and traditional. People-oriented; relationally based.	Causative; rational - Always asking “why?” Exploitative, discovery, scientific. Individualistic; venturesome. Universalistic – transnational; global perspective Individualistic – competitive; achievement-oriented.
Socio-economic Orientation	
Existence; subsistence-oriented. Socialism; personality consciousness.	Goal; success-oriented, business-oriented. Capitalism; time consciousness.
Religio-cultural Orientation	
Religion: holistic worldview; related to whole. Ontologically, person is small part of cosmos; subject to cosmic laws.	Dualistic worldview: sacred vs. secular. Utilitarian; world—person-controlled object

Comparing the African worldview-controlled mindset with that of Westerners the former is more people-oriented, conservative, and holistic whereas the later is individualistic and time-oriented.

⁵ Figure 2 is an adaptation from Wan’s comparative study (2010) of Chinese and American . See Enoch Wan, “Understanding Chinese Worldview,” in *Sino Theology*; an unpublished work.

Religious Multiplicity

In African traditional society, African Traditional Religion (ATR) is to Africa as Hinduism is to India. Comparatively, the state-religion separation in the US is non-existent in the Ghanaian context. Africans live without any separation between religion and socio-economic life. Peter Sarpong stated, “The African is inseparably religious...Religion pervades all areas of African life and there are rituals in the three most important stages of their life.”⁶ Later, Sarpong commented, “For Africans religion is like their skin. They carry it wherever they go...Our Western brothers and sisters came to Africa to teach us. Now they should come to Africa to learn.”⁷ Generally, therefore, Ghanaian perception and involvement with religion is different from the discerning style in USA.

Linguistic Diversity

English is the official Ghanaian language—a British colonial-heritage. However, within the homogeneous Ghanaian culture is the heterogeneous linguistic diversity. Moreover, different dialects are spoken in the same linguistic-stock. Ruth Benedict expressed linguistic differences as important in understanding cultural diversity, “The numbers of sounds that can be produced by our vocal cords and our oral and nasal cavities are practically unlimited...a great deal of our misunderstanding of languages unrelated to our own has arisen from our attempts to refer alien phonetic systems back to ours as a point of reference.”⁸ In Ghana the *Akan* speak *Twi* and *Fante*, the *Ewe* speak *Ewe*, and the *Ga* speak *Ga* dialects.

Rites of Passage.

Generically, rites are mostly closely related to childhood, youth, and adulthood. Birth, puberty, marriage, and death are signposts of human existence. Nevertheless, rites associated with these passage

⁶ Peter Akwasi Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect: Some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture* (Tema: Ghana Publishing Company, 1974), 133,134.

⁷ Jim Ault, “Faces of African Christianity,” Film Documentary Footage filmed in Ghana. This was previewed in an African Christianity and Gospel and Culture courses at the Princeton Theological Seminary in 2006.

⁸Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989), 23.

signposts have cultural variety. For instance, *obadinto*, the naming ceremony of the *Akan*, after the eighth day when the child and mother make their first journey from indoors to outdoors is strange in the USA. This rite called ‘outdooring’ is strange because it is not part of the US culture. There is also diversity in the rites associated with puberty, marriage, and death in the US multicultural society.

Ethnic Diversity

Several ethnic groupings exist within the Ghanaian diaspora. Figure 3 illustrates Ghanaian ethnic diversity within the US cultural context.

Figure 3 — Ethnic Distribution of Ghanaians (2000 Population Census)

Ethnicity	Percentage of the Population
<i>Akan</i>	49.1%
<i>Mole-Dagomba</i>	16.5%
<i>Ewe</i>	12.7%
<i>Ga-Adangme</i>	8.0%
Non-Ghanaians	3.7%
Total	100.0%

Contrary to the general assumption of homogeneous Ghanaian culture, ethnicity is an expression of diverse Ghanaian subcultures. In the multiethnic-multicultural-pluralistic US society, various ethnic groups are at various stages of assimilation and adaptation, Ghanaians included. Naturally, there is an ongoing dynamic interplay between traditional Ghanaian culture and the influences of dominant US pop culture including thought patterns and life styles.

Ghanaian Generational Diversity in USA

Generational variations within the US population are exemplified by “baby boomers,” a generation born between the late 1940s and early 1960s after the Second World War, and “generation-X.” Walt Mueller, describing the generation-X and its attachment to digitals stated,

Generation Y...driven by emerging postmodern worldview...The cries rising out of their deep hunger and thirst are loud, very loud. If we listen, we’ll hear it in their music, books and films.

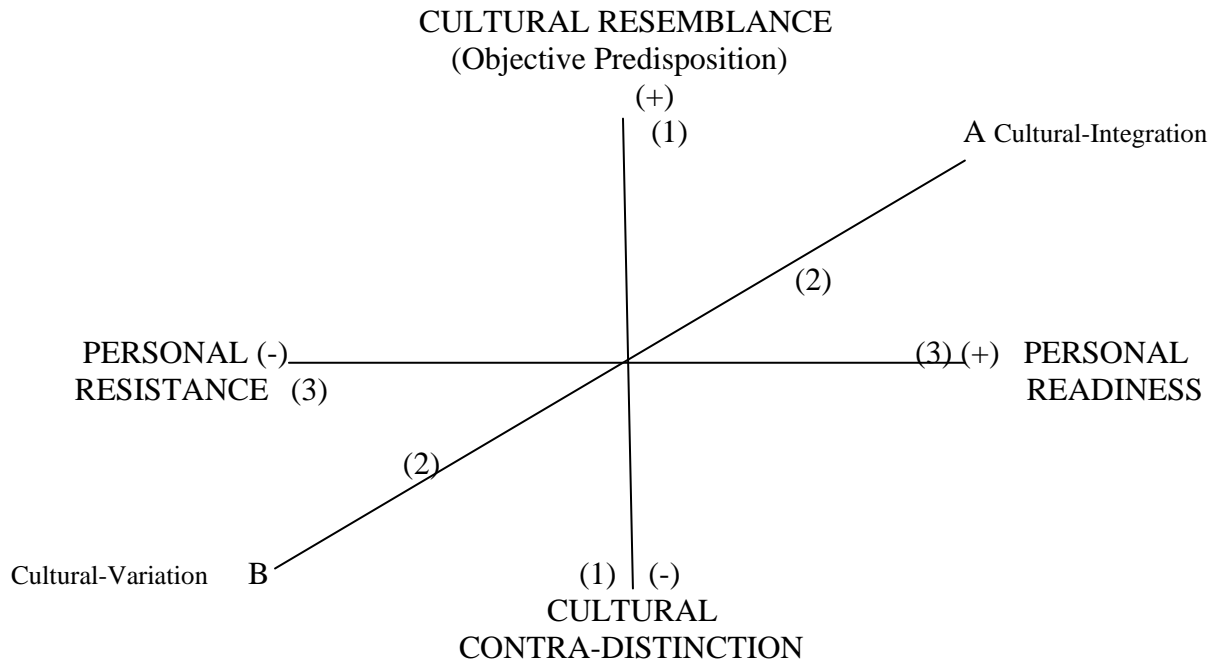
We observe it in their choices and behaviors. They long to be “meaningfully connected to life.” But the complexities of their world have made it difficult for them to hear the good news—at least in the way the church is now “spreading” it.⁹

For Mueller, the reason for the generation-X’s attachment to the computer is that they receive “acceptance, understanding, community, meaning, and guidance”¹⁰ from their online-friends. The point is communication exists between them and their peers, even unknown personally, for individual satisfaction. Characteristically, today’s youth are hooked to electronics such as the television, computers, face-books, twitters, mobile phones, I-pods and I-phones, video-cameras and films, DVDs, and CDs. Perceiving fornication as accepted relationship, they talk, sing, and dance sex. Hip-hop is their dance and they enjoy profane lyrics. They have the craze for fashion and indecent exposure. They push and do drugs. Unfortunately, the family has failed them woefully because both Christian and non-Christian parenting are unable to withstand the pressures of the generic pop-culture. As the generation-X feel they are not being heard, parents covertly or overtly refuse to listen to them.

Within Ghanaian diaspora US sub-culture also there is the generational diversity. Generally, this has a close connection with the generational complexity of the USA. Categorization of the generations reveals two main dimensions: chronological and incidental. Chronologically, there are first, second, and third generations where factors of assimilation and amalgamation are evident. Incidentally the various Ghanaian generations of immigrants vary in the preservation of traditional Ghanaian culture and adaptation to the US culture. Figure 4 illustrates.

⁹Walt Mueller, *Engaging the Soul of Youth Culture: Bridging Teen Worldviews and Christian Truth* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, InterVarsity Press, 2006), 18, 19.

¹⁰Walt Mueller, *Engaging the Soul of Youth Culture*, 17.

Figure 4 — Cultural Integration/Variation & Readiness Scale¹¹

Key: 1. OBG—Overseas Born Ghanaians
2. LBG—Locally Born Ghanaians

As Enoch Wan explained Figure 4 above,

The two major dimensions in the process of cultural integration are: objective predisposition (“the degree of resemblance of an ‘OBG/LBG’s’ own culture to the host culture”), and the subjective preference (“an ‘OBG/LBG’s’ personal choice in terms of motivation, emotion and volition towards cultural integration). These two can also be the deterrent factors against cultural integration with resultant cultural variation (see the A-B scale in figure 4).¹²

Within the USA generational diversity is the particularity of Ghanaian diaspora generations. The generic values of the OBG are summarized in figure 5.

Figure 5 — The Morality and Values of the OBG¹³

Category	Description
Cognition and Emotional	Humility: Ghanaians are gentle; modestly aggressive; peaceful. Honor: Proud in morality and integrity. Shame: Guilt manifested when wrong; frown on sin; evil.

¹¹ Enoch Wan, (ed.), *Missions Within Reach: Intercultural Ministries in Canada*, A Compendium Volume of the Intercultural Ministries National conference of Canada, 1993 (China Alliance Press, 1995), 162.

¹² Enoch Wan, (ed.), *Missions Within Reach*, 162.

¹³ Adopted from Enoch Wan’s theology of Asian cultures.

	Overly show no pain—glad to make sacrifices.
Interpersonal Relationship	Community: Tribal and extended family first, before self. Sharing: Everything belongs to others; e.g. Mother Earth belongs to all. Respect; Honor: for elderly—do not criticize elders. Acceptance:—Good from all others but despise; chastisement for the bad. Children: Gift from God; shared with others.
Religion	Religion is supreme and relevant, transcends all other aspects of life. Medicines should be from natural herbs, a gift from God and mother earth.
Learning	Learning through legends: Past great stories remembered – source of knowledge; wisdom. Mother-tongue Aspirations: Cherish own language; speak it whenever possible. <i>Sankofa</i> : Return to traditional ways; values—old ways; values are best; have been proven.
Socio-cultural	Land is precious: orient self to land. Diligence: live with hands—hard work is sacred. Leave things natural.

OBGs retain their cultural values as central, making US culture peripheral. Individualism and assimilation are eschewed. The second generation constitutes two youthful types. There are those who immigrated with their parents to USA (OBG2). These are divided equally between cultural integration and cultural variation as in figure 4. The others are LBG1 and LBG2 who have US citizenship. Ghanaian culture may remain faint at the core of their thinking while US culture is dominant through assimilation and acculturation. Traditionally, puberty rites are relevant connections associated with this adolescent generation. However, their physiological and cognitive importance is relatively diverse in various cultures. For instance, in Africa, puberty rites are significant to usher in adulthood. Such rites are insignificant in the US. Mueller offered four useful truths for youth ministry.¹⁴ Overall, the

¹⁴Walt Mueller, *Engaging the Soul of Youth Culture*, 13, 14. Two of Mueller’s four Truths relevant for us are explained:

- False optimism looks at the world and with a shrug of the shoulders says “No need to worry. Everything is going to be alright.” Truth is the collective lot of children and teens hasn’t gotten any better. Habitual pessimism looks at the world and says, “It’s so bad and so far gone that there’s nothing anyone can do about it.” Not only does this view belittle God, but it too forfeits influence because there’s nothing anyone can do. In recent years Christians and cultural analysts have traveled down both these roads as they’ve looked at the emerging generations—particularly Generation X and the Millennials.
- At time I am critical of the “faith” we’re calling young people to. For too long youth ministry has been getting young people saved”... We have failed to understand that conversion is not just about belief, repentance, forgiveness, and eternal life. When we call young people to faith we are not calling them to live out of the world and into heaven.

technological worldview of the generation-X is far different from the first generation because of globalization, internet technology, computers, and communication drive. Mueller suggested that the US adult generation has failed to understand the real worldview of today’s youth—a direct reflection of Ghanaian diaspora. The Ghanaian diaspora family, as institution for socialization, has failed woefully. Attempting to survive the harsh US economy, parents are absentee parents. Children are virtually abandoned. Therefore, the LBG is hurting. What then are the challenges and opportunities of these cultural and generational diversities for Christian ministry to the Ghanaian communities through Ghanaian congregations?

Challenges and Opportunities of the Diversities of Ghanaian Diaspora in USA for Christian Ministry

As genesis for this section, summaries of challenges and opportunities of ministering to Ghanaian communities through Ghanaian congregations and generations are presented in figures 6 and 7.

Figure 6 — Ministering to Ghanaian Diaspora Communities in the USA

Challenges	Opportunities
Ghanaian Communities	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Existing diverse cultures; worldviews. 2. Existing ethnic churches. 3. Existing similar mainline denominations. 4. Pastoral Care and Counseling issues. 5. Lack of trained leadership. 6. Pluralistic operational environment. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formation and nurturing congregations. 2. Creation of “home” from home. 3. Opportunity to operate as community. 4. Exhibiting ecclesiology of family values. 5. Using cultural values: stories, proverbs, wise sayings, etc.
Ghanaian Generations	

<p>OBGs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Widening generational gap. 2. Dominant cultural reality. 3. Cultural dislocation: Challenge for cross-cultural ministry. 4. Delineating polychromic from monochromic time. 5. Cosmological warfare. <p>LBGs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Linguistic diversity. 2. Loss of cultural identity. 3. Peer pressure. 4. Pop-culture influences; assimilation 	<p>OBGs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hearing the Gospel in mother-tongue; monolingual congregations. 2. Meaningful engagement. 3. Family caring for the LBGs 4. Responsible discipleship. <p>LBGs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LBGs hunger for God. 2. Generational gap as positive vehicle for evangelization. 3. Youth worship; different times; different congregations.
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Figure 7 — Ministering through Ghanaian Diaspora Congregations in the USA

Challenges	Opportunities
Ghanaian Congregations	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Colonization;” paternalistic church oversight from some local mainline churches. 2. Challenging employment schedules. 3. Location of congregations in long distances. 4. Spiritual warfare. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practice: Authentic Christians; authentic Africans. 2. Functional: Satisfying felt needs. 3. Self-help; communal support. 4. Financial support for churches back home. 5. Rites of passage celebration. 6. Meaningful engagement; toleration and cooperation. 7. Responsible discipleship. 8. Countering cosmological warfare; healing and deliverance. 9. Worship as attraction for all races; all generations.
Ghanaian Generations	
<p>OBGs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LBGs socialization. 2. Care for LBGs. <p>LBG</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peer pressures in ministry. 2. Difficulties in operating as current members. 3. Mother-tongue challenges. 	<p>OBGs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Socializing LBGs through worship 2. Training for LBGs. <p>LBGs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaching mother-tongue through LBG 2 2. Action oriented ministry: drama, poetry, dancing, etc. 3. Deliverance from “modern day demons.”

From these long lists, the paper is selective for further discussion.

Cultural and Generational Diversity Challenges in Ministering to Ghanaian Communities

Diversity in Worldviews

US worldview, easily adaptable to change, with its strong scientific and technological influence⁷ has little connection with of OBGs traditional worldview. Differences in both worldviews create a wide gap between the two cultures. For both cultures, the worldview impinges on values; which in turn influences beliefs that control behavior. The challenge is fitting into USA's industrialized socio-cultural worldview. Though Ghanaians easily fuse into the dominant culture, the OBG challenge is resistance, avoidance, or rejection of absolute cultural assimilation as they endeavor to eschew individualism. Regard the LBGs, maintaining, preserving, and behaving more in line with Ghanaian cultural values is their challenge.

Widening Generational Gap

On of the major challenges boils down to adult and youth cultures. The dominant culture is a serious challenge to the youth. Mueller suggested that in the US dominant culture, the “‘perfect storm, forces, and trends affecting’ the youth include the ‘rapidly changing, free fall families.’”¹⁵ At the same youthful independence creates its own protective sub-culture where “outside influences are shaping teenage values; and changing values are leading to new trends.”¹⁶ LBGs are in a different world from

¹⁵Walt Mueller, *Youth Culture 101* (El Cajon, CA: Youth Specialties Products, Zondervan, 2007), 39. -76.

¹⁶Walt Mueller, 39-76. Mueller writes that the forces and trends affecting teenagers include:

- Families are Changing: increase and acceptance of divorce, rise in cohabitation and out-of-wedlock births, crisis of fatherlessness, family that affects teenagers is the increasing of mothers who work outside the home, and decreasing amount of time parents are spending with their kids.
- Outside Influences are Shaping Teenage Values: Music, advertizing, and other media, digital revolution, peer group, globalization, and postmodern worldview.
- Changing Influences Are Leading to New Trends: sex—no rules—our teenagers live in a sex saturated society, materialism—the desirable lifestyle, prevalence of substance abuse, increased risk-taking behavior, and epidemic of teenage depression and suicide...Our teenagers live in sex-saturated society. The dominant message they hear from the media is that sex is an appetite to be indulged and enjoyed whenever, wherever, however, and with whomever they like.

their parents. Exposed to US way of liberal life, mostly outside the home, they find it difficult to accept adult conservative views. Figure 8 summarizes the differences in values of the two generations.

Figure 8 — Differences in OBG and LBG Morality and Values¹⁷

OBG Morality and Values	LBG Morality and Values
Cognition and Emotion	
Happiness is paramount! enjoy life. Humility: Ghanaians are gentle; peaceful; very modest. Honor: honor wise elders. Shame: frown on sin; evil. Pain: show no pain—glad to make sacrifices.	Success: Generally involving status, wealth, and proficiency. Competitive: self-believing—“If you do not toot own horn who will?” Future lies with youth; Honor: behave, speak, and dress American Shame: Not of any moral grounds but moving from closely identifying with the Ghanaian culture. Do not be tortured—no kind of a masochistic nut.
Interpersonal Relationships	
Community: commonality before self; Sharing: Everything belongs to others. Elderly Respect:—no criticism for elders. Universal acceptance: Good form all others; but despise and chastise the bad. Children: Gifts from God; shared with others.	“Think of number one!” syndrome. Ownership: Preference for outhouse rather than share a mansion. A critic is a good analyst. Persuade, convince, and proselytize—be an evangelist/missionary. “I will discipline my own children; do not tell me how to raise mine.”
Learning	
Learning through legends: great past stories; knowledge comes from them. <i>Sankofa</i> : Return to traditional ways; old ways and values, the best, having been proven. Mother tongue aspirations: Cherish own language; speak it when possible.	Learning found in school; get all schooling you possibly can; it cannot be taken from you Look to the future to things new—“Tie your wagon to a star; keep climbing up; up.” You are American; speak English.
Religion	
Religion, supreme; relevant; transcends all life’s aspects.	Individualistic religion.
Socio-Economic-Cultural	

- Principles That Bridge the Cultural-Generational Gap:
 - Understanding the World of Kids Is Primarily a Parent’s Calling.
 - It’s Never Too Early; It’s Never Too Late.
 - It Won’t be Easy; Pain Is a Blessing.
 - Understanding Youth Culture Equips Parents to Pass on the Torch of Faith.
 - Understanding Youth Culture Fosters Relational Closeness.

An Example of Teenage Misunderstanding: In November 2009, a thirteen year old Ghanaian school boy jumped from the balcony of the 22nd floor of the Tracey Towers in the Bronx, NY when the mother did not allow him to go out to play basketball after school. The mother had told him to wait and eat his lunch, which she was preparing in the kitchen, in addition to doing his homework before allowing him to go. In the spur of the moment the mother went to the balcony only to witness his son rolling downward to his death.

¹⁷ Enoch Wan, “Sino Theology,” an unpublished book draft. Some of the items above are adopted from the draft material and organized into the various sections. OBGs morality values are shortened as summary for fig. 5.

Diligence: hard work is sacred. Leave things natural. Medicinal herbs; God’s gifts from mother earth. Land is precious: Orient self to the land.	Live with your mind—think intelligently. Show the teacher how well you know the answers. Good at books. “You should see land when God had it all alone.” Synthetic medicines: “Today’s laboratories can do anything.” Orient yourself to a house, a job
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Host culture impact, particularly from peer pressure, seems overwhelming to LBGs. As citizens of the USA, they are more inclined to its culture than Ghanaian culture. Honor for them is to speak, dress, learn, and behave like US citizens. Shame is not going against any moral values of the society. Expectation of a strictly Ghanaian cultural attachment by a different generation seems too much. Such expectations of behavior from LBGs, born, socialized, and acculturated in the US by the OBGs raise conflict between the generations. Urging them to learn the culture of the motherland by participating in the activities of churches seems difficult, paternalistic, and overbearing as they question the desirability and values of such “outdated” rules, norms, and customs.

Linguistic Diversity

This is the mother-tongue aspirations of the two vastly different generations. On one hand, it is argued that generally, Chinese, Indians, Koreans, Japanese, and Hispanics publicly speak their indigenous dialects with their children. One of the first social institutions Chinese or Koreans set up in the US is language schools. This is helpful for them to learn their language. Ghanaians do not do this. Those who perceive the challenge of language as normative for Ghanaian behavior often cite the Canada example where the official languages of Quebec are French and English. Quebec laws allow the teaching of *Twi*, one of the major Ghanaian languages. Therefore, Ghanaian children in Quebec officially speak three languages, which is helpful. On the other hand, others argue that the perception that other nationals speak their mother-tongue with their children is problematic. It depends on one’s location. Those who live among Whites speak English just as Ghanaians. Meanwhile, related to honor and shame, teasing is the LBG’s cognitive challenge; sometimes shame is to speak too much “African”

when peers hear them communicating in their mother-tongue. Ironically, speaking *Twi*, *Ga*, or *Ewe* well is a struggle. Linguistically, LBGs are thus tossed between the two opposing cultures psychologically.

Loss of Identity of LBGs

The OBGs in the USA sometimes express their frustrations in their children's loss of cultural identity. Their children's assimilation is problematic. Despite their acculturation and assimilation they are neither Ghanaian nor American. Ghanaian children have are disjointed, disoriented, and even wayward in terms of their African roots. While the first generation Ghanaian immigrants are comfortable with their cultural identity their LBGs are not. This creates the problems of identity, cultural, and inter-generational conflicts. Biney stated,

A people's community life often depends largely on their identification with certain cultural symbols, beliefs and ideas, language, and practices that they consider to be historically or mythically linked to their existence and prosperity. This understanding of the relationship between the community and individual is prominent among many Ghanaian immigrants and stands in opposition to the general individualistic ethos of American culture.¹⁸

This is not the case of the LBGs. Coupled with other challenges such as hurting cognitive dispositions, lack of parental time and care, and paternalistic adults, Ghanaian identity is a huge problem for LBGs.

Opportunity for Christian Ministry through Ghanaian Congregations to Ghanaian Communities Congregational Creation, Mobilization, and Motivation

An undisputed but hardly recognized fact is the creation and nurture of congregations. Africans, including Ghanaians, are converting living rooms, garages, defunct warehouses, and dilapidated buildings to imposing chapels in the USA to 're-caffeinate' some of the 'decaffeinated' US mainline churches. African congregations are reconfiguring and are slowly but surely Africanizing US

¹⁸Moses Biney, "'Singing the Lord's Song in a Foreign Land,' 271, 272. Also see The Department of City Planning, *The Newest New Yorkers 2000: Immigrant New York in the Millennium* (New York: Department of City Planning, 2004).

Christianity. Their existence brings renewal and vitality. African churches are community players which offer spirituality space for worshipers. Some of these African churches have trans-nationalism operation by getting into contact with their mother-churches back home. There is also double-reverse mission in which congregations are set up in the USA which returns home to start branches in the form of co-operative ventures. Where are these congregations? In their functional role, how do diaspora Ghanaians in them use religion as a soothing balm for their psychological, theological, and stressful challenges? The quest for answers to these questions is relevant. Some churches that have congregations in the USA include mainline ones such the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG), the Catholics, and the Methodist Church Ghana. Others include Church of Pentecost (CoP—currently said to have over eighty congregations in USA), the Assemblies of God, Light House Church, and Apostolic Church of Ghana.

For the Presbyterians, there are two groups: those affiliated to the PCG back home as trans-nationals and those affiliated to the Presbyterian Church of the USA (PCUSA). Figure 9 indicates the locations of some Ghanaian Presbyterian congregations in the US.

Figure 9 – Ghanaian Presbyterian (Reformed) Churches' US Locations

City Location	State	Denomination	Affiliation
18. Worcester	Massachusetts	Presbyterian	PCG
19. Houston	Texas	Presbyterian	PCG
20. Harlem, NY	New York	Presbyterian	PCG
20. Houston	Texas	Presbyterian	PCUSA
2. Bronx, NY	New York	Presbyterian	PCG
3. Brooklyn, NY	New York	Reformed	PCUSA
4. Ogden, NY	New York	Presbyterian	PCUSA
5. Queens, NY	New York	Presbyterian	PCG
6. Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	Presbyterian	PCUSA
7. Norton	Virginia	Presbyterian	PCG
8. Arlington	Virginia	Presbyterian	PCUSA
9. Silver Spring	Maryland	Presbyterian	PCUSA
10. Adelphi	Maryland	Presbyterian	PCG
11. Columbus	Ohio	Presbyterian	PCG
12. Columbus	Ohio	Presbyterian	PCUSA
13. Chicago	Illinois	Presbyterian	PCG
14. Chicago	Illinois	Presbyterian	PCUSA
15. Newark,	New Jersey	Reformed	PCUSA
16. Irvington	New Jersey	Presbyterian	PCG
17. Atlanta	Georgia	Presbyterian	PCUSA

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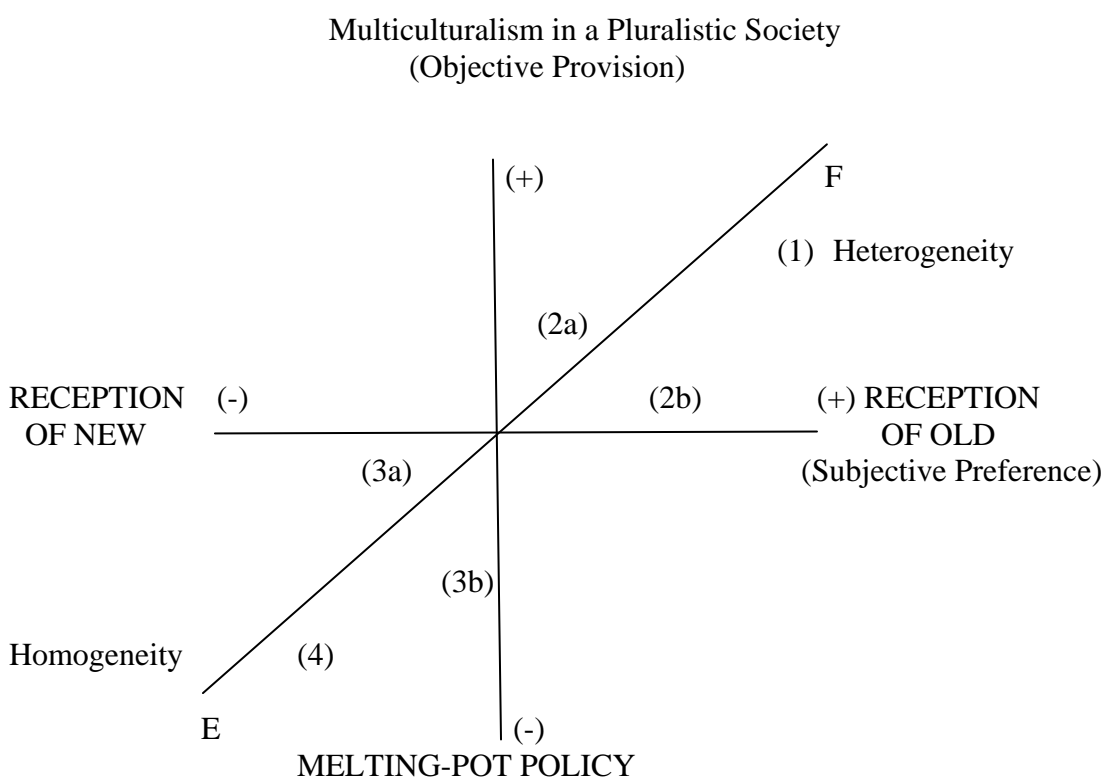
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p increases, the churches are growing more visible in their neighborhoods. People walk in and find community—friendly African hospitality...And second, there's this big emphasis on spiritual power in their services...Africans are taking their faith to Africans...It is a home away from home for people.¹⁹

These congregations have really become responsive to human needs making them a “home” from home. The type and process of setting up congregations have been analyzed by Enoch Wan in figure 10.

Figure 10 — The Congregation Type and Church Planter’s Option Scale²⁰



Wan used the following to explain the figure;

Notes: 1. heterogeneous & multi-congregation church.

2a. multilingual & multicultural church

2b. bilingual & bicultural church

3a. monolingual & monocultural church, ethnic but open
(OBG + LBG + etc)

3b. monolingual & bicultural church, ethnic but conservative (OBG dominant)

4. monolingual & heterogeneous church (only OBG or LBG)²¹

¹⁹ Daniel Wakin, “In New York, Gospel Resounds in African Tongues,” in NY: The New York Times, April 18, 2004, 31.

²⁰ Enoch Wan, (ed.), *Missions Within Reach*, 167.

He went on to explain,

It is natural and logical, and even expedient for ethnic... to form a monolingual and homogeneous church as in example (4) in figure #3 (10). This is a common practice of OBE...Christians...The opposite alternative is to form a multilingual, heterogeneous, and multi-congregational church (i.e., 1 in figure # 3) (10). The operation of a multilingual and multicultural church (2a of figure #3) (10) would usually require a lot of mutual respect, careful coordination and Christian love to ensure the health and well-being of such heterogeneous church.²²

Ghanaian congregations are usually set up by the OBGs who aim at reaching out to non-members.

Linguistic Opportunity

Most of OBGs want to hear the Gospel in their mother-tongue. Lamin Sanneh stated, “In the Christian example the stress on the vernacular brought the religion into profound continuity with mother-tongue aspirations.”²³ Kwame Bediako also stated, “Its deeper significance is that God speaks to men and women - always in the vernacular.”²⁴ Therefore, PCG affiliated congregations are monolingual-homogeneous types affiliated to the PCG which conduct their services mostly in *Twi* (type 4 in figure 10). Those affiliated to the PCUSA, though made up mostly of Ghanaians, use English first before translating into *Twi*. Consequently, they are multilingual type 3 in figure 10. Incidentally, they are not multicultural but monocultural. They also purchase and put on the paraphernalia of the PCG. Nonetheless, they have little or no connections with the PCG back home. Wakin wrote, “These churches create a cultural refuge. They are a way for Africans to pass on to their children their African values, particularly for African immigrants who see their children quickly assimilating into African-American

²¹ Enoch Wan, (ed.), 167.

²² Enoch Wan, (ed.), 167, 168.

²³ Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, (Maryknoll, New York 10545, Orbis Books, American Society of Missiology Series, No 13, 1989), 229.

²⁴ Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 60.

culture.”²⁵ The transmission of cultural values to children is helpful especially, for those Ghanaian immigrants who see their children quickly assimilating into US culture. However, though there is the potentiality, achievability of this transmission is debatable.

Authentic Praxis in Practice

Another relevant opportunity for ministry comes from the praxis of authentic Christianity within an authentic African context. To understand African Christians in the diaspora, arguments between Gerrie ter Haar and Roswith Gerlof about African Christians in Europe is relevant. Gerlof, a German Sociologist, argued that Africans in Europe see themselves as Africans. From her *etic* viewpoint, to avoid losing their identity, Africans must be categorized as Africans without being labeled as Christians. From quasi *emic* Christian viewpoint, a Dutch ter Haar who worships with Ghanaians in Amsterdam, argued that some Africans in Europe see themselves first as Christians before as Africans. She feels referring to them as Africans, in Europe, is derisive and “demeaning.” This denies these diaspora Christians the universality of the faith. For our purpose, both are correct. The point is that the praxis African Christianity must be contextualized such that Africans can worship as authentic Christians and authentic Africans. Effective operation of mission in African cultural parameters within multicultural USA is the challenge.

Ministering to Ghanaian communities the congregations have to develop a connection between Ghanaian and biblical worldviews. For instance, OT and NT spiritual worldviews have a constant cosmological conflict between God on one hand, and Satan and demons on the other. This resonates well with the African worldview. Other biblical and African worldviews include recognition of and respect for God’s creation, ancestral veneration, subsistence agriculture, community life, strong family ties, and strong moral norms, values, and beliefs that influence behavior. Worshiping as authentic African Christians, categories that can be used to minister to Ghanaian communities through Ghanaian

²⁵Daniel J. Wakin, “In New York, Gospel Resounds in African Tongues”, 33.

congregations (to reach out) include stories, wise sayings, proverbs, anecdotes, and symbolism. A story and a proverb are used to illustrate.

Story: Once there was a furious bushfire near a village surrounded by grassland. A mother-hen and her chicks were trapped. The only thing the mother could do was to gather all the little chicks under her wings while the raging fire was coming closer and closer to them. Eventually the fire reached them and with the swiftness of the wind that drove the fire, it soon passed over them leaving all the grass and the mother-hen totally burnt, but the little ones were safe because of their mother's wings that covered them.

This story can explain the vicarious death of Christ in Romans 5:8. No Pauline scholarly theology of Christ's death in place of sinful humanity can explain this better to simple rural people than this story.

Akan Proverb: *Abe pe nkwa tenten nti, ode ne ho kowuraa odum yam; na ama wanwu da.* The literal meaning of this proverb is that it is because of having longevity that the palm tree embedded itself in the belly of the oak tree so that it will never die. In the African tropical rain forest, the oak tree, considered as a forest god by the *Akan*, can stand for almost two hundred years if not felled. Periodically farmers and hunters find an oak tree where a palm tree grows in its roots. As a parasite it is believed that the life of such a palm tree depends on the life of the oak tree.

This proverb also explains Paul's difficult in-grafting as part of Christian life in Romans 11: 11-24. It can also be used to explain John's concept of Christ's eternal life in 1 John 5: 11-13. Such cultural categories resonate well with OBGs in USA. Christian congregations can take advantage to reach out to the unreached among the Ghanaian communities.

Congregations as Bridges among Races

A third opportunity is seeking the ways through which Ghanaian diaspora congregations can serve as bridges among the races. Africans are bringing their faith to Africans in a reverse mission in USA. Wakin wrote,

As African churches attract increasing numbers of white worshippers, they can serve as a bridge between races...Like many Pentecostal churches, it is trying to reach beyond ethnic

borders...Maybe the services should be shorter than the usual three or four hours...or maybe African dress should be discouraged.²⁶

Such sentiments, describing the Church of Pentecost (CoP) in Bronx, are shared by the leadership of some other Ghanaian congregations. They have the opportunity of serving as bridges to spread the gospel to the unreached among the races and cultures in USA. For instance, the Portland International Church (PIC) in Portland, Oregon is multi-national. Though it is Ghanaian-led, among the few membership are Ghanaians, Nigerians, Togolese, Cameroonians, Liberians, White and Black Americans, and Hispanics.

Other opportunities include: the exhibition of community, communality, and commonality, family relational values, promotion and operation of self-help, communal support, fraternizing, promotion of Ghanaian culture, socialization and enculturation of children, transmission of financial support for their mother churches back home, and celebration of the rites of passage.

Missiological Implications: Motivating and Mobilizing the Congregations for Mission

The search for the practical missiological use of Ghanaian Christian congregations in the US involves the relational strategies of reaching out to Ghanaian individual non-believers. Mission should strive for the inseparable quantitative and qualitative growth in the congregations. Instead of struggling for conversion methods that may not work, care must be taken in strategizing to reach the unreached.

Strategizing to Become Missional in Practice

First, meaningful engagement through toleration and cooperation is one important evangelization strategy. The popular posture of the unreached is confrontational, defensive, and argumentative.

Moreau and others admonished,

Tolerance is a term defined in context...Scripturally, Christians are called not simply to tolerate, but to go further; they are commanded to love the followers of non-Christian religions...the

²⁶Daniel J. Wakin, "In New York, Gospel Resounds in African Tongues," 32, 33.

missionary should recognize that cooperating with others is less likely to harm the gospel message than is an intolerant attitude that communicates posture of superiority.²⁷

Some non-Christians often open up when they realize that Christians are prepared to listen to them. Ghanaian Christians should eschew their criticisms of and arguments non-believers. They should rather listen to them. Meaningful dialogue and discussions without coercive or intimidating language or actions are invaluable in trying to win the unreached. Thereafter follows a conversation on why Christianity “ticks.” In addition, missions in the form of “performing acts of charity whenever appropriate, joining them in working for their benefit when they are oppressed, and demonstrating God’s unconditional love for them in all circumstances,”²⁸ are the congregations’ nuanced practical strategic mission to win the unreached for Christ.

Second, strongly related to engagement and growth is the functional oriented mission of satisfying felt needs. Wakin stated, “What’s happening in African churches is largely at the beginning...They’re very responsive to human needs.”²⁹ Christian anthropologists, such as Charles Kraft and Paul Hiebert, posit need approach functional theories that propose that different kinds of needs have to be addressed among different people group. Kraft proposed a theoretical model of function by stating, “‘Christianess’ lies in the ‘supracultural’ functions and meanings expressed by people in their use of culture rather than in the mere forms of the culture.”³⁰ But needs satisfaction should not be an end in itself. It should be a means to an end where psychological, physiological, and sociological needs are met. Consequently, Enoch Wan proposes a relational function. Satisfaction of felt-needs should operate in the sense of relationship. This is rediscovering of the ideal Church and God’s agenda instead of the humanized functional oriented church. Faithfulness and servanthood should come first before success

²⁷Scott Moreau, A. et. al., *Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Survey* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 308, 309.

²⁸Scott Moreau, A. et. al., *Introducing World Missions*, 309.

²⁹Daniel J. Wakin, “In New York, Gospel Resounds in African Tongues,” 33.

³⁰Charles Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Revised 25th Anniversary Edition (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 92.

and leadership. This is the process of ideal relational discipleship. For responsible church membership the proper balance is to have relationship over function and having faithfulness over fruitfulness. This is helpful to be transformational and not conformational. In dealing with non-Christian diaspora Ghanaians the congregations' agenda should be functional relationally.

Third, mission is responsible discipleship in ministry. Christians tend to convert but fail to disciple. The church is defined simply as the *ecclesia*—an assembly of God's people. One of the practices embodied in the gospel is discipleship (*didache*) meaning apprenticeship. Discipleship is to learn from Christ to carry on making other disciples. David Bosch suggested, "It is Christ Himself who calls 'Follow Me!' and they follow (Matt. 8:19ff). Following Jesus...and sharing His mission thus belong together."³¹ This is the learning of certain kinds of attitudes and the church's calling to do certain things. James Dunn asked, "Would Jesus have been disappointed with the church?"³² Discipleship promotes exemplary character forming habits that make relationship absolutely crucial in mission. In addition, discipleship should not be isolated and confined in the chapel; it means what happens also from Monday to Saturday. If Ghanaian diaspora congregations are not making people relate Scripture to what they do in private then there is a missing link in discipleship. Notwithstanding its difficulty, it can revolutionize the Ghanaian diaspora congregations.

Fourth, delineating the polychronic from monochronic time orientation is a strategy for Ghanaian diaspora Christian mission. The perception of "African time" is problematic to Westerners. But Africans in the diaspora should be understood. For instance, Ghanaians have polychronic perception of time.

Moreau and colleagues stated,

Missionaries need to recognize that people in other cultures treat time differently...to communicate Christ well...Too often, monochronic missionaries end up communicating that following Christ is a business venture rather than an intimate relationship simply because they do not understand the messages they communicate when they demand that services start on time,

³¹David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 38.

³²James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus' Call to Discipleship*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 93.

that prayer meetings follow prearranged schedule, or that Bible studies end after exactly one hour.³³

This advice is good for foreign missionaries who go to Africa. Nonetheless, it is most relevant for Ghanaian guests and mission in the diaspora. Apart from their polychromic orientation of time, Ghanaian collective orientation make them start their programs only when appreciable numbers are around. Activities by some congregations never start or close on time. Events scheduled for ten p.m. could start at one a.m. Understanding them as Africans and rescheduling one's own time to match their sense of time goes a long way to end frustrations and disappointments in ministry to the communities and through the congregations.

Reality of Cosmological Warfare

One serious major issue in diaspora mission is African Christology of constant warfare. This resonates well with all Ghanaians as Africans. As there is no separation between the sacred and the mundane, most occurrences in human life are attributed to one's perceived and/or real enemies. On one hand, God is Sovereign Eternal, Merciful, Compassionate, and Providential. On the other hand, Satan and his demons are devious, capricious, and malignant. Constant warfare between the two is a reality. The human being is caught up in this conflict and struggle. Activities of witches and wizards, diviners, occultists, charmers, and malignant ancestors are all directed against Christians to prevent them from enjoying abundant life or fulfilling destiny. From this background, salvation is, defined as enjoyment of longevity, prosperity, security, and good health. Philip Jenkins stated, "Doctrines of loosing the captives, casting out demons, healing and deliverance, liberating the oppressed and defeating poverty take place against the backdrop of constant spiritual warfare between the Triune God and Satan with his

³³Scott Moreau, A, et. al., *Introducing World Missions*, 272, 273.

demons.”³⁴ For Ghanaian Christians, the greatest fighter in this struggle is Christ, God’s Son. Christ is the greatest *Osagyefo*, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief who fights to win this constant struggle for a victorious Christian life. Non-Christian Africans are aware of such enemies and Christian mission should use the strategic method of miracles, healing, and deliverance to reach out to them.

Reaching Out to the LBGs

To reach out to the youth mission needs to strategize and work at establishing bridges. Working for the Holy Spirit’s unction and direction prayerfully, the church should plan and strategize its reach-out to LBGs. First, the generational gap is positive vehicle for evangelization in the USA. The concept is catching them young. Historically, in child evangelization through the school parents were converted through the education of children in Africa. This can be re-strategized into peer group evangelization. Using the potential linguistic facilities the youth can take advantage of programs in USA to learn Ghanaian languages. For instance, Fordham University in New York is starting a program of teaching and learning *Twi*. Mensah-Shalders submitted,

As from next summer, Fordham University will start teaching *Twi*...The motivation...is as a result of the growing number of people who transact business in the Bronx using *Twi*...“It is amazing to see people communicating in *Twi*, not thousand; but tens of thousands. The churches, African shops, African Restaurants and Food Joints just name them”...The University is proud to undertake this enterprise as it will help teachers, social workers and others who will be working in the Bronx communities where *Twi* is spoken...Once again Ghana will be in the spotlight as the course will also look at the various cultural practices of the *Akan*.³⁵

Young graduates of this program can teach the LBGs who cannot speak *Twi* in language Sunday schools; to emulate the Chinese and Koreans. The congregations can tap this resource to do mission by strategizing on this for its evangelization through peer influence. Ghanaians in USA should learn from the Canadian model to help in the socialization of their children.

³⁴ Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 149-151.

³⁵Ekow Mensah-Shalders, “Fordham University Goes *Twi*,” <www.ghanaweb.com>, November 20, 2009.

Second, worship is one of the major vehicles of attraction into the congregations in the USA. One of the challenges of Ghanaian mission is what to do with the LBGs. Do we have two separate congregations—one for them and the other for adults? Or do we have two services during the worship period? Both options are relevant depending on the location, time, and availability of space. A lasting solution of linguistic disparity can be solved when teenagers worship with their peers. Here, youthful exuberance will add to African vitality. The LBGs bring vitality, vibrancy, and expressive worship experiences. However, for socialization and enculturation purposes, the OBGs and LBGs should worship together once a while.

Third, adults in the congregations should care for the LBGs since parenting is not the best for diaspora Ghanaians. A group of teenagers were asked to make choices of who they wanted to meet: their teachers, church elders, or parents. Both genders vehemently refused to meet their teachers with the males complaining that their teachers were competing with them over girlfriends. They refused to meet their church elders because, for them, they were too dictatorial and paternalistic. They wanted to meet their parents. When the youth workers arranged a meeting the teenagers said they needed RAIL at home. RAIL was their acronym for recognition, acceptance, identification, and love. The girls told their parents that it is because of lack love in their homes that they fall for anyone outside the home who proposes love to them. Mission through the congregations should offer this RAIL for its youth as a model for parenting the LBGs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Ghanaian Christian mission practice in the diaspora should apply the recommendation from Moreau and colleagues. They stated,

Evangelism is to be given a logical...priority in the total mission of the church. Mission that does not include evangelism is missing the core...At the same time; however, mission is more than evangelism. Mission that does not include incorporating those led to Christ into a local body of

believers or teaching them to obey all that Christ commanded his followers to be salt and light is, at best, truncated mission.³⁶

The Great Command of love coupled with the Great Commission of witness results in the fulfillment of Christian God-given goal. In order to fulfill this kind of Christian mission, first of all, Ghanaians are religious. Many Ghanaians in the diaspora have gone through mission schools, professed Christianity, or are prone to the Christian faith. Such Christians should be educated to obey their Christian mandate to reach out to their non-Christian counterparts in love, humility, and embrace. Christian mission should stop its self-praise by not condemning non-Christians but reach out to them. Second, missional practice should endeavor to care for and love the LBGs X of the Ghanaian diaspora. They hurt and feel nobody is listening to them. Meanwhile they hunger and thirst for God. Third, Ghanaian reverse mission should not condemn African culture. Contextualization of the Christian faith should be applied. Loba-Mkole states, “True inculturation is the one which crucifies all the sins of a culture that encounters the Christ and allows him to change the culture into a new creation.”³⁷ This helps African Christianity to become truly African and truly Christian. Western Christianity, especially in Europe, seems declined and fossilized through secularization and something must be done about it. In so doing, it has a lot to learn from African Christianity. African reverse missionaries today should learn from the mistakes of their Great (19th) century historical counterparts. In order not to repeat the same mistakes in missionary and evangelical endeavors, reverse mission should not condemn Africans in the diaspora as European missionaries did back on the continent. Moreover, African Christian mission should not condemn the host culture as Satanic, demonic, and without anything to offer. It should rather see both African and US cultures with positive lenses. Both cultures should be seen as vehicles for mission to all the generations.

³⁶Scott Moreau, A, et. al., *Introducing World Missions*, 88, 89.

³⁷Jean-Claude Loba-Mkole, “Bible Translation and Inculturation Hermeneutics,” in Ernst R. Wendland and Jean-Claude Loba-Mkole (eds.), *Biblical Texts and African Audiences* (Nairobi, Kenya: Acton Publishers, 2004).

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